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Gender and the Enactment of Suicide Bombings by Boko Haram

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GENDER AND THE ENACTMENT OF SUICIDE BOMBINGS
BY BOKO HARAM

by

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

GENDER AND THE ENACTMENT OF SUICIDE BOMBINGS BY BOKO HARAM

by

Jordan N Galehan

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In the field of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Approved by:

Christopher Mullins, Chair

Raymund Narag

Breanne Pleggenkuhle

Bryan Bubolz

Rachel Whaley

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
June 6, 2019

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Jordan Galehan, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice,

presented on June 6, 2019, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: GENDER AND THE ENACTMENT OF SUICIDE BOMBINGS BY BOKO HARAM

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Christopher Mullins

The Boko Haram terror group has utilized more women as suicide bombers than any
other group in history. While prior research has examined why this phenomenon is occurring,
and what makes Boko Haram a unique terror group, the present study examines how these
attacks are being perpetrated, or enacted, by the female bombers. Utilizing the Global Terrorism
Database (GTD), which is the largest terrorism incident database available, the study examined
the incidents of female suicide bombings perpetrated by Boko Haram. The open-sourced
citations provided by the GTD were compiled and turned into a complementary qualitative
dataset. Overall, there were 151 incidents of female suicide bombings by Boko Haram between
2014 and 2017, of which 102 were included in the final sample for the study. Results of content
analysis indicate that there are similarities between the perpetration of suicide bombings by
females and other acts of crime, violence, and terrorist acts committed by other women, but there
are also distinct differences. The cultural and social constructs of the region create a unique
situation for Boko Haram compared to other terrorist groups that have deployed the female
suicide bombing tactic; however, these features also make it difficult to flesh out the overarching
issues of coercion, victimization, and kidnapping that the group heavily relies on. Though the
ways in which the suicide attacks are enacted can be examined, at this point, it is still unclear
whether the young women and girls perpetrating the attacks are acting out of their own volition,
high levels of coercion, or a blend of the two.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the person who showed me my own strength. Thank you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Female participation in terrorism and political violence is not a new phenomenon, as can be seen in the early female fighters of Islam (*mujahidaat)[1]* (Qazi, 2012) and the female assassins in nineteenth century Russia[2] (Hilbrenner, 2016), though scholars note that participation in armed conflict has not "significantly altered their social status within their respective societies" (Qazi, 2012). Terrorist organizations have employed women in a multitude of roles throughout history, including logistical, recruiting, fundraising, and less often leadership positions in various organizations (Cragin & Daly, 2009). A shift in how terrorist organizations operate and the roles available to women is occurring, however (Rapoport, 2002). Since the 1980s, terrorist organizations have increasingly been using women in more operative positions to gain a tactical advantage and for strategic purposes, the most common being the role of a suicide bomber. Sources indicate that the first female suicide bombing was in 1985 by a sixteen-year-old girl affiliated with the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) on an Israeli Defense Force convoy (Bloom, 2005; Zedalis, 2004). Since then, women have been suicide bombers for other groups and causes, but each conflict seems to have its own variation for female involvement and

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[1] Qazi (2012) discusses how Muslim women in Arabia during the seventh-century tended to the wounded and we in charge of protecting their homes while the men were away for battle. In a few cases, some women were trained and participated in the armed conflict with the men. Most often, however, the women's role in battle was limited to caring for the wounded and protecting their homes, though they also contributed to furthering the nationalist ideologies and ensuring the survival of the faith.

[2] As Hilbrenner (2016) discusses, the two most well-known cases of early female terrorist involvement in Russia, which played a direct role in later terrorist activities in Russia, are Vera Zasulich and Sofia Perovskaia. In 1878, Zasulich attempted to assassinate General governor Fedor Trepov, while Perovskaia is said to be the mastermind behind Tsar Alexander II's assassination in 1881. The actions of these two women broke the perception of female nonviolence, however, were portrayed in two very different ways: condemnation and adoration.

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explanation for why women are engaging in suicide attacks.[3] The turn of the century has also

seen several changes in the frequency of female involvement in terrorist activities, primary as

suicide bombers, in numerous terrorist groups throughout several regions, predominantly seen in

Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa.[4]

The trend that was seen in the early years of female involvement in terrorist attacks may

therefore be evolving over time and in different groups. Though numeric differences exist

depending on the data being used, scholars have demonstrated that only about 15% of total

suicide bombing attacks were carried out by women between 1980 and 2005, with the Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) contributing the most female suicide missions, 23 total (Pape,

2003; Schweitzer, 2006). Since 2000, however, organizations are less likely to wait an extended

period to deploy women as suicide bombers and organizations are deploying female suicide

bombers at significantly higher rates (See Figure 1 on Female Suicide bombers over time)

According to Davis (2013), attacks by Iraqi groups, including Al Qaida, the Islamic State of Iraq,

and unclaimed Iraqi attacks, have surpassed the number of females engaged in suicide attacks by

previous groups, and now comprise almost a quarter of all female suicide bombing attacks

internationally. Furthermore, the early organizations to deploy women as suicide bombers

generally waited an average of 13.5 years (Dalton & Asal, 2011) to use women in suicide roles,

but more recent organizations are waiting progressively less time from group inception to female

suicide mission deployment.

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[3] While the Chechen female bombers, also known as the Black Widows, were viewed as seeking vengeance for the death of their husbands, other groups may be allowing female participation as a tactical strategy, as in the conflicts in the Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts (Cook & Allison, 2007; Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007; Qazi, 2012).

