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Why Female Suicide Bombers?
A Closer Look at the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and Chechen Separatists

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

by
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Abstract

WHY FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBERS: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM AND CHECEHEN SEPARTISTS?

By Latisha Tennille Campbell

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014

Major Director: William W. Newmann, Ph.D. Professor of Political Science, College of Humanities & Sciences

The central hypothesis of this study is that terrorist organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers not only as tactical innovation but also to “signal” or send a message to various audiences. In order to meet the research objectives of this study, two terrorist organizations—the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Chechen Separatists or those individuals associated with the Chechen Resistance—are examined in detail from their inception through 2013 using a structured focused comparison methodology.

Evidence is found to support both of the studies’ main hypotheses. First, female suicide bombers are used by terrorist organizations because they are a 1) tactical advantage, and 2) to “signal” or send a message to various audiences. Their “entertainment” or shock value maximizes the psychological punch intended for delivery to a variety of audiences. These two reasons are not mutually exclusive but are colored by contextual considerations unique to each case. While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations’ preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics

surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. Those patterns are consistent across both cases and suggest that when females' use is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are used overwhelmingly in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets—usually defined as security and political targets—matter. In contrast, suicide attacks explained by the signaling model are characterized by their novelty usually representing a deviation from terrorist organizations' operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies in this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The number of terrorist organizations using suicide attacks as a primary method of operation has dramatically risen. For example, in 1994 only four organizations had used this method; by 2011, 76 terrorist organizations had embraced it (Chicago Project on Security and terrorism [CPOST], 2014).¹ Suicide operations have often been deemed the “ultimate weapon of the weak” by terrorist organizations to achieve their goals; organizations that employ females as suicide bombers have not only made tactical shifts to their organization’s strategies but use female suicide bombers as lethal means of communication (Bloom, 2011). Terrorist organizations exponentially increased their use of females as suicide operatives between 1985 and 2010. According to Bloom (2011) 257 female suicide bombers (representing about one quarter of the total number of suicide bombings) have acted on behalf of many terrorist organizations while dozens have been arrested when their missions have failed (p. 2).² Further, Bloom (2011) contends that while females have carried out 25 percent of the total number of suicide attacks between 1985 and 2010, females have accounted for more than 50 percent of the attacks in some countries since 2002 (p. 2). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have also begun to focus on this issue with more

¹ The database administrator asked that the source be cited as “Chicago Project on Suicide Terrorism: Suicide Attack Database” (CPOST-SAD); this is acknowledged and shortened to “CPOST” throughout this study.

² It is important to note that this paper frequently uses the words “female” and “woman” interchangeably. The author understands the difference between these two words in that “woman” describes the gender of an individual, while “female” refers to the biological sex of an individual. The author uses these terms throughout the text in line with the above definitions; however, when citing the literature, deference is given to the scholars’ use of the terms, which may or may not be in line with the above. For the purposes of this study, the feminist perspective, while important, has no bearing on the specific intent of this study.

scrutiny. A Joint Homeland Security Assessment in February of 2008 discussed the possibility that “some terrorist organizations use women as operatives to circumvent security measures that focus on male terrorists (Office of Intelligence and Analysis, 2008).”

Since 2003, suicide bombings have grown exponentially in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, although the use of female suicide bombers in these areas has only spiked in Iraq (CPOST, 2014). As of the end of 2011, approximately 43 female suicide attacks had occurred in Iraq, 33 in Sri Lanka (LTTE), 20 in Russia (Chechen Resistance), approximately 11 in Israel, Jordan, and the occupied Palestinian Territory (all areas attributed to Israeli/Palestinian Conflict), nine in Turkey (PKK) and seven in Lebanon (CPOST, 2014). The growing trend of women as suicide bombers contradicts the theory that women are more likely than men to choose peaceful mechanisms for conflict resolution and thus less ‘warlike’ (Bloom, 2007; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Ness, 2005; Victor, 2003). The literature on the subject ranges from the increased involvement of females in suicide campaigns, the differences in involvement across terrorist organizations, the characteristics of female suicide bombers as compared to males, as well as the motivations of females to not only join terroristic organizations but engage in suicide bombing. There are only a handful of books devoted solely to the subject of female suicide bombers, slightly more chapters devoted to the topic in books, and, although there are a fair amount of journal articles devoted to the topic, much more research needs to be done in this area (Bloom, 2009; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013; Jacques & Taylor, 2008; Skaine, 2006; Victor, 2004; Zedalis, 2004).

Overview of Theoretical Framework

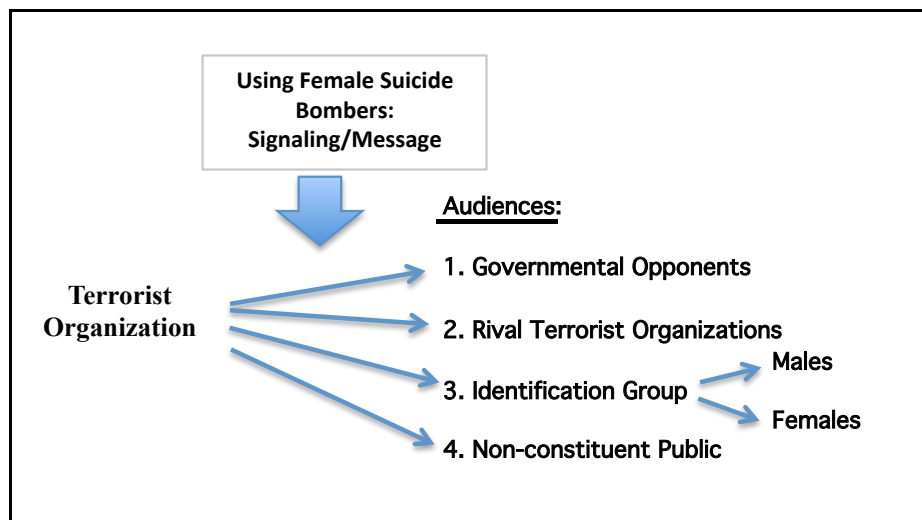
The central hypothesis of this study is that terrorist organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers not only as tactical innovation but also to “signal” or send a message to various audiences. The use of females not only communicates to governmental opponents and/or other terrorist organizations that they are willing to do “whatever it takes” but also keeps the public’s eyes on the plight of the organization thereby seeking a symbolic political effort to reach a much larger audience. Simply put, terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers to signal to four audiences: 1) governmental opponents, 2) rival terrorist organizations, 3) individuals in their identification group, further divided between males and females of the organization’s identification group, and 4) non-constituent public. The non-constituent public is operationalized as the global audience.

This study does not seek to refute the idea that organizations have begun to use females as suicide bombers as a tactical innovation, but to argue that this is not the only reason they do so. Using female suicide bombers is a tactical innovation strategy, meaning terrorist organizations have found vulnerability in the enemy government’s countermeasures, and are hoping to exploit them. Most counterterrorism strategies have failed to see female suicide bombers as a significant threat. Although this idea is set forth in much of the literature on this topic, it has not formally been operationalized as a model; it is presented here as the “tactical innovation model.” This model explains how and why terrorist organizations have adopted the use of females as suicide bombers. Simply put, they are used because they are unsuspecting and can get to places that males cannot. However, as this study will argue, there are additional reasons why organizations use females other than the fact that they are a tactical innovation; they also use females to signal commitment and resolve, and by doing so, they are also intending to send a message to one of

five target audiences. Essentially, I argue that terrorist organizations have incorporated women into the ranks as suicide bombers in order to increase lethality and to send a message. The act of sending a female is simply more symbolic than sending a male (Dalton & Asal, 2011; Gunawardena, 2006; O'Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, 2008; Zedalis, 2004). When females are used, a statement is being made. This addition of “signaling” provides a stronger explanatory model for why organizations use females than the tactical innovation model alone.

The signaling model suggests that terrorist organizations are using female suicide bombers to send a message to four main “target audiences,” these messages vary based on the receiving audience and a variety of socio-political factors specific to the terrorist organization. Although the primary message or “signal” to each target audience is the same, the terrorist organization expects each audience will interpret it differently. Below, Figure 1 helps to illustrate the signaling model and the audiences the terrorist organization hopes their signals—or use of female bombers—will reach.

Figure 1. Intended Audiences in the Signaling Model



Research Questions

This study seeks to better understand the use of female suicide bombers from the terrorist organizations' perspectives. The three research questions presented below aid in this inquiry:

1. Why do terrorist organizations use females for suicide bombing?
2. Do terrorist organizations turn to female suicide bombers as a form of tactical innovation, a judgment that females can achieve greater success in suicide attacks? This question will be answered by evaluating the following:
 - a. Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack?
 - b. Do female suicide bombers "fail" less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)?
 - c. Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females?
 - d. Are female suicide bombers chosen (over males) in instances where getting closer to the intended target matter, e.g. assassination missions?
3. Do terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers to signal their resolve and commitment to select audiences?
 - a. Governmental opponents
 - b. Rival terrorist organizations
 - c. Identification group
 - a. Males in their identification group
 - b. Females in their identification group
 - d. Non-constituent public

Models of Female Suicide Terrorism

The motivations of organizations to engage in acts of terrorism, much less acts of suicide terrorism, are important to understand. Based on a review of the literature, no model has yet been applied to the organizational use of female bombers. Therefore we must rely on existing models of terrorism and suicide terrorism to frame this study. The dominant models to explain why organizations engage in terrorism include the instrumental and organizational model, as well as the terrorism as political communication model (Crenshaw, 1995; Ozdamar, 2008). The dominant models of suicide terrorism include rationalist and culturalist approaches, with ideas of religion and ethnicity being at the core of the latter (Hafez, 2006). The signaling model, as developed in this study, is based on the idea of terrorism as political communication, and that organizations are rational actors making the decision to use female bombers to that end. It is assumed that organizations are making rational decisions, and the decisions to use female bombers are not attributed to the religious underpinnings of the sponsoring terrorist organization.

A review of the literature reveals common themes as to why organizations use female bombers, namely because females are unexpected and they can get to places men cannot. However, as previously stated, there is not a standard model that encapsulates all of these ideas; this study presents the tactical innovation model as a composition to do just that. The tactical innovation model views the use of female bombers by terrorist organizations as “well-calculated weapons” in asymmetrical warfare. Conversely, the signaling model views terrorist organizations’ use of females as a means of communicating messages to various audiences. The use of female bombers is a symbolic signal, generating far more publicity for the terrorist organization’s plight than male bombers. This increased publicity provides the terrorist organization with a powerful PR campaign. To that end, the addition of the signaling model

helps to explain why terrorist organizations use females where the tactical innovation model falls short.

The Tactical Innovation Model

The tactical innovation model suggests that ultimately the choice of terrorist organizations to use females as suicide bombers is an “innovation” in the organization’s tactics in an effort to reach otherwise unreachable targets that the normalized “young man” no longer has access to (Bloom, 2007; 2011; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013; Gunawardena, 2006; Sheckhard, 2008; Ness, 2005; O’Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, & Akhemdova, 2006a; Zedalis 2004). This argument is hard to deny given the numerous studies that have been presented illustrating the ease with which females can strategically place themselves in places that men cannot (given societies’ notions of femininity) (Bloom, 2007; 2011; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013; Gunawardena, 2006; Sheckhard, 2008; Ness, 2005; O’Rourke, 2009; Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006a; Zedalis, 2004). The literature suggests the decision to use female suicide bombers by organizations is increasingly contingent on the enemies’ notion that females are not, and cannot be, suicide bombers—taking full advantage of this socialized assumption. This faulty logic that many of the terrorist organizations’ enemies hold allows females to become valuable and lethal commodities to the organizations in which they belong.

Shortcomings of the Tactical Innovation Model

This study highlights the gap in the literature in regards to organizations’ decision to use females as suicide bombers for several reasons. First, the literature presents few models for why organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers, in fact, only a handful of refereed journal articles focus solely on the organizational decision to use females. Models have not been

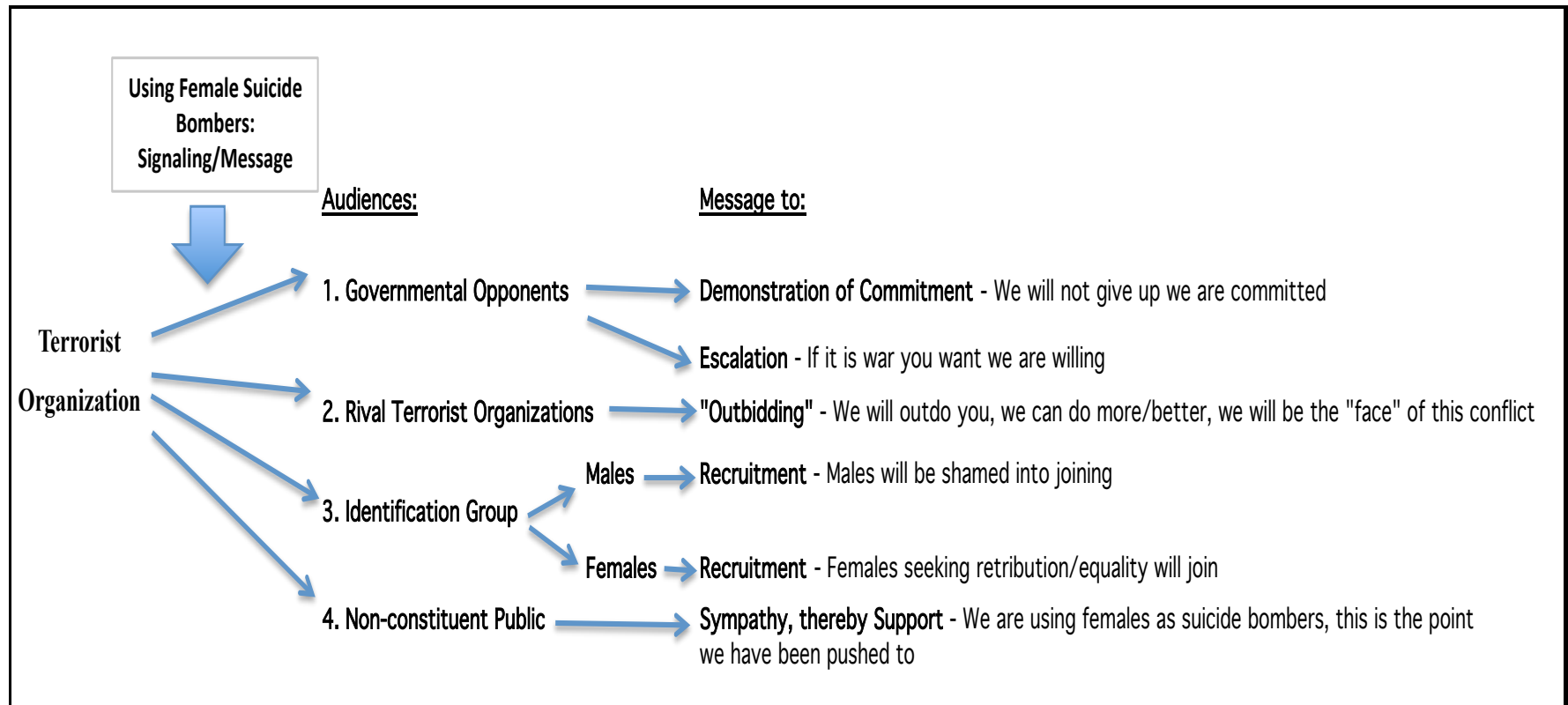
presented as unified theories to be tested in an effort to advance this body of literature. There is a body of literature addressing organizational decision-making and suicide bombing *in general*, or even organizational decision-making and males, but these models leave things unexplained. The tactical innovation model presented here has been extracted from the literature on female suicide bombers and named in this study in an effort to organize scholars' existing ideas into a "workable" theoretical framework. Further, while the tactical innovation model does offer explanations for why organizations have chosen to use females as suicide bombers, the addition of another model increases the explanatory power of the phenomena. Additionally, this study sets forth hypotheses for why organizations use female suicide bombers that have yet to be explored. For example, the tactical innovation model may explain why organizations choose women for missions, but it does not address the importance of that action, or the message that organization is trying to send; the signaling model does.

The Signaling Model

The main hypothesis of this study is terrorist organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers not only as tactical innovation but also to "signal" or send messages to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, males and females within the terrorist organizations' identification groups as well as any member of the groups' 4) "non-constituent public" (Bloom, 2011; Davis, 2013; Fearon, 1994; George & Smoke, 1974; Hoffman & McCormick, 2004; Jervis, 2002; Kahn, 1965; O'Rourke, 2009; Schelling, 1960; 1966; Wolford, 2013). Although the act, and thus the signal, of using female suicide bombers is the same, the terrorist organization has different expectations for that message depending on the audience. Figure 2 below provides a general illustration as to how the signaling model works, however,

overall, the signaling model suggests that governmental opponents of the terrorist organizations will receive a message of commitment and/or escalation, rival terrorist organizations will be privy to the organizations' intent to outbid them, males and females of the organizations' identification group will fall victim to recruitment antics employed by the sponsoring organization, and finally, members of the non-constituent public, will be overcome with sympathy for the organization, which in turn translates to support for the organization.

Figure 2. The Signaling Model: Female Suicide Bombers as Signals



Research Methodology

This study examines why terrorist organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers. In order to meet the research objectives of this study, two terrorist organizations are examined in detail from their inception through 2013 using a “structured, focused comparison”³: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Chechen Separatists or those individuals associated with the Chechen Resistance.⁴⁵ These cases were chosen for several reasons. Together, they have performed more female suicide operations than all other terrorist organizations around the globe between the years 1980 and 2013; the LTTE used the highest number of female suicide bombers, while the Chechen Separatist have used the third highest number of female bombers (CPOST, 2014). They have relied on suicide bombing as a primary method of attack at specific points since their inception. Research suggests that the LTTE not only cultivated suicide bombing, but invented the suicide belt and pioneered the use of women in

³ This is a type of research method used in which the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective, these questions are then asked of each case study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and accumulation of the findings of the cases possible (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 67).

⁴ Unique to this case study is the fact that although there are a number of de-facto organizations associated with this cause, they were all influenced by one main leader, Shamil Basayev (until his death in 2006), thus consequently “acted” as one organization fighting for an independent Chechnya and thus will be referred to as “Chechen Separatists” throughout this study. These nuances and justification for this operationalization will be expanded upon in the case study. The term “organization” is used to refer to all groups associated with the Chechen Resistance unless otherwise stated.

⁵ It is important to note, Harakat al-Muqaqamma al-Islamiya [herein Hamas] was originally slated to be included in this study given their heavy reliance on suicide bombing; up until 2009, they were second only to the LTTE in terms of number of suicide attacks (CPOST, 2014). However, in terms of female suicide bombers, there were only two suicide attacks perpetrated by females that met the criteria for inclusion in this study. While this case study would have been very helpful in highlighting the use of female suicide bombers in relation to rival terrorist organizations—both as a reason Hamas used female suicide bombers, and as an audience being signaled to with their use—there were simply too few suicide attacks by females to warrant inclusion.

suicide attacks (Bhattacharji, 2009; Rueter, 2004). Also, each organization has been identified as ethnonationalist, at least in part, thus both have operated with similar external pressures placed on them by opposing state forces. The LTTE was a secular ethnonationalist organization fighting against the Sinhalese majority to create a Tamil Homeland (Tamil Eelam) in the Northern and Eastern regions of Sri Lanka.⁶ The Chechen Separatists are an interesting case because although they are clearly an ethnonationalist movement, in more recent times they have also been increasingly associated with radical Islamic fundamentalists, in what many call a “Wahhabistic movement.”

The two case studies examined in this study allow for several controls. Each organization operated under “the forth wave of terrorism,” a frame used by many scholars to delineate between periods of terrorism with similar characteristics (what Rapport (2001) deems major “international ingredients”). More specifically these “ingredients” include: group commitments of international revolution, the willingness of foreign governments and publics to help, and the sympathies of diaspora populations, during the history of terrorism (Rapoport, 2001, p. 422). In line with both organizations operating under the forth wave of terrorism, both also adopted suicide bombing as a method of attack within 13 years of each other: LTTE’s first attack in 1987 and Chechen Separatists in 2000 (CPOST, 2014). Each organization also had to undergo its own learning curve—after Hezbollah provided “the model suicide attack” in 1983—grappling with how to incorporate this new method into its overall strategy.

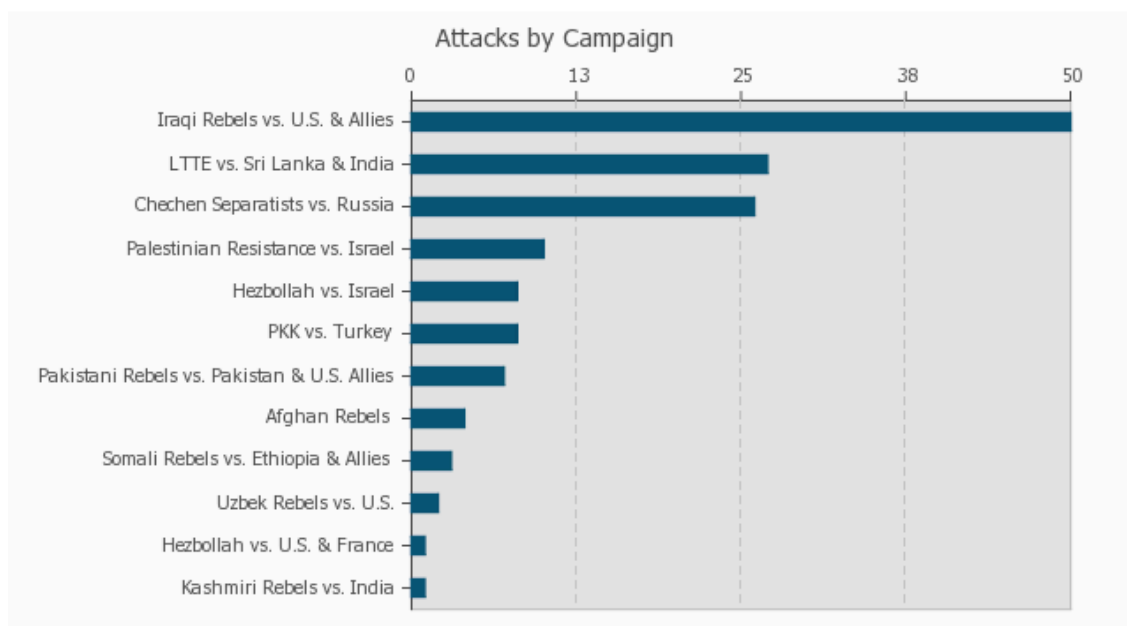
While the LTTE and Chechen Separatists both began as ethnonationalist movements, thus providing continuity between issues involved, the selection of these groups also allows for

⁶ The word “was” is used because although the LTTE is still thought to exist as an organization today – “the LTTE” and thus the civil war in Sri Lanka ended when its leader Thiruvankadam Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed on May 18th, 2009.

some variation. The LTTE operated with a single goal in mind and was a cohesive organization with no disruption in leadership until its demise, while the Chechen Separatists were loosely organized with a few main leaders, and were increasingly identified and associated with religious ideologies. The fact that the LTTE will remain a “stable” comparison while examining the ebb and flow of Chechen leaders and ideologies allows for the possible illumination of key processes associated with each organization’s decision to use female bombers.

Figure 3 below is included to underscore the decision to use the two organizations for case study examination. The figure displays the total number of suicide attacks involving females from 1982-2013. Although there has been a significant increase in female suicide attacks in Iraq, no single organization takes responsibility for the bombings. This fact would make it impossible to analyze the terrorist organizations’ decision making process, leaving the “top” terrorist organizations to analyze the ones that have been selected in this study (CPOST, 2014).

Figure 3. Total Number of Female Suicide Attacks by Campaign from 1982-2013



(CPOST, 2014)

This study will employ a qualitative case study methodological approach based on “structured-focused comparison” in which a standardized set of questions or categories are used to analyze and compare the aforementioned case studies (George & Bennett, 2005). Case studies are detailed examinations of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalizable to other events. This type of case study in particular emphasizes the systematic development of general questions, reflecting the research objectives that are asked of each case study to guide and standardize data collection (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 68). The structured-focused comparison case study methodology lends itself to systematic comparison of two similar cases; a single-case study research design is primarily suggested for use when such studies’ goals are to debunk existing theories by testing deviant, crucial, most-likely, and least likely research designs; single-case studies might also be useful when testing of claims of necessity and sufficiency (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 32-33). Case studies offer comparative advantage when studying decision-making process, historical and social contexts, and path dependencies, all of which are applicable when looking at why organizations have chosen to employ female bombers.

The “reasons why” organizations use females as suicide bombers are the independent variables, while the “use of females” as suicide bombers are the dependent variable. The basic hypothesis of this research is two-fold: 1) although no standard model of female suicide terrorism exists there are a variety of themes in the literature that suggest agreement on the tactical innovation model as identified in this study, this study will illuminate those themes and consolidate them into a workable frame, and 2) this study will discuss the “other reason” female suicide bombers are used by organizations; taken together, these models explain why organizations use female suicide bombers.

Hypotheses

All five hypotheses below will be used to help explain the primary research question put forth in this study: “why do terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers?” Hypothesis one suggests that female suicide bombers are used as a tactical innovation and therefore support the tactical innovation model set forth in this study. Hypotheses two through five suggest that female suicide bombers are used by the terrorist organizations to signal their commitment and resolve to various audiences; those audiences are specified in the hypotheses below.

H1. Terrorist organizations choose females for suicide bombing because organizations view this as tactical innovation.

H2. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to their governmental organization opponents.

H3. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to rival terrorist organizations.

H4. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to males in their identification group.

H5. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to females in their identification group.

H6. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to their non-constituent public.

Research Design

This study examines two terrorist organizations—the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Chechen Separatists or those individuals associated with the Chechen Resistance—in detail from their inception through 2013 using a structured focused comparison methodology. In order to meet the objectives of this study, to understand why terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers, each organization's decision making process will be examined in order to search for patterns that are common in each case. This will be done by using what has been deemed a “process-tracing procedure” which attempts to trace the links between possible causes and observed outcomes; the structured focused comparison questions provide for a series of answers that will aid in the revelation of any patterns found within and between cases. During this procedure the researcher examines histories, archival data and other sources to see whether the causal process, a theory hypothesized or implied in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables of the case (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 6).

This study is based in part on inference since terrorist leaders cannot be asked to describe their rationale on whether or not to use females as suicide bombers. Therefore various events that occurred before each organization began using females for suicide missions, and for the duration thereof, must be examined. This is a realistic limitation to this study but also one that underscores the need of the structured focused case study methodology—a set of standardized general questions asked of each case—allowing for a controlled comparison between two similar cases and a single framework for this case (George & Bennett, 2005). A pattern of events is being sought in order to see if any common themes can be found that presented a context for the decision.

The following questions will be asked of each case study:

1. Operational Characteristics of Suicide Attacks - What are the operational characteristics of suicide missions by the organization? Do these characteristics give any indication as to why the terrorist organization uses female suicide bombers? The following will be examined to answer that question:
 - a) Methods of Attack
 - b) Target Types
 - c) Assassination Missions
 - d) Team Attacks
 - e) Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies: After looking at the operational characteristics presented in a – d above, do any suicide attacks perpetrated by females occur outside of “standard operating procedures” as identified in this section? Are female suicide bombers used in suicide attacks at “instrumental” times in conflicts or where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only” suicide attacks, “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks?
2. Popular Support: Have there been changes in the level of popular support before or after the use of females as suicide bombers? Does this support differ between males and females in the organizations’ identification group? Has the community always embraced a culture of martyrdom or has this increased or decreased at specific points in time and why?
3. Rival Terrorist Organizations: Does the terrorist organization have rivals and is that rivalry a factor in their decision making to use females for suicide bombings?

4. Counterterrorism Events: Have any counterterrorism events, mainly in the form of military offenses by the terrorist organizations' governmental opponents, immediately preceded the decision to use women as suicide bombers?
5. Political Events: Have any political changes or events contributed to the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers?
6. Pattern: Finally, with answers to the preceding questions, can any triggering events or trends be identified in an organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers?

These questions will be answered in summary form within the context of each case study, after which it will be possible to compare the patterns of each terrorist organization and any similarities and differences will be examined in detail in order to address the research questions presented in this study as well as test the hypotheses. Question six on any triggering events or trends identified in an organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers will be answered in a conclusion for each case study. A more detailed analysis of each of the questions as they relate to the terrorist organization's decision to use females will be provided in the conclusion chapter of this study.

Having applied these questions to each case study, it will be possible to compare the patterns of organizational decision making to use females as suicide bombers from terrorist organization to terrorist organization. Though this research hypothesizes that both of the terrorist organizations use females as a means of signaling to five audiences, similarities and differences revealed must be taken into account and explained. The factors that account for these similarities and differences found should be isolated so that conclusions about the patterns found between organizations and their decision to use females can be recognized.

Data Processing and Analysis

Examination of the case studies was primarily qualitative, drawing on a multitude of books, journal articles, etcetera, in order to meet the research objectives of this study. However, the study also relied heavily on available information contained in the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) and corresponding database, Suicide Attack Database, or SAD. CPOST-SAD is an open-source database that focuses solely on suicide attacks.⁷ CPOST maintains a searchable database on all suicide attacks from 1982 to 2013, comprising 3,699 attacks in over 40 countries, as well as preliminary data for Iraq through June, 2014. The open-source suicide database includes information about the location of attacks, the target type, the weapon used, and systematic information on the demographic and general biographical characteristics of suicide attackers, as well as martyr videos and terrorist group profiles. Incidentally this is also the only database that allows for one to differentiate between females and males which is why this study draws upon information primarily from this database, unless otherwise stated. The database expands the breadth of the data available in English using native language sources (e.g., Arabic, Hebrew, Russian, Tamil) that are likely to have the most extensive relevant information; the database is considered to be the most reliable survey of terrorist attacks now available, due in part, to the diversity of languages it has access to.

This database allows you to filter by seven variables: Year, Location, Group, Campaign, Target Type, Weapon, and Gender; several of these need further description.

Year: Selection returns results from 1982-2013, with limited data for Iraq for 2014.

⁷ “CPOST” refers to the source of the database, while “CPOST-SAD” is the name of the actual database. For the purposes of this study, “CPOST” and “CPOST-SAD” are the same and will be referred to as “CPOST” throughout this study.

Location: There are a total of 44 “locations” identified in the database: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Finland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestinian Territory, Occupied, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

Group: A total of 93 groups are available for selection, essentially any organization that has used suicide bombing as a method of attack from 1982-2014.

Campaign: This is defined by CPOST as “a series of attacks that the terrorist leaders explained as aimed at gaining specific political concessions from a named target government, and which continued until the terrorist leaders deliberately abandoned the effort, either because sufficient gains were achieved or because the leaders became convinced that the effort had failed” (Pape, 2006, p. 16-17). There are a total of 22 “campaigns” identified in the database: Afghan Rebels, Al Qaeda vs. U.S. & Allies, Al-Qaida in Islamic North Africa, BKI vs. India, Chechen Separatists vs. Russia, Egyptian Rebels, Hezbollah vs. Israel, Hezbollah vs. U.S. & France, Iraqi Rebels vs. U.S. & Allies, Isolated Attacks, Jundullah vs. Iran, Kashmiri Rebels vs. India, LTTE vs. Sri Lanka & India, Pakistani Rebels vs. Pakistan & U.S. Allies, Palestinian Resistance vs. Israel, PKK vs. Turkey, Rebels vs. Government of Mali & Allies, Rebels vs. Syria & Allies, Rebels vs. Yemen, Somali Rebels vs. Ethiopia & Allies, Uzbek Rebels vs. U.S.

Target Type: There are a total of four “target types” identified in the database:

Security- this includes targets such as the military, police, or intelligence forces and their support structures (e.g. bases, supply lines, civilian employees), as well as rival militias and militant groups.

Political- this includes targets such as politicians and public officials, elected and non-elected, foreign and domestic, at all levels. It also includes their office and supporters.

Civilian- this includes victims that have no direct affiliation with either security or political structures.

Other- this includes all “other” target-types not included above.

Weapon: There are a total of five “weapon types” identified in the database: Airplane, Belt bomb, Car Bomb, Other, or Unspecified. In the case of the LTTE many of the “others” were scuba bombs and boat bombs, Other-Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIEDs), truck bombs and motorcycle bombs.

Gender: Here the choice was male, female, and unknown. It is important to note that when a “female” was selected, the return results would include any suicide attack where a female was involved, even if there were more than one female. This was also true for males, and selections including those of unknown gender.

While the database is limited to filtering by these seven variables, the results heed additional variables such as if the attack was intended to be an “assassination,” defined as an attempt to kill a particular person, “total number of individuals killed per attacks,” “number wounded,” as well as personal demographic data on the individual attacker(s) if known. Also, the database makes all sources of the information it compiled for the data available in full text. For example, if two newspaper articles were used to generate the information for the database,

both newspaper articles, in their entirety are also listed with each individual attack; to be included in the database the information must be verified by at least two sources. Lastly, it is necessary to mention what counts as a suicide attack: CPOST defines a suicide attack as an attack in which an attacker kills himself or herself in a deliberate attempt to kill others. The critical factor is suicide: the attacker must kill him or herself, even if no one but the attacker dies in the attack. CPOST includes only suicide attacks perpetrated by non-state actors: attacks authorized by national governments are not included (CPOST 2014).

This study examines a total of 198 suicide attacks; 115 suicide attacks—32 of which females participated in—for the LTTE, involving a total of 122 individual males, 43 females, and 100 individuals of unknown gender. The results used in this study were obtained from selecting the following: “Year” – 1982-2013⁸; “Location” –default settings; “Group”-default settings; “Campaign”⁹—LTTE vs. Sri Lanka & India; the default settings were also selected for the final three variables, “target-type,” “weapon,” and “gender;” the variable “gender” was often manipulated when performing searches. This study also examined 83 attacks carried out by Chechen Separatists —26 of which females participated in. The 83 attacks involved a total of 28 males, 48 females, and 28 individuals of unknown gender. The results used in this study were obtained from selecting the following: “Year”—1982-2013; “Location”—default settings; “Group”— default settings; “Campaign”—Chechen Separatists vs. Russia; the default settings

⁸ The conflict technically ended in 2009 with the death of the organization’s leader, I still chose “2013” to stay consistent

⁹ There are many instances where the LTTE did not “claim” certain suicide attacks, to be included in the CPOST database assigned to a particular group, here, the LTTE, the LTTE would have needed to specifically claimed that attack—all of these “unclaimed” attacks, that few would dispute the LTTE was behind are “counted” when the “LTTE vs. Sri Lanka vs. India” campaign is selected and filtered by when searching the CPOST database. Similarly, search results for the “Chechen Separatists” as defined in this study, were found by choosing the “Chechen Separatists vs. Russia” campaign.

were also selected for the final three variables, “target-type,” “weapon,” and “gender.” After the search was completed, each suicide attack was examined and data was exported to an excel spreadsheet, various columns such as “ number of bombers,” “number of individuals per attack,” “more than one individual,” were added to aid in data manipulation through descriptive analysis and pivot tables. The author made all charts and graphs in this study unless specifically stated otherwise.

Political and counterterrorism events in each case study are identified using information available through the British Broadcasting Network (BBC). This study defines political events as any event having to do with the political situation in Sri Lanka and/or Russia, as identified by the BBC. This study defines counterterrorism events as any military offenses launched by Sri Lanka and/or Russia in the name “countering terrorism,” as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, or uncovered in the literature review, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. This study examines all political and counterterrorism events associated with either conflict, as defined above, as well as all suicide bombings that were performed by males and females in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the political/counterterrorism event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are recorded and used in the analysis of this study. Although an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

Significance of the Study

The aim of this study is to address the gap in the literature regarding why organizations employ female suicide bombers. This research contributes to the knowledge of rational choice models of organizational decision making for terrorism in general while also adding a much-needed “terrorism as communication” piece via signaling (using females) to develop a more thorough explanation for why organizations would choose to use females as suicide bombers. In looking at this from a practitioner’s perspective the conclusions might allow for a better understanding for why and when certain organizations might employ females as suicide bombers and adjust their counterterrorism policies accordingly.

The dramatic increase in female suicide bombings in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan raise many questions as to why organizations are beginning to use females more frequently. If we are to develop strategies to defend ourselves in the United States and abroad we must understand why this is happening. Stern (2003) argues, “our weakness in our counterterrorism strategy is that we are not putting female suicide bombers into the equation, this study helps us to do just that” (p. 262).

The single-issue case studies presented in this study will be used to generalize about the overall patterns for why organizations use females as suicide bombers. If reoccurring patterns are found for why organizations use females, as explained by the tactical innovation model, then counterterrorism policy makers will be better equipped to make decisions based on this. If recurring patterns are found as explained by the signaling model, the identified patterns may help governmental agencies in two ways: 1) given that terrorist organizations will use females to send certain messages to certain audiences, governmental agencies will also be privy to these messages and be able to act accordingly; 2) if government agencies know what audiences are

being signaled to, they might be able to develop innovative ways to thwart the way in which that message is perceived, thereby proving that the use of female bombers is an ineffective way to communicate.

Assumptions

Two main assumptions are taken into account about terrorist organizations' decision to employ female suicide bombers. First, terrorist organizational decision making within any given environment is in a constant state of flux, thus decisions are made that do not always adhere to the "rational nature" of the organization. Although the organization would choose to make rational choices based on a set of similarly stated preferences, a terrorist organization and the environment around it is unpredictable. Classical rational choice theory claims that human behavior can be explained by a generalized calculus of utility-maximizing behavior whereby calculated self-interest narrowly defined by cost-benefit calculations govern social action (Brym & Anderson, 2011). While this utility-maximizing model has merit, it has been criticized for its inability to take human cognition into consideration when assessing why individuals or organizations did not make certain decisions in line with respect to their "rational" interest. As a result, a theory of "bounded rationality" was developed to address this incongruence. Classical rational choice theory assumes preferences are defined over outcomes, that those outcomes are known and fixed, and that decision makers maximize their net benefits, or utilities, by choosing the alternative that yields the highest level of benefits (discounted by costs) (Jones, 1999). Alternatively, bounded rationality takes into account that decision makers are constantly confronted with information from external and internal environments, the former dealing with how we respond to incentives facing us, while the latter deals with how our cognitive faculties

cause us to deviate from the demands of the external environment (Simon, 1996). Essentially, the rationality of decision makers is limited by a lack of information, the way they perceive that information and the time they have to make decisions; which makes perfectly rational decisions—as defined by the classical rational choice theory—impossible (Simon, 1996).

While most studies of suicide terrorism are based on the idea of strategic logic, making the assumption that the organization is a rational actor using suicide bombing as a calculated strategy against its opponent, the ideas set forth in bounded rationality must be taken into account in regards to organizations' constantly changing environments. This research is based on the above rational choice assumptions; organizations are making rational calculations about whether to use females in their operations in an “open systems environment.” While this broad theory has been used to try and understand both individual and organizational behavior in a multitude of fields, its application is useful in understanding why organizations would choose to engage in terroristic acts, perform and perpetuate suicide missions, and increasingly use females to that end.

The second assumption that is made regarding terrorist organizations' decision to use females is that both religious and secular groups use female suicide bombers for the same reasons. Religious groups on average have adopted this tactic—female suicide bombers—later than secular organizations, but motives for doing so are the same (Ness, 2005). While each “type” of organization may qualify the use of suicide bombers, and accordingly female bombers differently, the justification seems to be in the act itself and not the rationale for engaging in the act. Radical religious fundamentalist *do not* commit acts of “suicide bombing”, they engage in acts of “martyrdom”, which proves to be a valuable distinction to those that are indoctrinated into the ranks and the surrounding culture that must embrace this notion in order for terrorist

organizations to be successful in recruiting and carrying out suicide missions. Over the past few decades, radical religious fundamentalist organizations have increasingly legitimized suicide bombings, including the use of females, and differentiated it from “the suicide” presented in the Koran. While the legitimization of using suicide bombing as a tactic by the sponsoring organization varies based on their religious orientation/ideology, the distinction has not been found to influence the decision to use female bombers once the organization has adopted suicide bombing as a strategy.¹⁰

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this research approach: 1) currently there is only one online database that focuses solely on suicide attacks *and* that can easily be filtered by gender, however this database only includes “successful” suicide attacks. The inclusion of all suicide attacks, successful and otherwise, would be most helpful for this study given the focus is on explaining the “reasons why” females were sent by terrorist organizations. And, 2) many times online databases dealing with terrorism operationalize groups and terms differently, for example in 2012 CPOST used the term “Chechen Separatists” to account for all rebel groups in Chechnya; in 2014, when the database was updated, more groups associated with the “Chechen Resistance” were added: Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, Riyadus Salikhiim, Martyrs’ Brigade, Caucasus Emirate, Chechen Separatists, and the Gazotan Murdash (CPOST, 2014). Even though a variety of organizations have claimed responsibility for certain attacks the literature still

¹⁰ For a more extensive discussion on secular and religious orientation/ideology as it applies to female bombers see: Bloom, 2005; Gonazalez-Perez, 2011; and Ness, 2005. For a discussion of the Western definition of suicide bomber verses “the religious concept” of shahida (self-sacrifice in the path of God) see: Schweitzer, 2007; and finally, for a discussion on strategies for justifying females engaging in martyrdom see: Ness, 2005.

suggests they were first influenced by one main leader, Shamil Basayev. Regardless of the specific terrorist organization designation, Basayev was influential until his death in 2006, after which a few other prominent leaders emerged such as Doku Umarov. All of the aforementioned organizations are included as “one organization” representing the Chechen Separatists in this study. Treating each organization as an independent entity given the loosely structured and overlapping leaders and members of the resistance, and the fact they all were operating in the same region could lead to false generalizations. Any instance where this distinction proved relevant or problematic has been noted as to not provide any misinformation.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter has provided a brief introduction to suicide terrorism and female suicide terrorism as well as models that will be used to frame the latter throughout this study, the tactical innovation model and the signaling model. It has also provided the rationale for the study, significance, and the studies’ research methodology. Chapter Two will present a review of the literature relating to models of suicide bombing, female suicide bombing as well as introducing and explaining the model this study sets forth as the reason organizations use female suicide bombers. Chapters Three and Four will analyze in great detail, the context for each of the terrorist organizations, the LTTE and Chechen Separatists, in regards to their decision to use females as suicide bombers.

Chapter Five will serve as the concluding chapter where characteristics of the tactical model and signaling model will further be developed with consideration of the information illuminated in each of the case studies. The basic hypotheses about the characteristics of the tactical innovation model and signaling model will be confirmed. First, female suicide bombers

are used by terrorist organizations because they are a 1) tactical advantage, and 2) to “signal” or send a message to various audiences. Their “entertainment” or shock value maximizes the psychological punch intended for delivery to a variety of audiences. These two reasons are not mutually exclusive but are colored by contextual considerations unique to each case. While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism policies promulgated in response to the terrorist organization, and political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations’ preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. Those patterns are consistent across both cases and suggest that when females’ use is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are used overwhelmingly in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets—usually defined as security and political targets—matter. In contrast, suicide attacks explained by the signaling model are characterized by their novelty usually representing a deviation from terrorist organizations’ operational norms, characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The central hypothesis of this study is that terrorist organizations choose to use females as suicide bombers not only as tactical innovation but also to “signal” or send a message to various audiences. In this study, the tactical innovation model is introduced as a primary reason that terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers. The addition of the signaling model to the tactical innovation framework increases the explanatory power of the study. Key aspects of the signaling model are then introduced in order to lay the foundation for the development of the theory used in this study. To do this, the study extrapolates information from existing studies of deterrence, escalation, and key ideas about the use of terrorism as signals or messages for theory building.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first briefly describes the phenomenon of terrorism highlighting, 1) the debate over the definition of terrorism and why that is important for this study, and 2) models of terrorism. The second section of this chapter focuses on current models of suicide terrorism in general, that is models that do not differentiate between terrorist organizations’ choice to use males or females to carry out suicide missions, or gender-neutral models. The third and final section, concentrates specifically on models of female suicide terrorism. The tactical innovation model, as formalized by this study, does explain why organizations have shifted their suicide tactics to include females, but does not include a discussion on the messages that are sent to various audiences when doing so. The messages being sent by terrorist organizations—as defined by the signaling model, introduced in this

study—play a key part in the decision to use them. This section will highlight characteristics of both models and discuss the development of the signaling model in detail.

Terrorism

Definition Debate

Almost every scholarly paper written on terrorism begins with a discussion of the definition debacle. In order to study any phenomena one must be able to identify and thus define what that phenomenon is. This is an ongoing debate in the field of terrorism literature in that there is still no one unified definition of terrorism used by academics and practitioners. For example, in 1983 there were 109 compiled academic definitions of terrorism making the lack of consensus an issue when trying to study this, however out of all the definitions two common themes have prevailed in most of the contemporary definitions: 1) that terrorism involves aggression against non-combatants, and, 2) that the terrorist action in itself is not expected by its perpetrator to accomplish a political goal but instead to influence a target audience and change that audience's behavior in a way that will serve the interests of the terrorist (Victoroff, 2005, p. 3). In 2006 another review of the literature revealed little had changed when trying to advance a singular definition of terrorism. Placing terrorism in a normative framework where the often quoted 'one man's terrorist is another man's revolutionary' blurs the lines in academic literature making this subject matter even harder to objectify (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006, p. 774). The definitional issue of what terrorism is must be placed in the appropriate context in order for one to study terrorism, in a similar vein the definition of a suicide attack or mission must also be considered.

Terrorism is defined within social and political contexts, which is why it is virtually impossible to have a single definition of terrorism. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) did try to encapsulate the term by defining terrorism in terms of international and domestic they are as follows:

- 1) Domestic terrorism is the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives; and,
- 2) International terrorism involves violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state. These acts appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping. International terrorist acts occur outside the United States or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to coerce or intimidate, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.).

As Laquer (1999) mentions, however, there is really no “terrorism” per se, only different terrorisms, although of all of the definitions of terrorism circulating today his is still recognized as the simplest, asserting that terrorism “constitutes the illegitimate use of force to achieve a political objective by targeting innocent people” (p. 6). Laquer (1999) furthers his assertion stating that: “the only general characteristic generally agreed upon is threat terrorism involves violence and the threat of violence. Yet terrorism is hardly the only enterprise involving violence and the threat of violence. So does war, coercive diplomacy, and bar room brawls” (p. 6). Schmid’s academic consensus definition contrasts this simple definition with his assertion that there is no true or correct definition of terrorism because it is a social construct and accordingly an abstract concept in which a single definition will never suffice (White, 2012).

Typologies are often employed in an effort to soften this “definitional dilemma” when studying terrorism. Typologies are usually based on behavior, activities, ideological orientation, or political and social classification. While it does not solve the definition debate, a typology could help to explain problems faced by security and how to fix such problems or how to adequately counter terrorism especially when females are being used more as a strategic tool (White, 2012). Typologies can increase our understanding of terrorism within the “realm” that terrorist acts exist; individuals that commit acts of terror for religious reasons are much different than those that act of nationalistic reasons and these differences in motivations must be accounted for in order to understand this definitional debate.

The discussion thus far demonstrates difficulties with developing a definition of terrorism that is accepted by many or all. Until we have consensus on the definition of terrorism within academia, law-enforcement and counter-terrorist agencies, the legal profession, the government, etc., different groups and organizations will continue to define terrorism within the context of their own agendas leading to social and political consequences (Bruce, 2013). Instead of choosing a single definition of terrorism, this study will defer to Reinare’s (2005) three traits that define terrorism for the purpose of academic study. Firstly, it is an act of violence that produces widespread disproportionate emotional reactions such as fear and anxiety, which are likely to influence attitudes and behavior. Secondly, the violence is systematic and rather unpredictable and is usually directed towards symbolic targets. Thirdly, the violence conveys messages and threats in order to communicate and gain social control (p. 120). These traits lend themselves particularly well to this study given the signaling model is based on sending a “symbolic signal” to convey messages to multiple audiences. Accordingly, this study will defer to the definition of

suicide terrorism as having the same traits that define terrorism with the addition of an attacker killing himself or herself in a deliberate attempt to kill others.

One last question remains, what makes acts of criminal or psychopathological violence different from acts of terrorism, what about acts of guerilla warfare? The most commonly accepted way to differentiate between terrorism and other forms of violence is the deliberate and systematic use of coercive intimidation to affect political change (Wilkinson & Stewart, 1987). In this light, in an effort to force people to do what they want, terrorists have chosen to engage in acts of systematic violence in order to create fear among a wider audience than the targets themselves (Ozdamar, 2008).

Models of Terrorism

Many researchers have tried to “theorize” terrorism many times over, even to go so far as to find the “typical terrorist type”; no such individual exists. The idea that terrorists are crazed lunatics has been, for the most part, discredited as an individual motivation to become involved in terrorist organizations; crazed lunatics are a threat to the organization in which they belong (Post, 2010). The issue of why some organizations “turn” terroristic and others do not is as multifaceted as the reasons why individuals turn to terrorism when others do not. The literature on both of these matters span the spectrum analyzing a variety of theories to try and explain these phenomena including: psychological theories -- to include psychoanalytic and non-psychoanalytic, sociological theories, motivational theories, rational choice theories, theories of group processes, organizational theories, as well as many different multidimensional theoretical approaches (Crenshaw, 1987; Ozdamar, 2008, p. 91-99; Post, 2010). It is important to note that an exorbitant amount of overlap occurs when looking at the theories in this context. Albeit,

individual motivations for joining terrorist organizations may be wide reaching, the study of terrorism is quickly beginning to focus more on organizational and social psychology (thus moving away from the individual) with a particular interest on “collective identity” especially among nationalist-separatist groups (Post, 2010). Other scholars have noted that although looking at individual’s psychology might seem logical, “the group, organizational, and cultural context is far more important,” further contending that the best way to cease suicide attacks is to not study the individual but the organization (Bloom, 2009, p. 388; Crenshaw, 1987; Sageman, 2004).

A brief discussion on models of terrorism is important. There are three main models or approaches that are presented in the literature as to why organizations engage in terrorist acts: the instrumental approach—also commonly referred to as the strategic approach—the organizational approach, and terrorism as political communication (Ozdamar, 2008). The instrumental approach is one of the most developed approaches to the subject in the discipline of political science; it suggests that the act of terrorism is a deliberate choice by a political actor aimed to change government policies (Crenshaw, 1995; Ozdamar, 2008). Rational choice assumptions underlie “the how” terrorist organizations decide upon specific actions and compliment the simplicity of the instrumental approach when looking at the intentions of actors in this model; the main goal of actors in this model is to achieve political ends (Ozdamar, 2008).

A research group out of Europe, Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (TTSRL) found that Crenshaw’s 1981 article on *The Causes of Terrorism* has been one of the most often quoted manuscripts regarding the causes of terrorism (2008). In this article Crenshaw (1981) argues that campaigns of terrorism depend on rational political choice in that terrorism occurs because an organization decides that it is politically useful in trying to counter a

government. Crenshaw (1981) furthers her argument by asserting that terrorist behavior should be analyzed as “rational” based on the assumption that terrorist organizations pose internally consistent sets of values, beliefs, and images of the environment – seen collectively as a logical means to advance desired ends (p. 385). The organization thus only engages in terrorist activities when that decision is based on a calculated analysis of what it will gain versus what it will lose given a specific scenario.

The organizational approach, in contrast, suggests that the main goal of the terrorist organization is “survival” and views the organization through the perspective of organizational theories (McCormick, 2003). In this model decisions are made based on organizational sustainment and sometimes run contrary to their ideological values; the aim, actions, and internal dynamics are explained in terms of their internal processes (Crenshaw, 1987). Given the secret nature of terrorist organizations, this approach is somewhat limiting.

Finally, the terrorism as political communication model suggests that terrorism is used for communication purposes and the ultimate aim of a terrorist organization is to spread political messages and make some segments of the society or state do something they want (Ozdamar, 2008, p. 95). This model and the instrumental model will serve as the foundation of the signaling model: organizations are making rational choices to use female suicide bombers.

Suicide Terrorism

Suicide terrorism is a lethal message of political violence increasing in frequency since the 1980’s (Pape, 2005). The use of females as suicide bombers is seen as the greatest “force multiplier;” in military terms “a force multiplier increases striking power without increasing the strength of a unit” (White, 2012, p. 135). On average, terrorist organizations that use female

bombers have done so 13.5 years after they have employed male bombers (Dalton & Asal, 2009; Davis, 2013, p. 284). In order to examine why terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers, a brief discussion is needed as to why organizations have chosen any kind of suicide attack.

Arguably the first contemporary suicide attack occurred in Beirut, Lebanon in 1981 with the destruction of the Iraqi embassy (Atran, 2003). In 1983, Beirut was home to two more noteworthy suicide attacks, one in April, involving a car bomb destroying the American Embassy, and the other more infamous attack “the Beirut Barracks Attack” in October of that year. In the Beirut Barracks Attack, two truck bombs were used to destroy separate buildings, United States Marine Barracks at the Beirut International Airport—killing 241 Americans—and French barracks located a couple of miles away—killing fifty-eight French servicemen (Pape, 2005, p. 214). These attacks are especially important when analyzing suicide terrorism as a strategic tool now used by many terrorist organizations; these attacks proved to be successful in their own right consequently serving as a “model” for others to follow (see Table 1 below). The car bombing in 1981 against the Iraqi embassy in Beirut demonstrated that this was in fact a viable tactic to inflict casualties on asymmetrically stronger opponents. This attack was emulated in two separate attacks against the U.S. and France—in April and October of 1983—that eventually led to the withdrawal of all U.S. and French troops in early 1984. If these attacks are taken together, they also arguably led to Israel ceding most of its territorial gains in 1995, from Lebanon during their 1992 invasion thus proving the “success” of suicide bombing (Atran, 2003).

Table 1. The “Success” of Suicide Bombing

Suicide Attack	Terrorist Organization Involved	Attack “Successful,” Why or Why not?
December 1981 – Destruction of Iraqi embassy in Beirut	Unknown, although likely “approved” by parties sponsored by Iranian intelligence	Yes, paved way for other suicide attacks
April 1983 – Attack on U.S. embassy in Beirut	Palestinian Islamic Jihad (claimed responsibility) Pro-Iranian Lebanese Party of God (Hezbollah) – (court finding)	Yes, the U.S. and France left Lebanon
October 1983 – Attack on U.S. and French Barracks in Beirut	Pro-Iranian Lebanese Party of God (Hezbollah)	Yes, the U.S. and France left Lebanon

(Atran, 2003; Callaway, 2009; Pape, 2005)

Models of Suicide Terrorism

From the organizational perspective, there are two main models that are used to explain why terrorist organizations choose to engage in suicide attacks: the rationalist model and the culturist model (Hafez, 2006). Theories for why individuals engage in terrorism, let alone suicide terrorism, are wide-ranging and by no means mutually exclusive (Ozdamar, 2008, p. 91-99; McCormick, 2003; Victoroff, 2005, p. 17-33; Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (TTSRL) 2008, p. 13-15).

The Rationalist Model

The rationalist model—as the name implies—is rooted in rationalist theories contending that organizations that use suicide bombing calculate costs and benefits of different courses of action, act with purpose, adapt to incentives and opportunities, and pursue means that are logically connected to their ends (Hafez, 2006, p. 167). In this model all decisions made by

individuals and organizations—considered “rational” actors—are based on cost-benefit calculations. Simply put, rational actors always seek to maximize their expected gain while minimizing their losses, and make all decisions based on this premise.

The concept of rational choice was first developed by eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham as a lens to examine criminal behavior by manipulating penal sanctions (Akers, 2000). Beccaria and Bentham thought that criminals could be deterred from crime if they knew the risks of engaging in criminal behavior were greater than the rewards received (Akers, 2000).

Using the rational choice perspective to frame terrorist organizations’ decision to use female suicide bombing, Hafez (2007) suggests there are four tactical advantages that highlight this model’s effectiveness: 1) Kill Ratio – on average, suicide terrorism kills more people with a single attack than does any other form of terrorism, 2) Smart Bombs – terrorists themselves are the “smart bombs” allowing them to pinpoint targets, make last minute adjustments, choose time of detonation, and walk into highly secured areas, 3) Cost-effectiveness – suicide bombing is an attractive option for terrorists seeking a cost effective way to inflict the greatest possible damage with the least number of their cadres killed, and lastly 4) Group Security – after a suicide mission is completed there is no suspect to provide evidence, even if the suicide bomber doesn’t succeed in killing others, he/she will most surely die and will never be able to reveal their recruiters’ modus operandi (p.11). Tosini (2009) recognizes five tactical advantages, four of which parallel Hafez’s contentions but with the addition of, “the feasibility (of the attacker) to enter locations (thanks to disguise) which are highly defended and thus difficult to destroy by conventional methods”; Tosini does not elaborate on what he means by “thanks to disguise” or if he is referring to men dressing as women or something else entirely (p. 75). Regardless, in this model,

the use of suicide bombing is a rational choice made by the terrorist organization in order to maximize their expected political benefits while minimizing their costs.

The Culturalist Model

The second main model is called the culturalist model and emphasizes the importance of culture in determining behavior and the acts of violence that give meaning to it. Hafez (2006) points to several propositions that frame this model (p. 169): First, culture provides social actors a “tool kit” of resources that can be retrieved and employed for the purpose of strategic action. Second, collective action, high-risk activism, or extreme violence that disrupts normal living and brings tremendous hardship to participants must be framed—or rationalized—as meaningful acts of redemption. Third, ritual and ceremony are not simply by-products of violent conflict, but constitutive aspects of it. Rituals and ceremonies are cultural performances, symbolic behaviors, or proscribed procedures that are dramatic, socially standardized, and repetitive. Their aim is to communicate and declare identity, arouse emotions, deepen commitments, and inculcate the values of collective ethos. They link individuals with broader goals and identities, and may even link worldly time and sacred history. Fourth, identity and interests are not opposing concepts; identity constitutes interests and defines choices. Religion and ethnicity are both primary components of culture.

The rise in terrorism for religious motives has nearly tripled between the mid-1960’s and the mid-1990’s, and the number of terrorist organizations primarily motivated by religious concerns equate to approximately one quarter of all active terrorist organizations today (Howard & Sawyer, 2006, p. 151). The radical Islamic religious fundamentalist view, for example, is thought of as “terrorism in the name of religion,” based on the notion that individuals do not engage in suicide terrorism but in acts of *istishad* (martyrdom or self-sacrifice in the service of

Allah) (Davis, 2003; Rueter, 2004; Stern, 2003). An interview with one suicide bomb commander punctuates this distinction for many religious Islamist terrorists when he was asked a question that used the term “suicide bomber,” he answered angrily: “This is not suicide. Suicide is selfish, it is weak, it is mentally disturbed. This is *isitishad* (Post, 2010, p. 20).” In the context of religious fundamentalism terrorist organizations view suicide bombing as the highest level and most valued technique of jihad, distinguished (as noted above) from the “suicide” that is described in the Koran (Post, 2010). While radical Islamic fundamentalist groups use religion as justification for martyrdom operations, secular ethnonationalist—namely the LTTE—rely on societal norms to guide their behavior. For ethnonationalist, the act of killing oneself is seen as the ultimate expression of selflessness and altruism, guided by norms established by social networks absent of heavily rewards (Hoffman, 2006).

Females’ Involvement in Political Violence

Although males have historically portrayed the “face of combat”, females have had a strong presence fighting alongside them throughout history (Friedman, 2008; Dalton & Asal, 2011). Females’ involvement and leadership in combat and political violence are exemplified in organizations such as the Red Army Faction (RAF) which had a female co-founder, Ulrike Meinhof; the Japanese Red Army (JRA) which was founded and led by Fusako Shingenobu; Leila Khalid remains an iconic member of the Popular Front of the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), taking part in several hijackings; and Adriana Faranda, the most notorious female member of the Red Brigade, one of 20 females (out of a total of 60) that stood trial for the 1978 kidnaping of Aldo Moro (Ness, 2005, p. 355). The influx of female combatants have significantly strengthened organizations such as the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the

Liberation Tamil Tigers Ealam (LTTE), the Shining Path, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), all of which might not have been able to sustain their operations had they not welcomed females into their ranks (Ness, 2005; 2007).

The drive to include females into the terrorist organizations' tactical operations can be understood in terms of the scope of females' contributions to the advancement of the groups' cause (Dalton & Asal, 2011). Dalton and Asal (2011) note that organizations benefit from using females in terrorist operations for four reasons: 1) their skill and expertise in caregiving and auxiliary support that might be needed by the group, especially when male labor becomes scarce due to casualties or unsuccessful recruitment; 2) females offer a strategic advantage uniquely embedded in the imagery and social perception of feminist pacifism (e.g. females can get to targets that males might not be able to); 3) symbolic value of the "female sacrifice" rooted in motherhood and martyrdom or maternal sacrifice often exploited by the organization to gain nationalism and patriotism and is often used as a recruitment tool; and, 4) females provide physical, emotional, and psychological solace to their male counterparts (p. 805).

Models of Female Suicide Terrorism

The models of suicide terrorism presented above do not make any distinction regarding gender as it applies to the reasons organizations engage in suicide bombing, these will be called gender-neutral models. Just as models of suicide bombing seem to flow from models of terrorism, gender-neutral models of suicide bombing help to frame models of female suicide bombing. Organizational decision making based on rational choices is central in each "stage" of terrorism; this is true when looking at the main model used to explain why organizations use female bombers: the tactical innovation model. Given that terrorist organizations are constantly battling

a much stronger opponent, organizations must constantly evolve and change their tactics to account for this disparity. In the past few decades many terrorist organizations have tried to control for this disparity by making the decision to use female suicide bombers as opposed to their male counter parts.

The single-issue cases in this study present a detailed examination of terrorist organizations' use of females. This study argues that terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers for two main reasons; 1) they are unassuming and can get to places that males cannot—as described by the tactical innovation model—and 2) they are used to “signal” or send a message to various audiences—as described by the signaling model; these models are discussed in detail below.

The Tactical Innovation Model

The tactical innovation model is based upon assumptions of organizational rational choice and suggests that both the bomber and the supporting organization are rational actors, choosing the best course of action amongst a range of options to further their goals (Berrebi, 2009; Brym & Anderson, 2011; Crenshaw, 1986; Hafez, 2007; Zedalis, 2004). Organizations believe that suicide bombers are successful in bringing notice to their plight, and contend that suicide bombers are the only effective weapons they have, in contrast to their enemies' much larger wealth, weapons, soldiers, and political means (Berrebi, 2009; Brym & Anderson, 2011; Crenshaw, 1986; Hafez, 2007; Zedalis, 2004).

The success of female suicide bombers is dependent on the element of surprise and accessibility to targets. Terrorist groups seek out vulnerabilities in their enemies' countermeasures; female suicide bombers have become the “new” vulnerability (Bloom, 2011;

Friedman, 2008; Stern, 2003; Victor, 2004; Zedalis, 2004). Female violence is considered more shocking because it violates gender norms and does not fit popular conceptions about what it means to be a woman. Organizations using this unconventional method capitalize on social prejudices – giving them a comparative advantage. Simply put, females have been found to be more effective suicide bombers.¹¹

Reoccurring themes in the literature underscore the idea many individuals hold: they are unable to grasp females' willingness and capability to engage in suicide bombing because of these gendered stereotypes, thus incorporating women into the organization's strategy is seen as a tactical advantage (Bloom, 2011; Ness, 2005; Stern, 2003; Victor, 2004; Zedalis, 2004). This idea of tactical innovation centers on the very essence of what it means to be a woman and the stereotype thereof, including common "feminine" descriptors like: submissive, gentle, nonviolent, peaceful, givers of life, pacifists, nurturing, lovers not fighters, etcetera. Females are not assumed to be hostile, as a result, they can walk into a building unsearched when a man would be frisked; simply put, females can get into places and do things that men simply cannot based on the fact that, for the most part, they are not targeted.

Although the topic of female bombers has received increasing attention over the last few decades, little attention has been paid to organizational motivations. A review of the literature revealed *only* a handful of journal articles that "purposely" focus on terrorist organizations' decision to use females as suicide bombers (Bloom, 2011; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013; O'Rourke 2009; Sheckhard, 2008). Meaning, much of the literature on female suicide bombers does not focus on the issue of "why organizations use female bombers" but instead, look to narratives of the females' lives. Dalton & Asal (2011) joined by Davis (2013) contend that most

¹¹ As measured by lethality and explained below

studies on the subject are qualitative in nature and, although these case studies provide rich illustrations on females' activities in different organizations, their experience in these groups, and their personal history including why they chose to join these groups (if in fact they were given a choice), there is a paucity of systematic quantitative treatment of underlying factors that should be examined from the organizational perspective. Many authors suggest this has been a missing level of analysis for quite some time (Cunningham, 2003; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013).

O'Rourke (2009) examines all known suicide terrorist attacks between 1981 and July 2008 in an effort to analyze the interaction between the individual motivation of suicide bombers and terrorist organizations' strategies to use them.¹² In doing so, O'Rourke (2009) uses quantitative measures to forward her claim that female bombers offer a tactical and overall strategic advantage to terrorist organizations, as identified by: 1) lethality of individual suicide attacks, 2) lethality of team attacks, and 3) the number of ineffective attacks or zero victims according to the gender of the attacker. As indicated by Table 2 below, O'Rourke suggests that the average number of victims resulting from individual attacks conducted by females is 8.4 versus 5.3 per attack perpetrated by males; Table 3 reveals females inflicted far more fatalities per attacker than team attacks with only men; finally, Table 4 shows that male attackers had zero casualties 33 percent of the time as compared to females 17 percent of the time. From this analysis, she concludes that organizations employ female bombers because: 1) overall, women inflict more casualties in individual attacks (than men); 2) when women were used in team attacks they had higher casualties than their male counterparts; and, 3) females were

¹² "Known" as accounted for in the Chicago Project on Suicide Terrorism (CPOST) Database

unsuccessful in their suicide mission(s) (operationalized as no casualties) less frequently than males (O'Rourke, 2009).

Table 2. Average Casualties per Individual Attack by Group

	Lebanese	PKK	LTTE	Chechen	Palestinian	Total
Female	2.3	2.3	12.1	20.9	3.4	8.4
Male	3.3	1.4	10.4	13.3	4	5.3
Percentage (Female:Male)	70%	164%	116%	157%	85%	158%

Table 3. Average Casualties per Individual Attack in Team Attacks

	Lebanese	PKK	LTTE	Chechen	Palestinian	Total
Female	N/A	N/A	4.1	12.6	N/A	8.3
Male	0.7	N/A	3	8.7	4.3	3.6
Percentage (Female:Male)	N/A	N/A	137%	145%	N/A	231%

Table 4. Suicide Attacks to Inflict More Than Zero Casualties by Gender

	Attacks to Inflict Zero Casualties	Attacks to Inflict More Than Zero Casualties	Zero Casualty Attacks as Percentage of Total
Female	13	64	17%
Male	102	204	33%

Davis (2013) echoes this finding stating that female suicide bombers “appear marginally more lethal than their male counterparts” (p. 282). Davis (2013) suggests this lethality can be explained by several factors, which is why organizations use them: 1) they are not viewed as combatants, therefore less likely to be detected, and can achieve better tactical surprise, and 2) used to hit high value targets, as well as soft targets perhaps also accounting for the high victim rate.

One of the few studies to look specifically at the organizational advantages of female bombers identifies underlying factors or mechanisms that motivate terrorist organizations to incorporate females into their modus operandi (Dalton & Asal, 2011).¹³ Dalton & Asal (2011) look at the interplay of social conditions, economic factors, and organizational characteristics of 395 terrorist organizations in order to estimate the likelihood of women's direct involvement in terrorist attacks. Findings suggest that larger organizations and "older" organizations are the most likely to employ females, with the former being the most statistically significant. This conclusion lends credence to the involvement of females in suicide missions in groups such as the LTTE and Chechen Separatists (Dalton & Asal, 2011). Larger and "older" terrorist organizations are more likely to sustain failed attempts of new tactics, (e.g. using female bombers), where "younger" and less established organizations may not risk such innovative endeavors.

The tactical advantages offered by females are referenced ubiquitously in the research; female suicide bombers are a strategic innovation (Cunningham, 2003), are strategic in nature (Cook, 2005; Ness, 2005; Zedalis, 2004), are a result of operational needs (Alison, 2003), are unsuspecting (in affect offering advantages to reach targets), generate less suspicion, are better able to conceal explosives, are many times subjected to more relaxed security (Bloom, 2011; Ness, 2005; O'Rourke, 2009; Gunawardena, 2006; Gonzalez-Perez, 2011), and can elude detection more easily. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, they can hide bombs in their clothing less conspicuously (e.g. suicide belts can be passed off as appearing pregnant); generally women are not searched as strictly as men – many times security personnel, even women, are uncomfortable searching other women's "sensitive areas" and will pass a woman

¹³ Noteworthy here is that females in this study are included but not limited to females that engage in suicide missions.

through a checkpoint without searching her completely (Bloom, 2005; 2011; Davis, 2013; O'Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, 2008).¹⁴ Palestinian groups only resorted to female bombers when males no longer passed through the checkpoints with the ease they once did (Cook, 2005; Gonzalez-Perez, 2011; Speckhard, 2008). There are several indications in this literature that organizations have further exploited public perceptions by sending female suicide bombers who appear pregnant (Bloom, 2005; 2011; Gunawardena, 2006; O'Rourke, 2009). In areas where females have been increasingly involved in suicide bombing there are also incidences of females dressing in what is considered more "western" attire, flirting with male security guards, posing in vehicles with children's car seats, posing with men and children (as a family) to thwart suspicion; men have also dressed as women to evade detection (Bloom, 2011). These tactical advantages enable females to be more effective (Davis, 2013).

To further this notion of female bombers as a tactical innovation, a more formal sampling from the literature of reoccurring themes/notions of why females are advantageous perpetrators of violence to the organizations that employ them include, but are not limited to:

- Cunningham (2003) concludes that females can use their gender to avoid detection on several fronts: first, their "non-threatening" nature may prevent in-depth scrutiny at the most basic level as they are simply not considered important enough to warrant investigation; second, sensitivities, regarding more thorough searches, particularly of women's bodies, may hamper stricter scrutiny; third, a woman's ability to get pregnant and the attendant changes to her body facilitate concealment of bombs using maternity

¹⁴ It is worth mentioning that many times in the literature the word "strategic" is used incorrectly. For example, Cook (2005), Ness (2005), and Zedalis (2004) describe female suicide bombers as "strategic in nature" when the word strategy refers to the broader organizational strategy of suicide bombing; tactics are individual methods by which the strategy is carried out. Going forward, the word tactic will replace the word strategic when it is incorrectly used.

clothing; finally, popular opinion typically considers women as victims of violence, including terrorism, rather than perpetrators, a perspective that is even more entrenched when considering states and societies that are believed to be extremely “oppressed” such as those in the Middle East and North Africa (p. 172).

- Zedalis (2004) argues that terrorist organizations use female bombers because they provide:
 - Tactical advantage: stealthier attack, element of surprise, hesitancy to search women, female stereotype (e.g., nonviolent);
 - Increase number of combatants;
 - Increase publicity (greater publicity = larger number of recruits);
 - Psychological effect (p. 7).

Leaders of terrorist organizations have also spoken to the tactical advantages of using females. Take for example, Hamas leader Abd al-Aziz Rantisi who went on record saying that female suicide attacks are the most important “strategic weapon” of the Palestinian resistance (Ness, 2005, p. 366). Abu Adul Aziz al-Mohammadi, al-Qaeda leader in Anbar, Iraq, states that “women are being recruited because there were far fewer Arab fighters,” further asserting that “we consider the women’s battalion a winning card which has not been used effectively up to now....a woman blowing herself up applies pressure on men who refuse to do the same” (Raghavan, 2008).

A review of 120 news stories via four media sources from January, 2002 through October, 2004 were examined to uncover motives for females’ involvement in suicide bombings. Five particular themes emerge, in order of frequency, they are: 1) strategic desirability, 2) the

influence of men, 3) revenge, 4) desperation, and 5) liberation (Friedman, 2008).¹⁵ Even though strategic desirability prevailed as the top reason females were involved, nearly all of the 120 news items made attempts to explain the females by their novelty and personal turmoil, further touting the disruption of the male warrior and female pacifist dichotomy (Alison, 2009).

While most scholars agree that the use of females by organizations is a tactical strategy in nature, a few studies point to their use when a terrorist organization's resources are running low (e.g. availability of male suicide bombers); however, this has almost always precipitated the ongoing use of females and is not mutually exclusive (Bloom, 2011; Cook, 2005; Ness, 2005).¹⁶ Davis (2013) points out that jihadist groups have increasingly used females in areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan to supplement their depleting resources. Ness (2005) found that females were used in many organizations as desperate measures for desperate times and "the introduction of women and girls in combat generally came about in response to logistical demands: the mounting number of casualties, the intensified crackdowns by government, and the ability of women to escape detection more easily than men" (p. 357). She furthers this notion arguing that the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), The Shining Path, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) might not have been able to sustain themselves had they not opened their doors to females in combat roles, and they were clearly part of a militia strategy aimed at inflicting maximizing damage. Cook (2005) argues that Palestinian groups had enough male recruits to send as bombers but they chose females, not

¹⁵ The four major news sources were the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, and CNN

¹⁶ Most, if not all, scholars agree that the use of females by organizations is tactical in nature; however a small body of literature suggests that female bombers are used only when a terrorist organization needs more "bodies" to engage in suicide missions (Cook, 2005; Friedman, 2008; Ness, 2005).

because of the lack of males, but probably the desire to skew the profile of a “typical attacker” that Israeli intelligence and security forces had developed (p. 381).

It is important to note that female suicide bombers will only continue to offer their tactical advantage to organizations if target states continue to have lax defensive strategies. Gender-neutral counterterrorism strategies or other strategies need to be developed in order to thwart this increasing tactic. One such strategy implemented by the U.S. Army to curb female bombers in 2008 is a program called “The Daughters of Iraq” (Healy & Ghazi, 2011). This program was developed to address the increasing number of female bombers in Iraq believed to have easily passed through security checkpoints because Muslim males had difficulty-searching females due to prevailing cultural norms. In this U.S. sponsored program, Iraqi females were trained to properly search females for weapons and explosives primarily at security checkpoints and markets (Healy & Ghazi, 2011). American officials believe this program has curtailed the advantage once held by female bombers. The program was implemented in 2008 and a sharp decline was noted in the number of attacks perpetrated by females after its implementation (CPOST, 2014).¹⁷

Strands of the Tactical Innovation Model

This study identifies two strands—lethality and use on assassination missions—to explain female suicide bombers’ advantage, over male bombers, as identified by the tactical innovation model. Lethality is defined by three separate calculations—discussed below—while use on assassination missions is determined by the number of times females were sent on assassination suicide missions by the terrorist organization. Characteristics or components of the tactical innovation model—what makes females “more lethal”—are displayed in Figure 4 below.

¹⁷ As late as 2006, U.S. male soldiers in Iraq were told not to search females (Bloom, 2011)

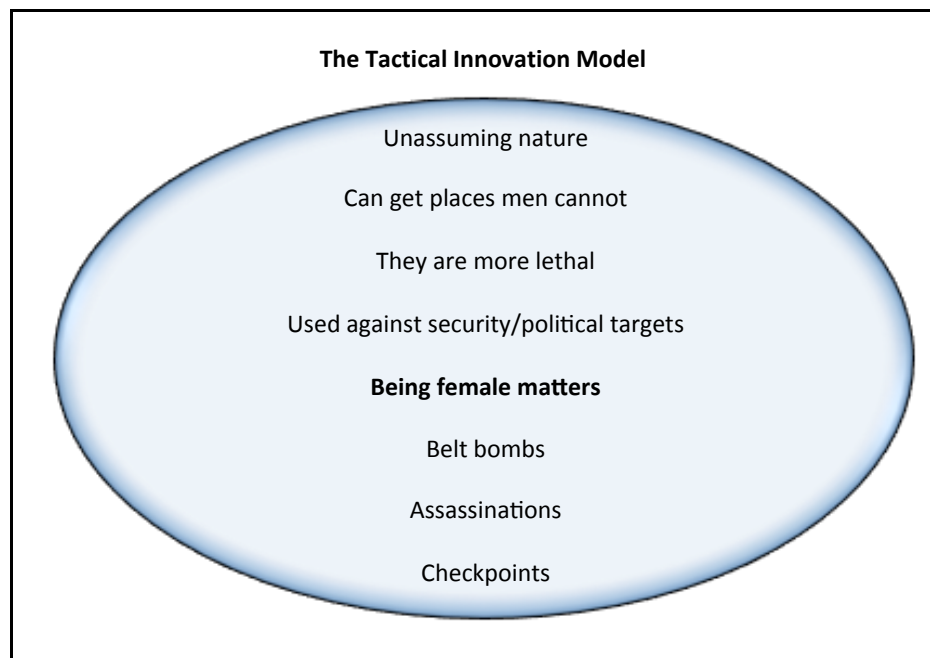
It is important to note that while the three measures included in the lethality strand have been used as outcome measures to gauge females' lethality over that of male suicide bombers, it is not a good measure of intentionality. The "use on assassination missions" (the second strand in the tactical innovation model) is a better indicator of intentionality because the target type of the female versus male suicide bomber is known. This strand stresses the targets of females, over males, which is much more important when looking at the ways in which terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers. In short, lethality measures are an ineffective way to measure intention, but do aid in analysis after the fact, and are thus included here.

Lethality. O'Rourke (2009) uses 1) the lethality of individual suicide attacks as measured by number of individual killed per attack by gender; 2) the lethality of team attacks measured by the average casualties per individual in team attacks; and 3) the number of ineffective attacks, or zero victims, according to the gender of the perpetrator (p. 686). This study will present these calculations for both the LTTE and the Chechen Separatists with one alteration to the lethality of team attacks; team attacks will not be measured as an individual average number of casualties, but by the team as a whole. It is the author's contention that the presence of a female (to the team) is of more importance than the exact number of females, as such the lethality will not be calculated based on individuals.

Use on Assassination Missions. Contrary to lethality measures, defined by the number of individuals killed per suicide attack, the use of female suicide bombers on assassination missions is not contingent on killing more people (than male bombers) but killing *certain* people, such as high-profile public officials. As noted above, females are unexpected perpetrators of violence

and therefore able to get closer to targets (than males), making them ideal for assassination suicide missions.

Figure 4. Characteristics of the Tactical Innovation Model



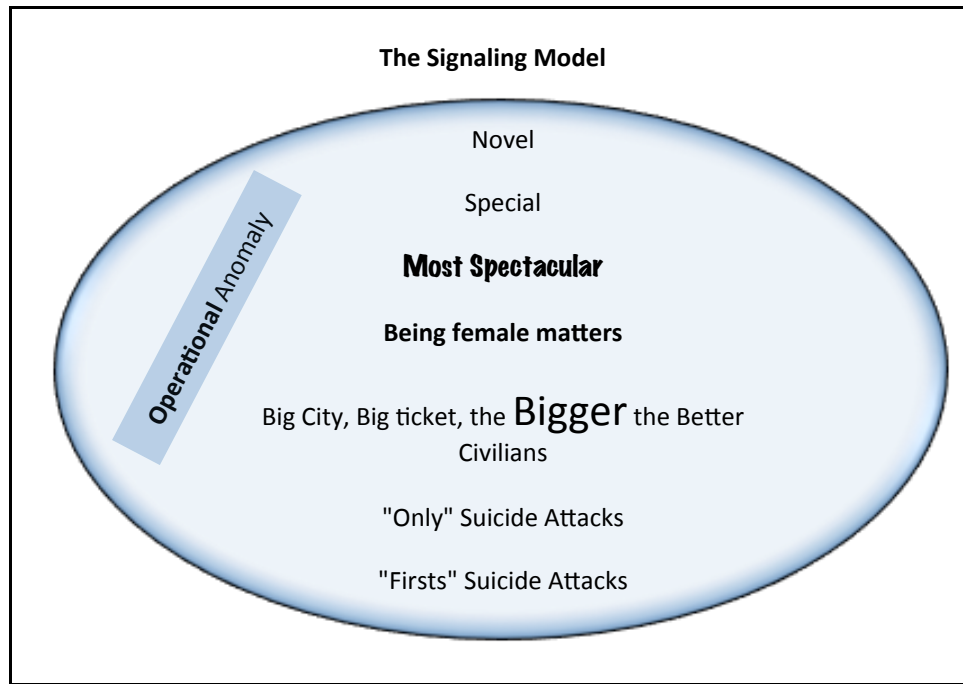
Conclusions

While the tactical model is helpful in explaining the “measurable benefits” organizations reap by using female bombers—for example, the average number of individuals killed per bomber—there are also immeasurable or intangible benefits that this model does not take into account. The signaling model, as presented in this study, helps to explain why terrorist organizations choose to use female suicide bombers where the tactical innovation model fails.

The Signaling Model

If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of terrorist organizations choosing to use female bombers in an effort to signal or send a message to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public. In line with this, we would also expect to find the organizations using females at instrumental times, falling somewhat out of the “norm” in terms of the organizations operations. The signaling model, as presented in this study, helps to explain why terrorist organizations choose to use female suicide bombers, where the tactical innovation model fails. This section explains that “females are different,” they are symbolic, and their use by terrorist organizations in this model parallel this belief. If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of terrorist organizations choosing to use female bombers at times when increased lethality does not matter, and they are not being used for assassination missions. Here we would expect to find females being used outside of any “standard operating procedures” usually employed by terrorist organizations in terms of suicide attacks. As indicated in Figure 5 below, female suicide bombers would be used in attacks where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only” suicide attacks, “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks. The focus of these attacks is not on quantitative outcomes—killing more or one individual(s)—but on the messages the terrorist organizations wants to convey to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public.

Figure 5. Characteristics of the Signaling Model



Building the Signaling Model

Characteristics from a variety of models are borrowed from in order to build the signaling model as developed in this study. Clarification of several concepts is needed at the outset. The idea of terrorism as political communication helps to form the foundation of the signaling model. Notions of suicide attacks as signaling tactics and the audiences they are intended for have been extrapolated from work done by Hoffman & McCormick (2004). Ideas of escalation and escalation of commitment (in war) have been borrowed from Schelling (1960, 1966), Staw (1976), and Kahn (1976). The concept of “commitment and resolve” has been extrapolated from contemporary deterrence theory (Fearon, 1994; George & Smoke, 1974), and finally, the use of female bombers as effective “signals” to these audiences is explored (Dalton & Asal, 2011; Gunawardena, 2006; O’Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, 2008; Zedalis, 2004). All of the aforementioned concepts are then built on one another to create “the signaling model.”

In short, the signaling model provides a framework by which the organizational use of female suicide bombers can be explained in terms of the messages the terrorist organizations want to send to various audiences. The nexus of ideas that are borrowed from each of the aforementioned concepts aid in explaining: 1) suicide bombings as “signals” to multiple audiences, 2) the general message of commitment and resolve, or the general meaning that is associated with the signal, 3) a discussion on females as effective signals, and finally, 4) how the signal—or “general message of commitment and resolve”—can be used by the terrorist organization to send additional “pointed” messages to various target audiences.

Female Suicide Bombings as Signals. While the *act* of using a female bomber is the same as using a male bomber the message, however, is different. Females garner more publicity when they commit acts of terror, especially suicide terrorism. The “surprise factor,” the “not normal,” the “new face of terrorism,” newsworthiness abounds, and the sensationalizing media provide free advertising to terrorist organizations as a result. The literature reveals a spattering of “testaments” advancing the belief that the use of female bombers by terrorist organizations is far more than a tactical advantage. The following statement encapsulates this notion: “to view the female suicide bomber purely in terms of utilitarian purpose would diminish its true effectiveness” (Trombley, 2002, para 3). Terrorist organizations make the decision to use female bombers based on a variety of quantitative and qualitative considerations; to date, only the quantitative considerations have been advanced in the literature explained by the tactical innovation model. This study adds a qualitative piece—the signaling model.

The ideas that terrorism is a form of political communication (Schmid & Graaf, 1982) and terrorist tactics—including suicide attacks—involve a signaling of intentions (Anderson,

1998; Hoffman & McCormick, 2004) are key to develop the signaling model. The terrorism as political communication model suggests that the ultimate aim of terrorism for a terrorist organization is to spread political messages and make some segments of the society or state do something they want. Ozdamar (2008) states that it would be difficult to construct a comprehensive theory of terrorism without considering the impact of the terrorist acts on intended and unintended audiences and how these actions affect society (p. 96). Ozdamar (2008) further states that this model should be used as a complementary approach—rather than comprehensive—to the study of terrorism and that “this approach is successful in bringing the communication dimension into theory-building processes in studies of terrorism” (p. 96). All terrorist acts convey information to different audiences; the particular messages that are received—by the audiences—are contextualized by a variety of socio-political factors. When a terrorist organization uses a female bomber, they are sending a violent message that will be interpreted by select audiences in a variety of ways; the terrorism as political communication model helps to explain this.

There is one other “piece” that needs to be added to the political communication model here in order to it to lend itself to the foundation of the signaling model: that is the addition of the suicide tactic as a signal. Hoffman and McCormick’s (2004) conceptual framework defines “terrorism as a signaling game in which terrorist attacks are used to communicate a group’s character and objectives to a set of target audiences” (p. 243); to that end, suicide missions are tactics of some militant groups to signal their commitment and further indicate the organizations’ willingness to continue their fight no matter what the cost. In this framework, the systematic use of suicide terrorism is a rational choice that can be thought of as a signaling game used to communicate an actor’s ability and determination to use violence to achieve its political

objectives. This is especially relevant in international crises, where terrorist organizations (non-state actors) versus governmental opponents (state actors) communicate with each other through signals, many times nonverbal actions (Hoffman & McCormick, 2004). In these circumstances, terrorist attacks are frequently used by organizations as signals to shape target audiences' perceptions in a way that advances the organization's political position; the messages that audiences receive is further shaped through the organizations choice of targets, tactics, and the timing of their attacks (Hoffman & McCormick, 2004).

Escalation. Terrorist organizations use suicide attacks to send messages to multiple audiences (as indicated above); the addition of females is an escalation of this tactic. The escalation in types of terrorist attacks, such as the hijackings in the 1970's, public bombings in the 1980's, and suicide bombings in the late 1980's, continuing to the present, has left terrorist organizations to search for something new (Gonzalez-Perez, 2009, p. 1). Male suicide attacks have become "business as usual" for many terrorist organizations, and while many of the attacks are still effective they do not pack the same "psychological punch" they once did. Female suicide bombers are another phase in the evolution of terrorist tactics, and thereby an escalatory tactic on the part of terrorist organizations. In this model the escalatory act of using female suicide bombers, also the signal itself, is the medium by which the message of commitment and resolve is sent. Thus, in similar fashion, a brief introduction to the concept of escalation is needed.

Escalation as an action, concept, or even a word was not "constructed" until the 1950's and 1960's exemplified by the fact that the word did not appear in the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* until 1969 (Hills, 2002, p. 253). Herman Kahn first popularized the concept in his publication entitled *On Escalation* while discussing the Cold War – the term, as he defined it was "a

deliberate act of coercion or compulsion that was distinct from escalation as the unwanted consequence of mistakes or misunderstandings” (Hills, 2002, p.253).

His escalation cannot be automatically equated with either terrorism or civil disasters but it retains analytical relevance because it expresses the dynamics driving catastrophe. It encapsulates the notion of an “ascending order of intensity through which a given crises may progress,” and it isolates the tendency to scale-up normal crises responses. Escalation was, for Kahn, a support for analyzing strategic policy, decision-making models, and the nature of crises. It provided a framework that he visualized in terms of a ladder representing “a linear arrangement of roughly increasing levels of intensity of crises” (Hills, 2002, p. 253).

Kahn (1965) describes that the typical escalation situation will likely encompass what he deems a “competition in risk taking” or at least resolve in which either side could win by increasing its efforts in some way (p. 3). Here, terrorist organizations are escalating their efforts by employing female suicide bombers. Escalation, or the problem of escalation in general, has commonly been used as a paradigm in which to examine particular types of international conflict such as deterrence situations, crisis bargaining, arms races, and war for which the Cold War created a nice “frame” to examine by (Carlson, 1995). Schelling (1960; 1966) contends that one of the potential effects of escalation theory is to convince an opponent to back down by exploiting his or her fear that future escalation will lead to disaster and it is in this vein that because both actors are engaged in demonstrating their superior ability to tolerate these risks, escalation is conceptualized as a game of competitive risk taking.