[4] In these two regions, Nigeria and Iraq have had the most female suicide bomb attacks, though other countries have experienced this type of attack as well.
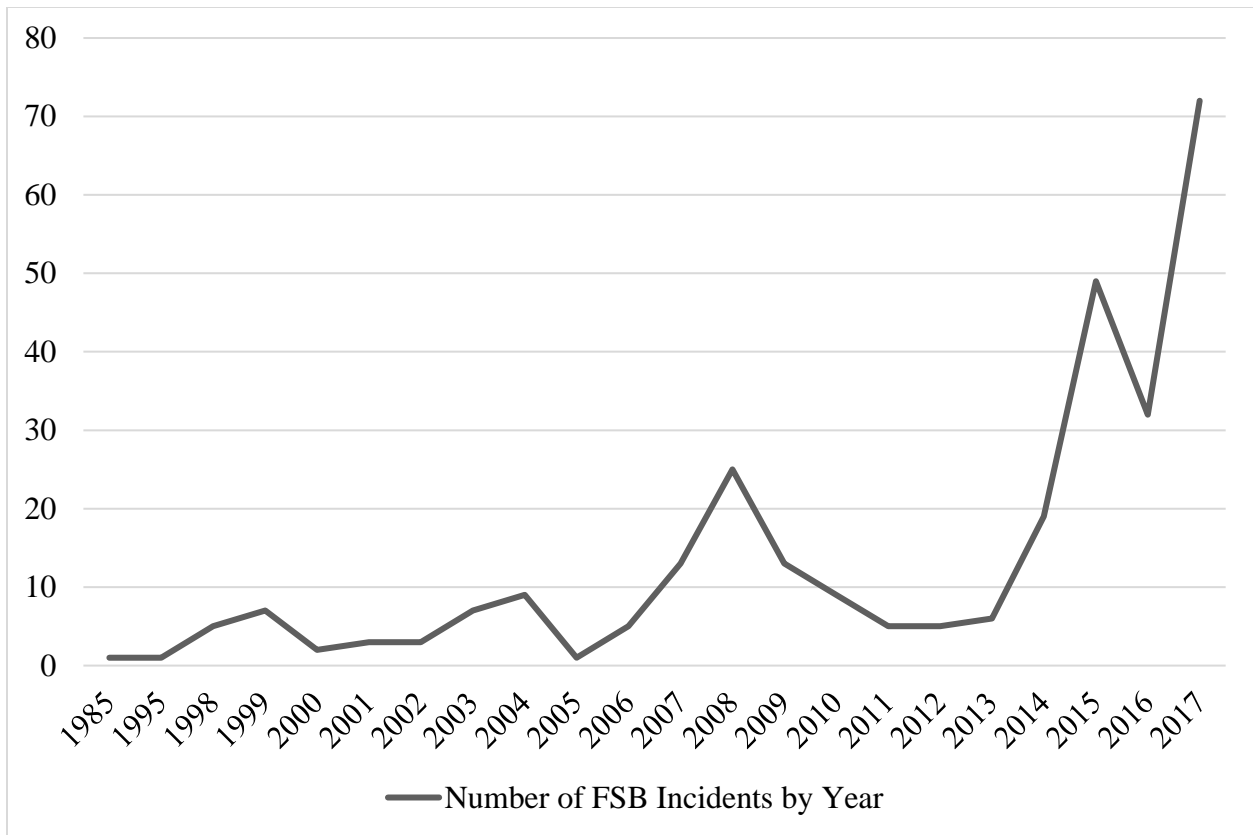
Figure 1: Female suicide bomb incidents by year

Literature on women's involvement in terrorism and suicide bombing often states that female suicide bombers often come from patriarchal societies and cultures where women are more restricted to a domestic sphere of influence and parental care (Bloom, 2007). As such, the two regions with the highest number of female suicide bombing attacks are the Middle East and North Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa region, which Kandiyoti (1988) describes as regions with two contrasting patriarchal systems that reflect "ideal-typical" systems of male dominance "for the purposes of discussing their implications for women." (p. 275). The Middle East and North African region reflect a system of classic patriarchy where women are more passive in domestic and subservient roles to men and gain status through the production of male off-spring and the prospect of becoming a senior woman in the household. Perceptions of females being

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capable of violence is underscored by the "traditional role of women as caregivers and compassionate members of a Muslim household and family" (Qazi, 2012, P. 5). In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa presents women with more autonomy given the insecurities that polygynous cultures present to resource acquisition and providing for dependent children (Kandiyoti, 1988). Thus, *patriarchal bargains,* or women's response to the opportunities and constraints presented to them given the patriarchal system in which they live, is reflected in their actions and decision-making, with the goal of generating the best possible outcome for themselves and their dependent offspring.

Given these contrasting patriarchal systems, feminist scholars note that women might be motivated by feeling like second class citizens in a male-dominated world; consequently, suicide attacks become an outlet into a masculine world in which many of these women would normally never be allowed.[5] Women's involvement in terrorism has also been described as stemming from either personal problems and past trauma, prior sexual victimization, or coercion and manipulation from men (Naaman, 2007; Victor, 2003). Given the social element of shame on women who have experienced a sexual victimization or rape and the stigma surrounding female sexual activities, many women may find suicide bombing as advantageous, leading either to martyrdom or a saintly status because of personal and group ideological beliefs, a possible monetary endowment to the family, and the potential to revitalize the family name if the woman was perceived to have brought shame or dishonor to the family (Drake, 1998). Women may therefore seek to participate in suicide bombing for personal redemption or for the betterment of their families.

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[5] It should be noted that, like women gaining access and becoming involved in organized crime and criminal networks, "female acceptance by male leaders is key to gaining access into terrorist organizations and perpetrating suicide attacks" (Qazi, 2012).

Women often break normative and behavioral roles for a multitude of reasons and use situations, constraints, and opportunities to make decisions and choices. Scholars therefore suggest that criminally or violence-involved women are performing a non-normative form of femininity, are engaging in oppositional femininity, are coerced into involvement, or have a history of victimization experiences (Bloom 2007, 2011; Ferraro, 2015; Messerschmidt, 2002). However, this implies that gendered norms of how women are supposed to behave are established structural actions and that women are acted upon by situation and experience. Not all women conform to normative gendered stereotypes, which change over time and are varied depending on time and place. Behaviors for women are indeed a form of structured (by opportunity and constraint) action, where structure shapes what is available, but women often demonstrate a vast amount of agency and empowerment to pursue one path over another, given those constraints. Women's participation in terrorist organizations and their activities could therefore be a reflection of a decision to become involved in the group cause because of a particular grievance, for family or monetary reasons, or for personal reasons, similar to male involvement. What is different for women's involvement, which is similar to trends in other areas of female crime involvement (street crime, criminal networks) is the supportive roles that women are likely to fill, which could vary given structural opportunities.

Research has detailed women's involvement and roles in terrorism (Cragin & Daly, 2009), how women have become a new, less detectable weapon for terrorist organizations to utilize (Bloom, 2011), how gender impacts the radicalization process (Davis, 2017), and gender relations in terrorist groups (Alison in Sjoberg & Gentry, 2009). What is currently lacking in the literature, and what the present study endeavors to bridge the gap between, is twofold: 1.) The performative, gendered accomplishment of female suicide bombings, and 2.) Expanding the

scope of how female suicide bombings are studied and analyzed, moving the literature beyond

political and international perspectives, through the addition of a criminological perspective,

more broadly, and a feminist criminological perspective specifically, using a *gendered crime*

framework.

Definition of Terrorism

Terrorism is difficult to define and there is no agreed upon definition of what terrorism

entails, and varies depending on the source of the definition: academic, political, journalist,

others (Ganor, 2002).[6] Though some subscribe to the notion that "one man's terrorist is another

man's freedom fighter" (Laqueur, 1987, p. 302), this framing elicits a degree of bias[7]. Garrison

(2004) suggests that this argument erroneously assumes that defining terrorism is "a subjective

activity about assigning negative connotations to one's opponents and positive connotations to

one's proponents" (p. 259). The concept of terrorism is a highly political term and is often

defined by those who have been the victims of terrorism (Davis, 2017), which can skew

perceptions and cause a loss of accuracy in future scholarly pursuits related to the concept of

terrorism (Crenshaw, 2011). Hoffman (2006) describes terrorism as the indiscriminate use of

violence on a target with the primary objective of fear from a population that is beyond the

immediate target by conducting indiscriminate attacks with the purpose to kill large numbers of

people and an indifference to the victims.[8] Terrorism is used for political motivations that is

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[6] Ganor (2002) argues that having a standard definition of terrorism that is widely accepted internationally is essential in order for governments to effectively counter terrorist attacks and organizations. He suggests that since most terrorist organizations base actions on a cost-benefit analyses, having a standard definition, and thus a standard in which to punish those who utilize terrorist strategies, may be deterred from using these tactics if punishment for targeting civilians is made worse than attacking military targets.

[7] Ganor (2002) also refutes the notion that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" through the characterization of terrorism as "a mode of operation directed against civilian targets," instead of "basing the definition on the *goals* of the violence" (original emphasis; p. 298).

[8] Target selection can also be highly discriminatory and based on the symbolic value of the target or the practical accessibility of a target.

centered on power and rely heavily on advanced communications, persuasion, leadership capabilities, and group dynamics (2006).

Though terrorism is sometimes framed more simplistically as a violent tactic with political objectives by non-state actors (Laqueur, 2000) or that terrorism is a "tool to achieve a desired end" (Garrison, 2004, p. 264), many scholars have incorporated psychological criteria into the definition (Horgan, 2005; Lemieux, 2010), while "avoiding the attribution of terrorism to personality disorders or 'irrationality' (Crenshaw, 2000, p. 405). Accordingly, a psychological component (primarily fear) to the definition is necessary given the intent to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the individuals involved or the immediate target of the attack (Hoffman, 2006). Crenshaw (2011) notes, however, that terrorism includes a psychological element, but this psychological effect is directed towards a wider audience to influence their behavior through threatening communications and tactics of fear. Some scholars thus define terrorism as the "threatened or actual use of illegal force directed against civilian targets by nonstate actors in order to attain a political goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation," (LaFree & Ackerman, 2009). While this definition incorporates several of the same elements as other definitions, there is still debate as to whether terrorism can only be directed against civilians (Hodgson & Tadros, 2013).

The incorporation of a psychological component can further be seen in various terrorism databases: RAND includes a necessary key element of terrorism as, "Calculated to create fear and alarm", while START includes as one of the criteria for a terrorist incident, "evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) other than the immediate victims" (RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents, 2018 ; START, 2018). The present study utilized the complete version of the START definition of

terrorism (defined more extensively in the Methods section) given that the data came from the

Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which is housed by the National Consortium for the Study of

Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START, 2018).

The Current Study:

The process of studying women who engage in terrorism, and women who are suicide

bombers, poses unique challenges. Terrorists in general are difficult to access given the violent

and criminal nature of the behaviors the groups engage in, the limited accessibility to direct

observation or interviews, and finding willing participants to interview (LaFree & Dugan, 2009;

Freilich & LaFree, 2015). Proximity to terrorists is also a challenge, especially when examining

suicide bombing. Most female attacks have occurred in the last twenty years and are

predominantly contained to the Middle East and North Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa

regions (See Figures 2 and 3 below). More specifically, the two countries with the highest attack

rates are Nigeria and Iraq, where Boko Haram and al-Qaida and Iraqi affiliated groups

predominate the violence. Additionally, given the nature of suicide bombings and the outcome of

such an attack, having direct access or speaking to or interviewing perpetrators is practically

impossible.[9] Other methods of inquiry are needed to bridge the gap in such instances. A further

methodological point to consider pertains to studying women, especially women engaged in

violence. Perceptions of women, female roles, and gender stereotypes might pervade accounts of

females engaging in violent acts, journalists may pander to extreme cases that can be

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[9] Qazi (2012) argues that the lack of direct interviews with potential female bombers or women who failed in their suicide bombing mission skews the information that is known about women who engage in these behaviors and oversimplifies the motivation behind such actions.