While all of these above assumptions will be utilized going forward, another set of assumptions will be used in this study to compliment the “escalation framework” presented above. The term “escalation of commitment” was first introduced in 1976 by Staw to describe business investment decisions but has since been expanded and applied to other fields such as psychology, sociology, and interestingly governmental decision making/policy, even using this

framework for a lens with which to examine the Vietnam and Iraq War. An illustrative example is used by Staw (1976), taken from a memo written by George Ball “former” Under Secretary of State—to President Lyndon Johnson on how this works in terms of governmental policy making (pertaining to the United States’ involvement in Indochina) (p. 29):

Once large numbers of U.S. troops are committed to direct combat, they will begin to take heavy casualties in a war they are ill equipped to fight in a non-cooperative if not downright hostile countryside. Once we suffer large casualties, we will have started a well-nigh irreversible process. Our involvement will be so great we cannot – without national humiliation – stop short of achieving our complete objectives. Of the two possibilities, I think humiliation would be more likely than achievement of our objectives – even after we have paid terrible costs.

Prudence of rational actors would have suggested that withdrawing entirely from the “investment” (above) rather than a continued investment of resources would have been the rational course of action to take. Although a rational choice approach may prescribe a complete disinvestment following negative feedback, many psychological, project, social, and structural factors can prohibit such a complete withdrawal of resources (Walsh & Henderson, 1989). Thus, while many factors do influence decision making by rational actors, the aforementioned passage exemplifies how “saving face” can lead many—including terrorist organizations—to escalate commitment, when clear evidence suggest this choice is unwise; however, it is at this point organizations feel as though they have invested too much to quit. Further, it has been found that once an organization has reached unanimity it is easier for an organization to defend its decisions and to continue to escalate its commitment to the cause, even when faced with negative outcomes, because the group wishes to protect its unanimity (Bazerman, Giuliano, & Appelman, 1984).

The signaling model suggests that when terrorists organizations make the decision to use female suicide bombers they are escalating their commitment to the conflict; they are making a

decision to increase their effort, and sending a message that they are doing so. The ideas of escalation, as presented here, help to explain why terrorist organizations make the choice to do so.

Commitment and Resolve. The importance of commitment and resolve to this model rests on the assumption that the use of female suicide bombers is in fact a “credible signal.” Ideas of signaling and credibility were first examined as principal issues in designing an adequate commitment; this notion of credibility was central to the discussion of contemporary deterrence theory inasmuch as it was seen as the main impediment to a successful deterrence strategy. With that, much emphasis was placed on how countries could credibly communicate commitment and resolve, and what that meant in the context of conflict, making it a vital component in all studies of international conflict, crisis bargaining, bargaining theory, and escalation—as well as the signaling model as presented here.

To understand the concepts of commitment and resolve and how they are used in this study, they must be discussed in the context from which they were derived. In the literature on female suicide bombers there are many references to the idea of commitment and resolve, suggesting that the use of female bombers signals both. In its simplest form, deterrence is merely a contingent threat: “If you do X, I shall do Y to you.” If the opponent expects the costs of Y to be greater than the benefits of X, he will refrain from doing X; he is deterred (George & Smoke, 1974, p. 48). A simple model or set of ideas is useful when examining contemporary deterrence theory and its applicability for theory building in this study. The principal assumptions of deterrence theory are given in propositions one through three below; the first constitutes an assumption based on “the state of the world”. The second and third constitute

assumptions about how the deterrence mechanism works by representing propositions of “decision theory”, resting upon the premise of decision by calculation of utilities or game theory (George & Smoke, 1974, p. 59-60).

1. The principal....powers perceive an interest in attacking or encroaching upon various nations or regions within which the U.S. has an interest in preserving self-determination.
2. Such attacks can be deterred if these powers calculate that the expected costs (C) and risks (R) (negative utilities) of attack outweigh the expected benefits (B) (positive utilities):

$$C + R > B$$

3. Such expectations will be held if these powers believe that the United States will defend the attacked nation. More precisely, the expectations will result if the estimated probability of the U.S. defense (p), multiplied by the costs and risks that the defense would impose (C+R), exceeds the expected benefits (B) that would result in the event of no U.S. defense:

$$p(C+R) > (1-p) (B)$$

4. Generating this belief—or more exactly, raising the estimated probability—is therefore the object of U.S. deterrence policy.
5. The requirements for generating this belief are that the principal.... powers perceive a U.S. “signal” of intent to defend and find the signal “credible.”
6. The signal requires appropriate declaratory and action moves by the United States, communicating the intent.
7. Credibility requires that the U.S. appear to become committed to carrying out its intention to defend the attacked nation.

The forth proposition naturally follows from the first through the third, leading to the final three propositions, five through seven, which are the subject of emphasis for the signaling model. The final three propositions have received the most attention from scholars in deterrence literature and are the best-developed and most visible aspect of contemporary deterrence (George & Smoke, 1974, p. 59-60).

The ideas set forth in this section, those of commitment and resolve, help form the building blocks of the signaling model by explaining the significance of credibility to

commitments. In order for a female suicide bomber to be considered a signal or message it first must be considered “credible” in the eyes of the intended audience(s). Without this assigned “credibility” a suicide attack perpetrated by a female is nothing more than a single act of violence with no message assigned to it.

Female Bombers as Effective Signals. The use of female bombers is indeed a tactical innovation on the part of the supporting terrorist organizations; however, this “message” also generates greater media coverage and widespread public attention, precisely *because* they are females (Dalton & Asal, 2011; Gunawardena, 2006; O’Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, 2008; Zedalis, 2004). Symbolically the deaths of females are more likely to evoke feelings of desperation and sympathy than that of male bombers (Dalton & Asal, 2011; Gunawardena, 2006; O’Rourke, 2009; Speckhard, 2008; Zedalis, 2004). Historically media accounts of female bombers have elicited sympathy, where political motives are emphasized for men, personal motives are emphasized for women, which in turn, points to the desperation of the sponsoring terrorist organization (Pounds, 2014; Zedalis, 2004). Terrorist organizations intend for the media to interpret the use of females as an indicator of a worsening situation (Knop, 2007, p. 400). O’Rourke (2009) suggests that the use of female bombers signals the group’s commitment to its political cause, revealed by a willingness to deploy a weapon—FST—that has long been considered taboo in light of the respective society’s role in prescribing gender-specific behavioral norms for women” (p. 699).¹⁸ Speckhard (2008) punctuates the notion that terrorism is essentially a psychological weapon, intended to reach a far greater audience than the actual victims. The role of the media in such instances is to accentuate the violence and amplify the

¹⁸ FST = “Female Suicide Terrorism”

terror in an effort to influence government and their citizens to enact political changes advantageous to the terrorist organization.

Female suicide bombers are used as a tool to gain media attention and emphasize the underdog nature of terrorist organizations engaged in asymmetrical warfare. Publicity is needed in order for terrorist organizations to convey messages to their intended target audiences. The media fetishes female acts of violence; the act of female suicide bombing receives eight times more media attention than males (Bloom, 2011; Pounds, 2014). This new media dimension allows terrorist organizations to use the media to deliver a variety of group-based messages to key audiences. The organization reaps many benefits by using female bombers, making them “effective” signals:

- organizations that use female suicide bombers effectively double the population they can recruit from, they strengthen support for their cause, especially from females, as well as illicit sympathy for their cause (O’Rourke, 2009);
- “...suicide terrorism in general, and female suicide bombers in particular, are used to increase a group’s legitimacy in the eyes of the movement’s own supporters” (Gunawardena, 2006, p. 87).
- the deaths of female suicide bombers are exploited as publicity stunts to facilitate recruitment of both males and females, males in particular might be “shamed into action” (Bloom, 2005; Davis, 2013; Speckhard, 2008; Zedalis, 2004);
- using females may help to legitimize an organization’s cause (Dalton & Asal, 2011);
- and finally, the use of female bombers clearly has the effect of increasing the weapon’s utility in creating a more horrific impact on the receiving audience (Speckhard, 2008, p. 1029).

The media is a powerful force in today's technologically advanced society, and terrorist organizations are increasingly exploiting this avenue for their gain. Terrorist organizations must keep their target audience immersed in their destruction in order to keep them engaged in their struggle, just as they must continue to act to remain a viable contender in the eyes of their opponents (Hoffman & McCormick, 2004). The sacrificial symbolism female suicide bombers exude on behalf of their sponsoring terrorist organization sends a powerful message of commitment and resolve to multiple audiences as shown in Figure 6 below. Figure 6 was presented in the introductory chapter and illustrates the audiences and general signals, or messages, to the various audiences represented in the signaling model. When terrorist organizations make the choice to use female bombers—as shown in Figure 6—they are sending specific messages to key audiences.

Audiences in the Signaling Model

Before discussing each audience, an important point needs to be made here. This study scrutinizes each terrorist organization, or case, in order to hypothesize which audiences are the intended recipients of which messages. The author then explains how that conclusion was reached based on the contextual considerations offered by each case. There is no formula for specific audience designation offered by the signaling model. Inferences are made in this study that lend themselves to further research. It is expected, however, that the two models—the tactical innovation model and the signaling model—can explain all instances where terrorist organizations used female suicide bombers in situations with complete or perfect information; however, due to the nature of terrorist organizations, obtaining complete information on operations is highly unlikely.

Governmental Opponents. In this model, the main messages governmental opponents would receive would be of escalation and a demonstration of commitment as indicated in Figure 6. Messages to this audience would most likely occur at instrumental times in the conflict. In this study, governmental opponents are defined as “the group of people who control and make decisions in the country where the terrorist organizations are engaging in acts of terrorism.” Terrorist organizations are signaling to their governmental opponents that they remain committed in spite of any political setback. They must do this in order to remain a “force to be reckoned with;” any sign of weakness shown by the terrorist organization threatens to delegitimize their organizational agency as well as their political demands (Hoffman & McCormick, 2004). The governmental opponents analyzed in this study are Sri Lanka, opposing the LTTE, and the Russian Federation, opposing the Chechen Separatists.

Rival Terrorist Organizations. In this model, the main messages rival terrorist organizations would receive would be of “outbidding” as indicated in Figure 6. Terrorist organizations are also signaling to their rival terrorist opponents that they remain committed in spite of any political setback, perhaps in an effort to “outbid” their opponent¹⁹. Terrorist organizations need community support in order to be successful. Gaining this support to be “the” terrorist organization representing a particular population’s plight is extremely important and highly competitive. The support of the terrorist organization’s community is paramount for monetary and recruitment purposes. Thus, if the terrorist organization wants to remain a viable contender against its governmental opponents it will first have to thwart other insurgent groups from becoming too popular or powerful. They are competing for the support of the same population as

¹⁹ Bloom (2011) discusses the concept of “outbidding” where organizations use suicide bombing to “out do” one another in an effort to gain support from their constituency group.

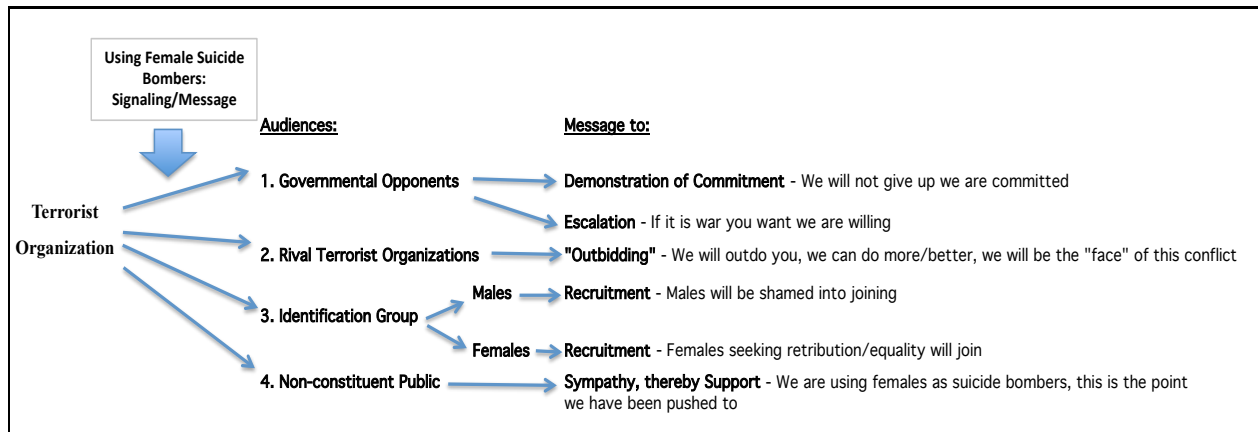
other terrorist organizations and they want to show they are willing to do whatever it takes to be “the face” of the resistance; they need to differentiate themselves from other organizations to seem “better.” Here however, the message need not speak to the political demands of the organization but of the organization’s willingness to continue the outbidding process and win over their identification group.

Identification Group. In this model, the main message individuals in the organizations’ identification group would receive would be of recruitment as indicated in Figure 6. Individuals in the identification group are further divided into males of the organizations’ identification group and females of the organizations’ identification group. The organization hopes males in the organization’s identification group will be shamed into joining, and that females in that same group will choose to join as a result of perceived injustices or inequality within their society; both of which lead to an increase in new recruits with the latter also increasing support among females in the identification group that choose not to join but are happy they have the choice.²⁰

Non-constituent Public. In this model, the main message individuals in the organizations’ non-constituent public would receive is a plea of sympathy in an effort to drum up support for the organization as indicated in Figure 6. The non-constituent public receives a signal of desperation and despair, the organization hopes to appeal to the public’s emotional sensibilities, in turn leading to an increase in support (monetarily and otherwise).

²⁰ This study does not seek to explore the individual motivations females have for volunteering for suicide missions, however, references to females joining for “equality” reasons are present in the literature, see O’Rourke, 2009; Ness, 2005; Dalton & Asal, 2011; and, Speckhard, 2008.

Figure 6. The Signaling Model: Female Suicide Bombers as Signals



Conclusions

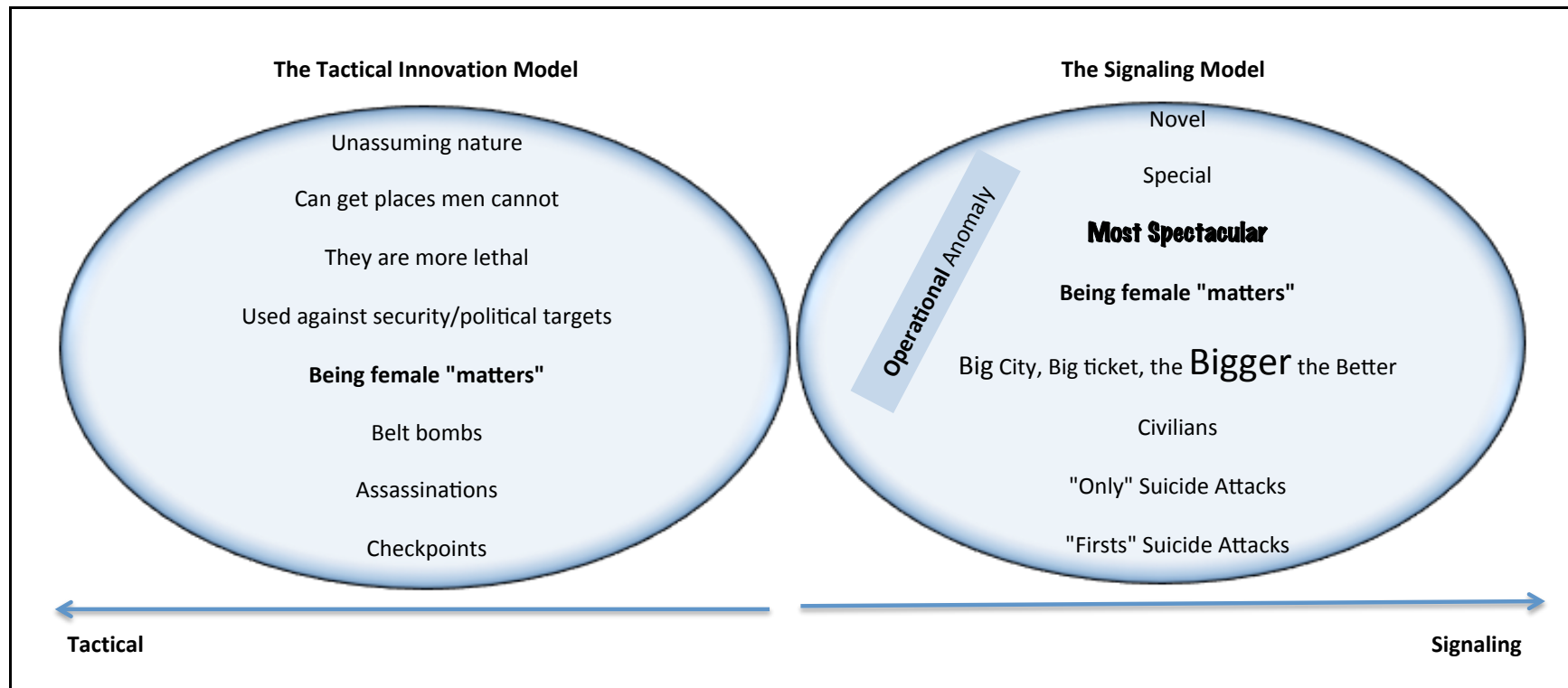
This study suggests that the reasons terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers can be explained by one of two models—the tactical innovation model and the signaling model—or both. While the tactical model is helpful in explaining the “measurable benefits” organizations reap by using female bombers—indicated by lethality measures and their use on assassination missions—there are also immeasurable or intangible benefits that this model does not take into account. The characteristics highlighted in each model are displayed in Figure 7 below. The signaling model, as presented in this study, helps to explain why terrorist organizations choose to use female suicide bombers, where the tactical innovation model fails. The focus of these attacks is not on quantitative outcomes, but on the messages the terrorist organizations wants to convey to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public.

Each of the case studies will be used to test and illustrate the characteristics of each model as described in this chapter. If the tactical innovation model is correct we would expect the LTTE and Chechen Separatists to use female suicide bombers to maximize the lethality of

their attacks and for assassination missions primarily against political and security targets. If the signaling model is correct we would expect the LTTE and Chechen Separatists to use female suicide bombers at times where increased lethality or their use on assassination missions a key determinant of their use by the organizations, many times against civilian targets. We would also expect to find females being used outside of any “standard operating procedures” in suicide attacks characterized by their novelty usually representing a deviation from terrorist organizations’ operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies in this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization

Once the delineation between female suicide bombers being used—by the LTTE and Chechen Separatists—as a tactical advantage or to send a message is made (for each suicide attack), inferences will be made as to the intended audience the terrorist organization wishes to signaling to. Inferences will be based on contextual considerations unique to the LTTE and Chechen Separatists as identified by the answers to the structured-focused comparisons questions.

Figure 7. Characteristics of the Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model



CHAPTER III: LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM

Introduction

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) executed the longest running suicide campaign of any terrorist organization to date; from 1987 to 2009 they performed a recorded 115 suicide attacks killing approximately 1,600 individuals (CPOST, 2014). The doctrines of the LTTE are Tamil nationalism and socialism embodied in a future Tamil state (DeVotta, 2004). This chapter draws upon the historical development, organizational evolution, operational and tactical characteristics, popular support, rival terrorist organizations, political events, as well as counterterrorism efforts used to defeat them.

This information will be examined in the following manner: first, relevant background information including a brief historical overview of Sri Lanka will be presented, followed by a discussion of the origins of the LTTE. The analysis framed by the five structured-focused comparison questions will come next. This section will highlight the context for the terrorist organization's decision to use female suicide bombers that are uncovered by answering the structured-focused comparison questions. Within this section various tactics used by the organization, as it applies to suicide bombing, will be analyzed. This will include an in-depth examination of the operational characteristics of suicide missions—as identified in the first structured-focused comparison question—associated with the organization's methods of operations and targets. Following this section, the remaining four structured-focused comparison questions will then be analyzed. Popular support for the organization in terms of their community embracing a culture of martyrdom will also be considered as well as the impact rival terrorist groups may have had on the organization's decision to use female bombers.

Counterterrorism and political events that may have contributed to the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers will follow.

The ultimate goal of the chapter is to determine if the LTTE used female suicide bombers for their perceived tactical advantage and/or to signal or send a message to multiple audiences. This will be done by uncovering patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers by examining the answers to each of the structured-focused comparison questions. Finally, with the answers to these questions, can any trends or triggering events be identified in the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers?

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to the LTTE—such as popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations' preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While only one of the structured-focused comparison questions shed light on patterns of use of female suicide bombers via operational suicide attack anomalies uncovered by an analysis of individual suicide attacks, the other questions illuminated reasons for signaling to certain audiences and the messages the LTTE may have wanted to send.

Overall, patterns indicate that when females' use by the LTTE is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are overwhelmingly used in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets matter. In line with this, the LTTE used female bombers as a result of their increased lethality—over male bombers—and for assassination missions. However, this model left several suicide attacks perpetrated by females unexplained; the addition of the signaling model was helpful in identifying why the LTTE choose to use female suicide bombers where the

tactical innovation model failed. When the signaling model frames females' use by the LTTE, they are used in suicide attacks representing a deviation from terrorist organizations' operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies by this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization. In line with this model, the LTTE used female suicide bombers at instrumental times, to signal escalation and demonstrate continued commitment to the Sri Lankan government, while also signaling to the organization's identification group, primarily females, for recruitment purposes.

Background Information

Sri Lanka: A Historical Account

In order to better understand the creation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a Marxist ethno-nationalist secular terror organization located in Sri Lanka, a brief background needs to be presented on the history of the country. Sri Lanka was formally known as Ceylon, gaining its full independence from Britain in 1948. For hundreds of years prior to this, the island of Ceylon maintained peaceful, or at the very least cordial, relations among the two main ethnic groups of the island; the Buddhist Sinhalese majority and the mostly Hindu Tamil minority (DeVotta, 2004). The Tamils had mainly occupied the northern and eastern portions of the island with significant intermixing of populations in Colombo (Sri Lanka's capital). The Ethnic boundaries in the pre-modern period were indistinct and permeable, with considerable ethnic accommodation and intermingling (Bloom, 2007). After the island broke from Britain in 1948, a slew of laws were passed causing significant hostility between the Sinhalese and Tamil

populations. In 1949, 41 percent of government recruits were Tamil and 54 percent were Sinhalese; by 1963, the proportion was seven percent Tamil and 92 percent Sinhalese (Bloom, 2007, p. 51). Laws displaced thousands of Tamils due to increased discrimination and deprivation of various legal rights including withdrawal of citizenship, implementation of university quotas that favored the Sinhalese majority, and barriers to the workforce due to language; the Official Language Act of 1956 [herein “the Act”], passed on July 7th, 1956, made the Sinhala language the “official” language of Ceylon.

In the years that followed the Act, a tremendous amount of ethnic rivalries ran rapid on the island; the Sinhalese population took clear advantage of their majority, alienating Tamils in all aspects of life (DeVotta, 2004). Discrimination against the Tamils continued throughout the 1960’s as Buddhism was given primacy as the state religion in the newly drafted constitution, disenfranchising Tamils from government employment and other positions of authority (Bloom, 2007, p. 50). Although the new laws were deeply resented by the Tamil population, violence and political outrage did not begin until 1972 when legislation reinforced and institutionalized the “new” Republican Constitution of the recently renamed state of Sri Lanka (Hoffman, 2006, p. 138). Researchers suggest that separatist agitation between the Sinhala and Tamil population has undergone several stages: in the 1950’s it was peaceful, moving to civil disobedience in the 1960’s, to individual violence in the 1970’s, becoming a dangerous threat by the 1980’s which continued until 2009 (Bloom, 2007). The only reprieve in violence over the 26-year civil war occurred after a ceasefire agreement in February, 2002, lasting until a lone suicide attack in July, 2004 by a female suicide bomber, followed by another attack in January, 2006, also by a female suicide bomber, which escalated with mounting attacks until LTTE leader, Thiruvankadam Velupillai Prabhakaran’s death in May, 2009.

As the struggle for Tamil nationalism continued many Tamil citizens began publically resisting the increasing discrimination. Rebel organizations rapidly formed and attracted significant support; at one point the number of different guerilla groups operating simultaneously reached 37 (Pape & Feldman, 2010, p. 290). Although many of these organizations had formed different philosophies for their existence and means to support their end, all shared the same aim: to create a Tamil homeland. This idea is captured by the phrase “Tamil *Eelam*,” or a “free” and independent Tamil State in northern and eastern Sri Lanka (Reuter, 2004, p. 158). Many rebel groups vied for the support of the Tamil population in order to become the face of the nationalist movement. As the conflict ensued, massive tension and violence increased between various Tamil rebel groups with the most militant group winning the internal opposition battle, the LTTE.

Initially, the LTTE’s operations were local, and their intentions to achieve Tamil *Eelam* both by way of immediate and long-term activities involve nothing less than eradicating Sri Lanka's ruling elite by any means possible, usually by suicide bombing (Rueter, 2004). All LTTE cadres were encouraged to carry out at least one mission every day against government interests (DeVotta, 2004, p.170). Prior to suicide bombing, the group primarily used conventional bombs, claymore mines, as well as individual and mass shootings to attack targets (Pape & Feldman, 2010). One of Prabhakaran’s most famous sayings was “Tamil *Eelam* can be achieved in 100 years, but if we conduct Black Tiger operations (suicide bombings), we can shorten the suffering of the people and achieve Tamil *Eelam* in a shorter period of time (Pape, 2005, p. 144).”

Given the uniqueness of the 26-year conflict, due in part to the LTTE’s nonstate military force—with “active duty” members as high as six thousand at one time—it is hard to discern between counterterrorism efforts undertaken by the Sri Lanka government and military

operations in regards to effects on the organization's decision to use female bombers (Hoffman, 2006, p. 143). There was one "official" counterterrorist measure promulgated by the Sri Lankan government was the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) in 1979. This Act permitted the Sri Lankan army and police to hold prisoners incommunicado for up to eighteen months without trial; instead of mitigating violence, the enforcement of this Act along with growing discriminatory measures [against Tamils] employed by the Sri Lankan government led to a spiral of increased brutality and tit-for-tat violence (Bloom, 2007, p. 52). The LTTE also began recruiting women as early as 1979, establishing the first women's training camp in 1984, asserting "that the use of female cadres was an important step in emancipating women in what is a traditional patriarchal society (Gunawardena, 2006, p. 85)." The decision to use females as suicide bombers was a natural progression of the organization's initial policies to include women in the LTTE; the decision was incidental to the ultimate goal. The LTTE had a preference for young recruits and women to fill the ranks of their suicide squads.

It is also necessary to understand how the LTTE was organized. The LTTE was internally divided according to specialization, much like a professional military. The general umbrella organization was the Tamil Tigers but was further subdivided between two main divisions: the political wing and the military wing. The political wing covered areas such as the courts, economic development, health care, education, as well as the arts and culture; while the military wing oversaw policing, recruitment, finance, intelligence gathering, and special operations (DeVotta, 2004). These two wings were further subdivided into divisions: the Black Tigers (suicide bombing division, further divided into the Black Tigresses or the female suicide bombers also called the "Freedom Birds"), Sea Tigers (naval attack unit), Baby Tigers (child soldier bombing division), Air Tigers (Air Force division) and the Women's Military Units of

the LTTE (Bloom, 2007, p. 60). Under Prabhakaran's leadership the LTTE became a highly disciplined, highly motivated guerilla force, commanding what amounted to a shadow state with its own flag, police, and court system (Mydans, 2009). Up until Prabhakaran's death in May of 2009, the LTTE operated similarly to, if not exactly like, a dictatorship. Beginning in 1979 with the PTA, and continuing through 2009, the Sri Lankan government continuously engaged in military campaigns against the LTTE, with both sides engaging in an "any means necessary" attitude to defeat their opponent ("United States Dept.", 2009, p. 141).

Context for the LTTE's Decision to use Female Suicide Bombers

This section examines the answers to the five structured-focused comparison questions in order to uncover patterns in the LTTE's decision to use female suicide bombers. These questions provide the context needed in order to understand why female suicide bombers were used by the LTTE, when they were used, as well as how often they were used. Although deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors—via the structured-focused comparison questions—unique to the LTTE, operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the LTTE's use of female suicide bombers. This, in turn, led to the conclusion that the LTTE used female suicide bombers at key times outside of any established operational patterns in terms of suicide attacks. Information in the popular support section suggests that when the LTTE used female suicide bombers in teams, messages or signals were being sent to females in the LTTE's identification groups in hopes of increasing recruitment.

Operational Characteristics of Suicide Missions

The first structured-focused comparison question examines the operational characteristics of each reported suicide mission as defined by CPOST. This case study reports on data from 115 individual suicide attacks made on the part of LTTE from July of 1987—their first attack—until May of 2009 (CPOST, 2014). The characteristics of each of the 115 suicide attacks will be examined making special note of any patterns that emerge from differences between male and female suicide attacks. It is important to examine the suicide attacks from a variety of vantage points as to not miss any important details that could aid in understanding why males or females were selected for suicide missions by their sponsoring organizations. To aid in this analysis the author also reviewed a total of 420 primary sources, two to eight sources per attack. These sources consisted of news sources around the world associated with these attacks, which were available on the CPOST website. This section looks at various characteristics of the LTTE's suicide tactics, beginning with a general overview of attacks by gender, moving to an examination of the group's methods of attacks, followed by a review of their targets, assassinations performed by the group, as well as "team attacks." The section then concludes by looking at any operational suicide attack anomalies—or deviations from the LTTE's operational "norms"—discovered in the preceding sections as well as any additional findings. Each of the sub-sections first considers how the organization used both males and females together, and then looks at each gender separately to search for patterns within each sub-section.

This section reaches five conclusions based on a summary of patterns found regarding the terrorist organization's operations: 1) females were used for the majority of assassination missions, 12 out of 18, where appearance of the individual made a difference in gaining access to a target and where belt bombs were used, suggesting that the organization made a tactical

decision when choosing to send a male or female bomber on such missions; 2) female bombers were primarily used alone for assassination missions (n=12), or with males in team attacks via boat and scuba bombs (n=12), meaning unless they were on assassination missions for the LTTE they were accompanied by males; 3) females were never involved in any attacks involving vehicular bombs, even though these methods accounted for 20 percent of the organization's suicide attacks; and 4) females were used to target civilians slightly more than males. The final subsection examines those suicide attacks perpetrated by females occurring outside of "standard operating procedures" as identified in this section. Therefore, the fifth conclusion reached in this section: 5) six operational suicide attack anomalies were found, three of these suicide attacks were performed at instrumental or key times during the LTTE conflict and three of the suicide attacks fell outside of "normal operating procedures," both of which point to the LTTE's use of female suicide bombers as signals.

Overview of Suicide Attacks by Gender

Table 5 below displays the "types" of suicide attacks as coded by the author; there are 13 different categorizations for "type of attack," with six main categories: "Assassination," "Other vessel on water," "Rammed vehicle into target," "Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship," "Truck bomb driven to and exploded at either a police or government target," and "Truck bomb driven to and exploded at target," which are further divided, as well as seven other categories of attacks— all of these attacks are further analyzed throughout this section.

Table 5. LTTE Suicide Attacks by Type of Attack and Gender

Type of Attack	Females	Males	Unknown	Total
1. "Escape bombing"	1	2	2	5
2. Assassination	12	11	8	31
Close contact assassination	12	7	4	23
Motorcycle		3	1	4
Scooter		1		1
Three-wheeler			2	2
Truck			1	1
3. Assault on government, military, or security target - suicide bombers part of larger attack	1	4	3	8
4. Cart bomb outside of government office		1		1
5. Checkpoint		1		1
6. Close contact bombing - civilians	3	1	3	7
7. Close contact bombing - military/police/political	3	5	2	10
8. Other vessel on water	3		2	5
Cargo vessel	1		1	2
Merchant ship	1			1
Oil tanker	1			1
Passenger ferry			1	1
9. Outside of government or military office	1	2		3
10. Rammed vehicle into target		1	2	3
military target			1	1
opposition		1		1
police target			1	1
11. Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	8	15	8	31
Convoy	1			1
Gunboat	2	2	4	8
Supply ship		1		1
12. Truck bomb driven to and exploded at either a police or government target		6	1	7
Convoy of vehicles		1		1
13. Truck bomb driven to and exploded at target		1	2	3
Buddhist Shrine			1	1
Central Bank of Sri Lanka		1	1	2
	32	50	33	115

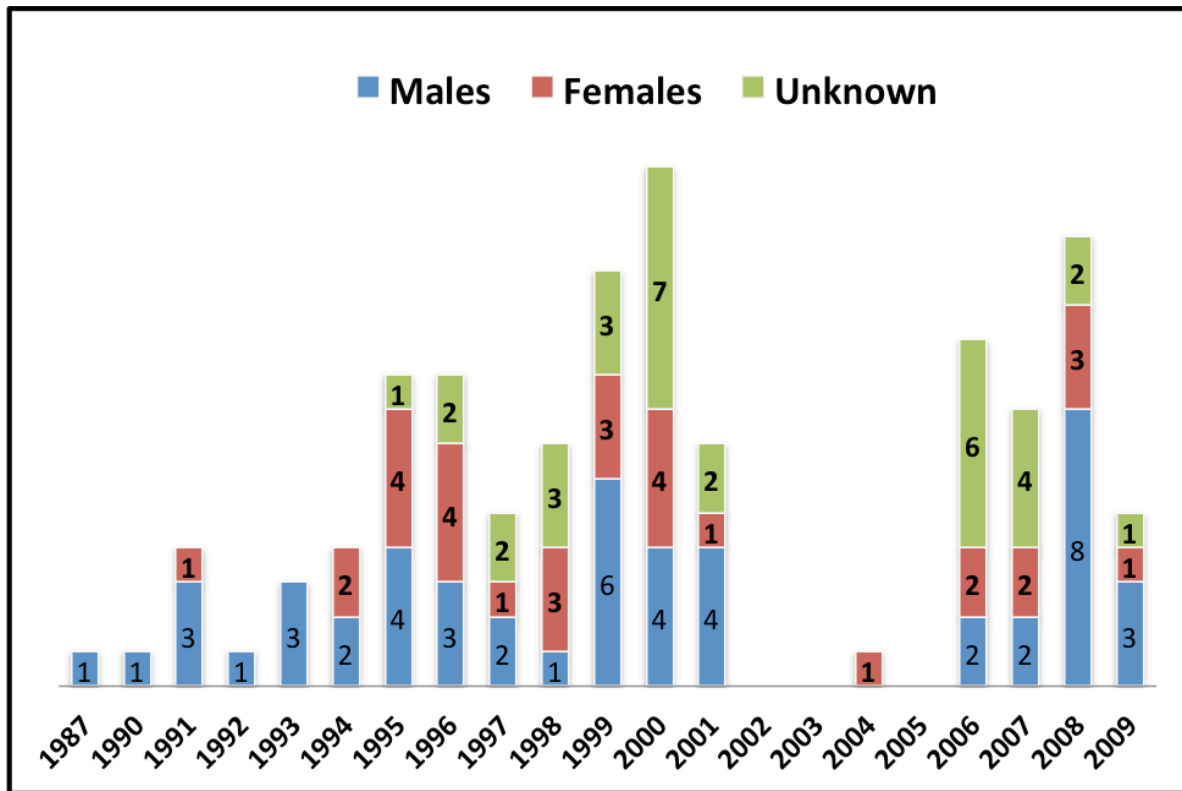
According to the data, the LTTE were responsible for 115 suicide attacks—32 of which involved females—resulting in approximately 1,600 fatalities and 4,000 injuries. The LTTE was the world’s leading suicide terrorist organization, carrying out its first suicide attack on July 5, 1987. The first attack was a carbon copy of the 1983 Marine barracks in Beirut bombing in which an LTTE Black Tiger dubbed “Captain Miller” drove a truck latent with explosives into a Sri Lankan Army Post killing between 20 and 100 individuals (CPOST, 2014).²¹ The LTTE first used a female suicide bomber—Dhanu—on May 21, 1991 – four years after their first suicide

²¹ This figure varies depending on source; Prabhakaran started appearing publically once a year starting on July 5th, 1990 in Jaffna for what is called “Heroes’ Day” to honor the first Black Tiger attack, carried out on July 5th, 1987. Other than this, Prabhakaran rarely, if ever, spoke or was seen in public (Pape, 2005; Pape & Feldman, 2010).

attack and their fifth ever – killing India’s Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by detonating an explosive vest as she was bowing down at his feet at an election rally in India. The LTTE used females every year after that (CPOST, 2014). Dhanu—the first female suicide bomber—was also the first LTTE member to use the belt bomb. According to the FBI and numerous other sources, the LTTE not only cultivated suicide bombing, but also invented the suicide belt and pioneered the use of women in suicide attacks. It has even been reported that suicide belts were constructed with the female’s body frame in mind (Bhattacharji, 2009; Rueter, 2004). Figure 8 below shows the total number of suicide attacks by gender and year from the first suicide bombing— in 1987—to the end of the conflict in 2009; there were a total of 115 attacks, 32 involving females, 50 attacks involving males, and 33 of unknown gender.²² The highest year of attacks was in 2000 with 15 attacks, 4 of which at least one female was identified, followed by 2008 with a total of 13 attacks, 3 of which a female was identified.

²² The attacks are by gender and counted as followed: if there was an attack where a female was identified it was counted as female; example if there was an attack with one male and one female it was counted as “female”, if there was an attack with two males, it was counted as “male”, if there was one male and one unknown, it was counted at male; if no gender was identified the attack is counted as “unknown”. All attacks that are counted as “unknown” have no gender data available.

Figure 8. LTTE Suicide Attacks by Gender, 1987-2009

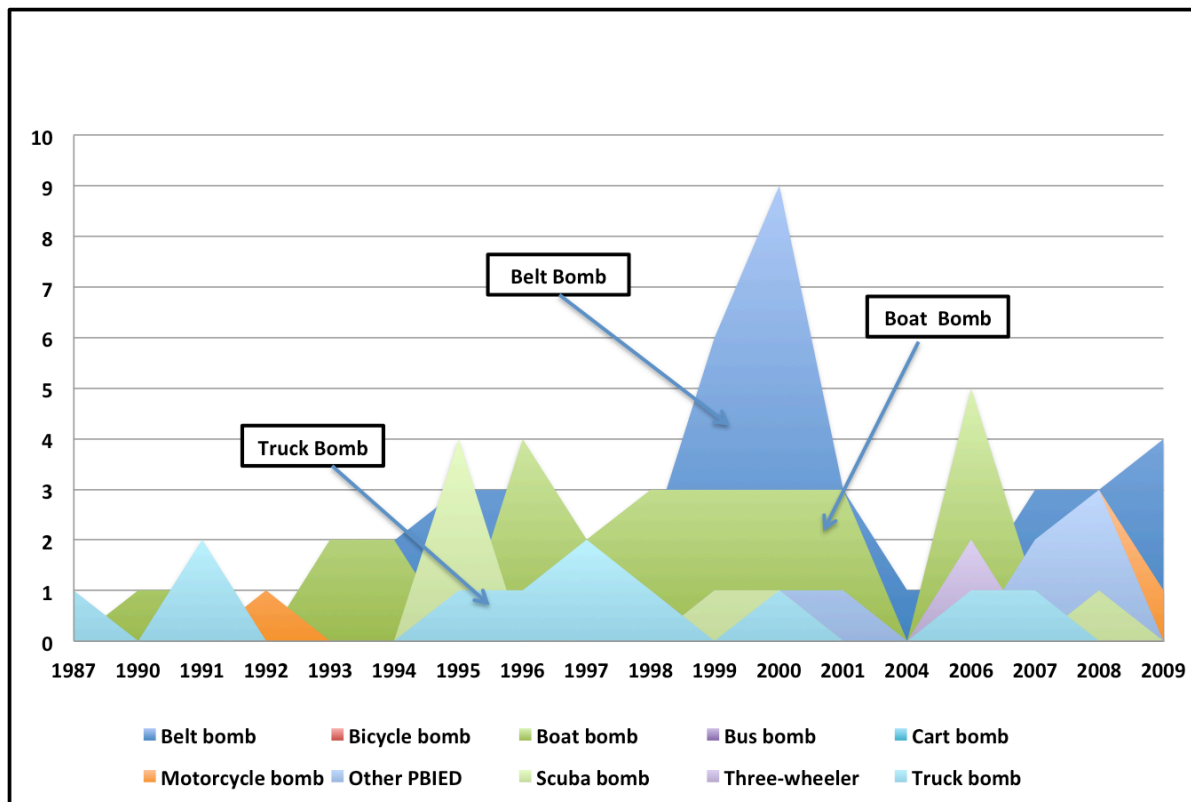


Methods or Modi Operandi

As indicated in Figure 9 below, the LTTE primarily used belt bombs and boat bombs, using these methods of attack 43 and 32 times respectively (CPOST, 2014). Truck bombs were used in 11 attacks, and motorcycle bombs were used in 9 attacks – interestingly females did not use either of these methods (CPOST, 2014). As noted in Figure 10, which shows suicide attacks by “type of method” and gender, females used suicide belts the most and more often than their male counterparts. Notable here is the fact that females were confined to four “types” of suicide missions, those involving: belt bombs, other Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIEDs), boat bombs, and scuba bombs (the argument could be made that they were confined to three given that the attacks that are coded as PBIEDs are most likely belt bombs or grenades

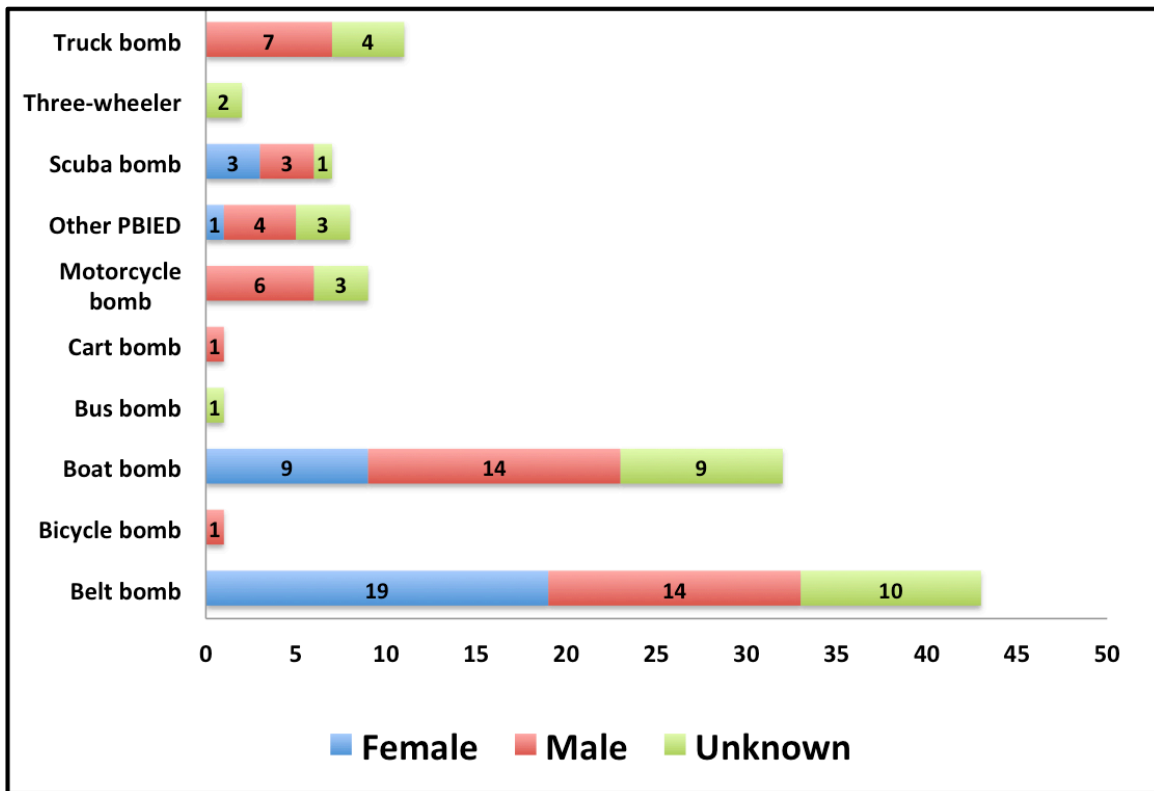
and are only coded as such because the sources do not provide for clear delineation of the exact type of PBIED that the female was using).

Figure 9. LTTE Suicide bombing by Method, 1987-2009



The point is, females never drove any vehicles—trucks, motorcycles, busses, or even a three-wheeler—when performing suicide missions. Further, even though Figure 10 shows their use of scuba bombs and boat bombs, these were always performed with males, except for one notable exception to be discussed later. The majority of suicide attacks that female suicide bombers were sent on (alone) involved assassination missions using belt bombs.