sensationalized in a news story, and women may frame their own experiences differently depending on who they are speaking to.[10]
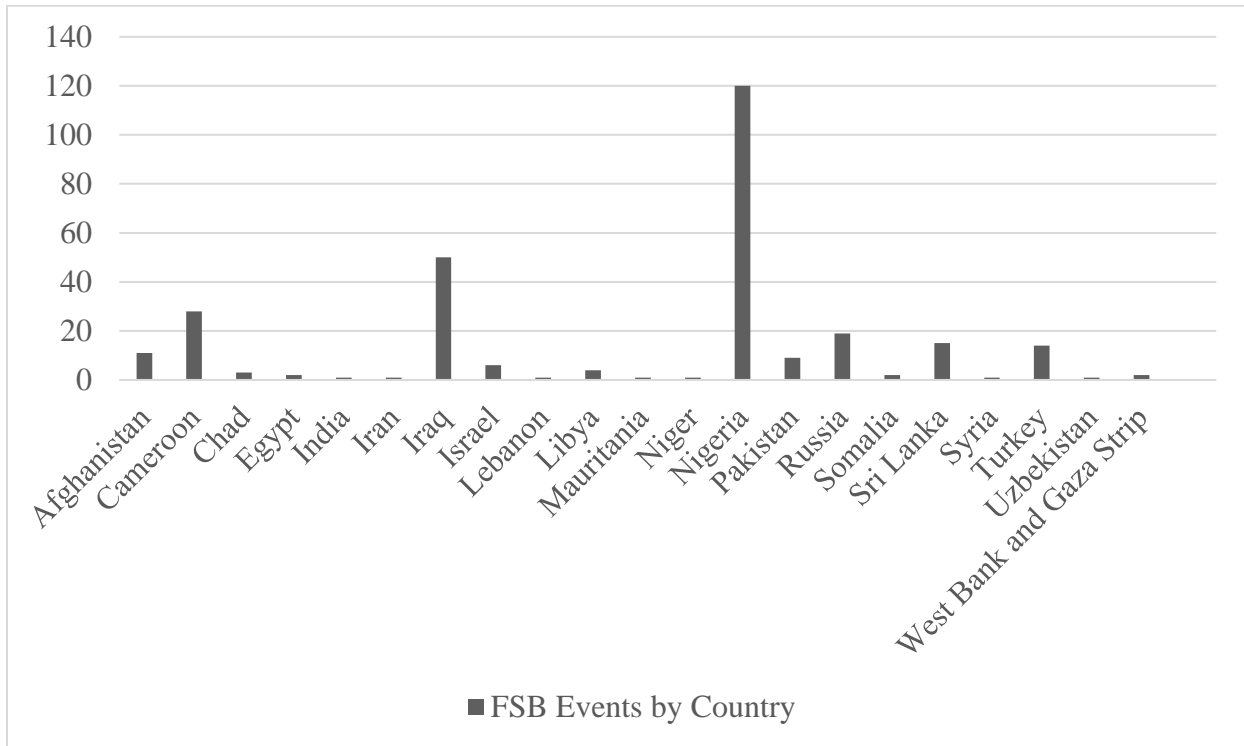
Figure 2: Female suicide bombing events by country

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[10] See Utas (2005), *Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone* for a further discussion on the various narratives women utilize in different contexts to their advantage and to receive the best possible outcome for their situation.
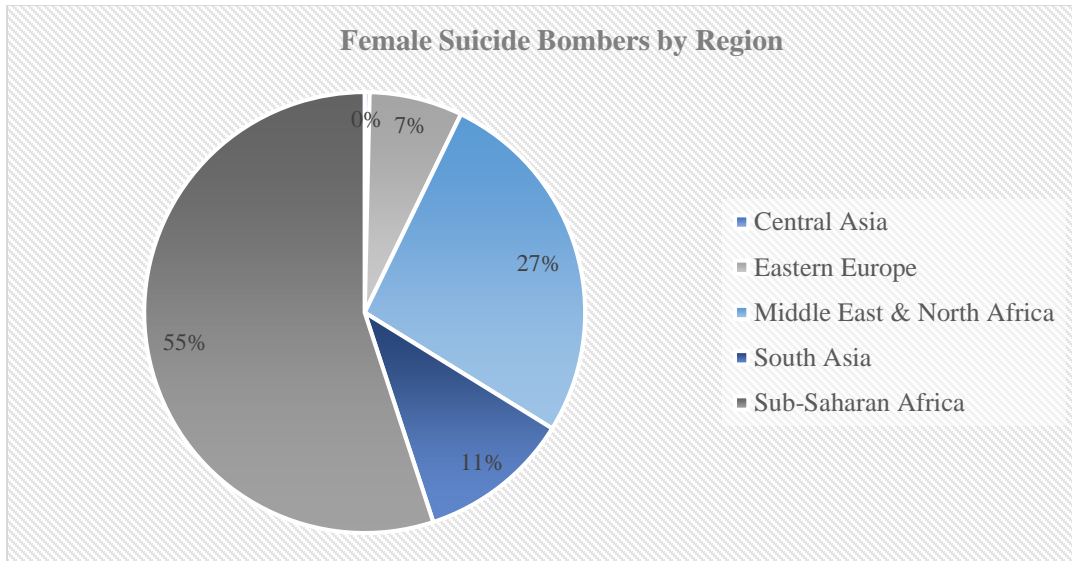
Figure 3: Female suicide bombers by region

The above does not indicate that this area of inquiry should go untouched or that a difficult task makes it an impossible one. Thus, the present study chose to utilize open-sourced media accounts of female suicide bombing events in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, specifically the countries effected by the Boko Haram terrorist organization (these include Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad). As previously noted, this region is selected based on prior literature defining the area an idealized form of the polygynous patriarchal system in which women navigate male-dominated cultures. To further the case for specifying the Nigerian area of Sub-Saharan Africa and Boko Haram for analysis, the most female suicide bombing attacks have occurred in this area. Though a study that incorporates all regions where female suicide bombing attacks have occurred would be beneficial to flesh out similarities or differences across terrorist groups (especially given that time, culture, and social organization impacts variation in opportunity and action), between ethno-nationalist compared to religious based groups, and with gendered aspects of women's lives in different areas, this is well beyond the scope of the present

study. Thus, this study focuses on one group in a non-traditional patriarchal system, that has the highest level of female suicide bombings, to examine gender differences in the performance and accomplishment of perpetrating suicide attacks.

To accomplish the goals set forth, a complementary dataset was constructed from the open-sourced citations in the Global Terrorism Database associated with each female suicide bomber.[11] By including all female attacks from Boko Haram and the affected areas into the study, high-profile incidents that may incorporate a greater degree of bias in the reporting are subject to analysis along with low-profile attacks that may not have created as great of a media impact (due to fewer casualties, characteristics about the perpetrator, or a variety of other factors). Media accounts are not without methodologic issues or problems of potential bias, especially since women who commit terrorist attacks receive a greater level of media attention (Nacos, 2006).[12] However, as Davis (2017) states, "The reliance on media reporting of terrorist incidents is… a necessary element of terrorism studies," given the greater level of reporting on large and small-scale attacks, and the fact that "there are few clear solutions" to the issue of gaining access to terrorist organizations and terrorist act perpetrators (p. 9). Therefore, the final sample contains 102 female suicide bombing incidents affiliated with Boko Haram.[13] For these

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[11] Due to the limitations of using traditional methods of inquiry and data sources found in criminological studies, Freilich and LaFree (2015), speaking to the numerous databased being constructed for terrorist specific events, that "The growing availability of data resources like these make it much more feasible for criminologists to provide theoretical contributions to the literature on terrorism" (p. 5).