Figure 10. LTTE Suicide Attacks by Method and Gender, 1987-2009



It might also be helpful to analyze this information in “periods of the conflict.” The Sri Lankan civil war is divided up into four major periods—known as Eelam Wars I, II, III, IV—punctuated by ceasefires, only one of which lasted for more than a year (Pape & Feldman, 2010). The chart below displays these periods as well as other key events during the conflict, and additionally presents any relevant data on suicide bombings that correspond with this.

Table 6. Overview of LTTE Suicide Attacks in the Context of the Sri Lankan Civil War

	Key Events	# of Suicide Attacks²³	# of Attacks by Females
Eelam War I, 1983 – 87	Sri Lankan offensive (Operation Liberation) to take Jaffna halted by pressure from India, Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) occupies Northern Province (1987)	1	0
Indian Intervention, 1987-90	Civil war suspended, LTTE fights war with IPKF	0	0
Eelam War II, 1990 – 94	IPKF withdraws (1990), renewed fighting between LTTE and Sri Lanka ends in stalemate	13	3
Eelam War III, 1995 – 2001	Sri Lanka takes Jaffna, fails to secure overland supply route 1995: Sri Lanka launches Operation Riviresa to retake Jaffna 1997: Sri Lanka launches Operation Jayasikurui to secure supply route	44	20
Cease fire agreement, 2002 – 05	Norway brokers peace deal leading to cease fire agreement (2002), LTTE splits (2004) ¹	1	1
Eelam War IV, 2006-09	Sri Lankan takes Eastern Province (2008) and central Northern Province (2008), defeats LTTE (2009)	23	8

(Bloom, 2007; CPOST, 2014; DeVotta, 2004; Pape & Feldman, 2010)

The first suicide bomber was used by the LTTE at the end of Eelam War I, nine years after the organization was officially started and four years after Hezbollah's infamous suicide attack in 1983, emulated by the LTTE on July 5, 1987. The first female suicide bomber (and the LTTE's fifth suicide attack overall) was used at the beginning of Eelam War II to assassinate Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi, whom the LTTE feared would be reelected and reinsert the IPKF into northern Sri Lanka (Post, 2010). The highest number of attacks came during Eelam War III—depicted in Table 7 below—during this time Sri Lanka launched two major

²³ “Known” gender only

military offensives: Operation Riviera in 1995 and Operation Jayasikurui in 1997. Reelected Sri Lankan President Kumaratunga was attacked and sworn into office in December, 1999 and violence ensued on both sides until the Ceasefire Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE on February 22, 2002 (Bloom, 2010).

Table 7. Suicide Attacks by Male and Females during Eelam War III

	Attacks by:	
	Males	Females
1995	4	4
1996	3	4
1997	2	1
1998	1	3
1999	6	3
2000	4	4
2001	4	1

Targets

As far as whom the LTTE targeted with their suicide attacks, between 1987 and 2009 the LTTE targeted “security” 72 percent of the time, “political” targets 20 percent, and civilians eight percent of the time (CPOST, 2014). The majority of the “security” targets included vessels on the water—primarily Sri Lankan Navy Ships—(via boat and scuba bombings) and comprised 38 of the 83 attacks. The LTTE targeted civilians eight percent of the time, accounting for nine of the 115 attacks and lastly, political targets accounted for the remaining 23 attacks all of which were high-ranking government officials. It is worth noting that while attacks on civilians accounted for a small percentage of overall attacks performed by the LTTE, female suicide

bombers targeted civilians over four times more than males when controlling for the total number of suicide attacks performed by each gender in this dataset.

Figure 11. LTTE Suicide Attacks by Target Type, 1987-2009

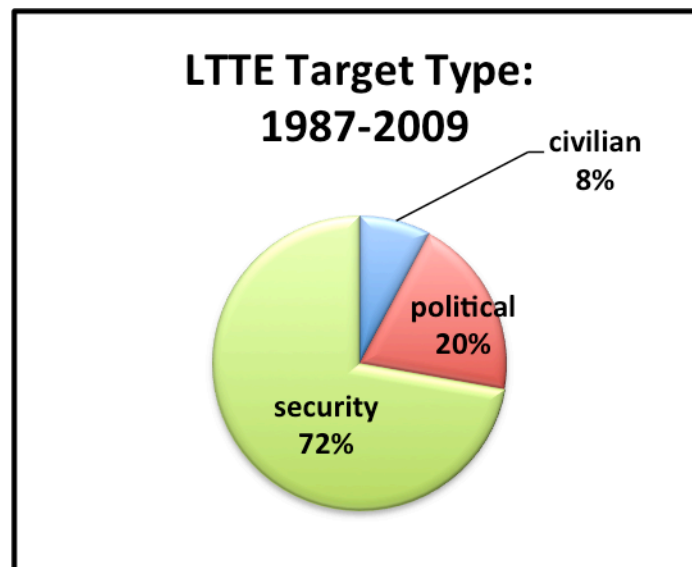
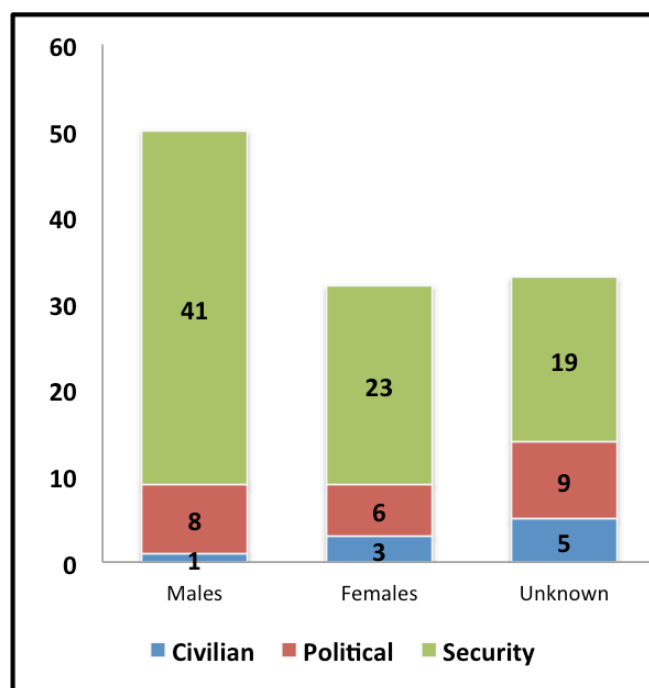


Figure 12. Female Suicide Attacks by Type of Target, 1987-2009



Assassinations

One of the LTTE's main strategies has always been to attack high profile public officials; they are the only terrorist group to have killed two national leaders: former Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, and the third Sri Lankan President, Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993, and left the 5th President of Sri Lanka—Chandrika Kumaratunga—blind in one eye after a botched assassination attempt (Pape & Feldman, 2010). Of the 115 attacks, 31 (or 27 percent) were assassination attempts and a lone suicide bomber performed all but one of them. The chart below displays all of the assassination attempts where the gender of the bomber was either “one male” or “one female”; this accounts for 23 of the 31 attacks, for eight of them the bomber was unknown, and for one there was more than one bomber so it was excluded. All 12 females used belt bombs on their “assassination missions,” while males only used belt bombs eight times, and a motorcycle bomb three times (CPOST, 2014).

Table 8. LTTE Suicide Assassination Information, 1987-2009

Year	Method	# Killed	Target	Target Type	Female?	Killed Target	Killed Others
1991	belt bomb	14	Rajiv Gandhi Madras (Prime Minister Candidate)	political	yes	yes	yes
1992	motorcycle bomb	4	Navy Commander Clancy Fernando traveling in a car	security	no	yes	yes
1993	belt bomb	24	Ranashighe Premadasa (President of Sri Lanka)	political	no	yes	yes
1994	belt bomb	57	Gamini Dissanayake (Political Candidate, Opposition Leader)	political	yes	yes	yes
1996	belt bomb	36	Ananda Hamangoda (Military Commander) and Nimal Siripala DeSilva (Housing Minister)	security	yes	yes*	yes
1998	belt bomb	1	Brigadier General Larry Wijerantne	security	yes	yes	no
1999	belt bomb	5	Chief Inspector Mohammed Nilabdeen	security	yes	no	yes
1999	motorcycle bomb	3	Muthulingam Ganeshamurthi (Leader of the National Auxiliary Forces)	security	no	yes	yes
1999	belt bomb	1	Neelan Thiruchelvam (Member of Parliament)	political	no	yes	yes
1999	belt bomb	1	Major Karunanayaka	security	no	yes	no
1999	belt bomb	24	President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga	political	yes	no	yes
2000	belt bomb	15	Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Sirima Bandaranaike	political	yes	no	yes
2000	belt bomb	1	22-1 Brigade Commander Piyal Abeysekara	security	yes	no	yes
2000	belt bomb	8	Health Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva	political	no	no	yes
2001	belt bomb	3	Ratnasiri Wickremanayake (Prime Minister)	political	no	no	yes
2001	belt bomb	0	Senior Police Officer	security	no	no	no
2004	belt bomb	5	Douglas Devananda (Tamil Affairs Minister)	security	yes	no	yes
2006	belt bomb	9	Lt. General Sarath Fonseka	security	yes	no	yes
2006	motorcycle bomb	4	Major-General Parami Kulatunga, Army Deputy Chief of Staff	security	no	yes	yes
2007	belt bomb	1	Douglas Devananda, Minister of Social Services and leader of Eelam People's Democratic Party	political	yes	no	yes
2008	belt bomb	28	Retired Major General Janaka Perera, Opposition Party member	political	no	yes	yes
2008	belt bomb	1	Maithripala Sirisena, Agricultural Minister	political	yes	no	yes
2009	belt bomb	15	Senior Sri Lankan Ministers, including the Postal Minister and Culture Minister	political	no	yes*	yes

For the purposes of this study, in trying to understand the differences—if any—between the organizational use of male and female suicide bombers, and postulating that females are unassuming and therefore better able to get closer to targets, suicide missions that were coded as assassinations but performed by “hit and run” tactics, (e.g. those involving vehicular type bombs) are not included in effective or lethality calculations. The rationale for this is as follows: when looking at assassinations by vehicles versus an individual with a PBIED one is inherently “more personal” requiring a more intimate encounter with a purposive target. It also requires that the bomber be more unassuming, which an individual in an explosive laden vehicle with the capability of racing into targets need not worry about. Given this operationalization of events, Table 9 below shows that there were a total of 17 assassination suicide missions (out of a total of 31) that could be analyzed with the criteria of gender known, a clear target, *and* performed by an individual with a PBIED. Of those 17, females were sent 11 times, as opposed to males being sent six times, with females “succeeding” half the time, meaning females were chosen over males because they offered the organization a tactical advantage. The organization thought, as the tactical innovation model suggests, that female bombers had a better chance of gaining access to individual targets.

Table 9. LTTE Suicide Assassination Attempt Analysis, 1987-2009

	Assasination attempts	Killed Target	Effective?	Total # killed	Lethality
Female	11	3	27%	133	12.09
Male	6	3	50%	64	10.67

Overall, females were sent on 12 assassination missions (the above table does not include two suicide attacks, one perpetrated by a female, and the other a male, where the target was unclear), these 12 suicide attacks also represent 38 percent of the total number of attacks they

were involved in (total of 32); for males that number is 7 out of 50 attacks, or 14 percent of the time.²⁴ Females also had a greater lethality measure, or average number of individuals killed per person, at 12.09, as compared to the males at 10.67. It is a worth mentioning that although the “effective rate” for males is higher than females, males killing their intended target 50 percent of the time, while females only 27 percent of the time, it could be easily argued that females were sent on “harder” missions given their perceived advantage, which in effect, lowered their effective rate.

Team Attacks

Other information that the data reveal is that the LTTE used teams of suicide bombers in many of its attacks: 45 out of 115 total attacks, with females being involved in 12 attacks, males 19 attacks, and those of unknown gender in 14 attacks. The LTTE was known for its group attacks or “team attacks”, with one attack consisting of as many as 21 attackers (all unknown gender), and a few others involving 15, 13, and 10 attackers. The majority of the team attacks were boat bombs—28 out of the 45—where multiple attackers would squeeze into boats packed with explosives and ram into Sri Lanka Military boats just before detonation. There appears to be a somewhat interesting pattern for many of the team attacks, in every instance but one, when males and females were both part of the “team”, they were used in equal numbers and females were never found to be in teams alone.

²⁴ This calculation includes two assassination missions (1 male and 1 female) where the bomber was sent with a PBIED but the target was unclear. In both cases the terrorist organization still made a choice to send the bomber on a “close contact” suicide mission.

Table 10. LTTE Boat Bomb Attacks by Number of Suicide Bombers (SB) and Gender 1987-2009

Year	Method	Target	SB by Gender
1990	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	4 males
1991	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	3 males
1993	boat bomb	Joint Sri Lankan Army and Navy base	13 males
1994	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	2 males, 2 females
1996	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	1 male, 1 female
1996	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy port	2 males
1996	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) gunboat	4 males, 1 female*
1996	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	2 males
1997	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) convoy	2 males, 2 females
1997	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	2 males
1998	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	5 males, 5 females
1998	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	2 males
1999	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) gunboat	2 males
1999	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	4 males
2000	boat bomb	Cargo Vessel carrying supplies to government troops in Jaffna	3 males, 3 females
2001	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship	3 males
2001	boat bomb	Oil Tanker	2 males, 2 females
2008	boat bomb	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) Ship	3 males

*Anomaly

Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies

The above section looked at the operational characteristics of 115 suicide attacks—via an overview of suicide attacks by gender, methods or modi operandi, targets, assassinations, and team attacks—performed by males and females of the LTTE to see if those characteristics produced any patterns pointing to the use of one gender over the other. This sections purpose was to identify deviations from those patterns in hopes of explaining why female suicide bombers were used by the LTTE. Six patterns or operational suicide attack anomalies were found, three of these suicide attacks were performed at instrumental or key times during the LTTE conflict and three of these attacks fell outside of “normal operating procedures,” these

patterns point to the LTTEs' use of female suicide bombers as signals. The details of these attacks include such descriptors as "novel," "special," "only" suicide attacks, "firsts" [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks

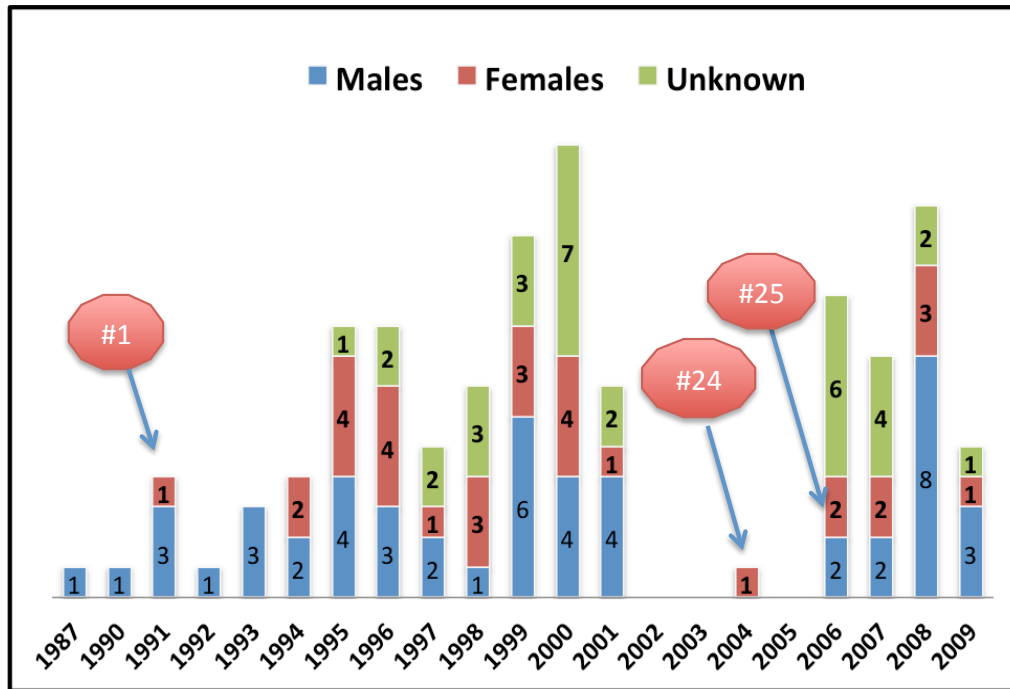
Timing of Suicide Attacks. Figure 13 presents three suicide attacks that were performed at instrumental or key times during the LTTE conflict.

- The LTTE *first* used a female suicide bomber—Dhanu—on May 21, 1991 – four years after their first suicide attack and their fifth ever – killing India's ex-Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by detonating an explosive vest as she was bowing down at his feet at an election rally in India—the LTTE used females every year after that (CPOST, 2014). This was intended to send a clear message of escalation to India (as well as the Sri Lankan government) should they decide to intervene in their affairs again; India intervened and the LTTE responded. (#1 in Figure 13 below)
- The *first* suicide attack after the ceasefire occurred on July 7, 2004, eighteen months after the 2002 ceasefire agreement. A female suicide bomber blew herself up in front of a police station in Colombo on her way to assassinate Eelam People's Democratic Party leader and Minister Douglas Devananda, the 10th attempt on his life (Wijayapala, 2004). This attack came at a time when the relationship between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE seemed somewhat fragile. Peace talks had been stalled since April, 2003 as a result of what seemed to be Sri Lanka's hesitancy to continue to move forward with the LTTE's Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA) proposal, incidentally one of the purported reasons that had prompted the LTTE to engage in peace talks in the first place (CPOST, 2014). This

attack seemed to come as a warning to the Sri Lankan government, one of renewed commitment by the LTTE, and its willingness to return to war if the need arose. The ceasefire enacted in 2002 had put an end to suicide attacks; while a diplomatic solution was sought, both parties remained publically committed to the ceasefire until the beginning of 2006. However, after this suicide attack—in 2004—speculations began mounting as to whether or not peace was actually possible. (#2 in Figure 13 below)

- Suicide attacks again lay dormant until January 7, 2006 when a female suicide bomber used a boat bomb to attack a Sri Lanka Navy Gunboat signaling a return to “war”. Not only was this attack “out of place” or different, in terms of a lone female using a boat bomb, which had never happened before nor did it ever happen again— suicide bombers were rarely sent on boat bombing missions alone. As noted above, the majority of boat and scuba bomb attacks were performed in teams. After this suicide attack, the fighting between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE continued until the LTTE’s ultimate downfall in May of 2009. The first of these two attacks was a signal of continued commitment on the part of the LTTE to the conflict, while the second, immediately preceding a return to tit-for-tat violence, was one of escalation back to war. (#3 in Figure 13 below)

Figure 13. LTTE Female Suicide Attacks at “Instrumental” Times in the Sri Lankan Conflict, 1987-2009



Other Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies. Three other “special” suicide attacks or deviations from “normal operating procedures” were found on the part of the LTTE indicating the use of female suicide bombers as signals. Females had primarily been used to assassinate high-profile public officials alone, or security targets in teams, since 1991. In 2007, a female suicide bomber self-detonated herself on a passenger bus in Colombo killing 15 civilians (CPOST, 2014). This was the first suicide attack perpetrated by a female suicide bomber against a civilian target, and it occurred 16 years after the first female was every used by the LTTE, representing a “different” use for female bombers. Two other female suicide bombers were sent—one in 2008, and 2009—to kill civilian targets at a railway station, and finally, at a Tamil refugee camp. These suicide attacks, the only time females targeted civilians in this dataset,

came late in the conflict, as Sri Lankan forces were encroaching on Tamil territory signaling a commitment to the cause no matter what the cost.

Popular Support

The lack of data on popular support—related to the second structured-focused comparison question—for suicide operations in general, and female suicide bombings in particular, makes it difficult to draw any conclusions as to whether or not the community embraced this tactic, and what effect this had on the decision to use female suicide bombers. There appears to be changes in the overall popular support for the LTTE as indicated by public opinion polling and an increasing number of recruits early in the conflict. However, tying this information to specific suicide attacks, much less those perpetrated by females, is difficult because longitudinal data on LTTE membership or popular support via public opinion polling is not available. However, the author does find information to support a hypothesis that Prabhakaran used females as suicide bombers to signal to females within the larger Tamil community in order to booster support—and thereby recruitment—for the LTTE in order to pursue his larger agenda of a free and independent Tamil Nation. While there is no definitive evidence to support this hypothesis, there is information to suggest Prabhakaran singling out females in the LTTE’s identification group, most likely in hopes of recruiting more female LTTE cadre.

The Tamil population was reluctant to resort to violence at first, not supporting any guerilla groups that employed violent tactics, including the LTTE. This quickly changed when Sri Lankan military forces started attacking innocent citizens; almost instantaneously thousands of young Tamils flocked to various guerilla movements while many “average” Tamil citizens

began to have a paradigm shift (Hoffman, 2006, p. 140). This shift fostered the worst-ever anti-Sinhalese and anti-Tamil attacks throughout the country, lasting from 1983 (marking the beginning of the civil war) to 2009. In 1983, Sri Lankan military and police personnel began burning Tamil homes, pillaging and raping Tamil women, engaging in widespread looting, as well as destroying many Tamil-owned factories and businesses (Bloom, 2007, p. 53). The LTTE capitalized on this momentum and began using mass propaganda to drive home the notion that the Tamil community would only feel safe if they had a land of their own, and to do that they needed to embrace the LTTE (Hoffman, 2006, p. 140). The biggest increase in LTTE recruits came after the 1983 riots. After the violence of 1983, the LTTE had little difficulty recruiting new cadres, most of which were deeply frustrated and resentful individuals (Bloom, 2007, p. 63). Support for the LTTE rose exponentially after these attacks, with pre-1983 figures of LTTE members and active supporters at 600, and post-1983 figures of LTTE supporters and active members exceeding 10,000 (Bloom, 2007, p. 53). Many Tamils join the Tigers because they had been raised on patriotic, mystical stories, songs, and films about great Tamil freedom fighters (Rueter, 2004).

Reasons for joining the LTTE range from a strong belief in Tamil nationalism, hoping to improve their families' social prestige, improve their families' economic condition, or to seek retribution for the humiliation, abuse, or murder of parents, siblings, or even friends (Rueter, 2004). The LTTE seemed to have a knack for tapping into Tamil pride, further increasing the number of Tamils that wanted to join the LTTE. Every individual bomber for the LTTE joined a "pantheon of martyrs [...in which each] boy's picture will be framed, garlanded and hung on the wall of his training camp to be revered by hundreds of other teenagers willing to sign their lives away for a cause (Bloom, 2007, p. 64)." Booklets were passed out containing the name, date of

birth, age, time of attack, where the attack occurred, as well as a picture of the martyr; young Tamils knew the names of martyrs the way American kids know the names of sports stars, looking up to them and wanting to emulate what they have done (Bloom, 2007, p. 64). When recruiting did become more difficult in the years that followed, the organization demanded that at least one child from every Tamil household become a soldier; if the children refused to present themselves, they were simply taken from their homes, schools, or picked up from the streets (Reuter, 2004). It has been said that the LTTE was not above snatching fourteen-year-olds from their beds under the cover of darkness and carting them off to paramilitary camps (Reuter, 2004, p. 159). By the mid 1980's, the LTTE, other Tamil rebel groups, and Sri Lankan forces were all massacring innocent civilians. Tamil rebels were killing security personnel and Sinhala citizens in border areas; Sri Lanka security forces always retaliated often by systematically killing Tamil citizens (DeVotta, 2004, p.171).

Support for LTTE's agenda by the Tamil community came from the abuse of ordinary citizens who suffered at the hands of the Sri Lankan army without reprieve. In 2000, Terasita Shaffer, former U.S. ambassador to Sri Lanka, stated "there is a belief among Tamils that the Tigers may be bastards, but they are at least our bastards (Fathers, Singh, Blanchfield, Gibson, & Hillenbrand, 2000, p. 28)." Further, [one Tamil citizen stated] "you find a lot of otherwise nice, sweet, reasonable people who say they don't agree with their tactics, but the boys have put us on the map (Fathers et al, 2000, p. 28)."

Early on in the civil war, the LTTE contributed to the social and economic life of the local Tamil community, enabling them to gain a certain amount of popularity from within the Tamil community and abroad. They devoted some of the group's resources to social services, which provided thousands of families and individuals with food, water, resettlement housing,

health services and interest-free loans (Pape, 2005). Overtime, however, the LTTE's firm grip over the Tamil civilian population tightened and they began decreasing social service efforts and forcing Tamils to abide by strict rules, facing extreme penalties such as death for refusing to obey or comply with policies (Bloom, 2007).

Polling of public support for the LTTE (within their community) was difficult for two reasons: 1) the LTTE itself made up a significant portion of the Tamil community during the conflict, and 2) research institutions tasked with polling Tamil attitudes in Sri Lanka over time did not exist (Bloom, 2007; Pape & Feldman, 2010). There were three organizations that sought to measure Tamil support for the LTTE but no questions regarding attitudes concerning suicide operations were asked by these organizations (Bloom, 2007). The deficiency in data led Bloom (2007) to interview/poll hundreds of Tamil citizens over a three-month period in 2002; some of her findings were: 1) 64 percent felt that armed confrontation by the LTTE was effective, and 2) while approximately 90 percent either opposed or strongly opposed attacks against Sinhalese civilians and 10 percent supported or strongly supported it, almost 40 percent of those surveyed said they supported or strongly supported attacks on soldiers in Jaffna (p. 68, 198).

The lack of data on popular support for suicide operations in general, and female suicide bombings in particular, makes it difficult to draw any conclusions as to whether or not the community embraced this tactic, and what effect this had on the decision to use females.

Ultimately, the popularity of the LTTE among average Tamil citizens dissipated as Prabhakaran's strong hold over the Tamil population tightened. Whether or not the Tamil citizens were advocates of the Tigers' tactics (most notably suicide bombing), they were supportive of the group's long-term goals, and most relied heavily on the social services provided by the organization; thus, initially they had little to say about how the LTTE

“conducted business.” However, it is noted that Tamil attitudes towards killing civilians did in fact play a role in the organization’s choice to not engage in such attacks (or not do so frequently – 8 of the 115 attacks targeted civilians and two of those were in the last 18 months of the conflict). Given the LTTE heeded the Tamil community’s opposition to killing civilians it could easily be inferred if the community staunchly opposed of the LTTE using females, they might not have used them as much.

One last point deserves consideration in this section, and that is the support Prabhakaran sought out, and seemingly rendered, from the females in the LTTE’s identification group. Outwardly, Prabhakaran was a stark proponent of women’s rights, whether this was mere lip-service or whole hearted activism is unclear. For example, the roles of women within the LTTE were initially confined to disseminating propaganda, administering medical care, gathering information and intelligence, raising money, and recruiting members; however, before long they began receiving combat training (Alison, 2009, p. 134). However, Alison (2009) found that former female LTTE combatants credited LTTE leader Prabhakaran for the gender-liberal approach, allowing females to actively pursue an armed role in the Tamil Nationalist movement. Most Tamil citizens questioned the ideas of women’s liberation from the predominately conservative patriarchal oppressive culture; however Prabhakaran ardently embraced this notion.²⁵ According to Prabhakaran (Alison, 2009, p. 143):

The ideology of women liberation [*sic*] is a child born out of the womb of our liberation struggle. The women’s liberation is an integral part of the greater Tamil struggle. The struggle against male chauvinistic oppression is not a struggle against men. It is an ideological struggle against the ignorance of men. Our struggle shines as a superb paradigm of women’s ability to accomplish anything.

²⁵ Tamil society raised females under many restrictions, some of which were: there were boundaries to the kind of jobs they can have, they are only fit for cooking and housework, they are not allowed to look at men in public, it was improper for them to be out past a certain hour, etc. (Alison, 2009).

In line with Prabhakaran's decision to allow, actively recruit, promote to the upper echelons of the LTTE's military command, and promote women's rights within the LTTE, Prabhakaran used females as suicide bombers to signal to females within the larger Tamil community in order to booster support for his larger agenda of a free and independent Tamil Nation.

The ultimate message the LTTE wished to convey was that of equality and strength, both of which women would gain if they joined the LTTE. The LTTE needed female cadres to join its ranks and, in line with that, needed to give them incentive to do so, seemingly empowerment was that incentive and that was the message they used by employing female suicide bombers. However, as explained above, Prabhakaran did so backhandedly, he sent males with females to create the illusion that females could do exactly what males did. However, as noted above, females did not perform the same attacks as males, they were limited, confined largely to belt bombs and suicide attacks with males.

Female's inclusion as suicide bombers in this struggle sent a symbolic message to the larger Tamil audience, particularly females – that message was that females' have equal status within the LTTE, and that they fought for Tamil nationalism but they [the LTTE] were also a mass social movement concerned with all members of society (Alison, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 1997). In essence Prabhakaran was signaling resolve or commitment to the larger female Tamil community in order to elicit support – militarily and otherwise. There are no other plausible reasons for him to become a poster child for women's rights unless he had something to gain. If one were to take into account Prabhakaran's domestic agenda, essentially championing women's rights made apparent by one of his numerous statements noted above and ask the question, what good would that do for him? There are only two plausible explanations, 1) Prabhakaran felt

strongly about women's rights, or 2) the pretext of his decision to employ females as suicide bombers was purely strategic. Prabhakaran was a meticulously calculated dictator that left nothing to chance; interviews with past "soldiers" indicate that LTTE Black Tigers had to submit an application when a suicide mission was announced, similar to answering a job in the classified section of the newspaper (Perry, 2006). Further, two applicants were chosen for each suicide mission, in case something happened to one of them. The point is this, the fact that Prabhakaran even had this vetting process in place, speaks volumes to the fact that he gave great consideration to every detail associated with each suicide attack—when, where, how, and why, a suicide attack would take place and who the "correct" bomber should be.

Rival Terrorist Organizations

The third structured-focused comparison question looks at the LTTE's relationship with rival terrorist organizations and if these relationships had any bearing on the LTTE's decision to use female suicide bombers. It is unlikely that the LTTE used females as suicide bombers in an effort to signal resolve or commitment to rival terrorist organizations given that the LTTE had emerged as the dominant Tamil separatist organization by 1986, and LTTE's first suicide bombing – performed by a male – was not until July 5, 1987, and the first female suicide bombing was not until May 21, 1991 (CPOST, 2014). Researchers have made note that the use of females in general may be attributed to rival terrorist groups using them/recruiting them first, but they were never used by another group in the capacity of suicide bombers (Alison, 2009).

The emergence of the ultimate leader of the Tamil revolution was an elaborate process paralleling events evoked by numerous laws, riots, and acts put in place to marginalize the Tamil population. One of the first activist groups to form was the Tamil Students Front in 1970. This

group acted as the impetus for a slew of other militant ethno-nationalist groups to form, one of which was the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). TULF's parent organization, the Tamil United Front (TUF) was engaged in legal and political activities, as was TULF; the one major difference being the latter prescribed violence as a means to an end. Thiruvankadam Velupillai Prabhakaran joined this group in 1972 but was quickly drawn to one of the more extreme offshoots of TULF, the Tamil New Tigers (TNT) (Hoffman, 2006, p. 139). Prabhakaran swiftly climbed the ranks within this organization and seized the opportunity to become the leader when Thanabalsingham – the then leader—was arrested. Prabhakaran assumed command on May 5, 1976 and renamed the group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) (Hoffman, 2006, p. 139). On April 29, 1986, Prabhakaran gave orders to kill off almost all leaders of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO) and over two hundred of its fighters; a move most likely prompted because TELO – the second largest parliamentary resistance movement – was the only rebel group that posed a real threat to the LTTE's power (Reuter, 2004). LTTE was finally the sole contender in the fight to thwart off Sri Lankan control.

Counterterrorism Events

This section looks at counterterrorism events—related to the fourth structured-focused comparison question—associated with the Sri Lankan conflict between the years 1987 and 2009 in an effort to see if any counterterrorism events preceded the use of female suicide bombers. Table 11 below displays all counterterrorism events associated with this conflict—six total events—as well as all suicide bombings that were performed around that time.²⁶ Two

²⁶ As noted in the methodology, this section defines counterterrorism events as any event having to do with the conflict in Sri Lanka, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary

counterterrorism events rendered further examination where patterns were found between suicide attacks by males and females related to military offenses by the Sri Lankan army, however, no patterns were found that indicated the LTTE's preference for female suicide bombers over males.

Two counterterrorism events tied to increases in suicide bombings are shown in Table 11 below. In May/June of 1987, Sri Lanka launched Operation Liberation in an effort to take control of the highly contested city of Jaffna, this resulted in the first suicide attack perpetrated by the LTTE in July 1987, no doubt signaling an escalation to war on the part of the LTTE. There does seem to be a cluster of attacks surrounding Sri Lanka's decision to launch Operation Riviresa in October of 1995; however, at this point in the conflict suicide bombings were an "everyday tactic" thus an increase in fighting on Sri Lanka's part would likely create a corresponding increase in paramilitary efforts by the LTTE. The next spattering of suicide bombings took place around the time the Sri Lankan government launched a massive offensive against the LTTE in January of 2008 after officially pulling out of the 2002 ceasefire agreement. Here again we see an increase in suicide bombings—a common war tactic of the LTTE—corresponding with the military offensive launched by the Sri Lankan government.

sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the counterterrorism event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

Table 11. Counterterrorism Events in the LTTE Conflict

Date	Counterterrorism Policies 1987 - 2009	# of Bombings by Gender in Preceding Calendar		# of Bombings by Gender in Calendar		# of Bombings by Gender in Following Calendar	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
May/June 1987*	Sri Lanka launches Operation Liberation to take Jaffna (May 1987 - June 1987)					1	
Oct-95	Sri Lanka launches Operation Riviresa to retake Jaffna (October 1995 - December 1995)		1	2			1
May-97	Sri Lanka launches Operation Jayasikurui to secure supply route (May 1997 - 1999)						
Jan-08	Government officially pulls out of 2002 ceasefire agreement, launches massive offensive.	1		1		2	1
Jul-08	Sri Lankan military says it has captured the important Tamil Tiger naval base of Vidattaltivu in the north.	1					
Jan-09	Government troops capture the northern town of Kilinochchi, held for ten years by the Tamil Tigers as their administrative headquarters. President Mahinda Rajapakse calls it an unparalleled victory and urges the rebels to surrender.	1					
	Totals	3	1	3	0	3	2

*Attacks are recorded for April (month before), May & June (in calendar month), and then July (month after)

Please see Appendix 1 for source information.

Political Events

This section looks at political events—related to the fifth and final structured-focused comparison question—associated with the Sri Lankan conflict between the years 1987 and 2009 in an effort to see if any political events preceded the use of females in these roles. Table 12 below displays all political events associated with this conflict as defined above—15 total events—as well as all suicide bombings that were performed around that time.²⁷ One political event rendered further examination where patterns were found between suicide attacks by males and females related to the political situation in Sri Lanka, however, no patterns were found that indicated the LTTE's preference for female suicide bombers over males.

Details of the political event and suicide attacks surrounding this event are as follows. In December of 1999, there were four suicide attacks, two of which were on December 18, 1999, both assassination missions, and both took place at election rallies. The first suicide attack of the day—considered a copy-cat assassination of the 1991 suicide attack on Rajiv Gandhi—took place at the People's Alliance (PA) rally in Colombo, the final presidential rally for Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga (Jayasinghe, 1999). President Kumaratunga survived the attack perpetrated by a female suicide bomber, but lost an eye. The next suicide attack to take

²⁷ As noted in the methodology, this section defines political events as any event having to do with the political situation in Sri Lanka, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the political event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

place on December 18, 1999—nine miles away—was perpetrated by a bomber of unknown gender at the Opposition Union National Party (UNP) rally; former Army General Lucky Algama was killed in this attack (Jayasinghe, 1999). The other two suicide attacks that took place in December of 1999 occurred before and after this attack—December 8th and 30th—and both involved attacks on Sri Lankan Navy ships.

Table 12. Key Political Events in the LTTE Conflict

Date	Political Events 1987 - 2009	# of Bombings by Gender in Preceding Calendar Month		# of Bombings by Gender in Calendar Month		# of Bombings by Gender in Following Calendar Month	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Jul-87	The Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord was signed			1			
Nov-87	Sri Lanka Government signs accords creating new councils for Tamil areas in north and east						
Nov-94	President Chandrika Kumaratunga comes to power pledging to end war. Peace talks opened with LTTE.		1	1			
Dec-99	President Kumaratunga sworn in for second term days after losing eye in LTTE assassination attempt- took office in December, 1999			3	1		1
Feb-02	Ceasefire Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE on February 22, 2002						
Aug-02	Government lifts ban on Tamil Tigers						
Sep-02	Rebels drop demand for separate state.						
Jun-05	Tigers pull out of talks. Ceasefire holds.						
Mar-04	Former LTTE Commander Colonel Karuna split from the LTTE and formed the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) party, became coalition government in Eastern Province.						
Aug-05	Sri Lanka calls for a state of emergency after foreign minister is killed by a suspected Tiger assassin.						
Nov-05	Mahinda Rajapaksa, prime minister at the time, wins presidential elections. Most Tamils in areas controlled by the Tamil Tigers do not vote.						
Oct-06	Peace talks fail in Geneva.			2			
Jun-07	Police force hundreds of Tamils out of the capital, citing security concerns. A court orders an end to the expulsions.	1					
Feb-09	International concern over the humanitarian situation of thousands of civilians trapped in the battle zone prompts calls for a temporary cease-fire. This is rejected by the government, which says it is on the verge of destroying the Tamil Tigers, but it offers an amnesty to rebels if they surrender.	1			1	1	
May-09	Government declares Tamil Tigers defeated. LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed in the fighting. Tamil Tiger statement says the group will lay down its arm.	1					
	Totals	3	1	7	2	1	1

Please see Appendix 2 for source information.

Conclusions

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as operational characteristics of suicide attacks, popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations’ preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While only one of the structured-focused comparison questions shed light on patterns of use of female suicide bombers via operational anomalies uncovered by an analysis of individual suicide attacks, the other questions illuminated reasons for signaling to certain audiences and the messages the LTTE may have wanted to send.

Overall, patterns indicate that when females’ use by the LTTE is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are overwhelmingly used in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets matter. In line with this, the LTTE used female bombers as a result of their increased lethality—over male bombers—and for assassination missions. However, this model left several suicide attacks perpetrated by females unexplained; the addition of the signaling model was helpful in identifying why the LTTE choose to use female suicide bombers where the tactical innovation model failed. When the signaling model frames females’ use by the LTTE, they are used in suicide attacks representing a deviation from terrorist organizations’ operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies by this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization. In line with this model, the LTTE used female suicide bombers at instrumental times, to signal escalation and demonstrate continued commitment to the Sri

Lankan government, while also signaling to the organization's identification group, primarily females, for recruitment purposes.

The Tactical Innovation Model

If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of the LTTE using female suicide bombers because they afford the organization an advantage over male bombers as identified by the tactical innovation model. This chapter shows that out of the 32 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, the tactical innovation model explains 13 out of 32, or 40 percent of the suicide attacks.

Lethality

Presented below are three tables, Table 13, 14, and 15—that measure the lethality of females—as identified by the first strain of the tactical innovation model—as opposed to males.²⁸ Each of the three tables correlates with the first three questions of the second research question presented in this case study.

²⁸ The methodology used for the calculations in this section are as follows: there were a total of 82 suicide attacks associated with this case study where the gender of the attacker is known, 50 of which involved male bombers, 32 of which involved females. One suicide attack perpetrated by a male suicide bomber was excluded. The details and explanation for this is as follows: on November 11, 1993, an estimated 50 LTTE fighters captured a military base, attacking from land and sea, using rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and machine guns, as well as a suicide squad (Cruetz, 1993). While there is still merit in looking at this attack as a suicide mission under inquiry for the case study, it is not clear, and highly unlikely that the 200 deaths attributed to this attack via the CPOST database were a direct result of the 13 members of the all male suicide squad, or represented “normal operating conditions” by which this case study seeks to examine.

Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack? On average, attacks involving females killed more (14 individuals) per attack than males, who killed twelve per attack.

Table 13. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack by Gender

	Total Attacks	Total Number Killed	"Lethality"
Females	32	446	14
Males	49	603	12

Do female suicide bombers “fail” less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)? Male suicide bombers are involved in attacks where zero fatalities are recorded 18 percent of the time, as opposed to females where this occurs only nine percent of the time, in short, males fail more.

Table 14. Suicide Attacks to Inflict More Than Zero Casualties by Gender

	Attacks to Inflict Zero Casualties	As % of Total Attacks
Males	9	18%
Females	3	9%

Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females? Yes, in attacks that were performed in groups of two or more (a.k.a. “team” attacks) where females were involved, the average number of individuals killed was 15 as opposed to six where the teams were comprised of only men.

Table 15. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack in Team Attacks

	Total Attacks	Total Number Killed	"Lethality"
Males	18	114	6
Females	12	184	15

Assassination Missions

The second strain of the tactical innovation model is not “proven” by higher numbers of casualty rates, or lethality—although this may be the case. Instead, it focuses on reasons why organizations would want to send female suicide bombers as opposed to males on certain missions, namely assassinations.

As shown in Table 16, this case study shows that females were sent on assassination missions eleven times, as opposed to males being tasked with this six times. Table 17 highlights this finding by showing that females killed more political figures, 106 compared to males killing 56, even though they participated in 18 fewer suicide attacks than males overall.

Table 16. LTTE Suicide Assassination Information

	Assasination attempts	Killed Target	Effective?	Total # killed	Lethality
Female	11	3	27%	133	12.09
Male	6	3	50%	64	10.67

Table 17. Total Number of Individuals Killed by Target Type by Gender

	Civilian Killed	Per Attack	Political Killed	Per Attack	Security Killed	Per Attack	# Attacks
Males	189	3.8	56	1.1	358*	7.3	50
Females	72	2.3	106	3.3	268	8.4	32
Unknown	108	3.3	93	2.8	148	4.5	33

* Attack with reported 200 deaths, as discussed above, has been omitted

Conclusions

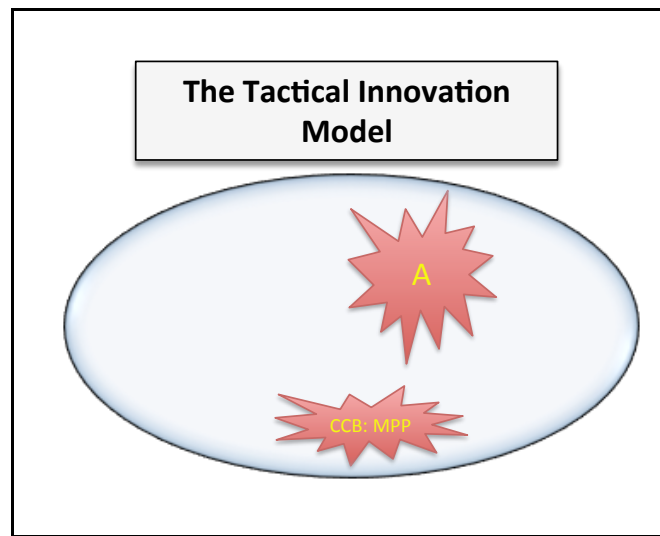
In sum, this case study shows that females are more lethal, as analyzed above, and the LTTE chose to send female bombers, as opposed to males, because they assumed females would be able to gain access to places that men could not. Thirteen out of 32 suicide attacks perpetrated by female members of the LTTE can be explained by the tactical innovation model as formulated by this study, suggesting that 19 suicide attacks are unexplained when explained by this model. Table 18 displays these 13 suicide attacks divided into two categories, 1) assassination missions, and 2) close contact bombing: military, police, and political. Both categories, or coding of suicide attacks, point to female suicide bombers being used by the LTTE because of their unassuming nature—thus they can get closer to intended targets—and the LTTE’s assumption that females are more lethal

This also identifies a big question for future research, if females are in fact more lethal, why aren’t they always chosen over males?

Table 18. LTTE Suicide Attack Classification: The Tactical Innovation Model

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks			Classification
10	3, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 30	= Assassinations	=	A	= Tactical
3	11, 17, 22	= Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	=	CCB: MPP	= Tactical
13					

Figure 14. The Tactical Innovation Model: LTTE and Female Suicide Bombers



The Signaling Model

If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of the LTTE choosing to use female bombers in an effort to signal or send a message to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public. In line with this, we would also expect to find the LTTE using females at instrumental times, falling somewhat out of the “norm” in terms of the organization’s operations. The LTTE would also use female suicide bombers in suicide attacks where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only,” “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks. This chapter shows that out of the 32 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, the signaling model explains 18 out of 32, or 56 percent of the suicide attacks. These suicide attacks were highlighted by patterns found in the Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies section, a sub-section of the first structured-focused comparison question. The rest of the structured-focused comparison

questions—while not helpful in uncovering patterns of use via female suicide bombers for the LTTE—aided in the understanding of messages sent and their intended audiences.

Audiences of the LTTE

As noted in Chapter Two, this section hypothesizes which audiences the LTTE intended to signal or send messages to, the author reached these conclusions based on contextual considerations offered by this case. There is no formula for specific audience designation offered by the signaling model. Inferences are made in this study that lend themselves to further research. Of the 18 signaling suicide attacks, six were designated primarily as signals for the Sri Lankan Government, and 12 to females in the Tamil community, or, to females in the organization's identification group.

Governmental Opponents

The signaling model helps to explain six suicide attacks performed by female suicide bombers that are not explained by the tactical innovation model. As discussed in this chapter and indicated in Table 19 and Table 20 below, suicide attack numbers 1, 24, and 25 all came at instrumental times in the conflict, signaling escalation of war to the Sri Lankan government. Suicide attack numbers 27, 29, and 32 all came at the end of the conflict when the Sri Lankan government was closing in on the LTTE. These suicide attacks were the first and only time female suicide bombers were used by the LTTE against civilian targets signaling a demonstration of commitment in spite of any political setbacks.

Rival Terrorist Organizations

It is unlikely that the LTTE used females as suicide bombers in an effort to signal resolve or commitment to rival terrorist organizations given that the LTTE had emerged as the dominant Tamil separatist organization by 1986, and LTTE's first suicide bombing – performed by a male – was not until July 5, 1987, and the first female suicide bombing was not until May 21, 1991 (CPOST, 2014)

Identification Group

The signaling model helps to explain 12 suicide attacks performed by female suicide bombers intended to reach females in the LTTE's identification group. These 12 suicide attacks could be explained by the tactical innovation model, in that suicide attacks are found to be more lethal with the presence of a female, however, the author hypothesizes that there is a better explanation. The act of sending females to martyr themselves alongside males—on some missions, not the “tactical” ones—had a larger purpose. As discussed in this chapter and indicated in Table 19 and Table 20 below, all team attacks involving females, suicide attack numbers: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 21, 23, and 31 were used by the LTTE to signal their organization's character to the females in the Tamil community in hopes of bolstering recruitment of females. In line with the signaling model, the designation of these suicide attacks as signaling attacks comes from details of these attacks, females were only used for assassination missions and when accompanied by males, although supposedly “equal” to men within the LTTE. Here, females within the identification group are identified as the primary recipients of the signal, but males are still receiving a “recruitment message.”

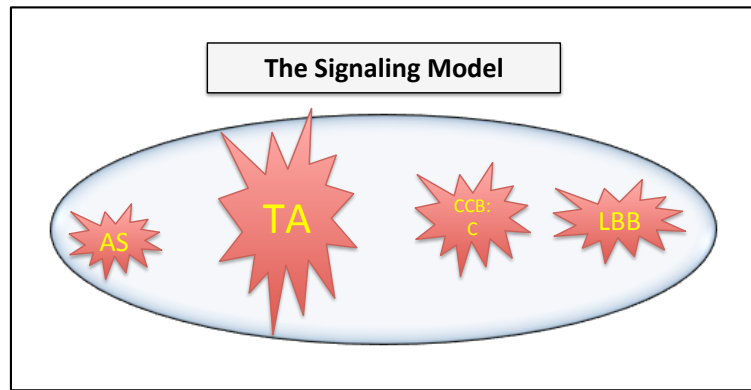
Non-constituent Public

The LTTE used females as a means to garner public support for their plight both nationally and internationally. Female suicide bombers attract more attention from the media and in many cases incite more fear; while no information is presented in this case to highlight specific female suicide attacks intended to signal to this group, it is likely that any female suicide attack performed by the LTTE would have resonated somewhat with this audience.

Table 19. LTTE Suicide Attack Classification: The Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks			Classification
12	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 31	= Team Attacks	=	TA	= Signaling: Primarily females in the identification group. Message: Recruitment - If you join you can do what men do, you are equal. Peripherally, shaming men into joining.
10	3, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 30	= Assassinations	=	A	= Tactical
3	11, 17, 22	= Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	=	CCB: MPP	= Tactical
3	27, 29, 32	= Close Contact Bombing: Civilians	=	CCB: C	= Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
2	24, 25	= Assassination: Signaling	=	AS	= Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
1	1	= Lone Boat Bombing	=	LBB	= Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
1	13	= Indeterminate	=	I	= N/A
32					

Figure 15. The Signaling Model: LTTE and Female Suicide Bombers



Conclusion

As indicated in Figure 16 and Figure 17, this chapter shows that out of the 32 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, 13 out of 32, or 40 percent of the attacks can be explained by the tactical innovation model, 18 out of 32, or 56 percent of the attacks can be explained by the signaling model, and the remaining one suicide attack is defined as “indeterminate.” Of the 18 signaling suicide attacks, six were intended primarily as signals for the Sri Lankan Government, and 12 to females in the Tamil community, or, to females in the organization’s identification group. The remaining attack was categorized as an “escape bombing” and hence an indiscriminate attack.

Table 20 below displays each of the 32 suicide attacks perpetrated by females of the LTTE, while Figure 16 and Figure 17 provide illustrations of each suicide attack based on the characteristics of the tactical innovation model and the signaling model. Each suicide attack is characterized as either a “tactical,” “signaling,” or “indiscriminate” attack, as well as the rationale for each. Indiscriminate attacks are defined as suicide missions where more information is needed concerning the characteristics or details of these attacks in order to make an informed

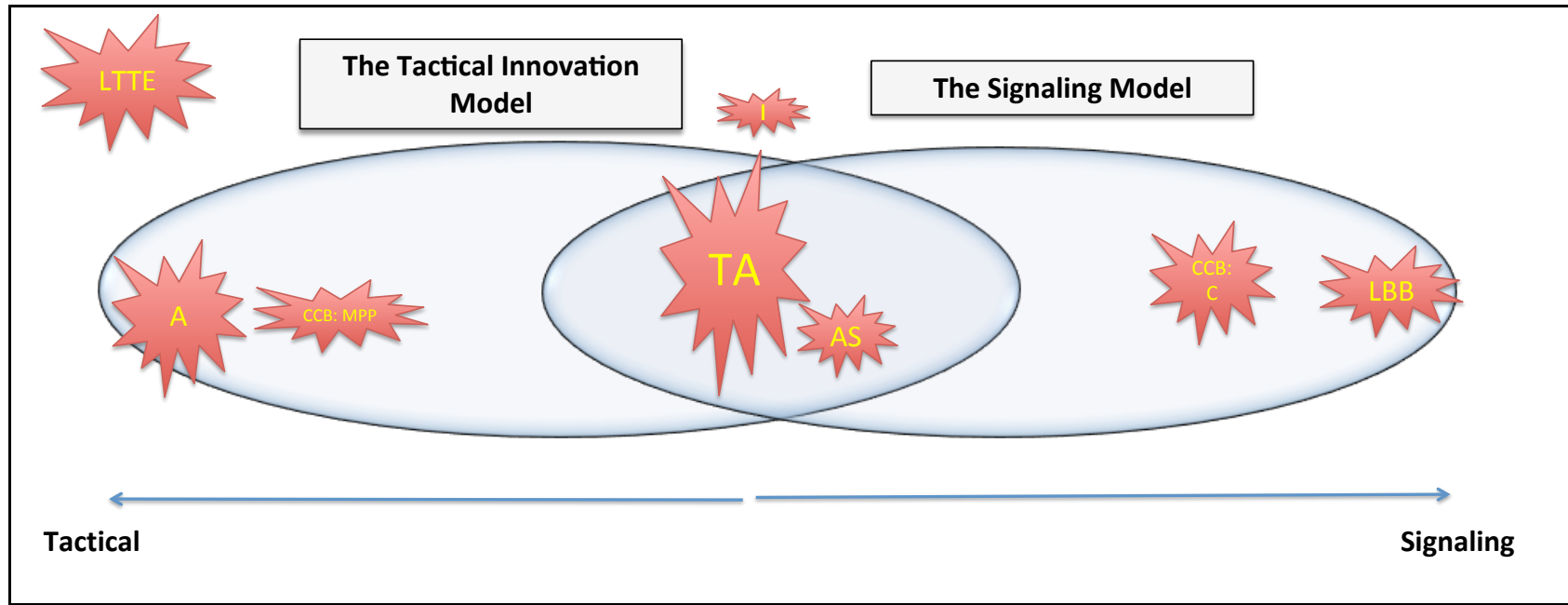
decision. It should be noted that most attacks are not mutually exclusive in nature, however, each attack will be coded as one of the three, that being the one in which the characteristics of the attack most closely align with the characteristics presented in each of the aforementioned models.

Table 20. LTTE Suicide Attacks as Specified by Models of Suicide Terrorism

	Date	Place of terrorist act	Attack details	Total terrorists	Number killed	Tactical	Signaling	Indiscriminate
1	May 21, 1991	India, Madras Tamil Nadu	Assassination (successful), Rajiv Gandhi Madras (Prime Minister Candidate), belt bomb, political	1 female	14		G	
2	September 19, 1994	Manar (off coast), Northern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship, boat bomb, security	2 females, 2 males	35		IG	
3	October 10, 1994	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (successful), Gamini Dissanayake (Political Candidate, Opposition Leader), belt bomb, political	1 female	57	✓		
4	April 19, 1995	Trincomalee, Eastern Province	Military base, scuba bomb, security	2 females, 2 males	16		IG	
5	July 16, 1995	Kankesanthurai, Northern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship, scuba bomb, security	1 females, 2 males	10		IG	
6	September 10, 1995	Kankesanthurai, Northern Province	Military base, scuba bomb, security	2 females, 2 males	0		IG	
7	November 11, 1995	Colombo, Western Province	Military base, Sri Lankan Army National Headquarters, belt bomb, security	1 females, 1 male	20		IG	
8	March 30, 1996	Vettilaikerny (off Coast), Eastern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship, boat bomb, security	1 female, 1 male	10		IG	
9	July 4, 1996	Jaffna, Northern Province	Assassination (ambiguous target), Ananda Hamangoda, died (Military Commander) and Nimal Siripala DeSilva, survived (Housing Minister)	1 female	36	✓		
10	July 19, 1996	Mullaitivu (off coast), Northern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) gun boat, boat bomb, security	1 female, 4 males	28		IG	
11	November 25, 1996	Trincomalee, Eastern Province	Approached police vehicle, belt bomb, security	1 female	0	✓		
12	March 3, 1997	Mullaitivu (off coast), Northern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) convoy, boat bomb, security	2 females, 2 males	1		IG	
13	February 5, 1998	Colombo, Western Province	Checkpoint before being detained, was with three accomplices, belt bomb, security	1 female	8			✓
14	February 23, 1998	Point Pedro (Off Coast), Eastern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship, boat bomb, security	5 females, 5 males	46		IG	
15	May 14, 1998	Point Pedro, Eastern Province	Assassination (successful), Brigadier General Larry Wijerantne, Belt bomb, political	1 female	1	✓		
16	March 16, 1999	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Chief Inspector Mohammed Nilabdeen, Belt bomb, security	1 female	5	✓		
17	August 4, 1999	Veppankulam, Northern Province	Approaching special task force convoy, belt bomb, security	1 female	13	✓		
18	December 18, 1999	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga, Belt bomb, political	1 female	24	✓		
19	January 5, 2000	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Sirima Bandaranaike, Belt bomb, political	1 female	15	✓		
20	March 2, 2000	Trincomalee, Eastern Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), 22-1 Brigade Commander Piyal Abeysekara, Belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
21	June 26, 2000	Point Pedro (Off Coast), Eastern Province	Cargo vessel carrying supplies to government troops, boat bomb, security	3 females, 3 males	14		IG	
22	August 15, 2000	Vavuniya, Northern Province	Approached Sri Lankan Army truck, belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
23	October 30, 2001	Point Pedro (Off Coast), Eastern Province	Oil Tanker, boat bomb, security	2 females, 2 males	4		IG	
24	July 7, 2004	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Douglas Devananda (Tamil Affairs Minister), Belt bomb, security	1 female	5		G	
25	January 7, 2006	Trincomalee (off-coast), Eastern Province	Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) ship, boat bomb, security	1 female	15		G	
26	April 25, 2006	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Lt. General Sarath Fonseka, Belt bomb, security (feigned pregnancy at military hospital on Maternity Day)	1 female	9	✓		
27	January 6, 2007	Peraliya, Sri Lanka	Bus, PBIED, civilian	1 female	15		G	
28	November 28, 2007	Colombo, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Douglas Devananda, Minister of Social Services and leader of Eelam People's Democratic Party, Belt bomb, political	1 female	1	✓		
29	February 3, 2008	Colombo, Western Province	Railway Station, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	11		G	
30	October 9, 2008	Boralesgamuwa, Western Province	Assassination (unsuccessful), Maithripala Sirisena, Agricultural Minister, Belt bomb, political	1 female	1	✓		
31	October 23, 2008	Kankesanthurai, Northern Province	Two merchant ships transporting military supplies, boat bomb, security	1 female, 1 male, 4 unknown	0		IG	
32	February 9, 2009	Mullaitivu, Northern Province	Outside entrance of camp for civilians fleeing Sri Lanka's war zone as she was being searched by female soldiers, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	30		G	

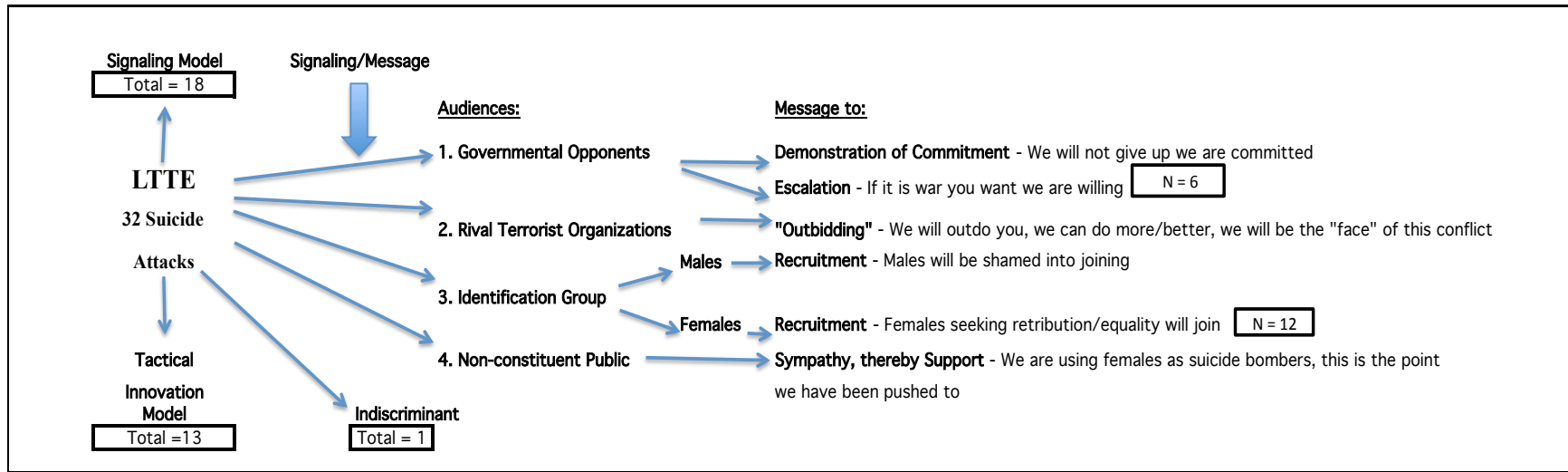
Please see Appendix 3 for source information.

Figure 16. LTTE Suicide Attacks as Identified by the Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model



*As indicated in the text, Team Suicide Attacks or TA, could be explained by the tactical innovation model as defined in this study, however, given the information in the case—afforded by the answers to the structured-focused comparison questions—TA's were concluded to be signals to females in the LTTE's identification group. These attacks illustrate that the tactical innovation model and signaling model are not mutually exclusive; a determination of certain suicide attacks as either “tactical” or “signaling” must be made after an in-depth examination of each case.

Figure 17. LTTE Suicide Attacks Illustrated by the Signaling Model



CHAPTER IV: CHECHEN SEPARATISTS

Introduction

Chechen Separatists have executed a deadly suicide campaign against the Russia Federation from 2000 until present day, although Russia's official comment on this may suggest otherwise. They have performed a recorded 83 suicide attacks killing approximately 800 individuals, with female suicide bombers, dubbed the "Black Widows," being involved in 26 of them (CPOST, 2014).²⁹ The ideological underpinnings of the Chechen Separatists are best described as initially nationalist, set on a sovereign Chechen nation and increasingly becoming part of a wider nationalist-Islamic resistance movement fighting for an autonomous caliphate in the North Caucasus region. This chapter draws upon the historical development, organizational evolution, operational and tactical characteristics, popular support, rival terrorist organizations, political events, as well as counterterrorism efforts used to defeat them.

This information will be examined in the following manner: first, a detailed historical overview of Chechnya, followed by a discussion of the origins of the Chechen Resistance as well as a brief section on the Chechen Separatists as a cohesive organization—as defined in this study—moving to what is deemed the "Black Widows phenomena." The analysis framed by the five structured-focused comparison questions will come next. This section will highlight the context for the terrorist organization's decision to use female suicide bombers that are uncovered by answering the structured-focused comparison questions. Within this section various tactics

²⁹ Keeping in mind this is the number of "successful" suicide attacks by the Chechen Separatists and does not include attempted attacks. This study also looks at two additional attacks in detail, the Dubrovka Theater siege and Beslan elementary school siege for a total of 28 attacks that are examined in this case, 26 of which are identified in the CPOST database.

used by the organization as it applies to suicide bombing will be analyzed. This will include an in-depth examination of the Chechen Separatists' operational characteristics of suicide missions—as identified in the first structured-focus comparison question—associated with the organization's methods of operations and targets. Following this section, the remaining four structured-focused comparison questions will then be analyzed. Popular support for the organization in terms of their community embracing a culture of martyrdom will also be considered as well as the impact rival terrorist groups may have had on the organization's decision to use female bombers. Counterterrorism and political events that may have contributed to the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers will follow.

The ultimate goal of this chapter is to determine if the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers for their perceived tactical advantage and/or to signal or send a message to multiple audiences. This will be done by uncovering patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers by examining the answers to each of the structured-focused comparison questions. Finally, with the answers to these questions, can any trends or triggering events be identified in the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers?

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to the Chechen Separatists—such as operational characteristics of suicide attacks, popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organization's preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While only one of the structured-focused comparison questions—on the operational characteristics of suicide attacks—shed light on patterns of use of female suicide bombers via operational anomalies uncovered by

an analysis of individual suicide attacks, the other questions illuminated reasons for signaling to certain audiences and the messages the Chechen Separatists may have wanted to send.

Overall, patterns indicate that when females' use by the Chechen Separatists is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are overwhelmingly used in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets matter. In line with this, the Chechen Separatists used female bombers as a result of their increased lethality—over male bombers—and for assassination missions. However, this model left several suicide attacks perpetrated by females unexplained; the addition of the signaling model was helpful in identifying why the Chechen Separatists choose to use female suicide bombers where the tactical innovation model failed. When the signaling model frames females' use by the Chechen Separatists, they are used in suicide attacks representing a deviation from terrorist organizations' operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies by this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization. In line with this model, the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers at instrumental times and for their most spectacular suicide attacks—by air, at a rock concert, opposite the kremlin, and on, or outside a subway—to signal escalation and demonstrate continued commitment to the Russian government, while also signaling to the organization's non-constituent public a single time.

Background Information

Chechnya: A Historical Account

In order to have a better understanding of the Chechen Separatists—exactly who they are, and where they came from—and accordingly, their use of Black Widows— a brief historical account needs to be presented on the tattered region of the Chechen Republic, more commonly

referred to as Chechnya, where the Black Widows were borne. This starts by examining the growing tension between Chechnya and Russia - illustrated by a glance at the intricate myriad and highly complex war torn history of this region - which is no doubt important in recognizing the disenfranchised society, culture, and the individuals currently occupying this region.

Chechnya is located in the Caucasus region between the Black and Caspian Seas and is separated politically into Northern and Southern parts with the former bordered by Russia and the latter by Iran; generally perceived to be the “dividing line” between Asia and Europe. This area is known to be one of the most linguistically and culturally diverse regions on Earth (Oliker, 2001). The Chechens are the largest North Caucasian group and second largest Caucasian group after the Georgians. They have occupied the North Caucasian region for more than six millennia thwarting takeovers by Persians, Arabs, Mongols, Buddhists, Turks, and Russians (Akhmadov, Bowers, & Doss, 2001, p. 111). The Chechen citizens have maintained a deep-rooted history of a separatist mentality from Russia, successfully avoiding conquest from the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and the Russian Republic –first to avoid subjugation and later with aims to achieve sovereignty (Akhmadov et al, 2001). The Russians have tried to gain control of this Northern Caucasus region for decades, battling the ancestors of those who fight there now (Oliker, 2001). The abundance of feudal relations in this mountainous area thwarted the traditional method of Russian occupation and land acquisition. In fact, the Russians usually made “friends” with the indigenous nobility (others may call these bought friendships) in many surrounding hierarchical-structured societies that existed in nearby plain regions; the absence of such Chechen nobility has been stated as one of the reasons Chechnya was able to continually resist Russian takeover (Fowkes, 1998).

During World War II, commonly referred to by the Soviets as “the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union,” Soviet authorities led a series of ruthless minority deportations that included the Volga Germans, the Karachai, the Kalmyks, the Bakars, and the Crimean Tatars (Flemming, 1998). Although deportations of all kinds were taking place during this time it is argued that the Soviet deportations were a “distinct phenomena” because most wartime deportations were aimed (at least in thought) to protect national security; the deportations that took place under the Former Premier of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, were rumored to be out of retribution and to demonstrate power over the defiant “red-headed stepchild” (Flemming, 1998). The Soviets alleged that all deportations were legitimized by the fact that citizens in this region were collaborating with the Germans as stated in the 1944 decree issued by the Soviet government to dissolve what was then the loosely defined Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Gokay, 2004). This decree resulted in the mass deportations of the entire Chechen nation to Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Siberia with thousands dying during the expulsion; those who lived were only allowed to return to Chechnya after Stalin’s death in 1953 (Gokay, 2004; Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006b; Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006c). The Chechen people have suffered immensely, witnessing the total obliteration of their country in the past decade as well as endearing what Rueter (2004) deems “an apocalyptic demographic crises” with nearly 180,000 Chechens killed and over 300,000 displaced, meaning that one in two Chechens were either killed or driven from their homes in the past ten years (p. 21-22).

Upon the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990’s many former Soviet republics initiated succession and became independent states. Under its newly elected president Dzhokhar Dudayev, Chechnya also initiated secession in 1991, although Chechnya’s “declaration of independence” was somewhat different in that Chechnya had been a state inside the Russian

Federation and the others had not; they were independent republics of a now fallen union, the Soviet Union (Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006c).

Table 21. Summary of Significant Events Leading up to First Russo-Chechen War

- **November 1990-** the National Congress of the Chechen People (OKChN) is established; General Dzhokhar Dudayev is elected leader
- **1 November 1991-** Chechnya declares independence from the Russian Federation, (declaration not recognized by the Russian Parliament)
- **7 November 1991-** President Yeltsin imposes martial law on Checheno-Ingushetia and three days later the Russian parliament cancels Yeltsin's decree
- **25-26 December 1991-** Gorbachev resigns and the Soviet Union official ceases to exist, the Soviet flag is lowered over Kremlin and is replaced by Russian flag
- **October 1993-** the Russian government expels 'persons of Caucasian nationality' from Moscow allegedly because of rising crime rates in the city
- **2 November 1993-** Russia adopts a new military doctrine which includes a clause reserving the right to protect Russian minorities outside Russian borders
- **December 1993-** a new Russian Constitution is adopted and first democratic parliamentary elections take place; Chechnya does not participate
- **December 1993-** a Provisional Council of Dudayev's opponents is formed in Chechnya
- **May-October 1993-** one of several assassination attempts against Dudayev takes place; Russian government denounces Dudayev's administration in the Chechen Republic as illegitimate; Chechens begin to mobilize as do Russian military forces in North Caucasus region and Russian intelligence receives information that both Chechen opposition forces and Dudayev's supporters would fight if Russians invade
- **November 1994-** Dudayev declares martial law in Chechnya and orders mobilization of all men over 17
- **December 1994-** Yeltsin issues decree ordering Russian government to use all means available to disarm Chechens, including bombs and tanks entering Grozny
- **21 December 1994-** Western news agencies accuse Russia of using 'terror bombing' against the citizens of Grozny

(Siren & Fowkes, 1998, p. 170-182)

First Russo-Chechen War (1994-1996)

In 1994, Former Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin sent troops into Chechnya in order to cease the secessionist movement; this marked the beginning of the first Russo-Chechen War. The Russian army had anticipated a quick victory, they were not prepared to encounter an organized rebel force who had developed war plans, divided up zones of responsibility, trained

their militia, and set up effective communication (Oliker, 2001, p 16). By the end of the initial push, a tired Russian army was only able to take control of the now decimated city of Grozny. A progression of retreats by Chechen rebel groups and subsequent attacks left 70,000 – 90,000 Chechens dead as well as thousands of Russian soldiers, eventually leading to a Russian declaration that troops be withdrawn from Chechnya by the end of 1996 (Oliker, 2001; Siren & Fowkes, 1998, p. 180-182). The first Chechen war was an embarrassment to the Russian Federation, who had expected an easy victory with little pushback from the purposive unprepared guerilla fighters; instead, they were forced to retreat and incurred many casualties.

Second Russo-Chechen War (1999-2009)

The Russian government entered the first Chechen War after acting on the declared “Decree on Measures for Restoring Constitutional Law and Order,” constantly attempting to undermine the Chechens by publicly calling them “bandits” and “Islamists” (Souleimanov & Ditych, 2008). The second Chechen War, however, was consistently framed as an “anti-terrorist operation,” and was treated as such: Russian federal forces began systematically targeted Chechen civilians in so-called “cleansing operations” as well as used a smear of other brutal tactics (Souleimanov & Ditych, 2008; Rueter, 2004, p.2). During the second Chechen War the Russian Government committed widespread human rights abuses against citizens, was unwilling to entertain peace talks, and created a destitute and vengeful Chechen society spawning suicide operations and radical religious fundamentalism (Rueter, 2004). Russian President Vladmair Putin’s continuation of the war against Chechnya has been considered to be the result of two things: 1) the war gave him an excuse to build up the “repressive state apparatus” against terrorism, greatly expanding his national security apparatus; and, 2) Putin wanted to assert his great power ambitions of the Russian ruling elite, losing a small republic

would weaken his persona and thus weaken Russian influence in the Caucasus region (Gokay, 2004, p. 16).

Traditional Chechen Society

For hundreds of years Chechen society had been characterized by a patriarchal family structure of kinships and clan groups in which all members were free and equal (Fowkes, 1998). In this classless society, distinctions among citizens were based on age, social honor, and kinship, with no formal governmental structures; Chechnya resembled an independent nation with its own language and territory (Akhmadov et al, 2001). Religion had always played an important role in Chechen culture; however, upon their return after the deportations in 1944, Chechens seemed to be more religious and militant than ever (Gokay, 2004). The Chechen people were thought to have Christian roots, converting to Islam rather late in their history. Although Islam had come to Chechnya in the seventh century, it did not begin to “take hold” until around the eighteenth century (Fowkes, 1998). Other sources argue that Islam did not arrive in Chechnya until the fifteenth century, and was used as a great mobilizing force for Chechen society in critical times including various wars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the fall of the Soviet Union—and subsequently the onset of the first Chechen War—which all marked periods of “ethnic and religious rebirth” (Souleimanov, 2004). The two aforementioned statements exemplify why it has been extremely difficult to gauge the extent to which religious identity was a part of the Chechen culture. These competing notions could have arisen as a result of the fact that the practice of Islam as well as other religious expressions were suppressed by the Soviet regime; Russia’s state-imposed “anti-Islamic Policy” had existed in one form or another for decades under Soviet Control, those that continued to practice in Chechnya did so “underground” fearing for their jobs, education, or even lives (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006c).

In 1943, all mosques had been shut down in Chechnya to make room for the Eastern Orthodox Russian Church. They were reopened when the Chechen people were allowed to return to their homeland in the 1960s (Gokay, 2004, p.11). Further, even though many Chechens wanted an Islamic state, there was not a clear conception of what that meant, allowing many competing ideologies to take hold, especially during the interwar period and second Chechen Wars (Menon, 2004).

Traditionally, and still prevalent today, most Chechens practice a sect of Islam called Sufism, which is described by its characteristics below. During the interwar period however, another sect began to have a powerful presence, that being Wahhabism, a conservative Sunni Islamic sect from Saudi Arabia (Souleimanov, 2004). Wahhabism is a non-indigenous form of Islam originating sometime in the eighteenth century calling for Islam to return to its original purity based on a strict interpretation of the Koran (Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006c). This belief system is not in itself inherently militant, in fact, it is a very peaceful sect of Islam in many places throughout the world; in Chechnya, Russia, and the entire Caucasus region, however, this ideology parallels global Salfism jihad, thus prescribing to an ultra-radical and militant form of Islam (Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006c). The below information helps to illustrate the differences between the “traditional” Muslims in Chechen society (Sufist) and Wahhabists (as now identified in this region) (Speckhard & Akhemdova, 2006c, p. 110-111):

1. Traditional Chechen Muslims esteem Ustazies which are the spiritual teachers who first accepted and distributed Islam in Chechnya. These priests knew the Arabic language and could read and translate the Koran. Ustazies declared values of pacifism, mercy, and compassion. They were against any type of warfare. In contrast, the new ideology proclaimed by Wahhabists glorified war and the path of jihad and martyrdom as a main value that should be adopted by every Muslim in Chechnya.
2. Traditional Chechen Muslims make use of prayer rituals of chanting, clapping their hands, and rocking the body, which is named “zikr”. Traditional Chechen Muslims glorify God by chanting the name of Allah, some prophets, and the Ustazies. Wahhabists condemn these practices and call them idolatry. Wahhabists on the contrary use “nashids”, or prayers that

repeat portions of the Koran and Islamic writings that give glory to Allah, his one prophet Muhammad and that invoke jihad.

3. Wahhabists distributed many new religious publications in Chechnya; the most prominent being the book entitled “One God”. This publication took issue with any practice that did not strictly reinforce the oneness of God and that made any use of intermediaries to God or glorifying any of his prophets or saints, all of which are traditional Chechen Islamic practices.
4. Chechen men and women traditionally dress in European fashions and are free in their clothing, following only minimal habits of modesty that are common to many other European and modern Muslim countries. By contrast the women who followed the Wahhabist ways began to dress in hijab, covering themselves in ways that Chechen women have never done in the past. Hence the Wahhabists proposed dress that differed dramatically from ethnic and modern clothes of Chechen women. They likewise proposed a new image for Chechen men with long hair, moustaches, beards, and Arabic clothing.
5. Traditionally Chechen families consider the father as the head of the family. Wahhabists by contrast promoted the concept of Muslim brotherhood stating that Muslim brothers are more important than parents and other family members. As a result conflicts arose in many families where parents were no longer respected as they were in the past.
6. Wahhabists created in Chechnya Sharia courts in which they punished with beatings by canes those who were caught drinking alcohol, using drugs, and committing other crimes. Before Wahhabism there were government courts for serious crimes but only public condemnation in society for issues of moral trespass.
7. Wahhabism became an extreme trend in Chechen expressions of Islam. In Chechnya, Wahhabists killed traditional Muslim leaders who tried to resist their activity. The majority of Chechens did not support Wahhabism but the assassination of traditional Chechen imams became a means to silence the majority.

The traditional Chechen culture also had its own norms for retribution if a family member was harmed or killed, traditional Chechen rules for revenge primarily include (Kurtz & Bartles, 2007, p. 534):

- Males should be avenged with murder.
- Only males may avenge; females are allowed to avenge if there are no males in her family and among her relatives.
- For the murder of a female, two males should be killed: the murderer and the murderer’s family.
- The revenge should be directed only at the murderer, not at his family members or close associates.
- Revenge is not limited in time; it can be realized many years after the murder.
- The revenge can be averted if respected elders intervene and ask the victim’s family to forgive the murderer.
- Revenge does not mandate that the avenger should kill him/herself while committing the murder.

As is understood by the above rules for revenge, it is not normal practice to seek retribution outside of the individual responsible for harm or the individual's family; however as many Chechens "radicalized," the traditional Chechen rules for revenge seemed to be of peripheral significance (Kurtz & Bartles, 2007; Pape & Feldman, 2010).

Although a somewhat extensive review of Chechnya and the Chechen culture has been given here, it is needed to present the appropriate backdrop to what has arguably contributed to the chaotic and oppressed nature of the current Chechen culture. As with many nationalistic conflicts that "turn terroristic" there is always a climatically historical context that precipitates events and so should be noted.

The Chechen Separatists as an Organization

The Chechen Separatists are unique as to how they are handled in the literature when discussing terrorism, in particular when comparing this group to other terrorist movements. For example, when scholars compare and contrast why organizations use females in political violence (Dalton & Asal, 2011), or explore female "jihadists" in terrorist groups (Davis, 2013), Chechen Separatists are considered a single overarching organization or group, and is attributed characteristics such as organizational age, ideological orientation, and even organizational size. These two examples are not isolated occurrences; this categorization is ubiquitous in the literature and will be used here. However, before delving further into this case study, it is important to understand the rationale for why this loosely knit group of groups is considered a "terrorist organization."

Collectively, this group of nationalist rebels turned radical Islamic fundamentalist are referred to by various “identifiers” in the literature—Chechen nationalists, Chechen rebels, the Separatist movement, Chechen groups, Chechen insurgents, Chechen Separatists—all of which carry the same meaning. Given this study’s main source for information on suicide attacks included in this study is CPOST, the definition of Chechen Separatists, as it applies to this dataset, is needed. All attacks attributed to the Chechen Separatists are defined by CPOST under the “Chechen Separatists vs. Russia campaign.”³⁰ CPOST codes attacks under the “Chechen Separatists vs. Russia” campaign as perpetrated by either the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, the Caucasus Emirate, Riyadus Salikhiin, Gazotan Murdash group, or by an Unknown Group.

After reviewing all 324 primary sources associated with these attacks as well as other information, the author finds little merit in this discernment for practical purposes, and if anything it causes more confusion.³¹ For example, personal communication with the Research

³⁰ “Groups are assigned to the Chechen Separatists vs. Russia campaign if they operate out of the North Caucasus (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia) and have as their primary objective independence from Russia, whether as independent republics or as a pan-Caucasus Islamic state. We assign specific groups to attacks based on claims. We have no evidence of non-Caucasus groups using or claiming suicide attacks in Russia. We therefore assign unclaimed suicide attacks in Russia to the Chechen Separatists vs. Russia campaign as well.” This operationalization of the campaign was emailed to me by CPOST Research Director, Keven Ruby.

³¹ It should be noted that there were several instances where the database had incorrect information either in presentation or deduction of information from primary sources. At one time when looking at the CPOST aggregate “output” for all suicide attacks as applicable to the group assignment, the aggregate data suggested that there was a group identified as “the Chechen Separatist,” according to the database, this group claimed one attack, while individual analysis of the 83 attacks yielded no such attribution. Further, as of September 1, 2014 the aggregated data also attributed 85 suicide attacks to this campaign when two of the suicide attacks are noted in the database twice. They were double counted. There was also incorrect coding noted on the suicide attack that took place on March 6, 2013, the database noted that this attack was performed by a female using a car bomb, while another attack (hours later) on March 6, 2012 was performed by her husband using a belt bomb, the method information (car bomb and belt bomb) for both of these were incorrect. Also, two attacks on February 14, 2011 were performed on bicycle bombs and were coded as motorcycle bombs. The author made the Research Director

Director of the CPOST Database reveals the following (K. Ruby, personal communication, August 29, 2014):

We assign groups based on who claimed the attack. Attacks were assigned Riyadus Salikhiin if the claim was explicitly issued in the group's name. Typically these are claims issued by Basaev. We assigned the attack to Chechen Republic of Ichkeria if the attack was claimed by Movladi Udugov, spokesman for the Ichkeria government. That does not mean the attacks were not carried out by Riyadus Salikhiin -- only that it was not claimed by Basaev separately from the official separatist government.

From this we gather, that the coders are suggesting that Rayidus Salikhiin could have in fact orchestrated and perpetrated the suicide attack while the armies of the de-facto government of the Republic of Ichkeria claimed responsibility. If they are all acting in unison with one another any distinction between groups would be difficult, maybe impossible, and given the overlap of all organizations associated with this movement would add no analytical power to the research. Next, we move to a more formal discussion on the groups operating within the Chechen nationalist frame as well as justification for treating all of the groups as a unified movement.

In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (ChRI), a de-facto secessionist movement, was formed by Dzhokhar Dudayev with the stated goal of a sovereign Chechen secular nation. In 1996 the first prolific splinter group was formed, the Special Islamic Regiment (SPIR), followed by the International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB) in 1998 and the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade (RS or commonly referred to as Riyadus Salikhin) in 1999 ("Mapping Militant Organizations," 2014). Infamous Chechen leader Shamil Basayev founded Riyadus Salikhiin and co-founded the IIPB, while having close ties to the SPIR. Basayev had relationships with many individual separatist groups, all of which acted together, sharing fighters, weapons, and funding ("Mapping Militant Organizations," 2014). Basayev was the undisputed face of the resistance from 1991 until his

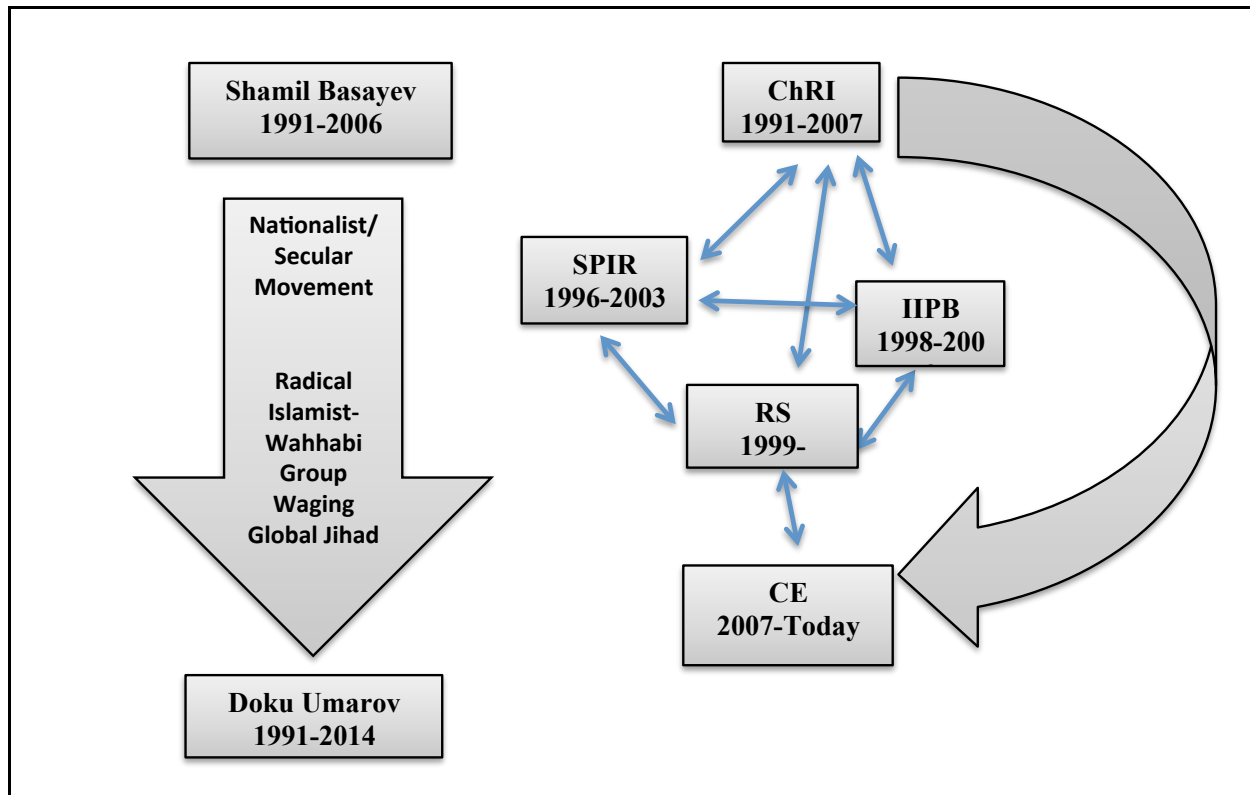
of the CPOST database aware of these issues, some of which remain unchanged. CPOST provides little in the way of operationalization of the information it provides.

death in 2006, and although former President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, and first Emir (ruler) of the Caucasus Emirate, Doku Umarov, was also active during this time, his infamy neatly corresponded with Basayev's death. Umarov was the fifth and final president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. His presidency lasted only one-year, beginning in 2006 and ending in 2007, at which time he declared himself Emir of a larger movement, the Caucasus Emirate (CE).

During Basayev's "reign" he either orchestrated or took part in almost every major terrorist attack against Russia. All groups associated with this movement operated seamlessly and with immense overlap. The leadership structure appeared to be loosely organized with a variety of leaders and groups cross-pollinating, yet interestingly, Basayev always seemed in charge of the entire resistance. Most of the groups associated with the resistance have personal and organizational linkages (Pape & Feldman, 2010).

In sum, and as indicated in Figure 18 below, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria was formed in 1991, and was later joined by SPIR, IIPB, and RS. These groups worked together yet slowly began merging with the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria until Basayev's death in 2006, which punctuated this solidation unification. In 2007, former President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, Doku Umarov, declared the Republic of Ichkeria was no longer a stand alone republic and was now part of the broader, CE, naming himself the first Emir. This effectively dissolved the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and all groups associated with it were now part of the broader CE.

Figure 18. Evolution of Chechen Leaders and Groups, 1991 to 2013



Group Name:	Formed	Disbanded
Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (ChRI or CRI)	1991	2007
Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR)	1996	2003
International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB)	1998	2003
Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade (RS)	1999	2009/Active
Caucasus Emirate (CE)	2007	Active

The CE is a Sulfi nationalist organization consisting of six provinces, located in the North Caucasus, Chechnya, Ingushetia and North Ossetia, Nogay Steppe (Northern Krasnodar Krai and Stavropol Krai), Cherkess and Southern Krasnodar Krai, Dagestan, and Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay, each reporting to their own Emir and then reporting to the Emir of the CE. Umarov served as Emir of the CE up until his death in early 2014. The last piece of this puzzle is the increasing ideological influence of radical religious fundamentalism, or Wahhabism, that funded various groups throughout this period. As the conflict continued so did the influx of funding and

fighters until the stated goal of a sovereign Chechnya became the stated goal of an Islamic Caliphate of the North Caucasus region. Table 22 below gives a more detailed description of each group and their identified leaders.