[12] Some sociological scholars suggest that media reports on terrorism, violence, and gender reflects a social problem regarding the framing of media reports that demonstrates the work on claims making in the sociological subdiscipline of social problems. This paradigm shift reflects the change from researching issues and problems to researching how these problems are defined and constructed via public discourse (See Joel Best for further work). The reports utilized in this dissertation are read with this sociological issue in mind, however, the sources are viewed as a documentation of available evidence from those doing the reporting. To examine the sources or 'problem' following the framework of how the issue is being defined and constructed by those providing the evidence opens the door to an endless cycle and debate about where the evidence is coming from, what their bias and frameworks are, and would require that every behavioral phenomenon be re-examined to incorporate individuals definitions and personal constructions regardless of the subject at hand.

[13] There are 153 female incidents from Sub-Saharan Africa in the Global Terrorism Database, of which 151 are from the region affiliated with Boko Haram. Two attacks from this region were from the group Al-Shabaab, primarily

attacks, 212 articles were included in a complementary qualitative dataset to the GTD.

Additionally, many of these sources were from news agencies and reporters that regionally

matched the area being reported on. Incident data on attacks attributed to Boko Haram and the

region where Boko Haram carries out attacks consist of about 40% available from domestic

(Nigerian, Sub-Sahara African, West African) sources, almost 40% came from international

sources, and the remaining were western based (primary the United States) (See Figure 4 for

examples of sources utilized and its classification).

Domestic	International	Western
Weekly Trust- Nigeria	The Gulf Today	New York Times
Nigeria Punch	Al Jazeera	CNN
The Nation Nigeria	BBC News	The Independent
Latest Nigerian News	AFP (World Service)	The Houston Chronicle
News Express Nigeria	Qatar Tribune	Los Angeles Times
Pulse.ng	Xinhua General News Services	Business Insider
Nigerian Tribune	Xinhua News Agency	
Channels TV Nigeria		
News Nigeria		

Figure 4: Examples and Classifications of Open-Sourced News Cites

Theoretical Framework

The study is examining female suicide bombers with a feminist criminological lens. This

perspective is different from traditional theories of crime and deviance because it includes a

"theoretical understanding of gender that guides [the] research: theories of *gender* are as much a

starting point in feminist criminological analyses as are theories of *crime*" (Daly, 1998, Miller &

Mullins, 2006). Furthermore, Daly & Chesney-Lind (1988) present five elements of feminist

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based out of Somalia, and were not included in the study. See also the Methods chapter for an explanation on how
the final sample was narrowed down from 151 incidents to 102 incidents.

thought that distinguish it from traditional criminological theories: gender is a multi-faceted historical and cultural product that is related to biological sex and reproduction differences, gender relations dictate social orders and institutions, gender relations and constructions of masculinity and femininity are based on the principle that men are socially, politically, and economically superior over women, worldviews and the production of knowledge are gendered, and lastly, women need to be at the center of scholarly pursuits and not simply placed in relation to men. Utilizing a feminist criminological framework also allows for the inclusion of the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and ethnicity, which all effect the gender experience of everyone differently in addition to time and place (Daly & Maher, 1988; Maher, 1997). Thus, feminist scholars maintain that crime can only be fully understood and examined with the inclusion of gender; however, this can prove difficult as much research on women's involvement in crime "continuously produces and reproduces the traditional findings of gender differences while attempting to explain the nuances of gender and offending behaviors" (Miller, 2002).

Scholars have demonstrated that the learned behavior of what is *gender appropriate* and what is gender appropriate for others is shaped through the overarching structural factors that must be included in any analysis of gender.[14] Within these structural constraints, individuals display, perform, and *do* gender by constantly learning about and constructing gender during each interaction throughout life (West & Zimmerman, 1987). In most societies, hegemonic cultural dynamics and patriarchal structures and expectations still impact every day functions and interactions in which gendered behavior is enacted and accomplished and creates a gendered hierarchy in the social order (Connell, 2009; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Turshen &

---

[14] Gender, and what it means to be gendered, is not a static principle, but one that evolves with society in time and place. A person learns gender and their gendered-self early in development through observation and modeling what is deemed as appropriate and what will garner a rewarding outcome.

Twagiramariya, 1998; Zuckerhut, 2011). To explain this, the following theoretical models have been created, which scholars have demonstrated shape the framework of examining gender, crime, and violence, and the concept of a gendered nature of criminal behavior (Messerschmidt, 2009; Miller, 1998, 2002; Miller, 1986; Mullins).

Instead of viewing gender and crime from a purely theoretical framework, Daly (1998) created a conceptual schema for examining gender and crime, which incorporates the various theoretical components into each area of inquiry: *gendered pathways to lawbreaking, gendered crime*, and *gendered lives.* Daly states that the many criminological studies involving women center on either the discrepancy between the gender ratios of criminal behavior or on the gendered pathways to crime. To a lesser extent gendered crime and gendered lives have been examined. Makin and Hoard (2014) also note that most studies on female participation in terrorist activities focus on "describing the media portrayal, pathways into the group, or the psychology of those participants," which has led to the study of women and terrorism to be "severely limited and examined through a bifurcated lens" (p. 532). Therefore, the present study focused on the gendered crime aspects of female suicide bombing, and examines the specific contexts and qualities of offending and how the various aspects of offending are socially organized. Future research should seek to address the lack of direct narrative data and interviews from female bombers of Boko Haram to examine the gendered lives of the bombers and fill this gap further.

The study utilized the female bombers of Boko Haram given the recency of the attacks and the fact that Boko Haram has utilized more female bombers than any other group that has used females in suicide missions. The group is also in a gendered, patriarchal system that is different from most other terrorist groups and organizations (such as the classic patriarchal structures

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found in the Middle East and North Africa and parts of Asia and South Asia) that have deployed these tactics. Thus, it presents a unique circumstance to examine whether women are being utilized for group advantage/instrumental goals (using women in a gendered capacity because of strategic, tactical, and media advantages purported by female bombers), like scholars have suggested is the case in the Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts; or, if women are acting out of their own free-will, agency, and desire to commit bombings, or if the women are victims of circumstance, rape, and coercion to carry out attacks, more suggestive of the Chechen Black Widows.