Table 22. Summary of Major Groups Associated with the Chechen Movement

Group/ Year Established	Leader	Ideology/Collaboration with Other Groups
Chechen Republic of Ichkeria 1991 - 2007	1 st President - Dzhokhar Dudayev : 1991-1996 2 nd President - Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev: 1996-1997 3 rd President - Aslan Maskhadov: 1997-2005 4 th President - “Sheikh” Abdul Sadulayev: 2005-2006 5 th President - Doku Umarov: 2006-2007	Secessionist and internationally unrecognized government of Chechnya. Initially promoted a nationalist and secular ideology, became more religious and radical as the years went on Shared fighters and fought with International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB), Riyadus-Salikhin, and the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) In 2006, the armed forces of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria absorbed the IIPB along with Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR).
Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) 1996-2003	Founded by Arbi Barayev: 1996 to 6/23/01 (1996 to June 23, 2001) Ran w/relative Movsar Barayev: 6/23/01-10/26/02 Amir Khamzat Tazabayev: 10/02 – 2/24/04	The group formed to liberate Chechnya and establish an independent nation Increasingly embraced Wahhabist ideology and global jihad Group said to have disbanded and/or folded into larger Chechen Movement Shared fighters and fought with International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB), Riyadus-Salikhin and the armed forces of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.
International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB) 1998-2006	Shamil Basayev (Co-founder): 1998-2006 Ibn Al-Khattab (Co-founder): 1998-2002 Abu Al-Walid: 2002-2004 Abu Hafs Al-Urduni: 2004-2006	The group aimed to establish an independent Chechnya under Shariah and, eventually, to liberate other parts of the North Caucasus. Shared fighters and fought with the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR), Riyadus-Salikhin, and the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) Al Qaeda (AQ) financiers worked closely with IIPB because it served as a liaison between AQ and other terrorist groups in the region. Throughout the group’s existence, the leaders of IIPB were of Arab

		origin. This helped to integrate foreign, mostly Arab fighters in the North Caucasus into a single organization
Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade 1999-2009/Current	<p>Shamil Basayev (1999 – July 10, 2006)</p> <p>Aslan Butukayev (July 2006 to Unknown)</p>	<p>The group aims to create an independent Chechnya, eventually expanded its original goal of Chechen independence to include independence for the whole North Caucasus.</p> <p>The group ceased most operations with the death of Basayev in 2006. In 2009, Doku Umarov reactivated Riyadus-Salikhin under the Caucasus Emirate (CE)</p> <p>Said to have shared fighters and fought with International Islamic Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB), Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) before becoming a part of the CE.</p>
Caucasus Emirate 2007 - Current	<p>Doku Umarov (October 2007 to March 2014)</p> <p>Ali Abu Muhammad (2007 to Present)</p>	<p>The group aims to establish an independent Caucasus Emirate ruled under Shariah and to wage global jihad</p> <p>Heavily influenced by other sub-national groups, especially the Taliban and Al-Qaeda (AQ). Its shift to a jihadist ideology stems from its growing reliance on and support from these more globally recognized terrorist organizations</p> <p>The Caucasus Emirate's links to AQ and the Taliban began prior to its formation in 2007.</p> <p>The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, Riyadus-Salikhin, the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) and the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB) all had longstanding ties with AQ and the Taliban. These ties endured after the incorporation of all these groups into the Caucasus Emirate.</p>

(Pape & Feldman, 2010; “Mapping Militant Organizations,” 2014)

The Black Widows

A Black Widow in almost any other context denotes a precarious spider whose bite is relatively dangerous to humans especially if that bite comes from a female. Interestingly this is also the term that applies to any female suicide bomber involved in Chechnya's resistance against Russia. "Black Widows" is the designation Russian and Western media outlets gave these women believing that the name embodies the women's motives to kill Russian combatants: "acting in revenge for the death of their husbands, sons, and brothers (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006, p. 63)." The name Black Widow was a term first coined by the Russian and Western media after Chechen rebels seized a theater in Moscow in 2002, even though Black Widow suicide missions had initially begun in the year 2000 (Rueter, 2004). This name has been thought to provide individuals a way to inadvertently make sense of women participating in such atrocious "uncharacteristically violent acts (Struckman, 2010, p. 98)." Table 23 provides other "definitions" of the Black Widows in the literature.

Table 23. Who are the Black Widows?

Myers (2003)	<i>NYT</i> - "The [Russian] news media have fueled the unease with lurid stories about a cadre of female suicide bombers called "Black Widows," said to be planning a series of attacks to avenge the deaths of husbands or other relatives killed by federal forces in Chechnya"
Bloom (2007)	p.87 "In Chechnya, the Black Widows are female suicide bombers who have lost a loved one" p.127 "Black Widows are avenging the death of family members in Russia's conflict in Chechnya"
Richardson (2006)	p.128 "There is a special unit of the Chechen terrorists called the "Black Widows," made up of women who become terrorist once their husbands are killed."
Groskop (2004)	p.32 "Pawns in a man's game"

McDonald (2003)	p. A4 “Tens of thousands [of Chechens] have died in nearly a decade of conflict, and the most desperate and hopeless survivors are said to be young, childless women whose husbands have been killed, kidnapped or gone missing – hence the term ‘Black Widows’.
Pape (2005)	p. 183-184 “The Chechens make such great use of female suicide attackers who have lost husbands or children that there is a colloquial name for them—the Black Widows”

Although the literature reveals a resistance group with the formal name “the Black Widows Brigade” scant information is available on this particular group and no suicide missions are attributed to them. Therefore this study defines a Black Widow as any female suicide bomber involved in the Chechen resistance, and thus treats the Black Widows as an overall phenomenon associated with the Chechen Separatists. The nuances of treating all groups associated with the Chechen movement as a loose knit organization was discussed in the previous section. In line with that, Black Widows are “the females” of the organization and this case study seeks to examine why they were used as suicide bombers by the Chechen movement.

Context for the LTTE’s Decision to use Female Suicide Bombers

This section examines the answers to the five structured-focused comparison questions in order to uncover patterns in the Chechen Separatists’ decision to use female suicide bombers. These questions provide the context needed in order to understand why the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers, when they were used, as well as how often they were used. Although deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors—via the structured-focused comparison questions—unique to the Chechen Separatists, operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the Chechen

Separatists' use of female suicide bombers. This, in turn, led to the conclusion that the Chechen Separatists used Black Widows at instrumental times outside of any established operational patterns in terms of suicide attacks, and for “special” reasons, as indicated by an entire paramilitary operation designed especially for females.

Operational Characteristics of Suicide Missions

The first structured-focused comparison question examines the operational characteristics of each reported suicide mission as defined by CPOST. This case study reports on data from 83 individual suicide attacks made on the part of Chechen Separatists from June of 2000—their first attack—until the end of 2013 (CPOST, 2014). The characteristics of each of the 83 suicide attacks will be examined making special note of any patterns that emerge from differences between male and female suicide attacks. It is important to examine the suicide attacks from a variety of vantage points as to not miss any important details that could aid in understanding why males or females were selected for suicide missions by their sponsoring organizations. To aid in this analysis the author also reviewed a total of 324 primary sources, about two to eight sources per attack. These sources consisted of news sources around the world associated with these attacks, which were available on the CPOST website. This section looks at various characteristics of the Chechen Separatists' suicide tactics, beginning with a general overview of attacks by gender, moving to an examination of the groups' methods of attacks, followed by a review of their targets, assassinations performed by the group, as well as “team attacks.” The section then concludes by looking at any operational suicide attack anomalies—or deviations from the Chechen Separatists operational “norms”—discovered in the preceding sections as well as any additional findings. Each of these sections first considers how the organization operated

with both genders and then looks at each gender separately to search for patterns within each subsection.

This section reaches six conclusions based on a summary of patterns found regarding the terrorist organization's operations: 1) female bombers were used more, earlier in the conflict, with their highest frequency in 2003, where eight of the ten suicide missions were performed with females involved; 2) females were not used alone in truck bombings, nor did they take place in a single car bombing suicide mission, although this method of attack was used a total of 21 times by the organization, giving some indication the males were used more for the "day-to-day maintenance" suicide operations while females were sent on prolific "errands"; 3) females were used for every assassination mission ($n = 4$) where appearance of the individual made a difference in gaining access to a target and where PBIED's were used (three belt bombs and one "other PBIED"), suggesting that the organization made a tactical decision when choosing to send a male or female bomber on such missions.

The final subsection examines those suicide attacks perpetrated by females occurring outside of "standard operating procedures" as identified in this section. Therefore, the fourth, fifth, and six conclusions reached in this section are: 4) there was a special female taskforce formally organized under the name "Operation Boomerang" by Chechen leader Shamil Basayev, which was tasked with killing Russian citizens indicating that gender mattered, and to that end, more media coverage was garnered when females (as opposed to males) targeted civilians; 5) females were involved in the most "spectacular" attacks performed by the Chechen Separatists: Dubrovka Theater siege, Beslan elementary school siege, attacks involving commercial airplanes, city subways, a rock concert, and the attack in front of the historic National Hotel opposite the Kremlin which is located in the heart of Moscow—these also attracted more

publicity for the movement; lastly 6) females were used in Moscow 80 percent of the time, as opposed to males 20 percent of the time.

These last three findings—four through six—lend credence to the fact that information about suicide attacks in terms of media coverage flowed most freely when suicide attacks targeted civilians; gender is known for all attacks in this dataset where civilians were targeted. The fact that the only time gender did not go “unknown” was when attacks were carried out against civilians speaks to the very reason Chechen Separatists use female suicide bombers; they used these signals because they knew the media would cover the stories. Wide-spread coverage means more chance for the sponsoring organization’s messages to be delivered to their intended audiences.

Overview of Suicide Attacks by Gender

Table 24 below displays the types of attacks as coded by the author; there are 11 different categorizations for “type of attack,” with three main categories: “Checkpoint,” “Close contact bombing - civilians,” “Close contact bombing - Military/Police/Political,” which are further divided, as well as eight other categories of attacks—all of these attacks are further analyzed throughout this section.

Table 24. Chechen Separatists Suicide Bombings by Type of Attack and Gender

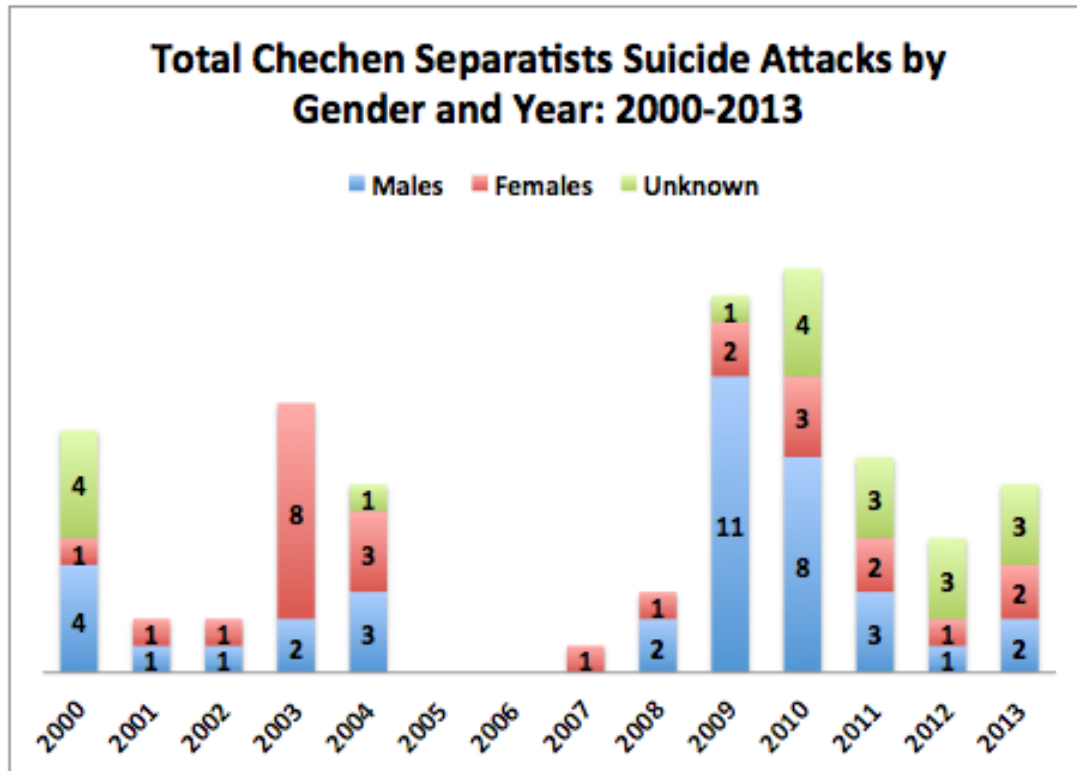
Type of Attack	Females	Males	Unknown	Total
1. "Escape bombing"		5		5
2. Airplane suicide bombing	2			2
3. Airport		1		1
4. Assassination	4	2	4	10
5. Checkpoint (Totals)	1	12	4	17
Belt bomb	1	5	1	7
Car bomb		5	3	8
Truck bomb		2		2
6. Close contact bombing - civilians (Totals)	5	2	1	8
Bus transporting Russian civilians	1			1
Civilian bus stop	1			1
Policemen attending funeral			1	1
Polling Station		1		1
Rock Festival	1			1
Russian civilians at National Hotel, opposite the Kremlin	1			1
Taxi (minibus) transporting Dagestani civilians	1			1
Trolleybus transporting Russian civilians		1		1
7. Close contact bombing - military/police/political (Totals)	6	5	2	13
Approached police patrol/outside police station	5	2	2	9
Bicycle bomb	1	1		2
Bomb outside of concert hall		1		1
Stormed Chechen Parliament building		1		1
8. Commuter Train		2		2
9. Metro suicide bombing	3	1		4
10. Truck and car bomb driven to and exploded at either a Police or Governmental target	5	7	8	20
11. Truck and car bomb driven to and exploded at target		1		1
	26	38	19	83

According to the data, the Chechen Separatists were responsible for 83 suicide attacks—26 of which involved females—resulting in approximately 776 fatalities and 2,526 injuries (CPOST, 2014).³² Unlike any other contemporary terrorist movement to date, females were part of the Chechen Separatists' first recorded suicide mission. Ten months after the start of the Second Chechen war—on June 7, 2000—Khava Barayeva (a relative of Movsar Barayev, a

³² The two mass hostage-taking events are not included as part of the 83 attacks and thus some of the analysis in this section (unless specifically stated) given the unique nature of the attacks. The two events will each be discussed in detail and any insight they provide in answering this study's research question(s) will be explored. It is important to note that controversy exists as to whether the individuals involved in these attacks did in fact plan on self-detonation, as the hostage takers were either killed by the deadly gas the Russian Special Forces used or gun shots, thus it is impossible to know with 100 percent certainty if the hostages would have exploded themselves. However, research by Speckhard & Akmedova (2008) suggests that there has been "strong confirmation" the hostage-takers had every intent on self-detonation, and therefore will be classified as suicide bombers within the text of this study (p. 119).

leader of SPIR) and Luiza Magamadova drove a truck packed with explosives into a temporary compound for Russia's elite Interior Ministry (OMON) paramilitary police in Alkhan-Yurt, Chechnya (CPOST, 2014). This contemporary, well-rehearsed “copy-cat” suicide mission, carried out by two females nonetheless, catapulted the conflict to center stage stardom. The Russo-Chechen wars and accompanied humanitarian concerns, although minimally acknowledged by many worldwide, did not receive continued international attention until this attack. The Chechen Separatists have also been responsible for the two largest mass hostage-taking events associated with suicide terrorism to date: the Dubrovka Theater Siege (also known as Nord Ost) in Moscow and the Beslan elementary school siege in North Ossetia (Speckhard & Akmedova, 2008, p. 100). Black Widows would go on to carry out suicide mission operations in three Moscow metro stations, on commuter trains, at a rock concert, on two commercial airplanes, as well as numerous other suicide attacks in and around Chechnya and Dagestan (CPOST, 2014). As the chart below illustrates, female bombers were most active in 2003, performing eight out of the 11 suicide attacks performed by the Chechen Separatists; in the Chechen Separatists’ next most “active” year, 2010, females only participated in three attacks.

Figure 19. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks by Gender, 2000-2013



Methods or Modi Operandi

As indicated in Figure 20 below, the Chechen Separatists primarily used belt bombs and car bombs, using these methods of attack 41 and 22 times respectively (CPOST, 2014). Truck bombs were used 14 times, half of those “types” occurred within the first six months of the conflict, hinting at the fact that the Chechens were committed to a tactic they knew would work before trying others. When looking at vehicular bombings—those performed using cars and trucks—it appears that although the movement seemed to have a preference for belt bombs, they also employed vehicular bombs almost half the time. Figure 21 shows attacks by methods and gender; the only glaring difference seems to be in the number of attacks females were involved in using car bombs (zero attacks) as opposed to males who used car bombs 13 times. The most prevalent use of truck bombs and car bombs occurred when they were “driven to and exploded at

either a police or government target,” 20 times, followed by their use at checkpoints, 11 times, and lastly, they were used in 4 assassination attempts. Interestingly, females never took part in a truck bombing alone, while males did so 5 times; even more interesting, however, is the fact that males took part in lone car bombings 12 times as compared to zero times for females. This is significant even when accounting for that fact that males were involved in a total of 12 more attacks than females—38 as compared to 26 where gender is known—in this data set. As indicated in Figure 21 below, females were only involved in five truck bombs, all were in groups, and all but one—the first suicide attack made by the Chechen Separatists—males accompanied females.

Figure 20. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks by Method, 2000-2013

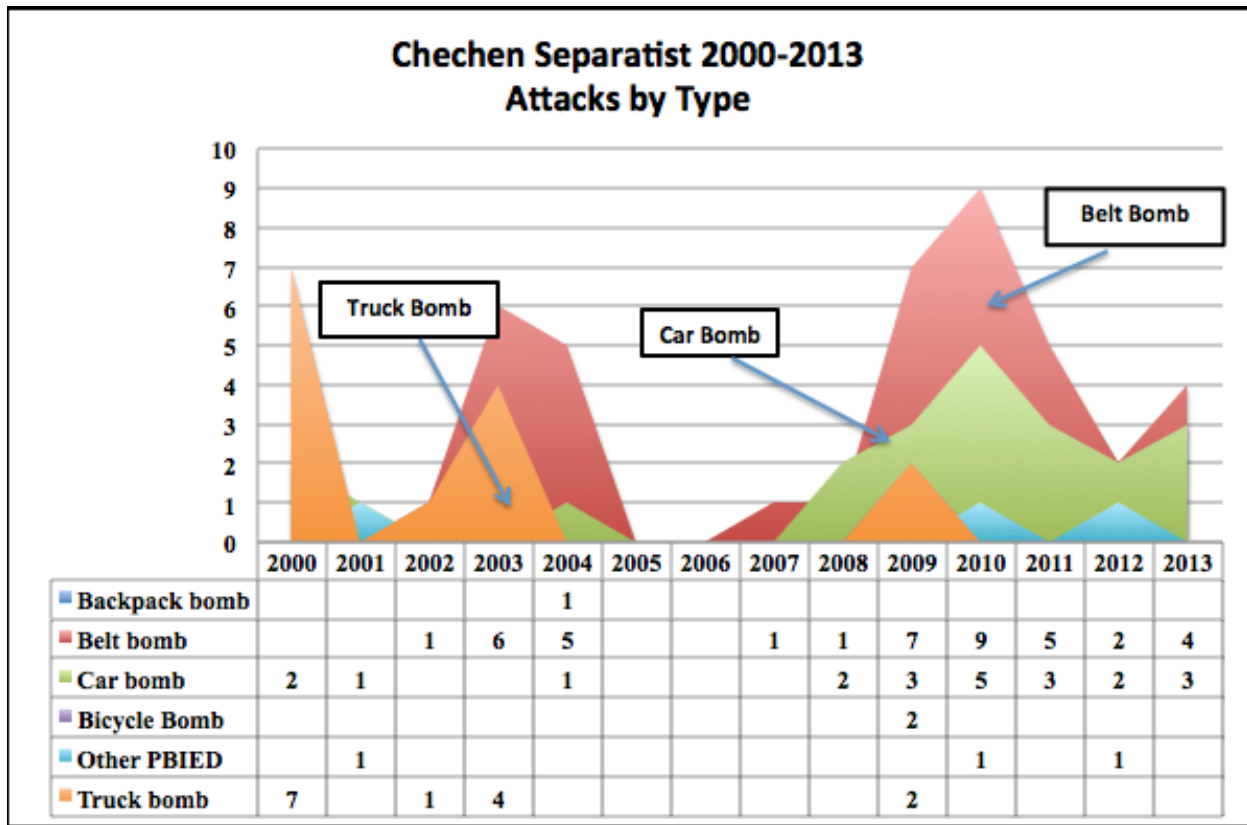
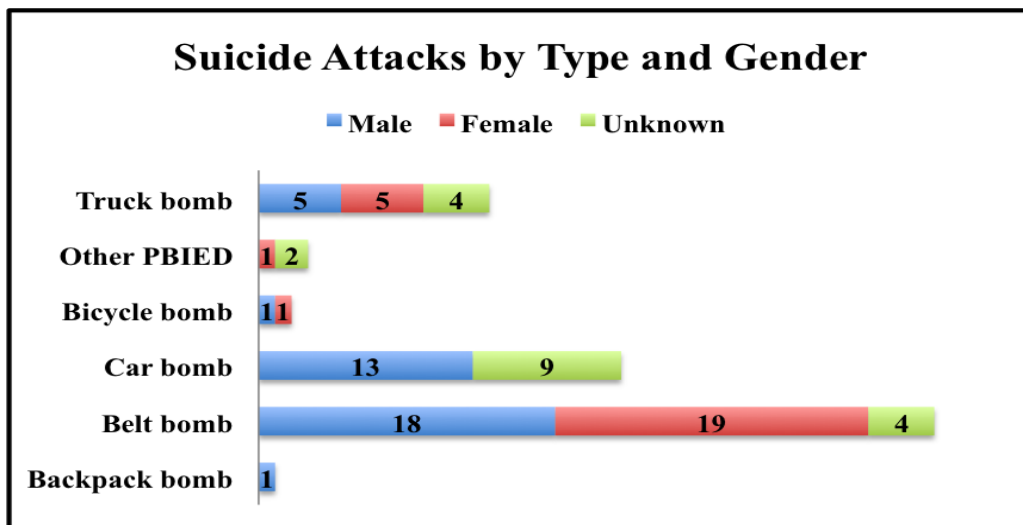


Figure 21. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks by Method and Gender, 2000-2013



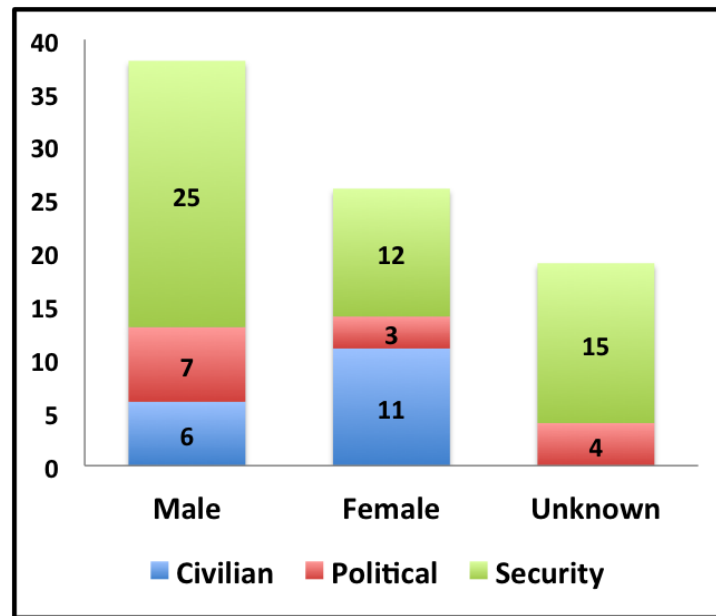
Targets

As far as whom the Chechen Separatists targeted with their suicide attacks, Figure 22 illustrates that between 2000 and 2013 the Chechen Separatists targeted “security” 63 percent of the time, “civilians” 20 percent of the time, and “political” targets 17 percent of the time. Attacks coded as “security” included a wide range of specific targets, including checkpoints as well as various police targets; policemen on patrol and many police headquarters/stations were targeted.

Figure 22. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks by Target Type, 2000-2013



Figure 23. Chechen Separatists Female Suicide Attacks by Type of Target, 2000-2013



Four of the five author-coded “escape attacks” were personal borne improvised explosive devices (PBIEDs) that the suicide attacker detonated after being cornered or detained by police officers, leaving the ultimate destination unknown. The majority of political targets were assassinations, discussed at length below. Civilian targets are of interest here given the data reveal that the Chechen Separatists targeted civilians 20 percent of the time, with females being involved 65 percent of the time. If the infamous Dubrovka theater siege and Beslan elementary school siege are included, females were involved in 72 percent of all attacks perpetrated by the Chechen Separatists that targeted civilians. A brief summary of each of these events is warranted.

Dubrovka Theater Siege. The Dubrovka Theater siege began on October 23, 2002 when 40 Chechen rebels—19 of which were Black Widows—stormed the theater in the middle of the popular musical performance of Nord Ost (Speckhard & Akmedova, 2008). There were

approximately 900 people in the theater at the time, a few were able to escape during the initial overtaking, the rest were held for roughly three days as the Chechen Rebels stated their one demand: Russian troops must leave Chechnya in seven days, or the theater would be blown up (Krechetnikov, 2012; Pape & Feldman, 2010, p. 267). The siege finally ended when Russian forces gassed the theater in an effort to lure the attackers into sleep, the result, however, was the death of all the attackers and 129 of the hostages (Speckhard & Akmedova, 2008, p. 101). Many questions are left unanswered surrounding this incident, especially by family members of those involved in the attack who are told that their loved ones simply died of natural causes. Their deaths are not attributed to the lethal gas that was pumped into the building but instead—as Russian President Vladimir Putin explains—the theatergoers died because of "chronic illness" and merely "the fact that they had been forced to remain in the building" (Mill, 2012).

This attack undermined the confidence Russian citizens had in President Putin's ability to take care of the situation in Chechnya, and shockingly made many Russian citizens sympathize with the Chechen's apparent plight, one that was so desperate as to force them to engage in such a horrific act. Up until this point the Chechen resistance and its corresponding suicide missions had been receiving declining media attention, due partly to the locations of such attacks (solely around the North Caucasus region), and because Russian combatants had been the main targets. Some argue that taking the terror to Moscow was part of a strategic plan to gain the public's attention, which they succeeded in doing (Rueter, 2004, p. 16). This attack catapulted the "Chechen crisis" from a peripheral guerilla conflict to a front page war once again; the media would go on to pay close attention to this conflict—lime lighting females—as a result of this event. In 2010, a public opinion poll showed that 74 percent of Russians still did not fully trust the official version of the event given to them by their government (Krechetnikov, 2012)

While the first attack perpetrated by the Chechen Separatists made international news, it was not until the Dubrovka Theater siege that this attention translated to something close to support for the plight of the Chechen people, and in turn, for the movement as a whole.³³ This support by the general public quickly dwindled in the aftermath of the botched 2004 Beslan elementary school siege.

Beslan Elementary School Siege. Just two years after the Dubrovka Theater siege, on September 1, 2004 another hostage situation occurred on the first day of elementary school in Beslan, North Ossetia (also a former Soviet Republic and now part of the Russian Federation) (Nivat, 2005). This attack was extremely well organized; weapons and explosives had been pre-positioned throughout the school prior to the attack where more than 1,300 hostages, most of which were women and children, were held for three days without food and water (Speckhard, 2008, p. 1027). The hostages were to remain as such until the demands of the resistance were met: remove Russian troops from Chechnya (Nivat, 2005). The often cited, but unconfirmed, story that the two Black Widows involved in this siege, (out of the approximately 19 individuals), openly spoke out against the leaders of the siege expressing their dismay by saying: “You didn’t tell us we’d have to kill innocent children” (Speckhard, 2008, p. 1027; Nivat, 2005, p. 415). Some of their male counterparts reportedly agreed and the leader supposedly killed them by detonating some of the explosives that were planted around the room. Purportedly this noise is what caused parents and Russian assault forces to storm the building (Speckhard, 2008, p. 1027;

³³ Just to reiterate, while the Dubrovka Theater siege and the Beslan elementary school siege are significant events perpetrated by the Chechen Separatists and discussed throughout this study, they are not included in the overall analysis of the tactical innovation model or the signaling model. These attacks or mass-hostage taking events are characteristically different than all of the other suicide attacks under inquiry and therefore not comparable.

Nivat, 2005, p. 415).

Assassinations

This study examined a total of 10 assassination attempts made by Chechen Separatist suicide bombers from 2000 to 2013; of those 10, four were performed by individuals of unknown gender, leaving six attacks under inquiry. For the purposes of this study, in trying to understand the differences between the organizational use of male and female suicide bombers—if any—and postulating that females are unassuming and therefore better able to get closer to targets, suicide missions that were coded as assassinations but performed by “hit and run” tactics are not included in effective or lethality calculations. The rationale for this—as explained in the previous case—is as follows: when looking at assassinations by cars versus an individual with a PBIED one is inherently “more personal” requiring a more intimate encounter—the PBIED—with a purposive target. It also requires that the bomber be more unassuming, which an individual in an explosive laden vehicle with the capability of racing into targets need not worry about. Given this operationalization of events, Table 25 below shows that there were a total of four assassination suicide missions (out of a total of 10) that could be analyzed with the criteria of gender known *and* performed by an individual with a PBIED ($n=4$).³⁴ Of those four, females were sent every time, “succeeding” half the time, meaning females were chosen over males because they offered the organization a tactical advantage. Here again, the organization thought, as the tactical innovation model suggests, that female bombers had a better chance of gaining access to individual targets.

³⁴ CPOST coded nine suicide attacks as “assassinations,” I added one more based on a description of the attack by sources in the database. It was the only civilian assassination in the dataset.

Table 25. Chechen Separatists Suicide Assassination Information, 2000-2013

Year	Method	# Killed	Target	Target Type	Female?	Killed Target
2001	Car bomb*	1	Movsar Timerbayev, Administrative Head of Argun	Political	No	Yes
2001	Other PBIED	3	Russian Commandant of Chechnya's Urus-Martan District Geydar Gadzhiyev	Security	Yes	Yes
2003	Belt bomb	16	Chechen pro-Russian leader Akhmad Kadyrov	Political	Yes	No
2003	Belt bomb	1	Ramzan Kadyrov, son of acting President Akhmat Kadyrov and head of his security service	Security	Yes	No
2008	Car bomb*	1	Musa Medov, Ingushetian Interior Minister	Political	No	No
2011	Belt bomb	7	Anti-rebel sufi cleric Sheikh Said Afandi	Civilian	Yes	Yes

	Assasination attempts	Killed Target	Effective?	Total # killed	Lethality
Female	4	2	50%	27	6.75
Male	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The remaining two assassinations were performed by males with car bombs, the first of which was the initial assassination mission performed by the Chechen Separatists. On September 17, 2001, Movsar Timerbayev, Administrative Head of Argun was killed when a male bomber drove an explosive laden vehicle into his house. Almost exactly seven years later, another male suicide bomber using a car bomb as a weapon attempted to assassinate Musa Medov, Ingushetian Interior Minister and failed.

Team Attacks

Unlike the LTTE, the data suggest that the Chechen Separatists did not send as many teams of suicide bombers, only 12 out of the 83 total attacks were performed in teams, with females being involved in six out of the 12. Stated differently, females were sent on team attacks

with other bombers 50 percent of the time.³⁵ Table 26 below provides details of these 12 team attacks as well as the two mass hostage-taking sieges perpetrated by the Chechen Separatists. Of these 14 attacks, five were performed in pairs, six were performed in groups of three, the Dubrovka Theater and Beslan elementary school siege were performed by 40 and 34 attackers respectively, and one was performed with a group of seven individuals.³⁶ All but one of the “target types” for team attacks were political or security. In these team attacks several different methods were used: seven out of the 14 of the attacks involved a “truck or car bomb driven to and exploded at either a police or government target”; two were coded as “escape bombings”; one was an assassination; one involved three males storming a Chechen Parliament building; finally, the only attack to target civilians occurred at a popular rock festival in a heavily populated venue (CPOST, 2014). This last suicide attack took place on July 5, 2003, when two females detonated their suicide belts at the Krylya Rock Festival held in the Tushino airfield in Moscow. More than 40,000 individuals were in attendance to see Russian band Crematorium, the first bomber detonated her explosives at one of the entrances and the second female detonated her explosives about ten minutes later at one of the exits, 17 people were killed and 40 to 60 wounded (Karush, 2003).

³⁵ Although the Dubrovka Theater siege and Beslan elementary school siege would fit the “team attack” operationalization, these two events deserve focused attention, while the author does in fact count them as suicide attacks, they are different in that they included the taking of hostages.

³⁶ CPOST coded nine suicide attacks as “assassinations,” the author added one more based on a description of the attack by sources in the database. It was the only civilian assassination in the dataset.

Table 26. Chechen Separatists Suicide Team Attack Information, 2000-2013

Attack Date	# killed	Province	Target	Weapon	SB by Gender
6/7/00	2	Chechnya	Compound for Russia's elite Interior Ministry (OMON) Paramilitary Police	Truck bomb	2 females
10/22-10/24 2002	129	Moscow	Dubrovka Theater	Hostage situation	21 males, 19 females
12/27/02	72	Chechnya	Chechen Government Administration Compound	Truck bomb	2 males, 1 female
5/12/03	41	Chechnya	Russian Federal Security Service (FSS) building	Truck bomb	2 males, 1 female
6/20/03	6	Chechnya	Chechen Governmental Complex	Truck bomb	1 male, 1 female
7/5/03	17	Moscow	Krylya Rock Festival	Belt bomb	2 females
9/15/03	3	Ingushetia	Regional Federal Security Service (FSB) Headquarters	Truck bomb	1 male, 1 female
9/1-9/3 2004	330	North Osetia	Beslan School	Hostage situation	32 males, 2 females
8/30/08	1	Chechnya	Vedeno Russian Military Base	Car bomb	2 males
8/27/09	0	Chechnya	Chechen Police Patrol	Belt bomb	2 males
8/30/10	5	Chechnya	Russia-backed Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov	Other PBIED	7 unknown
10/19/10	3	Chechnya	Chechen Parliament Members	Belt bomb	3 males
8/30/11	9	Chechnya	Grozny Parliament Building and First Responders	Belt bomb	1 male, 2 unknown
5/3/12	13	Dagestan	Dagestani Traffic Police Post and First Responders	Car bomb	2 unknown

Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies

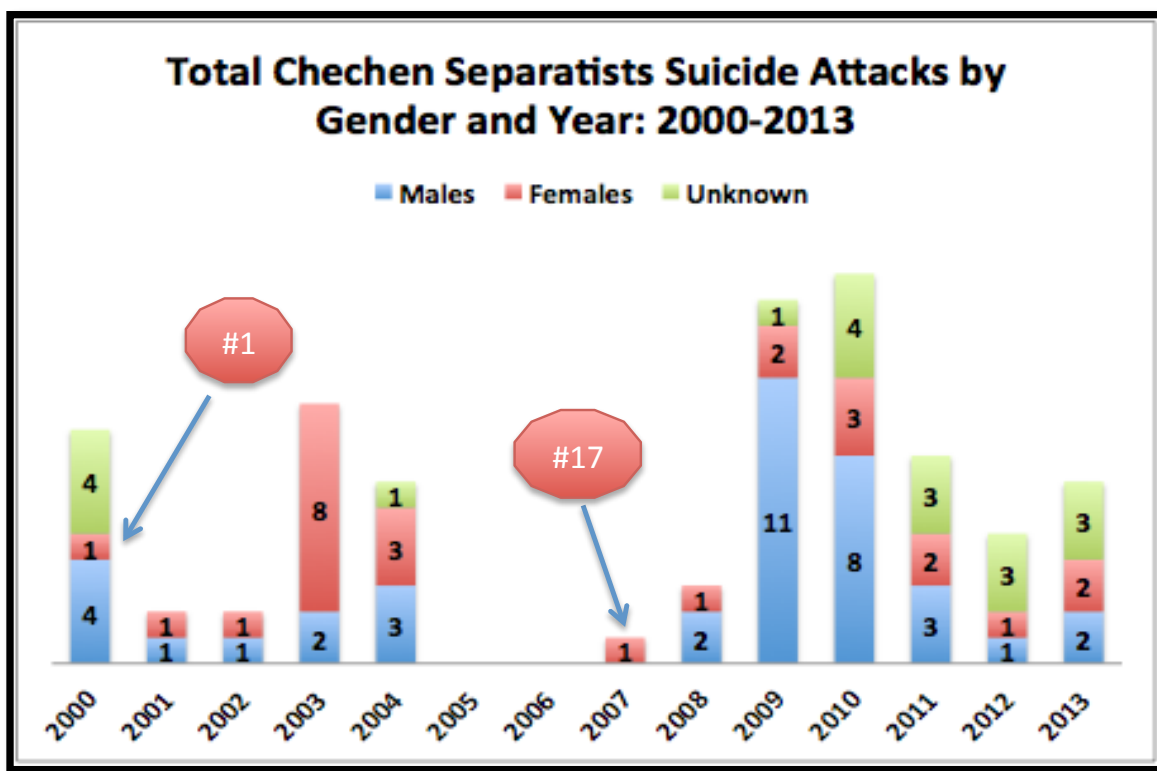
The above section looked at the operational characteristics of 83 suicide attacks—via an overview of suicide attacks by gender, methods or modi operandi, targets, assassinations, and team attacks—performed by males and females of the Chechen Separatists to see if those characteristics produced any patterns pointing to the use of one gender over the other. This section's purpose was to identify deviations from those patterns in hopes of explaining why, when, and how the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers differently. Thirteen operational suicide attack anomalies were found; two of these suicide attacks were performed at instrumental or key times during the Russo-Chechen conflict, eight received a “special” designation by way of implementing an entire paramilitary operation—Operation Boomerang—for the Black Widows. Three additional suicide operations fell outside of “normal operating procedures”—but did not seem to fall specifically at instrumental times in the conflict, nor were

they attributed to Operation Boomerang. The details of these suicide attacks included such descriptors as “only” and “firsts” [of that kind], two performed against civilians on a city bus and at a busy city bus stop, and a third, involved a family of three.

Timing of Suicide Attacks. Figure 24 below presents two suicide attacks that were performed at instrumental or key times during the Russo-Chechen conflict.

- The Chechen Separatists chose females for their first suicide bomber attack on June 7, 2000—sending two females with an explosive laden lorry barreling into an army base in Alkan-Yurt, just miles south of the Chechen capital Grozny. The Chechen Separatists most likely gave thought to how they should execute their first suicide mission, and if history had taught any lessons, it had worked for Hezbollah in 1983 and for the LTTE in a copycat version of Hezbollah’s attack in 1987; the Chechen Separatists made one adjustment however, they decided to use females. This attack did far more damage than killing two Russian servicemen, it signaled escalation on the part of the Chechen movement and marked a change in the movement’s tactics.
- The first suicide attack after a 1,060-day lull occurred on October 23, 2007. This was the longest amount of time between any suicide attacks. A female suicide bomber detonated herself in a shared taxi cab among civilian targets but killed no one.

Figure 24. Chechen Separatists Female Suicide Attacks at “Instrumental” Times in the Russo-Chechen Conflict, 2000-2013



Operation Boomerang. In contrast to female suicide bombers being used at instrumental times during the Russo-Chechen conflict, the Black Widow’s “special” nature extended to an entire paramilitary operation—a total of eight suicide attacks in this case study are attributed to this operation—created for their use.

In many primary sources associated with this CPOST (2014) database, Chechen leader Basayev makes numerous references to what he refers to as “Operation Boomerang;” a group of Black Widows tasked at reaping havoc on the Russian populace by killing as many civilians as possible through the systematic use of suicide bombings. His references to this Operation in a variety of news reports help to piece together the exact bombings that are included in this. In July of 2003 he was quoted as saying he is starting a campaign called “Boomerang” that will

bring “targeted vengeance” to Russian cities and towns (LaFraniere & Baker, 2003, A17). Another journalist reported that “A Chechen warlord [Basayev] earlier this year vowed to unleash dozens of female suicide bombers on Russian targets and other attacks are therefore likely, he warned that he had trained at least 30 female suicide bombers and would unleash them on the Russians” (Thuburn, 2003). In August 2003, Basayev commented on two operations carried out by shahids martyrs in Mozdok and Chechnya in June (of 2003) (BBC Monitoring, 2003). In his interview with the Shariat Shari’ah news agency he stated:

[The attacks] were the destruction of a bus carrying Russian pilots and the blowing up of the occupiers' department to combat organized crime, which the Russian command presented as an "attempt to blow up the building of the Ministry of Justice". Both operations were prepared and carried out by the department for special operations of the Riyadus Salikhin brigade," Abdullah Shamil said. "The first operation was named Boomerang. A 23-year-old Chechen girl blew up the infidels in Mozdok on 5 June, killing 20 employees of the local airbase, the main facility of the occupation troops in the North Caucasus. It is from the Mozdok base that the terrorist war is waged against Chechen civilians. The deaths of thousands of Chechen civilians is on the conscience of this particular base. "The next operation was the blowing up of the occupiers' department to combat organized crime on 20 June, as a result of which 25 occupiers were killed and 39 wounded. It was prepared and implemented as part of the Tornado-antiterror' operation by an 18-year-old mojahed of Nogay nationality and a Chechen girl (video footage will be available some time later) (BBC, 2003).

The two airline bombings perpetrated by females that took place on August 8th, 2004—one en route from Moscow to Sochi, and the other from Moscow to Volgograd—are also thought to be a part of Operation Boomerang; this disaster has been dubbed “Russia’s 9/11” by media sources.

While the exact number of attacks associated with Operation Boomerang is unclear, the fact that Basayev stated that all operations involved would include female suicide bombers and civilian targets in and around 2003 helps to give a pretty clear indication of which attacks he was referring to. The operation’s first attack most likely started with the first suicide attack following

the Dubrovka Siege on December 12, 2002 and ended sometime around the Beslan Siege in 2004. If we use these two events as a “start” and “stopping” point for Operation Boomerang, the Chechen Separatists were involved in 15 suicide attacks during this time period, 11 of which involved females. In other words females perpetrated nearly 75 percent of attacks during the two years of Operation Boomerang. While this in itself is prolific, of greater importance is the creation of an operation just for females, and to that end, to use these females to inflict damage on Russian civilians. Basayev was aware that there was something different about using females. He made a point to not only threaten their use, but to institute an entire operation contingent on the “special nature” of female bombers—the novelty, the allure of female bombers—gave a face to the Chechen conflict beginning in 2000. Basayev knew this and used these symbolic signals continuously for two years. The end of their systematic use was punctuated by the Beslan elementary school siege, as was the end of suicide attacks by both genders for two years.³⁷

Further, three out of the four highest casualty attacks involved females; the largest suicide attack performed on December 27, 2002 killed 72 individuals, followed by the infamous twin plane bombing suicide attacks on August 24, 2004—one en route from Moscow to Sochi and the other en route from Moscow to Volgograd—killing 46 and 43, respectfully for a total of 89 people, making it the most lethal day for the Chechen Separatists in regards to single person suicide attacks. Included in these “spectacular” bombings including suicide attacks by air (n=2), outside of or on a busy city subway (n=3), at a rock concert (n=1), or outside a historic national hotel opposite the Kremlin (n=1). Each of these attacks were perpetrated by females, against

³⁷ There is an attack listed in the database dated 11/27/04, however it appears that this bombing was not intentional and detonated only because of a possible arrest. There does appear to be a two-year lag in intentional suicide missions perpetrated by the Chechen Separatists.

civilians—many part of Operation Boomerang—in heavily populated venues to inflict maximum “wow effects” and create an avenue for free publicity.

There was also an interesting pattern found in regards to geographic locations where male and female suicide bombers performed suicide missions. The two most frequently attacked geographic locations were the capital of Chechnya, Grozny, 19 times, 17 of which gender was known, followed by Moscow, which had nine attacks.

Table 27. “Suicide Attacks by Geographic Location” Finding

Location of attacks	# of Suicide attacks			Percent of:	
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Chechnya	13	4	17	76%	24%
Moscow	2	7	9	22%	78%

Female bombers were involved in 40 percent of all attacks for the Chechen Separatists where the gender of the bomber was known, but involved in 78 percent of the suicide attacks that took place in Moscow and only 24 percent of the attacks that took place in Grozny. Females were used in the most “spectacular attacks” in heavily populated areas—Moscow is roughly 10 times the size of Grozny population-wise—where the terrorist organization made a calculated decision to place females in big ticket arenas to deliver a showcased symbolic performance. The most heavily populated geographic location in Sri Lanka is the capital, Colombo, no such pattern was found here in regards to male and female suicide bombers being used by the organization. The only “outlier” in regards to geographic location, was the sole suicide attack that occurred outside of Sri Lanka, executed in India by the LTTE’s first female suicide bomber in 1991.

Other Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies. Another operational suicide attack anomaly occurred on December 27th, 2002—only two months after the Dubrovka Theater siege was staged, another attempt was made by the Chechen Separatists to appeal to the populace—a family of three, a father, son, and his daughter, drove two explosive laden lorries into a government complex in Gronzy (“Suicide Family,” 2003). More important than the attack itself is the statement made by Basayev in its aftermath. Basayev said the suicide attack was a “heroic act” carried out by “a simple Chechen family” – clearly an attempt to portray the attack as an act of desperation and civilian sacrifice as a result of the war on “Russian occupation” aimed at garnering sympathy and support for the Chechen cause (“Suicide Family,” 2003).