Following the theoretical concepts and prior literature, there were several guiding questions that emerged. Are Boko Haram's female bombers using perceptions and stereotypes of the female gender to infiltrate targets and carry out suicide attacks? Do female suicide bombers accomplish attacks in similar ways to other forms of female perpetrated acts of violence or crime? Are female suicide bombers perceived/treated in a gendered way prior to bomb detonation? Given the inductive nature of the study, these guiding questions provided for further organic development of the emerging themes and patterns. Thus, the questions evolved to reflect the emergent themes: How are Boko Haram's female bombers infiltrating targets to carry out suicide attacks; what role do Boko Haram's female bombers play in the enactment of the attack; how to locals and authorities respond to the female bombers; and relatedly, do the female bombers react to being intercepted in a stereotypically gender-consistent way, ie. surrender, take opportunity not to detonate, claim victimhood, desist from perpetration. [15]

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[15] A fourth guiding question was originally included at the beginning of the study. Do the ways in which female suicide bombings are carried out reflect the ideal-typical patriarchal system in the Nigerian and Nigerian border area, specifically, and the Sub-Saharan Africa region more broadly? This question was formulated during the proposal stage when the study was planning on conducting a comparative analysis on the Middle East and North Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa regions since these two areas have varying patriarchal systems and the highest rates of female suicide bombers. Case analyses should be conducted for the primary countries/groups that have contributed to the high rates of bombers in these areas and should then be compared in a future research study.

The purpose of this study is to further the terrorism literature by examining gender and terrorism, specifically women's involvement and perpetration of suicide bombing events, using a criminological framework. This area is significant because there is an increasing number of women participating in terrorist activities and suicide bombings. Prior literature discusses the stories on how women became motivated to the cause or recruited, including women who failed to complete their suicide bombing missions, but lacks a gendered exploration and model of women perpetrating the attacks and the perpetration of the attack. Therefore, what separates this research from prior terrorism and political violence research in criminology and other fields of inquiry on women is the feminist criminological lens that will be utilized to examine female suicide bombers and their respective attacks. This study will therefore explore the gendered nature of female suicide bombings, those who perpetrate these attacks, the gendered ways these acts of violence are committed, and whether female suicide bombers engage in bombing missions in similar ways as women in other forms of criminal behavior.

CHAPTER 2

GENDER THEORY IN THE CONTEXT OF WOMEN & POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Introduction to Gender

Gender is one of the most researched and theorized topics in numerous fields of inquiry. Without any specific knowledge of an individual, a physical observation can garner aspects of a person's identity, personality, approved behavior, and mannerisms, or, at least what one assumes these characteristics will be given the dress, appearance, identifiable sex-specific attributes, and internal (domestic) and external (public) social expectations. Risman (2004) states that there are four theoretical traditions that are utilized to explain or define gender: individual, which includes biological and social elements[16]; how social and structural elements create gendered behavior, and not biological or individual learning components; integrative approaches that treat gender as "a socially constructed stratification system" (Connell, 2002, p. 430; Lorber, 1994), and 'doing gender,' which examines social interaction and accountability to other social actor's expectations (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Though there have been advancements in the understanding of gender since it was first distinguished as separate from a biological marker, Connell (2009) states that each tradition is still relevant today given that many individuals still subscribe to each tradition/way of viewing gender.

How a person is perceived to be gendered automatically elicits a response from others in any given social situation or context. If someone is performing or acting outside of these automatically perceived norms, then it is assumed that something is *off* or *not right* about them

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[16] Early theoretical developments regarding the differences between genders and gendered behavior suggested that male and female roles were developed early on through cognitive developments of sex roles, which were applied to what is "right" or "appropriate" behavior given an individual's sex, and to reject what does not fit into the "appropriate" behavior for that gender (Lorber 1994).

and will produce potentially negative, or even criminal, responses. Gender is also an important part of a person's identity, shaping how they react to the world they are in. Gender, and what it means to be gendered, is not a static principle, but one that evolves with society in time and place. But where does this initial behavior and what is considered proper male-female, masculine-feminine behavior come from and why would one response lead to a positive and another a negative outcome?

Scholars have demonstrated that the learned behavior is shaped through the overarching structural factors that must be included in any analysis of gender (Acker, 1992; Heimer & DeCoster, 1999). Through these structural constraints, individuals display, perform, and *do* gender (West &Zimmerman, 1987). In contemporary societies, hegemonic cultural dynamics and patriarchal structures and expectations still impact every day functions and interactions and how individuals are able to accomplish gender (Connell, 2009; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Turshen & Twagiramariya, 1998; Zuckerhut, 2011). Given the impact of continued political violence on communities- ethnic or racial division, violence, poverty, low educational attainment, crime, higher rates of single females with dependent children, and the militarization of males- women often face issues involving family and finances and potential victimization, but these situations can also give rise to activism and direct involvement (becoming soldiers, joining terrorist organizations), depending on the society.

Individual: Sex Role Theory

Sex role theory, first developed in the 1970s, suggests that the social construction of gender categories, or sex roles/gender roles[17] are learned and enacted behaviors and ways of

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[17] For an argument against the use of the term 'sex roles,' see *On the Term "Sex Roles"* by Helena Zopata and Barrie Thorne (1978). While the current study uses the term as it were in prior theory and arguments, it is noted that there are arguments on the numerous issues with such terminology and the applicability of it regarding gender.

being.[18] The problem with sex role theories is that roles are situational identities, not master

identities (like sex category) that "cut across situations" (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p.128).

To this end, gender does not stay constant across situations. Sex-role socialization research

demonstrates issues with this theory and it's "emphasis on 'consensus, stability and continuity'"

(West & Zimmerman, 1987 citing Stacey and Thorn, 1985, p. 307). The sex role theory does not

take into consideration historical setting, political or economic social structures, or cultural

customs, and assumes that people are static in action and behavior (Connell 1985).[19]

Consequently, early gender development theories lack a holistic explanation of the gendered

dynamics of social situations and actions and how individuals chose to act in those situations, the

constraints placed upon them, and the opportunities provided. Given the assumptions of the sex

role theory on male and female behavior, this tradition is limited in its ability to explain why

women engage in political violence, join terrorist organizations, or become suicide bombers.

Gender and social structure

Gender as structure and institution

Gender has also been conceptualized as a social structure and an institution to allow for

further analysis on the way gender is situated in the individual, institutional, and interactional

levels of society (Risman, 2004; Martin, 2004). Framing gender as a structure allows for the

identification of the conditions under which gender inequality is produced within various social

arenas (Risman, 2004). Lorber (1994) states that gender is a societal organizer and that this is a

primary reason for gendering individuals. Women are characterized as caregivers and mothers,

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[18] Gender starts with assignment of a sex category at birth, which then becomes the way they are dressed and displayed in order to effectively demonstrate this category to others. A person's sex category then becomes a gender status over time through social mechanisms such as naming and easily identifiable gender markers (Lorber, 1994).
[19] Some limitations to sex role theory include a lack of incorporation of the increasing rates of single parent households (only male or female), female headed households, being raised in nontraditional environments, economic status, race and ethnicity, educational status, or religion, which have intersectional effects on how people act and respond given their cultures and situation.

men as strong and masculine breadwinners. Society thus assigns similarities and differences between male and female, which translate into dichotomous gender roles and responsibilities to each classification (Lorber, 1994)[20].

The gender responsibilities assigned to women in Sub-Saharan Africa (and non-Western societies) keep women in subordinate positions by having to provide for dependent children, often being the primary caregiver and resource provider, as relations in this area are oftentimes polygynous. The lack of access to resources and opportunities for women, however, maintains the female reliance on males as the breadwinner for the family unit. The position of women is further reduced for women in violent African conflicts, where racial issues are dominant to gender equality initiatives. Women's rights are placed second to the overarching racial or ethnic struggles the state or region is engaged in and thus, women's rights and war-related violations and victimizations are often ignored or not given a platform (Halim, 1998; Padarath, 1998). The subordination of women, and the persistent inequalities of gender and other social stratifications, is continuously manifested under the guise of hegemonic masculinity, and social actors perform various displays in order to effectively navigate the overarching male-oriented power structure.

Hegemonic masculinity

To refer to something as hegemonic is a cultural dynamic that implies that a social group has a dominant position in society. Connell (1987) describes hegemonic masculinity as a normative male hetero sexuality that plays a large role in legitimizing male organizational power and dominance over women and other masculinities. The current societal standards of hegemonic masculinity describe a "strong, technically competent, authoritative leader who is sexually potent and attractive, has a family, and has his emotions under control" (Acker, 1990, p.

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[20] Lorber (1994) further states that proscribed roles and responsibilities are reinforced in each child through learning, teaching, modeling, and enforcement/reinforcement.

153). Women's bodies are thus not adaptable to hegemonic masculinity and therefore cannot fit in high status positions in the male hierarchy.[21] Consequently, symbols, images, and ideologies are created to justify and reinforce male dominance as a result of the hegemonic masculine narrative, which permeates through most structural/organizational institutions of power (military, economics, politics, criminal justice system) (Acker, 1992), especially in militarized societies (Enloe, 2004). Additionally, almost all people in a society know what these expectations are and "likely expect[s] that most others hold these beliefs" (p. 513), which could be why individuals rarely question the social order (Lorber, 1994).[22]

Hegemonic masculinity positions the male as 'breadwinner,' evokes intimidation from subordinates, is characterized as tough and violent, is economically established, and enjoys high social status (Donaldson, 1993).[23] This narrative legitimizes males as the dominant group and places women into the subordinate societal position. Connell (2005) states that a prominent feature of hegemonic masculinity is the use of "toxic" actions and practices, such as physical violence, which reinforces men's dominance over women, and is a gendered feature of domestic and sexual violence, common issues in regions with political violence like civil war, insurgency, or terrorism. These shared hegemonic beliefs instill males as dominant and women as subordinate in "social relational" contexts and further solidifies the gender inequality hierarchy (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).

Social stratification and inequality

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[21] This is arguably one of the reasons why there are low numbers of women in leadership positions, especially in criminal networks or groups that are engaging in violent activities. The female body itself is arguably not equipped, physically and perceptually, to be a dominant, authoritative figure.

[22] Lorber (1994) further suggests that the hegemonic order is rarely questioned or acted against because most individuals fail to recognize that there is anything to question to begin with and continue to fill prescribed gender norms that fit within this order.

[23] Hegemonic masculinity is also the idealized form of manhood, and the term is utilized to conceptualize the hierarchy of men (over other men and over women) (McCormack, 2012).

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Gender inequality is produced and reproduced through social processes that are built into the social culture by those in power to maintain their own status and dominant position.[24] Further inquiry on gender structure and stratification, conducted by Risman (2004), uses the structural theory of action to demonstrate how, given structural and situational constraints, individuals compare self and available options to other individuals in structurally similar positions.[25] Status and position in social settings are compared to others in similar positions, which creates comparisons that lead to feelings of either relative deprivation or advantage. Individuals choose various actions based on the social constraints that they encounter; however, social structure also shapes actions through influencing "actor's perceptions of their interests and directly by constraining choice" (Risman, 2004, p. 432). Individual constraints and perceptions are framed by their gender, race, and class, which will lead to feelings of inferiority or dominance given the situation, like areas of the Middle East or parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Social inequality, therefore, is shaped by cultural expectations during these interactions. A person will treat someone a certain way given their preconceived notions about gender, class, or race because they learned to associate individuals that are different as "not me" or the "Otherized" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011), and thus are valued as less than or better than given societal value placements, allowing the ability to victimize, dehumanize, or terrorize individuals labeled as *others*.

Integrative approach: Intersecting micro and macro influences on gender

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[24] Lorber (1994) states that, "When gender is a major component of structured inequality, the devalued genders have less power, prestige, and economic rewards than the valued genders" (p.20). Men, therefore, have a vested interest in maintaining the power position in society.

[25] Scholars have argued that once race and class are added to the social stratification scheme, people are ranked even further. Some social structures rank economics as a function of status, where resources dictate equality. Lower socioeconomic groups with fewer resources are ranked lower than groups with higher levels of resources. Given the subordinate occupational position women are often in, and the added status of head of family and childcare provider, men outrank women in a multitude of situations, economic or otherwise, continuously reinforcing the level of inequality (See Connell 2002, Ridgeway & Correll, 2004, and Collins & Bilge, 2016 for further literature on intersectionality).