Popular Support

Similar to the LTTE, the lack of data on popular support—related to the second structured-focused comparison question—for suicide operations in general, and female suicide bombings in particular, makes it difficult to draw any conclusions as to whether or not the community embraced this tactic, and what effect this had on the decision to use female suicide bombers. Information regarding ebbs and flows in public opinion of female suicide missions, and/or variations in recruitment numbers directly following suicide attacks involving females could aid in a better understanding of popular support.

Public support, or perhaps stated better as sympathy for the Chechen resistance by those living in Chechnya, the entire Russian Federation, and abroad, changed as the organization’s tactics became more extreme as indicated by the increasing number of attacks taking place outside of Chechnya and against civilians—especially children. Much of the support the Chechen resistance had gained, came to an end with the over-taking of the Beslan elementary

school in North Ossetia in 2004, where the public watched children being shot in the back while trying to run from the school (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006b).

Community support or a culture of martyrdom, a noted necessity for terrorist organizations that engage in suicide bombings—seen in Palestinian occupied territory as well as northern and eastern Sri Lanka when the Tamil Tigers were operational—is not readily apparent in Chechnya or the rest of the Caucasus. As of 2006, the public as a whole favored peace at the price of national independence and did not support violence, especially violence targeted towards civilians (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006b, p. 441; Kurtz & Bartles, 2007). Unlike the heroine rhetoric that surrounded the infamous “firsts” in female suicide attacks in Palestinian territory—Wafa Idris in 2002 or the LTTE’s Dhanu in 1991—the Chechen Separatists’ “firsts,” Khava Baraeva and Luiza Magomadova, received no such notoriety. Needless to say, Chechen children—especially females—are not indicated in the literature as wanting to follow in the footsteps of the first Chechen martyrs. In fact, families of female martyrs in the Tamil and Palestinian cultures often times held celebrations and were visited by adorning fans, whereas relatives of the Black Widows lived in fear of being abducted by government officials or killed by neighbors who were tired of war (Nivat, 2008). The only “positive” attention given to these attacks, or any suicide attack perpetrated by female bombers in this movement, was justification by Chechen leader Basayev (as discussed in the “Operations” section) or as a result of the Dubrovka Theater siege, as indicated by various news accounts which seemingly fostered not only public interest but sympathy for the Chechens plight (Speck, 2008). During the first Chechen War (1994-1996), 70 percent of the Russian people opposed the war and a 1998 public opinion poll showed that 82 percent preferred Chechen independence as a way to end the conflict (Russell 2005, p. 105; Pain, 2000, p. 60). While the Dubrovka Theater siege had thrust the

Chechen movement into the public's view in a somewhat favorable manner, creating an anti-Russian sentiment, the Beslan elementary school siege and the attacks on children had a very different effect. Any popular support the movement had mustered was quickly quelled by this attack.

As far as popular support is concerned, it could well be inferred that the paucity of praise for female suicide bombers, or suicide bombing in general, is a result of one of the following: 1) Chechens have never embraced a culture of martyrdom, or 2) there is not enough information to make an informed proclamation either way given the fearful society in which Chechens lives. Information coming out of Chechnya has been limited at best, due to its geographic location and overall lack of infrastructure; one of the primary reasons of increased media coverage of the area and of the conflict is most likely the movement's use of female suicide bombers in 2000. In either case, no deductions can be drawn as to whether or not the community embraced this tactic, and to what affect this had on the decision to use females as suicide bombers.

Rival Terrorist Organizations

The third structured-focused comparison question looks at the Chechen Separatists' relationship with rival terrorist organizations and if these relationships had any bearing on the Chechen Separatists' decision to use female suicide bombers. No information is found to support the idea that rival groups or rivalries between groups affected the organization's decision to use females for suicide bombing missions. As discussed at great length in the beginning of this chapter, all major groups associated with this movement worked closely with one another. While it would be wrong to assume there were not rifts among certain members and other smaller peripheral groups, there is no indication of rival terrorist organizations within the

Chechen movement, certainly none that would orchestrate the use of female bombers in order to propel their status over the others.

Counterterrorism Events

This section looks at counterterrorism events—related to the fourth structured-focused comparison question—associated with the Russo-Chechen conflict between the years 2000 and 2013 in an effort to see if any counterterrorism events preceded the use of female suicide bombers. Table 28 below displays all counterterrorism events associated with this conflict—seven total events—as well as all suicide bombings that were performed around that time.³⁸ In contrast to the LTTE case, no patterns were found between any counterterrorism events and suicide attacks—by males or females—related to military offenses by the Russian army.

Russia had, however, instituted two pieces of counterterrorism legislation that provided the framework by which counterterrorism policies were used against all individuals associated with the Chechen Separatist movement. In 1998, just before the start of the second Russo-Chechen war, the Russian government adopted the Federal Law “On Combating Terrorism” which, among other things, established Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB) as one of the top

³⁸ As noted in the methodology, this section defines counterterrorism events as any event having to do with the conflict in Chechnya, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the counterterrorism event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

agencies responsible for combating terrorism (Omelicheva, 2009). This agency, along with a few others, had no oversight and had the impunity of the military and special task forces. They were authorized to engage in “mop-up” and liquidation missions, abductions, summary executions, and torture tactics at their leisure (Omelicheva, 2009). The second Federal Law, “On Counteraction to Terrorism,” (passed in 2006) was similar to its predecessor but added the following: 1) increased military operations outside of the Chechen Republic, which increased Russia’s military presence all around the North Caucasus; 2) the Kremlin expanded controls over mass media and political life; and 3) the Law further legitimized the use of armed force against anything it deemed a “counterterrorism mission” (Omelicheva, 2009). In April 2009, Russia announced that its official decade-old “counterterrorist operation” was over and that the region had stabilized enough to devolve power to local governing bodies, consisting of Russian backed individuals and institutions (“Chechnya,” 2014).

It is fair to say that these two pieces of legislation aimed at combating terrorism did little more than add fuel to an already hot fire. The first counter-terrorism policy was put into place in 1998; the first suicide attack was performed in June of 2000. The second piece of legislation was adopted in March of 2006, at a time when suicide missions had been suspended as a result of the backlash the movement received for the Beslan elementary school siege; the next suicide attack did not occur until October 23rd, 2007. It can be inferred that counterterrorism events, as identified in this study, had no effect on the decision for the organization to employ the use of female suicide bombers.

Table 28. Counterterrorism Events in the Russo-Chechen Conflict

Date	Counterterrorism Events 2000 - 2013	# of Bombings by Gender in Preceding		# of Bombings by Gender in Calendar		# of Bombings by Gender in Following	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Feb-00	Russian troops capture Grozny						
May-04	President Akhmad Kadyrov killed in Grozny bomb blast	1					
Mar-05	Russian forces say Aslan Maskhadov has been killed in a special operation in Chechnya						
Mar-06	Russia passed Federal Law, "On Counteraction to Terrorism"						
Jun-06	Separatist leader Abdul-Khalim Saydullayev killed by government forces. He is succeeded by Doku Umarov						
Jul-06	Shamil Basayev is killed						
Apr-09	Russia declares "counterterrorism operation" against separatist rebels to be over					1	
	Totals	1	0	0	0	1	0

Please see Appendix 4 for source information.

Political Events

This section looks at political events—related to the fifth and final structured-focused comparison question—associated with the Russo-Chechen conflict between the years 2000 and 2013 in an effort to see if any political events preceded the use of females in these roles. Table 28 below displays all political events associated with this conflict as defined above—18 total events—as well as all suicide bombings that were performed around that time.³⁹ Two political events rendered further examination where patterns were found between suicide attacks by males and females related to the political situation in Chechnya; however, no patterns were found that indicated the Chechen Separatists’ preference for female suicide bombers over males.

As illustrated in Table 29 there seems to be a cluster of attacks around the time that President Putin appointed Akhmat Kadyrov—June 2000—as head of its administration in Chechnya. This corresponds with the beginning of the suicide campaign and may very well be the reason for the first suicide attack in July of 2000, signaling an escalation of conflict on the part of the Chechen Separatists. Another cluster of attacks occurred around July 2003 when Russian President Vladimir Putin signed an order setting presidential elections in Chechnya for October 5th. The specific date this decree was signed was July 5, 2003, hours before two females

³⁹ As noted in the methodology, this section defines political events as any event having to do with the political situation in Chechnya, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the political event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

blew themselves up at a rock concert. However, it is highly unlikely to near impossible, that this attack was a direct result of the event, given this suicide attack was in Moscow, approximately 24 hours by car from Chechnya, the home base of suicide operations at this time.

Table 29. Key Political Events in the Chechen Conflict

Date	Political Events 2000 - 2013	# of Bombings by Gender in Preceding Calendar Month		# of Bombings by Gender in Calendar Month		# of Bombings by Gender in Following Calendar Month	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
May-00	President Putin declares direct rule from Moscow					2	1
Jun-00	Russia appoints Akhmat Kadyrov as head of its administration in Chechnya			2	1	5	
Nov-01	First official negotiations since 1999, peace talks held in Moscow				1		
Mar-03	Chechnya voted to adopt a new constitution put forward by the Kremlin						
Jul-03	Russian President Vladimir Putin signed an order setting presidential elections in Chechnya for Oct. 5		2		2	1	
Oct-03	Akhmad Kadyrov elected president		1				
Dec-03	President Vladimir Putin's allies won legislative elections			1	1		
Oct-04	Kremlin-backed former Interior Minister Alu Alkhanov sworn in as president following August elections					1	
Feb-05	Separatist leader Aslan Maskhadov calls ceasefire and urges the Russian authorities to agree to peace talks.						
May-05	Mr Maskhadov's successor, Abdul-Khalim Saydullayev, signals end to policy of seeking peace talks with Moscow						
Nov-05	Regional parliamentary elections in Chechnya. More than 50% of the seats are won by Kremlin-backed United Russia						
Dec-05	President Vladimir Putin attends opening session of new parliament and pledges support for reconstruction						
Mar-06	Ramzan Kadyrov becomes prime minister after Sergey Abramov resigns						
Feb/March 2007*	President Alu Alkhanov is moved to a post in the Russian government by Russian President Vladimir Putin who names Ramzan Kadyrov as his successor. The Chechen parliament approves his candidacy						
Dec-07	The United Russia party, which backs Russian President Vladimir Putin, wins 99% of the vote in Chechnya in Russian parliamentary elections.						
Feb-08	Russian President Vladimir Putin's favored successor, Dmitry Medvedev, wins 89% of the vote in Chechnya, on a turnout of 91%						
Feb-10	Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov drops three libel suits against human rights activists and journalists who accused him of murder	1				1	2
May-12	Russian President Vladimir Putin to be inaugurated president after he had been prime minister for 4 years			1			
	Totals	1	3	4	5	10	3

*Attacks are recording for Jan (month before), February & March (in calendar month), and then April (month after)

Please see Appendix 5 for source information.

Conclusions

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to the Chechen Separatists—such as operational characteristics of suicide attacks, popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organization’s preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks, or operational anomalies, were central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While only one of the structured-focused comparison questions shed light on patterns of use of female suicide bombers via operational anomalies uncovered by an analysis of individual suicide attacks, the other questions illuminated reasons for signaling to certain audiences and the messages the Chechen Separatists may have wanted to send.

Overall, patterns indicate that when females’ use by the Chechen Separatists is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are overwhelmingly used in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets matter. In line with this, the Chechen Separatists used female bombers as a result of their increased lethality—over male bombers—and for assassination missions. However, this model left several suicide attacks perpetrated by females unexplained; the addition of the signaling model was helpful in identifying why the Chechen Separatists choose to use female suicide bombers where the tactical innovation model failed. When the signaling model frames females’ use by the Chechen Separatists, they are used in suicide attacks representing a deviation from terrorist organizations’ operational norms—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies by this study—characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization. In line with this model, the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers at instrumental times and for their

most spectacular suicide attacks—by air, at a rock concert, opposite the kremlin, on or outside a subway—to signal escalation and demonstrate continued commitment to the Russian government, while also signaling to the organization’s non-constituent public a single time.

The Tactical Innovation Model

If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of the Chechen Separatists using female suicide bombers because they afford the organization an advantage over male bombers as identified by the tactical innovation model. This chapter shows that out of the 26 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, the tactical innovation model can explain 10 out of 26, or 38 percent of the attacks.

Lethality

Presented below are three tables (Tables 30, 31, and 32) that measure the lethality of females—as identified by the first strain of the tactical innovation model—as opposed to males. Each of the three tables correlates with the first three questions of the second research question presented in this case study.

Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack? On average, attacks involving females killed fourteen individuals per attack than males, who killed eight per attack.

Table 30. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack by Gender

	Total Attacks	Total Number Killed	"Lethality"
Females	26	362	14
Males	38	309	8

Do female suicide bombers “fail” less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)? Male suicide bombers are involved in attacks where zero fatalities are recorded 13 percent of the time, as opposed to females where this occurs only four percent of the time.

Table 31. Suicide Attacks to Inflict More Than Zero Casualties by Gender

	Attacks to Inflict Zero Casualties	As % of Total Attacks
Males	5	13%
Females	1	4%

Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females? In attacks that were performed in groups of two or more (a.k.a. “team” attacks) where females were involved, the average number of individuals killed was 24 as opposed to three where females were not part of the team.

Table 32. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack in Team Attacks

	Total Attacks	Total Number Killed	"Lethality"
Males	4	13	3
Females	6	141	24

Assassination Missions

The second strain of the tactical innovation model is not “proven” by higher numbers of casualty rates, or lethality—although this may be the case. Instead, it focuses on reasons why

organizations would want to send female suicide bombers as opposed to males on certain missions, namely assassinations.

As shown in Table 33 below, this case study shows that females were sent on assassination missions four times as opposed to males being tasked with this zero times. Table 34 displays the total number of individuals killed in the dataset as identified as a civilian casualty, security casualty, or political casualty; females killed 66 “political individuals” as opposed to males, who killed one, keeping in mind females were involved in 12 fewer attacks than males overall.

Table 33. Chechen Separatists Suicide Assassination Information

	Assasination attempts	Killed Target	Effective?	Total # killed	Lethality
Female	4	2	50%	27	6.75
Male	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 34. Total Number of Individuals killed by Target Type by Gender

	Civilian Killed	Per Attack	Political Killed	Per Attack	Security Killed	Per Attack	# Attacks
Males	178	4.7	1	0.0	134	3.5	38
Females	225	8.7	66	2.5	71	2.7	26
Unknown	7	0.4	1	0.1	96	5.1	19

Conclusions

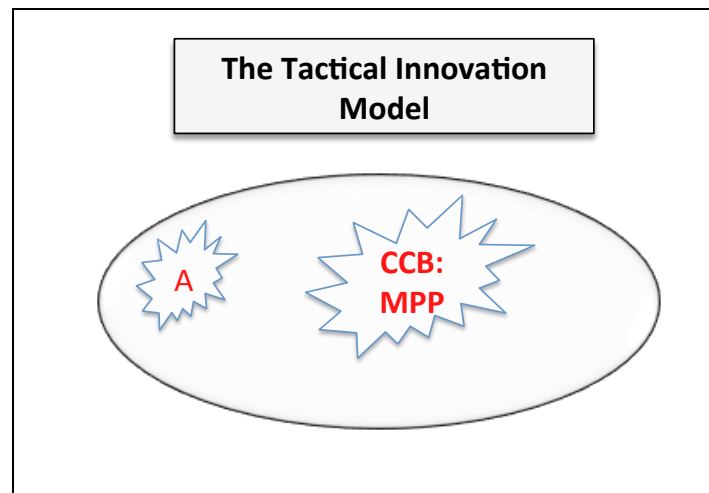
In sum, this case study shows that females are more lethal, as analyzed above, and the Chechen Separatists chose to send female bombers, as opposed to males, because they assumed females would be able to gain access to places that men could not. Ten out of 26 suicide attacks perpetrated by the Black Widows can be explained by the tactical innovation model as

formulated by this study, suggesting that 16 suicide attacks are unexplained when explained by this model. Table 35 below displays these ten suicide attacks divided into two categories, 1) assassination missions, and 2) close contact bombing: military, police, and political. Both categories, or coding, of suicide attacks point to female suicide bombers being used by the Chechen Separatists because of their unassuming nature—allowing them to get closer to intended targets—and the Chechen Separatists’ assumption that females are more lethal.

Table 35. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attack Classification: The Tactical Innovation Model

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks				Classification
6	19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27	=	Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	=	CCB: MPP	= Tactical
4	2, 6, 10, 25	=	Assassinations	=	A	= Tactical
10						

Figure 25. The Tactical Innovation Model: Chechen Separatists and Female Suicide Bombers



The Signaling Model

If this model is correct we should expect to find evidence of the Chechen Separatists choosing to use female bombers in an effort to signal or send a message to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public. In line with this, we would also expect to find the Chechen Separatists using females at instrumental times, falling somewhat out of the “norm” in terms of the organization’s operations. The Chechen Separatists would also use female suicide bombers in suicide attacks where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only,” “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks. This chapter shows that out of the 26 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, the signaling model explains 13 out of 26, or 50 percent of the suicide attacks. These suicide attacks were highlighted by patterns found in the Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies section, a sub-section of the first structured-focused comparison question. The rest of

the structured-focused comparison questions—while not helpful in uncovering patterns of use via female suicide bombers for the Chechen Separatists—aided in the understanding of messages sent and their intended audiences.

Audiences of the Chechen Separatists

As noted in Chapter Two, this section hypothesizes which audiences the Chechen Separatists intended to signal or send messages to, the author reached these conclusions based on contextual considerations offered by this case. There is no formula for specific audience designation offered by the signaling model. Inferences are made in this study that lend themselves to further research. Of the 13 signaling suicide attacks, twelve were designated primarily as signals for the Russian Government, and a single attack to the Chechen Separatists' non-constituent public.

Governmental Opponents

The signaling model helps to explain twelve suicide attacks performed by female suicide bombers that are not explained by the tactical innovation model. As discussed in this chapter and indicated in Table 36 and Table 37 below, suicide attack numbers 1 and 17 both came at instrumental times in the conflict signaling escalation of war, or back to war, to the Russian Federation. Suicide attack numbers 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, and 22 are part of a “special” operation just for the Black Widows: Operation Boomerang. Suicide attack numbers 18 and 28 were “first,” “special,” and “only” attacks targeting Russian civilians at a city bus stop and on a minibus transporting Dagestan citizens (CPOST, 2014).

Apart from suicide attacks at key points in the Russo-Chechen conflict signaling an escalation to war, and hence a message intended for the Russian Federation. Basayev's statements about Operation Boomerang suggest that these attacks were also aimed at the Russian

Government. In July of 2003, Basayev was quoted as saying he is starting a campaign called “Boomerang” that will bring “targeted vengeance” to Russian cities and towns (LaFraniere & Baker, 2003, A17). Another journalist reported that “A Chechen warlord [Basayev] earlier this year vowed to unleash dozens of female suicide bombers on Russian targets and other attacks are therefore likely, he warned that he had trained at least 30 female suicide bombers and would unleash them on the Russians” (Thuburn, 2003). The final two suicide attacks mentioned here—numbers 18 and 28—are in line with the characteristics of the signaling model and after examining details of this case, they too seem intended for the Russian Federation.

Rival Terrorist Organizations

Given there were no rival terrorist organizations presented in this chapter, it is unlikely the Chechen Separatists used female bombers to signal to this audience.

Identification Group

There is no evidence to support that the movement used female suicide bombers to signal to males and/or females in their identification group. The community or identification group from which this organization pulls new recruits is unclear, while the movement started in Chechnya it has now moved to encompass a broader region where nationalist goals and an Islamic ideology are often times at odds. The movement’s identification group in Chechnya fighting for an independent sovereign nation might be quite different from the identification group fighting in the North Caucasus region for an Islamic Caliphate. Also, the movement did not enjoy a culture of martyrdom, nor does there seem to be any support for violence in the Chechen community, making it unlikely that the organization used female suicide bombers to signal to males and females in their identification group.

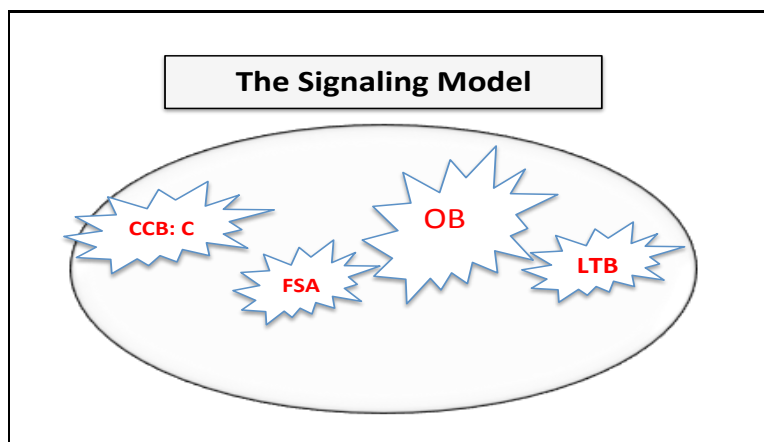
Non-constituent Public

There was a single plea to the Russian populous—part of the Chechen Separatists non-constituent public—evident by Basayev’s remarks in the aftermath of this suicide attack by a family of three; suicide attack number 4 in Table 37 below. Basayev claimed this suicide attack was a “heroic act” carried out by “a simple Chechen family” – clearly an attempt to portray the attack as an act of desperation and civilian sacrifice as a result of the war on “Russian occupation” in an effort to garner sympathy and support for the Chechen cause (“Suicide Family,” 2003).

Table 36. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attack Classification: The Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks				Classification	
8	7*, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21**, 22**	=	Operation Boomerang or "Spectacular" Bombings	=	OB	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
6	19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27	=	Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	=	CCB: MPP	=	Tactical
4	2, 6, 10, 25	=	Assassinations	=	A	=	Tactical
3	5, 8, 11	=	Indiscriminate (Truck bombs)	=	I	=	N/A
3	17, 18, 28	=	Close Contact Bombing: Civilians	=	CCB: C	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
1	4	=	Family Suicide Attack	=	FSA	=	Signaling: Non-constituent Public
1	1	=	Lone (two females) Truck Bombing	=	LTB	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
26	*Specific reference to via primary source; **Not part of Operation						

Figure 26. The Signaling Model: Chechen Separatists and Female Suicide Bombers



Conclusions

As indicated in Figure 27 and Figure 28 below, this chapter shows that out of the 26 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during this suicide campaign, 10 out of 26, or 38 percent of the attacks can be explained by the tactical innovation model, 13 out of 26, or 50 percent of the attacks can be explained by the signaling model, and the remaining three suicide attacks are defined as “indiscriminate.” Out of the 13 signaling attacks, 12 were intended primarily as signals for the Russian Government, and one for the Chechen Separatists’ non-constituent public. The Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers primarily for their novelty; theatrical performances, literally and figuratively, were their modus operandi.

Table 37 displays each of the 28 suicide attacks perpetrated by the Black Widows, while Figure 27 and Figure 28 provide illustrations of each suicide attack based on the characteristics of the tactical innovation model and the signaling model. Each suicide attack is characterized as either a “tactical,” “signaling,” or “indiscriminate” attack, as well as the rationale for each. Indiscriminate attacks are defined as suicide missions where more information is needed concerning the characteristics or details of these attacks in order to make an informed decision. It

should be noted that most attacks are not mutually exclusive in nature; however, each attack will be coded as one of the three, that being the one in which the characteristics of the attack most closely align with the characteristics presented in each of the aforementioned models.

Table 37. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks as Specified by Models of Female Terrorism

	Date	Place of terrorist act	Attack details	Total terrorists	Number killed	Tactical	Signaling	Indiscriminate
1	June 7, 2000	Chechnya, Alkhan-Yurt	Driven to and exploded at Compound for Russia's elite Interior Ministry (OMON) paramilitary police, belt bomb, security	2 females	2		G	
2	November 29, 2001	Chechnya, Urus-Martan	Assassination (successful), Russian Commandant of Chechnya's Urus-Martan District Geydar Gadzhiev, PBIED, political	1 female	3	✓		
3	October 23-26, 2002	Moscow	Dubrovka Theater siege, popular musical Nord-Ost, mass hostage crises, civilian	19 females, 21 males	129	-	-	-
4	December 27, 2002	Chechnya, Grozny	Driven to and exploded at government compound, allegedly disguised as Russian service men so could get through checkpoint to compound (father, daughter, and son), truck bomb (2), political	1 female, 2 males	72		NP	
5	May 12, 2003	Chechnya, Znamenskoye	Driven to and exploded at Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) building, truck bomb, security	1 female, 2 males	41			I
6	May 14, 2003	Chechnya, Ilaskhani-Yurt	Assassination (unsuccessful), female detonated bomb within six feet of Akhmad Kadyrov, the Moscow-appointed head of the Chechen government during prayer at a religious gathering, belt bomb, political	1 female	16	✓		
7	June 5, 2003	Severnaya Osetiya-Alaniya (North Ossetia), Mozdok	Bus full of Russian military helicopter pilots and technicians slowed down at railway crossing, belt bomb, security	1 female	20		G	
8	June 20, 2003	Chechnya, Grozny	Driven to and exploded at government complex, truck bomb, security	1 female, 1 male	6			I
9	July 5, 2003	Moscow, Tushino Airfield	Krylya Rock Festival, two women strapped with explosives blew themselves up, the first blast went off at one of the entrances, another went off about 10 minutes later as spectators exited through another gate, belt bomb, civilian	2 females	17		G	
10	July 27, 2003	Chechnya, Grozny	Assassination (unsuccessful), Chechen leader Akhmad Kadyrov's son Ramzan, heads one of his father's security groups, belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
11	September 15, 2003	Ingushetiya, Magas	Driven to and exploded at Regional Federal Security Service (FSB) Headquarters, truck bomb, security	1 female, 1 male	3			I
12	December 9, 2003	Moscow	Historic National Hotel (across from the Kremlin), belt bomb, civilian	1 female	6		G	
13	August 24, 2004	Moscow	Airplane en route from Moscow to Sochi, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	46		G	
14	August 24, 2004	Moscow	Airplane en route from Moscow to Volgograd, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	43		G	
15	August 31, 2004	Moscow	Outside Rizhskaya Subway Station, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	10		G	
16	September 1-3, 2004	North Ossetia	Beslan school siege, first day of school, mass hostage crises, civilian	2 females, 32 males	330	-	-	-
17	October 23, 2007	Dagestan, Kalininaul	Taxi (minibus), belt bomb, civilian	1 female	0		G	
18	November 6, 2008	North Ossetia, Vladikavkaz	Bus stop next to the central market in Vladikavkaz (capital of the North Ossetia region), belt bomb, civilian	1 female	12		G	
19	August 21, 2009	Chechnya, Grozny	Approached police officers on bicycle, belt bomb, security	1 female	2	✓		
20	September 16, 2009	Chechnya, Grozny	Approached a police vehicle, belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
21	March 29, 2010	Moscow	Subway train at Park Kultury Metro Station, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	26		G	
22	March 29, 2010	Moscow	Subway train at Lubyanka Metro Station, belt bomb, civilians (45 minutes later)	1 female	14		G	
23	April 9, 2010	Ingushetiya, Nazran	Approaching police officers as they worked a cornered off crime scene, belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
24	February 14, 2011	Dagestan, Gubden	Police station, (husband detonated a car bomb at a checkpoint 2 hours later), belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
25	August 28, 2011	Dagestan, Chirkey	Assassination (successful), female disguised as a "believer" at a religious festival approached anti-rebel spiritual leader of Dagestan Muslims, Sheikh Said Afandi, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	7	✓		
26	March 6, 2012	Dagestan, Karabudakhkent	Police checkpoint, belt bomb, security	1 female	5	✓		
27	May 25, 2013	Dagestan, Makhachkala	Approaching traffic policemen, belt bomb, security	1 female	1	✓		
28	October 21, 2013	Volgograd, Volgogradskaya Oblast	Bus transporting Russian citizens, belt bomb, civilian	1 female	6		G	

Please see Appendix 6 for all source information

Figure 27. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks as Identified by the Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model

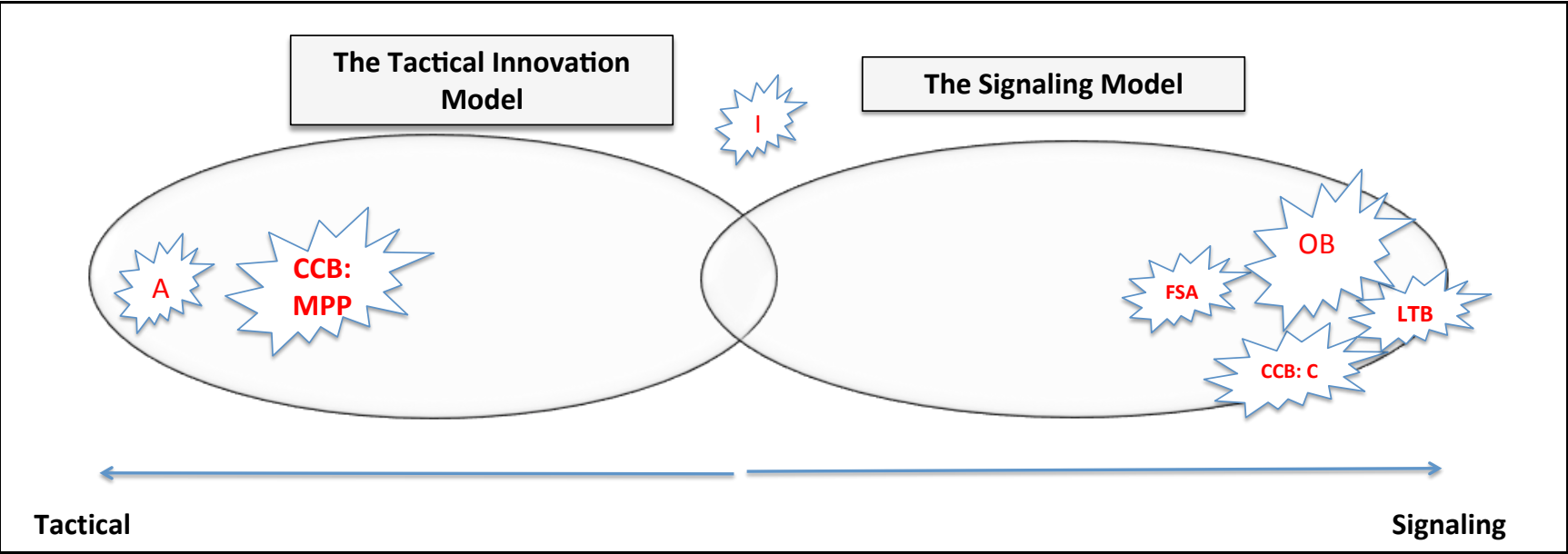
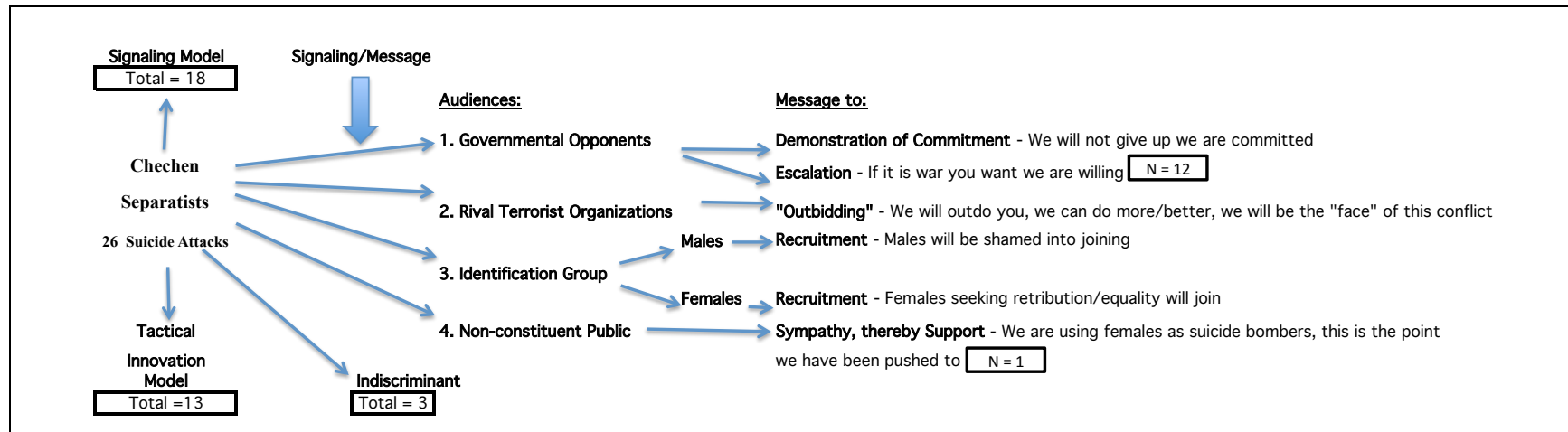


Figure 28. Chechen Separatists Suicide Attacks Illustrated by the Signaling Model



CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to identify reasons why terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers. The examination of the characteristics of the tactical innovation model—as formalized in this study—and the signaling model was intended to answer the question of why organizations use female suicide bombers. This chapter examines those questions using an in-case and cross-case comparison of two terrorist organizations that have heavily relied on female suicide bombers: the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Chechen Separatists. Each case provides valuable insight as to why these organizations use female bombers and how the two aforementioned models help frame their use. This inquiry is carried out by the systematic application of each of the structured-focused comparison questions, designed to highlight any patterns found that would help explain this phenomenon.

Evidence is found to support both of the studies' main hypotheses. First, female suicide bombers are used by terrorist organizations because they are 1) a tactical advantage, and 2) used to signal or send a message to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public. Their entertainment or shock value maximizes the psychological punch intended for a variety of audiences. These two reasons are not mutually exclusive but are colored by contextual considerations unique to each case. While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism events in response to the terrorist organization, or political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations' preference for females—

insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. Those patterns are consistent across both cases and suggest that when females' use is explained by the tactical innovation model, they are used overwhelmingly in suicide attacks where getting closer to intended targets—usually defined as security and political targets—matters. In contrast, suicide attacks explained by the signaling model are characterized by their novelty, usually representing a deviation from terrorist organizations' operational norms, characterized many times as “only” suicide attacks, “firsts [of that kind of],” or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization. Getting close to intended targets matters less in this model; the focus is on the theatrical performance given by female suicide bombers, as opposed to males, the former of which render far greater media attention for the sponsoring organization. Figure 29 illustrates the characteristics of each of these models. After controlling for females' involvement in team suicide attacks on behalf of the LTTE, female bombers performed far more “tactical attacks” for the LTTE, and “signaling attacks” for the Chechen Separatists.

This chapter will proceed as follows: first, answers to the structured-focused comparison questions will be examined for each case, highlighting any information relevant to this study's focus; next, with those findings in mind, each of this study's research questions will be examined, followed by the study's hypotheses. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on practical implications of this research as well as recommendations for future work.

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations' preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics

surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While the tactical innovation model is helpful in explaining the “measurable benefits” organizations reap by using female bombers—for example, the average number of individuals killed per bomber or the number of times females were tasked with assassination missions—there are also immeasurable or intangible benefits that this model does not take into account. The signaling model, as presented in this study, helps to explain why terrorist organizations choose to use female suicide bombers where the tactical innovation model fails.

After examining the answers to the structured-focused comparison questions from each case, it is clear that female suicide bombers are used by organizations for specific purposes; simply put, being female matters. This study reaches several conclusions. These conclusions are divided into three main categories: 1) conclusions supporting the tactical innovation model, 2) conclusions supporting the signaling model, and 3) general conclusions found not specific to either model.

Conclusions supporting the tactical innovation model:

- Suicide attacks that involve females inflict more casualties per individual attack than those involving males;
- Suicide attacks that involve females inflict greater than zero fatalities more often than those involving males; or better stated, female bombers fail less often;
- Suicide attacks performed in teams—or suicide attacks where a group of bombers are used—inflict a greater number of casualties when females are included in that “group”;
- Females were used most often against political targets; and,

- Females were selected for assassination missions, where appearance of the individual made a difference in gaining access to a target; meaning, for those attacks that were performed with a Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED)—not a truck, motorcycle, car, or scooter—females were the clear choice.

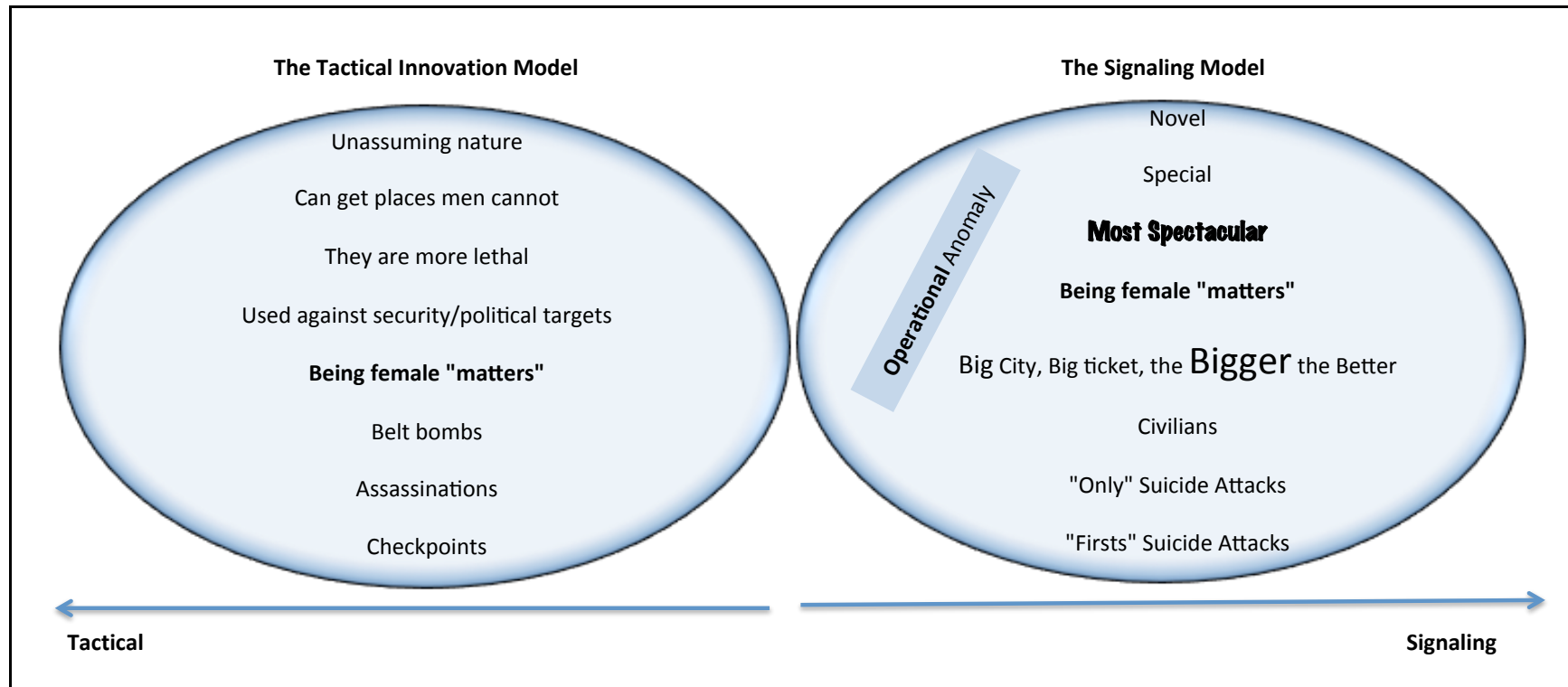
Conclusions supporting the signaling model:

- Females were overwhelmingly selected for suicide attacks occurring outside each organization’s “standard operating procedures”—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies in this study—and in the most “spectacular” suicide attacks, where the terrorist organizations made a calculated decision to deliver a showcased symbolic performance;
- Females were used most often against civilian targets;
- Females were used in more heavily populated areas; Black Widows were involved in 78 percent of the suicide attacks that took place in Moscow and only 24 percent of the attacks that took place in Grozny.
- Females were used at instrumental times—defined by long lulls in terrorist activity—during each conflict.

Conclusions found not specific to either model:

- In general, females in both groups were restricted, confined to belt bombs, never driving vehicles or performing attacks in teams without the company of males.
- Males were overwhelmingly used in routine or “day-to-day” suicide operations against security targets; females were used mainly to target political and civilian targets.

Figure 29. Characteristics of Models of Female Suicide Terrorism



Characteristics of Female Suicide Bombing

The answers to the six questions of the structured-focused comparison are presented in the text of each of the two cases—the LTTE and Chechen Separatists—in order to seek out similarities (and thus patterns) in the terrorist organizations’ organizational decision to use female suicide bombers. Each of these questions will be explored below, highlighting any important information found within each case or across both cases. This case study reports on data from a combined 198 individual suicide attacks—using a total of 754 primary sources—made on the part of LTTE and Chechen Separatists. Table 38 provides an overview of the number of suicide attacks examined by each terrorist organization in this study as well as the gender of the bomber.

Table 38. Overview of Suicide Attacks by Group

	LTTE: 1987-2009		Chechen Separatists: 2000-2013	
	# of Suicide Attacks	% of Total Suicide Attacks	# of Suicide Attacks	% of Total Suicide Attacks
Males	50	43%	38	46%
Females	32	28%	26	31%
Unknown	33	29%	19	23%
Total Attacks	115	100%	83	100%

Question One: Operational Characteristics of Suicide Missions

1. What are the operational characteristics of suicide missions by the organization? Do these characteristics give any indication as to why the terrorist organization uses female suicide bombers? The following will be examined to answer these questions:
 - a) Methods of Attack
 - b) Target Types
 - c) Assassination Missions
 - d) Team Attacks

- e) Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies: After looking at the operational characteristics presented in a – d above, do any suicide attacks perpetrated by females occur outside of “standard operating procedures” as identified in this study? Are female suicide bombers used in suicide attacks at “instrumental” times in conflicts or where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only” suicide attacks, “firsts” [of that kind], or the most “spectacular” suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks?

a. Methods of Attack

Overall, females in both groups were restricted. They were confined to belt bombs and never drove vehicles or performed suicide attacks in teams without the company of males. Any time there was a deviation from these operational “norms” an escalation or renewed commitment to conflict was eminent, by way of female suicide bombers.

Females of the LTTE were confined to suicide missions using Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIEDs) (to include suicide vests/belt bombs), boat bombs, or scuba bombs; and in the latter two, they were always accompanied by males except for one signaling attack performed by a female using a boat bomb. Females of the LTTE were not involved in any vehicular bombings, even though this tactic was used 13 times by males. Black Widows were involved in five truck bombings, but were always accompanied by males; here again except for on instance, in the Chechen Separatists’ first suicide attack against Russian forces, a signaling attack, which was performed by two females. Chechen Separatists also used car bombs in 13 attacks, females participating zero times.

As depicted in Table 39 below, the top four most frequently used methods of attacks for the LTTE were 1) belt bombs, 2) boat bombs, 3) truck bombs, and 4) motorcycle bombs; while the three most frequently used methods for the Chechen Separatists were 1) belt bombs, 2) car bombs, and 3) truck bombs. In both cases females used belt bombs more often than males and for a greater percentage of their overall attacks. Also, females did not participate in two of the

four most frequented types of attacks by the LTTE—truck bombs and motorcycle bombs—nor were they used in car bombs for the Chechen Separatists or in truck bombs without males.

Concerning the use of belt bombs, females of the LTTE used them in 19 out of 32 attacks, or for 60 percent of their total number of attacks; Black Widows used this method in 19 out of 26 of their attacks, or 73 percent of the time. Those numbers for male bombers of the LTTE are 14 out of 50, or 28 percent of the time, and 18 out of 38, or 47 percent of attacks perpetrated by males bombers associated with the Chechen Separatists. In short, although females were involved in 32 out of 82 attacks (39 percent) for the LTTE, and 26 out of 64 attacks (40 percent) for the Chechen Separatists—where gender was known—they were confined to using the belt bomb the majority of the time. This lends credence to the conclusion that there were restrictions on the type of bombings females could participate in and the organization must have different reasons for why males and females are used.

Table 39. Overview of Methods by Group

Method:		LTTE			
		Total # of Suicide Attacks	Total # of Attacks by Females	Total # of Attacks by Males	Total # of Attacks by Unknown Gender
1	Belt bombs	43	19	14	10
2	Boat bombs	32	9	14	9
3	Truck bombs	11	0*	7	4
4	Motorcycle bombs	9	0*	6	3
		Chechen Separatists			
1	Belt bombs	41	19	18	4
2	Car bombs	22	0*	13	9
3	Truck bombs	14	5	5	4

b. Target Types

Overall, females mainly targeted political and civilian targets; political “types” for assassinations—typical of the LTTE—and civilians for “big ticket attacks” aimed at maximum media exposure—typical of the Chechen Separatists.

As far as “target types,” both groups focused primarily on security targets—deemed “business as usual” targets; these were left mostly to male suicide bombers. Chechen Separatists targeted civilians far more than the LTTE, 20 percent of the time versus eight percent. Black Widows were used in the most “spectacular” bombings against civilians performed by the Chechen Separatists, by planes, trains, metros, as well as across from the iconic Kremlin in the center of Moscow. Infamous Chechen leader Shamil Basayev even named an operation, Operation Boomerang, tasked with reaping havoc on the Russian populace through the systematic use of suicide attacks. Basayev not only knew there was something special or novel about female suicide bombers, he used them for that very reason.

In line with the previous section, any deviation or pattern that seems outside of “normal operating procedures” usually points to the use of female bombers. Black Widows were used to attack civilians almost twice as much as males (11 versus six times); the same held true for the LTTE (three versus one). While these numbers may not seem significant alone, when accounting for the disparity between the total number of suicide attacks for each gender, it is in fact significant that in both cases, even though males perform a greater number of attacks, females are still used against civilians more.

Table 40. Overview of Target Types by Group

	LTTE		Chechen Separatists	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Security targets	41	23	25	12
Civilian targets	1*	3*	6*	11*
Political targets	8	6	7	3

c. Assassination Missions

Overall, the choice between male and females for assassination missions where “appearance mattered” was overwhelmingly female. The LTTE and Chechen Separatists’ thought, as the tactical innovation model suggests, that female bombers had a better chance of gaining access to individual targets; females were chosen over males because they offered the organization a tactical advantage.

One of the LTTE’s modus operandi was assassination missions, attacking high profile public officials; 31 out of the 115 suicide attacks perpetrated by the LTTE were coded as assassination attempts. The Chechen Separatists did not seem as wedded to this tactic but did in fact follow suit in sending female bombers more often than males when “appearance mattered.” The following is stated in the text of both cases but for emphasis is stated again here: in trying to understand the differences—if any—between the organizational use of male and female suicide bombers, and postulating that females are unassuming and therefore better able to get closer to targets, suicide missions that were coded as assassinations but performed by “hit and run” tactics, (e.g. those involving vehicular type bombs) are not included in effective or lethality calculations. The rationale for this is as follows: when looking at assassinations by vehicles versus an individual with a personal borne improvised explosive device (PBIED) one is inherently “more personal” requiring a more intimate encounter with a purposive target. It also requires that the bomber be more unassuming, which an individual in an explosive laden vehicle with the

capability of racing into targets need not worry about. Given this operationalization of events, Table 41 below shows that, in each case that could be analyzed with the criteria of gender known, a clear target, *and* performed by an individual with a PBIED, the choice was overwhelmingly female; here again, especially when accounting for higher “n” of male attacks in both cases. The organization thought, as the tactical innovation model suggests, that female bombers had a better chance of gaining access to individual targets; females were chosen over males because they offered the organization a tactical advantage.

Table 41. Overview of Assassinations by Group

	LTTE		Chechen Separatists	
Total Assassinations	31		10	
Performed by unknown gender	8		4	
Performed using vehicular bombing or "hit and run" tactics	3		2	
	19		4	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Attacks under inquiry	7	12	0	4
Target unclear	1	1	0	0
Total	6	11	0	4

d. Team Attacks

The LTTE was infamous for their team attacks while the Chechen Separatists usually sent individual bombers. Females, however, were never without the company of males.

Apart from assassinating high-level public officials the LTTE frequently performed “team attacks,” a group of two or more attackers sent on suicide missions. Forty-five of their attacks fell into this category while just 12 out of the 83 attacks perpetrated by the Chechen

Separatists did so. As discussed above, it was not “normal” for females to participate in team attacks alone in either organization, as illustrated from the table below the LTTE had no “female only” team attacks, they were always accompanied by males. The majority of the LTTE’s team attacks were boat bombs—28 out of the 45—targeting Sri Lankan ships, the others usually included scuba bombs—suicide squads of divers, or underwater bombs—extraordinary in their own right, self-educated military strategist genius. In every instance but one, when males and females were both part of a “team”, they were used in equal numbers, further indicating Prabhakaran’s calculated approach and attention to detail for all suicide attacks. For the Chechen Separatists this pattern holds overall; two instances of “deviations from the operational norm” were uncovered suggesting signaling attacks.

Table 42. Overview of Team Attacks by Group

	LTTE	Chechen
Total number of attacks in teams	45	12
Male only teams	17	3
Female only teams	0*	2*
Males with females	12	4

*1. July 7, 2000, first attack by Chechen Separatists, 2 females, and truck bomb. Females never drove trucks, were only used in teams with other females one other time, this is also the Chechen Separatists’ first suicide attack.

2. July 5, 2003, Krylya Rock Festival, 2 females, belt bomb. This is the Chechen Separatists’ first attack in Moscow and first suicide attack on civilians

e. Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies:

After looking at the operational characteristics presented in a – d above, do any suicide attacks perpetrated by females occur outside of “standard operating procedures” as identified in this section? Are female suicide bombers used in suicide attacks at “instrumental” times in conflicts or where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only” suicide attacks, “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks?

LTTE: Six patterns or operational suicide attack anomalies were found; three of these suicide attacks were performed at instrumental or key times during the LTTE conflict and three of these attacks fell outside of “normal operating procedures,” these patterns point to the LTTE’s use of female suicide bombers as signals. The details of these attacks include such descriptors as “novel,” “special,” “only” suicide attacks, “firsts” [of that kind], or the most spectacular suicide attacks carried out by the organization would characterize such attacks

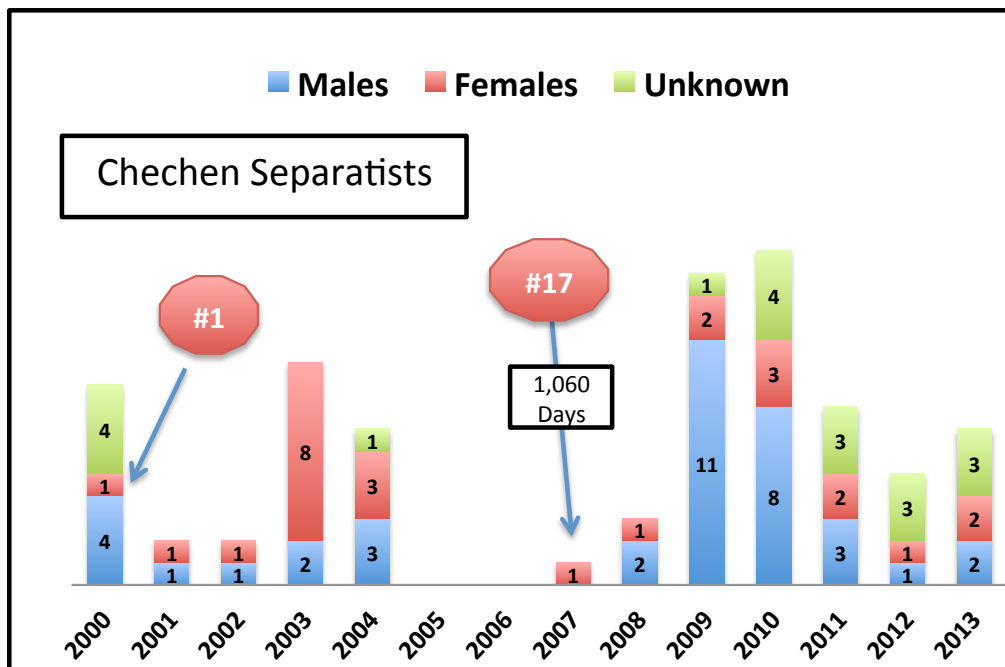
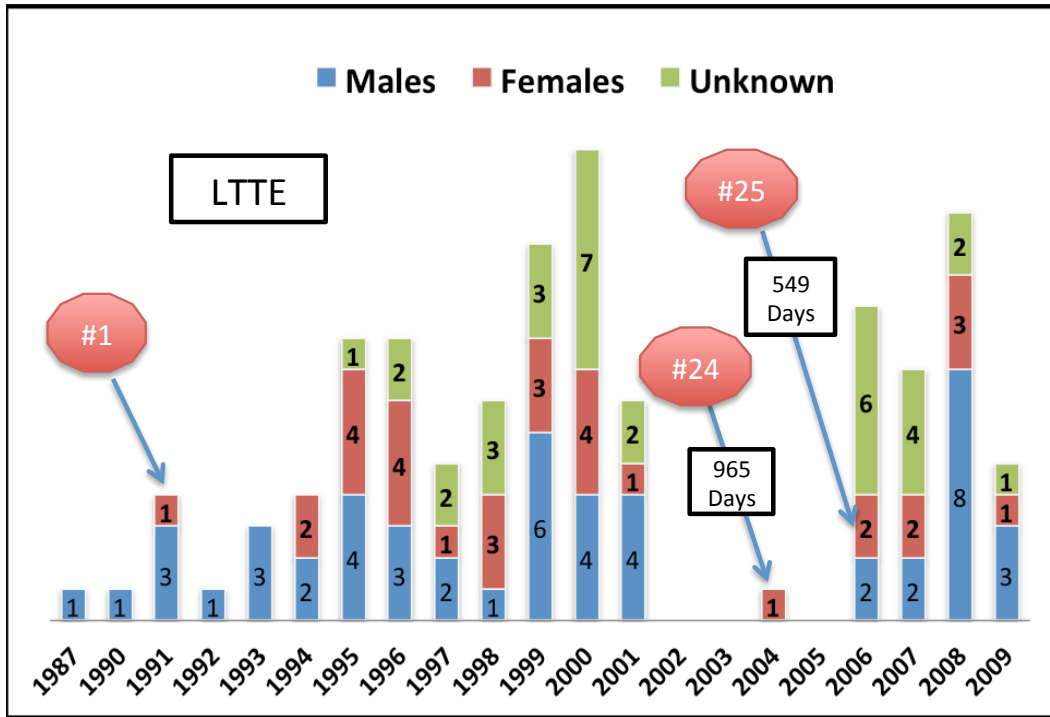
Chechen Separatists: Thirteen operational suicide attack anomalies were found; two of these suicide attacks were performed at instrumental or key times during the Russo-Chechen conflict, eight received a “special” designation by way of implementing an entire paramilitary operation—Operation Boomerang—for the Black Widows. Three additional suicide operations fell outside of “normal operating procedures”—but did not seem to fall specifically at instrumental times in the conflict, nor were they attributed to Operation Boomerang. The details of these suicide attacks included such descriptors as “only” and “firsts” [of that kind], two performed against civilians on a city bus and at a busy city bus stop, and a third, involving a family of three.

Table 43. Overview of Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies by Group

Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies			
LTTE	Number of Suicide Attacks	Chechen Separatists	Number of Suicide Attacks
First Female Bomber - Dhanu	1	First Female Bombers	1
Suicide Attack During Ceasefire	1	Suicide Attack after 1,060-day lull	1
Loan Boat Bomb - Just Before Return to War	1	Operation Boomerang	8
Civilian Suicide Attacks Late in War	3	Family of Three	1
Team Attacks*	12	Other Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies (city bus, city bus stop)	2
Totals:	18		13

*Discussed in Popular Support section, significance first found via operational characteristics section.

Table 44. “Timing of Suicide Attacks” Finding



Question Two: Popular Support

2. *Have there been changes in the level of popular support before or after the use of women as suicide bombers? Does this support differ between males and females in the organizations' identification group? Has the community always embraced a culture of martyrdom or has this increased or decreased at specific points in time and why?*

In regards to both cases, there is a lack of data on popular support for suicide operations in general, and female suicide bombings in particular, which makes it difficult to draw any conclusions as to whether or not this tactic was embraced by the organization's identification groups, and what effect this had on the decision to use females. In order to understand how popular support impacted the organizational use of female suicide bombers, longitudinal data indicating changes in organizational membership before and after suicide attacks by female bombers and/or indication of popular support for these attacks (via public opinion polling), would be needed, neither of which is available. The LTTE seemed to enjoy a culture of martyrdom, if only for a short period of time, while the transient nature of the Chechen Separatists makes it hard to identify a core identification group for the organization, much less gauge support within that group for a particular tactic.

In line with public support for the LTTE, the author does find information to support a hypothesis that LTTE leader, Thiruvankadam Velupillai Prabhakaran, used females as suicide bombers to signal to females within the larger Tamil community in order to booster public support—and thereby recruitment—for the LTTE in an effort to pursue his larger agenda of a free and independent Tamil Nation. While there is no definitive evidence to support this hypothesis, there is information to suggest Prabhakaran singled out females in the LTTE's identification group, most likely in hopes of recruiting more female LTTE cadre.

There seems to be an odd obsession on the part of Prabhakaran to “liberate” females within the Tamil culture, using this banter to encourage females to join the LTTE. While it is not exactly clear how this rhetoric affected females’ support of the organization overall, there is indication that this message did resonate with many of the LTTE female cadre who joined. The nature of cause and effect can be inferred here, but again, there is not enough data to make any sweeping conclusions. An inference that can be made however, after an exhaustive analysis of individual suicide attacks performed by males and females of the LTTE, is that there was a difference in the types of attacks each gender was used for. Females were not used “on-par” with males, they did not enjoy the same “freedom” that Prabhakaran lauded; they were used for specific missions or were accompanied by males.

Question Three: Rival Terrorist Organizations

3. *Does the terrorist organization have rivals and is that rivalry a factor in their decision making to use females for suicide bombings?*

No information was found to support the idea that rival groups or rivalries between individual groups affected either organization’s decision to use female suicide bombers. The LTTE had emerged as the dominant Tamil separatist organization by 1986, and LTTE’s first suicide bombing – performed by a male – was not until July 5, 1987, and the first female suicide bombing was not until May 21, 1991 (CPOST, 2014). As for the Chechen Separatists—as discussed at great length in the case study—all major groups associated with this movement worked closely with one another. While it would be wrong to assume there were not rifts among certain members and other smaller peripheral groups, there is no indication of rival terrorist

organizations within the Chechen movement, certainly none that would orchestrate the use of female bombers in order to propel their status over the others.

Information on the structures and inner workings of specific rebel groups within the Caucasus could aid in the analysis, however, terror groups are secretive by nature making any inferences into operational strategies difficult.

Question Four: Counterterrorism Events

4. Have any counterterrorism events occurred, mainly in the form of military offenses by the terrorist organizations' governmental opponent, immediately preceding the decision to use women as suicide bombers?

Counterterrorism events—as defined by this study—did not precede either terrorist organization's decision to use female suicide bombers.⁴⁰

For the LTTE, there were six counterterrorism events, two of which rendered further examination, where patterns were found between suicide attacks by males and females related to military offenses by the Sri Lankan army. However, upon examination, no indication was given pointing to the organization's preference for one gender over the other.

For the Chechen Separatists, seven counterterrorism events were identified, zero of which rendered further examination.

⁴⁰ As noted in the methodology, this study defines counterterrorism events as any event having to do with the conflict in Sri Lanka or Chechnya, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the counterterrorism event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

Question Five: Political Events

5. Have any political changes or events contributed to the organization's decision to use females as suicide bombers?

Political events—as defined by this study—did not precede either terrorist organization's decision to use female suicide bombers.⁴¹

For the LTTE, there were 15 political events, one of which rendered further examination, where patterns were found between suicide attacks by males and females related to the political situation in Sri Lanka. However, upon examination, no indication was given pointing to the organization's preference for one gender over the other.

For the Chechen Separatists, 18 political events were identified, two of which rendered further examination. Here again, no indication was given pointing to the organization's preference for one gender over the other.

Conclusions

While deliberation was given to a variety of socio-political factors unique to each organization—such as operational characteristics of suicide attacks, popular support for suicide attacks perpetrated by females, indication of rival terrorist organizations, counterterrorism and

⁴¹ As noted in the methodology, this section defines political events as any event having to do with the political situation in Sri Lanka or Russia, as identified by BBC. In cases where BBC does not mention particular events that are included in the primary source data, they are included from primary sources associated with individual attacks. BBC was chosen because it is a reputable news source, covering both the Sri Lankan and Chechen conflict and aids in the systematic examination of information between cases. All suicide bombings performed by males and females are recorded in the calendar month in which the event is reported, the calendar month prior to the reported event, and the calendar month following it. For example, if the political event date is February of 2000, any attacks that occurred in January, February, and March of that year are presented in the table below. Although, an overlap in the number of suicide attacks could produce double counting with this methodology, this is not thought to interfere with uncovering patterns.

political events that may have affected the terrorist organizations' preference for females—insight into the operational characteristics surrounding individual suicide attacks was central in highlighting patterns in the organizational use of female suicide bombers. While only one of the structured-focused comparison questions shed light on patterns of use of female suicide bombers via operational anomalies uncovered by an analysis of individual suicide attacks, the other questions illuminated reasons for signaling to certain audiences and the messages each organization may have wanted to send.

Models of Female Suicide Bombing: Being Female Matters

The following research questions were presented in this study in order to better understand the use of female suicide bombers from the terrorist organizations' perspective:

Primary Research Question:

1. Why do terrorist organizations use females for suicide bombing?

Supporting Research Questions:

1a. Do terrorist organizations turn to female suicide bombers as a form of tactical innovation, a judgment that females can achieve greater success in suicide attacks? This question will be answered by evaluating the following:

- a. Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack?
- b. Do female suicide bombers “fail” less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)?
- c. Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females?
- d. Are female suicide bombers chosen (over males) in instances where getting closer to the intended target matters, e.g. assassination missions?

1b. Do terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers to signal their resolve and commitment to select audiences?

- a. Governmental organizational opponents
- b. Rival terrorist organizations
- c. Identification group
 - a. Males in their identification group
 - b. Females in their identification group
- d. Non-constituent public

Each of these research questions, and accompanying hypotheses, will be discussed below to illuminate the models of female suicide bombing as identified in this study: the tactical innovation model and the signaling model. This will be followed by a brief discussion highlighting the characteristics of each model—while also exploring any overlap that exists between the two—and how each contributes to the understanding of why terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers. As indicated in Table 45 below, the tactical innovation model and signaling model help explain most suicide attacks performed by females on behalf of the LTTE and Chechen Separatists.

Table 45. Overview of Suicide Attacks by Group

	Tactical Suicide Attacks	Signaling Suicide Attacks	Indiscriminate Suicide Attacks	Total # of Female Suicide Attacks
LTTE	13	18	1	32
Chechen Separatists	10	13	3	26

Using the Tactical Innovation Model to Explain the Organizational Use of Female Suicide Bombers

If this model was correct we expected to find evidence of the LTTE and Chechen Separatists using female suicide bombers because they afforded the organizations an advantage over male bombers as identified by the tactical innovation model. This study shows that out of the 32 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during the LTTE suicide campaign, the tactical innovation model explains 13 out of 32, or 40 percent of the suicide attacks. For the Chechen Separatists, this model explains 10 out of 26, or 38 percent of the suicide attacks performed by female bombers.

Research Question 1: Do terrorist organizations turn to female suicide bombers as a form of tactical innovation, a judgment that females can achieve greater success in suicide attacks?

- a. Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack?
- b. Do female suicide bombers “fail” less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)?
- c. Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females?
- d. Are female suicide bombers chosen (over males) in instances where getting closer to the intended target matters, e.g. assassination missions?

H1. Terrorist organizations choose females for suicide bombing because organizations view this as tactical innovation.

To answer this research question, this study identified two strands—lethality and use on assassination missions—to explain female suicide bombers’ advantage, over male bombers, as identified by the tactical innovation model. Lethality is defined by three separate calculations, indicated as “1a – 1c” below—while use on assassination missions—identified as “1d” below—is determined by the number of times females were sent on assassination suicide missions by the terrorist organizations.

1a. Do female suicide bombers kill more individuals than males per suicide attack?

LTTE: On average, attacks involving females killed 14 individuals per attack, while attacks with only males killed twelve per attack.

Chechen Separatists: On average, attacks involving females killed fourteen individuals per attack while attacks with only males killed eight per attack.

1b. Do female suicide bombers “fail” less often than males (as measured by number of suicide attacks where zero individuals are killed)?

LTTE: Male suicide bombers are involved in attacks where zero fatalities are recorded 18 percent of the time, as opposed to females where this occurs only nine percent of the time; in short, males fail more.

Chechen Separatists: Male suicide bombers are involved in attacks where zero fatalities are recorded 13 percent of the time, as opposed to females where this occurs only four percent of the time; in short, males fail more.

1c. Are more individuals killed when suicide teams involve females?

LTTE: Yes, in attacks that were performed in groups of two or more (a.k.a. “team” attacks) where females were involved, the average number of individuals killed was 15 as opposed to six where the teams were comprised of only men.

Chechen Separatists: In attacks that were performed in groups of two or more (a.k.a. “team” attacks) where females were involved, the average number of individuals killed was 24 as opposed to three where females were not part of the team.

1d. Are female suicide bombers chosen (over males) in instances where getting closer to the intended target matters, e.g. assassination missions?

LTTE: The LTTE sent female suicide bombers on assassination missions eleven times, as opposed to males being tasked with this six times. In line with this, females killed more political figures, 106 compared to males killing 56, even though they participated in 18 fewer suicide attacks than males overall.

Chechen Separatists: The Chechen Separatists sent female suicide bombers on assassination missions four times as opposed to males being tasked with this zero times. In line with this, females killed 66 political figures as opposed to males, who killed one, even though females were involved in 12 fewer attacks than males overall.

Table 46. Tactical Innovation Model Calculations: Are Female Suicide Bombers More Lethal?

	LTTE		Chechen Separatists	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
Total Attacks	32	49	26	38
1. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack by Gender				
Total Number Killed	446	603	362	309
Lethality	14	12	14	8
2. Suicide Attacks to Inflict More than Zero Casualties by Gender				
Attacks to Inflict Zero Casualties	3	9	1	5
As % of Total Attacks	9%	18%	4%	13%
3. Average Casualties per Individual Suicide Attack in Team Attacks				
Total Attacks	12	18	6	4
Total Number Killed	184	114	141	13
Lethality	15	6	24	3
4. Assassination Missions				
Assassination attempts	11	6	4	0
Killed Target	3	3	2	N/A
Effective?	27%	50%	50%	N/A
Total # killed	133	64	27	N/A
Lethality	12	11	7	N/A

Using the Signaling Model to Explain the Organizational Use of Female Suicide Bombers

If this model was correct we expected to find evidence of the LTTE and Chechen Separatists choosing to use female bombers in an effort to signal or send a message to governmental opponents, rival terrorist organizations, members of their identification group, and individuals in their non-constituent public. In line with this, we also expected to find these

organizations using females at instrumental times, falling somewhat out of the “norm” in terms of the organizations’ operations. The LTTE and Chechen Separatists would use female suicide bombers in suicide attacks where words such as “novel,” “special,” “only,” “firsts” [of that kind], or the “most spectacular” would characterize such attacks.

The findings of this study indicate that the LTTE and the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers as signals to communicate with all but one of the intended audiences, that being rival terrorist organizations. As indicated in Figure 30 below, evidence suggests that out of a total of 18 signals—or suicide attacks by female bombers—the LTTE primarily signaled to females in the organization’s identification group ($n = 12$) in an effort to persuade them to join the organization; secondary to this, males of the identification group would also likely be shamed into joining the organization, and these suicide attacks would likely resonate with the general public or “non-constituent public.” The LTTE also sent several signals ($n = 6$) to the Sri Lankan government indicating an escalation of the conflict or a renewed commitment thereof. As indicated in Figure 30, the Chechen Separatists also sent several messages to the Russia Federation ($n = 13$), the majority of them in fact, indicating an escalation or renewed commitment to the conflict ($n = 12$), with one meant to specifically appeal to the Russian populace’s emotional sensibilities.

As in all cases related to signaling, it should be noted that although specific audiences are singled out above as being signaled to, the isolation of these messages would only hold in a closed-systems environment, and most likely wax and wane at different points in various conflicts. For example, many of the Chechen Separatists’ suicide attacks would have most likely resonated more with Russian citizens, and accordingly be assessed as primary signals to that audience by this study, if they [the Chechen Separatists] had not staged the Beslan elementary

school siege in 2004; public support for the Chechen cause had been on the upswing in light of the Dubrovka Theater siege (2002). In line with this, suicide attacks perpetrated by female bombers of the LTTE cited here as being used to signal to females of the organization's identification group, would have most likely been treated as "tactical in nature"—remembering the study proved the inclusion of females in team attacks increased "lethality" of the team—pointing to the advantage of the inclusion of female bombers in the organization's operational strategy.

In sum, an extensive review of the literature related to each terrorist organization provides the context needed to frame and thus make deductions in reference to the specific audience(s) being targeted, or if indeed, the suicide attack is meant to send a signal.

This study shows that out of the 32 suicide bombings perpetrated by females during the LTTE suicide campaign, the signaling model explains 18 out of 32, or 56 percent of the suicide attacks. For the Chechen Separatists, this model explains 13 out of 26, or 50 percent of the suicide attacks. These suicide attacks were highlighted by patterns found in the Operational Suicide Attack Anomalies section of each case, a sub-section of the first structured-focused comparison question. The rest of the structured-focused comparison questions—while not helpful in uncovering patterns of use via female suicide bombers for either organization—aided in the understanding of messages sent and their intended audiences.

The second research question and accompanying hypotheses are below:

2. Do terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers to signal their resolve and commitment to select audiences?

- a. Governmental organizational opponents
- b. Rival terrorist organizations
- c. Identification group
 - a. Males in their identification group
 - b. Females in their identification group
- d. Non-constituent public

H2. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to their governmental organizations opponents.

H3. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to rival terrorist organizations.

H4. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to males in their identification group.

H5. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to females in their identification group.

H6. Terrorist organizations use females in suicide bombings to signal their resolve and commitment to their non-constituent public.

These five hypotheses will be discussed below. The signaling model suggests that female suicide bombers—signals—are used by terrorist organizations to send a message of commitment and resolve to one of six target audiences, these messages vary based on the receiving audience. Socio-political factors specific to each terrorist organization color the exact message or purpose thereof, that the intended audiences receive, but are generalizable based on the audience. For example, signals intended for governmental opponents convey the terrorist organizations' intention to escalate the conflict or its continued commitment to the conflict no matter what the cost. Signals intended for rival terrorist organizations—although no support for this was found in this study—would, in theory, send messages to competing terrorist organizations in an attempt to “outbid” them, in an effort to represent their identification group in any conflict in question. Signals intended for males and females in the organizations' identification groups would have a general message of recruitment. Finally, signals sent to the organizations' non-constituent public can take on various meanings depending on a more specific group in that sphere, but the general message is one of desired support. It should go without saying, that terrorist acts in general, especially those perpetrated by female suicide

bombers in particular, are almost always used to illicit an emotional response from a much larger audience than the specific target. The signaling model simply suggests that these messages take on general meanings depending on the audience. The messages to the various audiences as defined in this model are illustrated in Table 47 and Figure 30 below.

Audiences of the LTTE and Chechen Separatists

As noted in each individual case study, this study scrutinized each terrorist organization, or case, in order to hypothesize which audiences were the intended recipients of which messages. There is no formula for specific audience designation offered by the signaling model. Inferences were made in this study that lend themselves to further research. Table 41 and Figure 30 below, illustrate the intended audiences and messages as indicated in for Hypothesis 2 – Hypothesis 6.

Table 47. Audiences of the LTTE and Chechen Separatists

General Message		LTTE	Chechen Separatists	Sometimes or Everytime
Governmental Opponents	Escalation and demonstration of commitment. Messages to this audience would most likely occur at instrumental times in the conflict.	Sri Lanka. Six suicide attacks perpetrated by female suicide bombers were found to come at instrumental times in the conflict, inferring a message to this audience	Russian Federation. Two suicide attacks perpetrated by female suicide bombers were found to come at instrumental times in the conflict. Operation Boomerang developed for "targeted vengeance" against Russia. Other "spectacular" media stunts also infer the message was meant for this audience.	Sometimes- "Instrumental" times
Rival Terrorist Groups	Outbidding. Organization's willingness to do what ever it takes to be the "face" of the conflict.	None identified	None identified	Sometimes- More information needed.
Identification Group	Recruitment	Yes	Yes	Everytime - to varying degrees
Males	via "shaming"	Yes	Identification group elusive	Everytime - to varying degrees
Females	via "inequality" or "injustice"	Yes, twelve team suicide attacks	Identification group elusive	Everytime - to varying degrees
Non-constituent Public	Plea for sympathy/support	Yes	Yes, and specific plea	Everytime - to varying degrees

Figure 30. The Signaling Model: Female Suicide Bombers as Signals

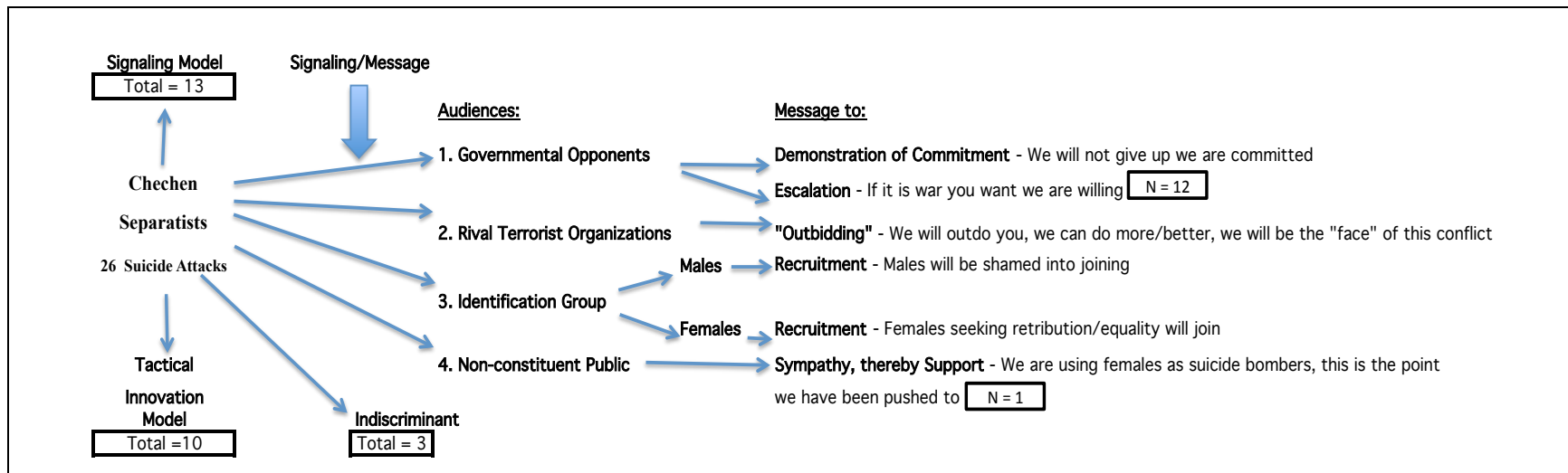
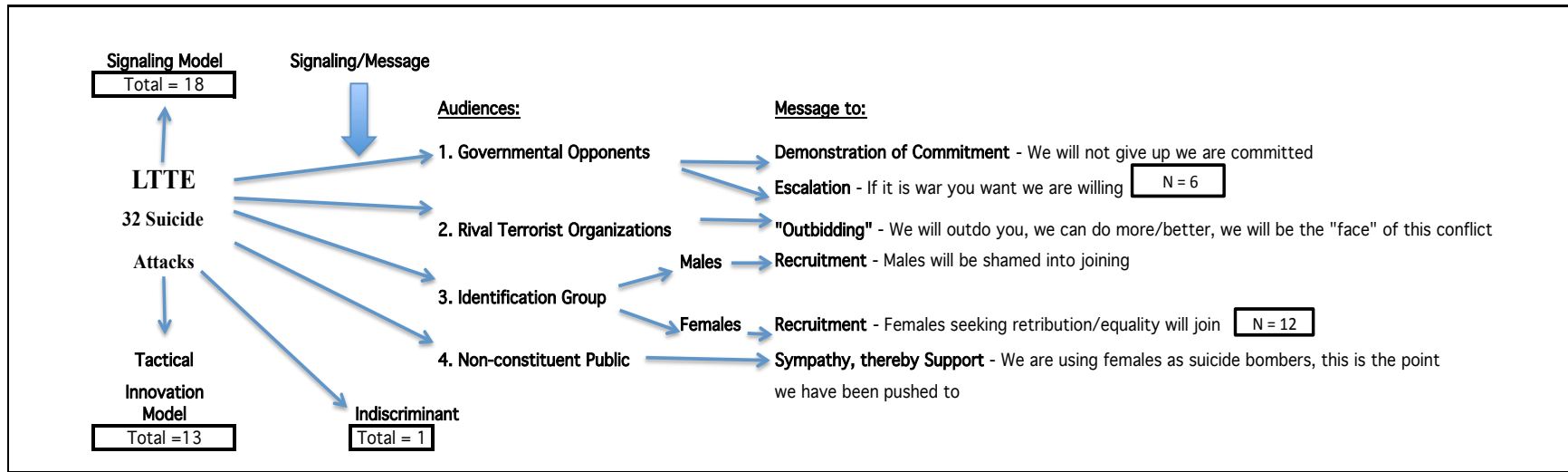


Table 48. Comparison and Coding of Models of Female Suicide Terrorism by Terrorist Organization

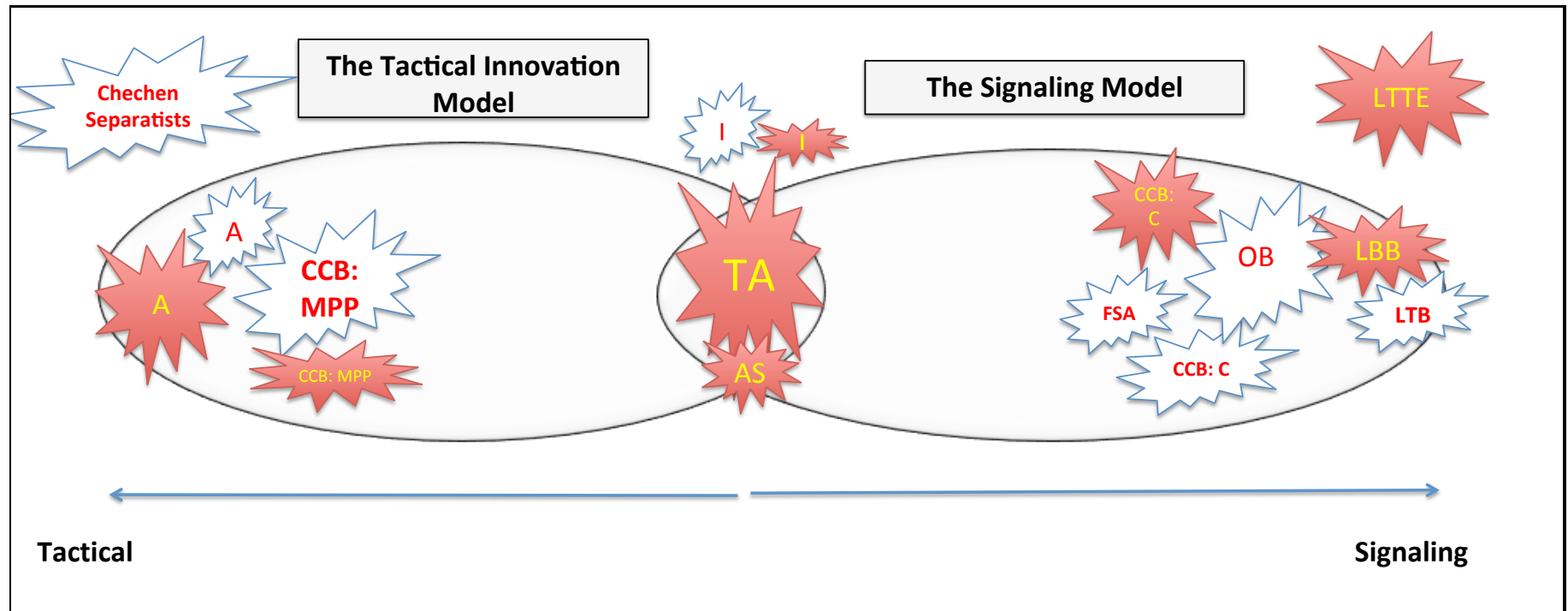
LTTE

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks		Classification	
12	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 31	= Team Attacks	= TA	=	Signaling: Primarily females in the identification group. Message: Recruitment - If you join you can do what men do, you are equal. Peripherally, shaming men into joining.
10	3, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 30	= Assassinations	= A	=	Tactical
3	11, 17, 22	= Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	= CCB: MPP	=	Tactical
3	27, 29, 32	= Close Contact Bombing: Civilians	= CCB: C	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
2	24, 25	= Assassination: Signaling	= AS	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
1	1	= Lone Boat Bombing	= LBB	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
1	13	= Indeterminate	= I	=	N/A
32					

Chechen Separatists

# of Suicide Attacks	Attack #'s	Coding of Suicide Attacks		Classification	
8	7*, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21**, 22**	= Operation Boomerang or "Spectacular" Bombings	= OB	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
6	19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27	= Close Contact Bombing: Military, Police, Political	= CCB: MPP	=	Tactical
4	2, 6, 10, 25	= Assassinations	= A	=	Tactical
3	5, 8, 11	= Indiscriminate (Truck bombs)	= I	=	N/A
3	17, 18, 28	= Close Contact Bombing: Civilians	= CCB: C	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Demonstration of Commitment.
1	4	= Family Suicide Attack	= FSA	=	Signaling: Non-constituent Public
1	1	= Lone (two females) Truck Bombing	= LTB	=	Signaling: Government. Message: Escalation or Demonstration of Commitment.
26	*Specific reference to via primary source; **Not part of Operation				

Figure 31. Across Case Analysis of the Tactical Innovation Model and the Signaling Model.



Theoretical Implications

As of this writing, no standard models of female suicide terrorism exist in the academic literature. This study clarifies two, the tactical innovation model and the signaling model. The tactical innovation model provides a much-needed standardized framework to evaluate the lethality of females, as opposed to males, across all terrorist organizations known to employ female suicide bombers. The signaling model helps to identify and explain reasons that terrorist organizations use female bombers not offered by higher lethality rates or female bombers' use on assassination missions. Those explanations characterize the signaling model. Both models contribute to the understanding of the organizational use of female suicide bombers.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study is limited to two terrorist organizations that use female suicide bombers, there are many others. There is simply not enough research on the organizational use of female suicide bombers, and much less details of individual suicide attacks perpetrated by females, to make sweeping generalizations. An examination of the operational characteristics of suicide missions by each terrorist organization that uses female suicide bombers could, and should, be accessed to examine the explanatory power of each of the models—the tactical innovation model and the signaling model—presented in this study. For example, Boko Haram, a radical Islamic fundamentalist group in Nigeria, has increasingly been using female suicide bombers. Questions that might arise here are: when were females first used, in what capacity, does religion play a factor, are females used as a tactical advantage against Nigerian forces, or to signal, or send a message to various audience. The systematic application of the models identified in this study—

if applied to all organizations that use female suicide bombers—can add to our understanding of their organizational use.

In regards to this study's research methodology, many of the structured-focused comparison questions did not prove to be helpful in uncovering patterns of use of female suicide bombers. However, the opposite is true; in all research before explanations for a certain phenomena can be ruled out, they must be tested. More terrorist organizations need to be examined using the same, or similar structured-focused comparison questions, in order to see if the conclusions in this study hold across other terrorist organizations that use female suicide bombers.

Lastly, it appears that the Chechen Separatists used female suicide bombers far more for theatrical performances—quite literally with the Dubrovka Theater siege—than the LTTE. Why is this the case, did access to the media have anything to do with it? While the Chechen Separatists used females to blow up planes in flight, subways in the heart of Moscow at rush hour, or across from a crowded Kremlin, the LTTE's most spectacular attacks—one of which included a lone female suicide bomber using a boat bomb after a long lull in terrorist activity—took subtleness unbeknown to the Chechen Separatists. A terrorist act is only as powerful as the audience it reaches, if the medium by which that message travels is absent, would the terrorist act still be the same?

Policy Implications

This research shows that there are two main reasons terrorist organizations use female suicide bombers: for tactical considerations and to send messages to various audiences. We know that terrorist organizations continually change their tactics as counterterrorism efforts grow

more successful. The research highlights the use of females as key tactical responses to terrorist organizations' evolution of tactics. When implementing or augmenting existing counterterrorism policies, this needs to be taken into account. Also, military and security personnel can be educated to acknowledge that females, too, can be violent. This may improve targeting of female suicide bombers thereby decreasing their "effectiveness" overall.

Terrorist organizations will continually seek out and exploit vulnerabilities in their opponents' apparatus, most of the civilized world views females as pacifist and males as warriors, continuing to send females as suicide bombers is a normal rational reaction to a world-wide "weakness." These stereotypes will not dissipate anytime soon. The best that we can hope for in terms of policy, is acknowledging the threat, and educating those that have influence over the creation of gender-neutral counterterrorism policies as well as those who implement them.

While specific policy recommendations for terrorist organizations' use of females via the tactical innovation model is difficult, recommendations to thwart their use as signals, is more so. More information is needed regarding the organizational use of females for this purpose before any intelligible suggestions can be put forth in this regard. Questions raised in the previous section in regards to the media's role in terrorist organization's choice of tactics and targets are central to developing policies to thwart the use of female suicide bombers as signals.

Conclusions

Female suicide bombers are increasingly being used as an instrument of war by various terrorist organizations. This study proves that being female matters. Female suicide bombers are not used on par with males and they do not engage in the same types of suicide attacks, even in organizations that have seemingly used females in close to equal numbers with males. There is a

difference, and understanding that difference can provide valuable information on the nature of individual terrorist organizations, which in turn, can provide information on how to defeat them.

No standard model exists in the literature specifically addressing why terrorist organizations use females for suicide missions. This study formalizes many loosely strewn ideas found in the literature to establish the tactical innovation model, and adds a much-needed signaling model. Together these models explain any instance where a female suicide bomber was or will be used by a terrorist organization and shed light on what they hope to gain from the suicide attack.

In sum, this study has reached several conclusions. These conclusions are divided into three main categories: 1) conclusions supporting the tactical innovation model, 2) conclusions supporting the signaling model, and 3) general conclusions found not specific to either model.

Conclusions supporting the tactical innovation model:

- Suicide attacks that involve females inflict more casualties per individual attack than those involving males;
- Suicide attacks that involve females inflict greater than zero fatalities more often than those involving males; or better stated, female bombers fail less often;
- Suicide attacks performed in teams—or suicide attacks where a group of bombers are used—inflict a greater number of casualties when females are included in that “group”;
- Females were used most often against political targets; and,
- Females were selected for assassination missions, where appearance of the individual made a difference in gaining access to a target; meaning, for those attacks that were performed with a Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED)—not a truck, motorcycle, car, or scooter—females were the clear choice.

Conclusions supporting the signaling model:

- Females were overwhelmingly selected for suicide attacks occurring outside each organization's "standard operating procedures"—deemed operational suicide attack anomalies in this study—and in the most "spectacular" suicide attacks, where the terrorist organizations made a calculated decision to deliver a showcased symbolic performance;
- Females were used most often against civilian targets;
- Females were used in more heavily populated areas; Black Widows were involved in 78 percent of the suicide attacks that took place in Moscow and only 24 percent of the attacks that took place in Grozny.
- Females were used at instrumental times—defined by long lulls in terrorist activity—during each conflict.

Conclusions found not specific to either model:

- In general, females in both groups were restricted, confined to belt bombs, never driving vehicles or performing attacks in teams without the company of males.
- Males were overwhelmingly used in routine or "day-to-day" suicide operations against security targets; females were used mainly to target political and civilian targets.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 (Table 11): Counterterrorism Events in the LTTE Conflict

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