Societal structures and culture are important for the development of gendered behavior.[26] Studies are lacking, however, on research in conflict zones or areas of political unrest, where males are commonly militarized, women may have experienced rape and pregnancy from the opposing forces, and resources are scarce.[27] Additionally, most theories only look at micro or macro level interactions without incorporating social structure and societal happenings during that time or place, which is especially relevant when looking at new and emerging phenomena happening across numerous cultures and times. Furthermore, many stratification issues are based on production and reproduction dynamics, sexual politics, and background factors (politics, economics), which amplify these conditions in various ways (Collins et al, 1993). Therefore, it is important that research examines gender and gendered actions in a unified way in multiple social environments. In relation to female suicide bombers, this includes differences in groups, the type of the group, the time period, and the regional and cultural factors of the group that is engaged in political violence.

Eagly (1987) suggests that most salient differences in gender are the products of the division of labor, which are replicated through socio-structural practices dominated by male status and power, even with technology advances, women's greater independence, less responsibility for childcare, and independence from reproduction (via birth control developments and planned parenting).[28] Macro-level cultural gender identity still "puts woman in this role"

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[26] Some research suggests that the family context is the most important aspect of developing gender ideologies and definitions during early developmental stages, however, life experiences become increasingly important as a person ages (Davis, 2007).

[27] Rape during conflict is often cited as a reason for women to become involved in terrorist activities, especially as suicide bombers. See Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terrorism (2005)* and *Bombshell: Women and Terrorism (2011)* for further explanations of women's motivation to commit suicide bombings.

[28] Further research by Bussey and Bandura (1999) on the social cognitive theory of gender role development states that a person's gender concept is developed from a mix of experiences. Gender roles are a "product of broad network of social influences operating interdependently in a variety of societal subsystems" (676). The authors argue that gender is important because the characteristics and roles that people adopt and promote for males and females have different values, with male attributes being regarded as better, "more desirable," and higher status (p. 676),

(Collins et al, 1993, 191). West and Zimmerman also state that gender and division of labor issues are a product of resource "allocation" (p.143), who does what, gets what, and how resources are distributed. Within the family structure, women are the primary care givers of children, even when they have outside jobs, and engage in household chores willingly and as part of their duties because they perceive it as part of their "essential nature" (Beer, 1983). In some cultures, however, women accept this duality and view the dual role as a strength and not simply as something expected because of their female status. For example, women who lived through high levels of violence in South Africa view themselves as survivors and not victims, and in addition to their maternal or wifely role, were also wage-earners in addition to being highly involved in initiatives that promoted peace. At the same time, however, these women "perceived and articulated their experiences as secondary" to the males in their family (Padarath, 1998).[29] [30]

Due to cultural beliefs about gender differences, organizations reproduce a culture of masculinity and reinforce the feminine stereotypes of weak, passive, or nurturing (Acker, 1990), which can be exploited by criminal and violent groups in a strategic manner for the group's success.[31] Thus, a gender hierarchy is prevalent in organizations and groups. Women, even though most are in lower positions or occupations, are not regarded in this way; and, because many societies still view males as the traditional "breadwinner," increasing female occupation or economic status is still perceived as threatening to male status in many situations (Ennaji &

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reinforcing the dominant masculine order. They argue that gender is thus a social construct where macro level processes impact micro-level individual factors.

[29] Gender in the public sphere also presents issues of dominance and subordination. Females are associated with less status and authority and engage more in "emotional labor," which is an enactment of their "essential" femininity (Hothschild, 1973).

[30] Another example is the shift in language and rhetoric in the United States from crime victims to survivors (often in the context of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault), which could indicate a shift in perception for the female who had the experience and those who perceive her to reclaim agency out of something rather subjective.

[31] See the chapter on Women in Terrorism for further discussion on the instrumental benefits of utilizing females in operational roles.

Sadiqi, 2011). Consequently, organizations, groups, and economic sectors of societies maintain a binary gender identity composition that is socially constructed and permeates into other social interactions and environments (Acker, 1990; Connell, 1987, 2009).[32]

The societal emphasis on economics and resources exacerbates income and status inequalities created through masculine organizational processes. In non-conflict social orders, women often dominate bottom-level positions in organizations, exemplifying production and reproduction differentials, where men are the prime wage-earners for families since women are likely to need time off for pregnancy or childcare.[33] As Kruttschnitt et al (2002) note, even with the advancements in women's economic and legal autonomy, there have been significantly less noticeable changes in the areas of female offending and crime. Even in criminal organizations and groups, like organized crime networks and street gangs, women are more often in peripheral or supporting roles (Mullins & Wright, 2003). Due to male and female stereotypes regarding emotions and child-rearing, women are viewed as more hormonal or emotional and thus are stigmatized by the male-dominated culture as a reason for exclusion in higher status positions (Huber, 1990). Or, conversely, women's bodies are over-sexualized and objectified in male-dominated organizations and are seen as either distracting or something to have power over (sexual harassment), while male bodies are not. The result of over-sexualization is a reinforcement of stereotypical female definitions that place women in positions that are "often jobs that *serve* men" (Hochschild, 1983, emphasis added), in either traditional or non-traditional (sex work) ways. Consequently, defiance of traditional female roles is more harshly punished because of female status as male sexual property (Chesney-Lind, 1986). In situations of political

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[32] In other words, women are consistently in supportive or peripheral roles and rarely in lead positions. When women can engage in the same environments as their male counterparts, it is often to the benefit of the male/group.
[33] In conflict zones, the principle of women in bottom-level positions remains constant, but there are differences regarding consistent employment, the types of labor women engage in, and time off for pregnancy and childcare.

violence, women's bodies are further objectified by males as "spoils of war", "war booty" or "boundary-markers" (Halim, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1992). Thus, a person's body and sexuality are used as structural mechanisms for inclusion and exclusion in certain roles, statuses and as trophies.

Macro-level structures establish and maintains desired order. Women are hindered in these areas, while males still dominate societal power structures and keep the most power by being in control of these areas, reaping benefits in politics, economics, and military prowess (Huber, 1990). These individuals help shape normative gender behaviors from a top-down hegemonic control over status and resources. Various cultures and communities are presented with differing resources, opportunities, and constraints. Thus, appropriate female and male demeanor and behavior vary for different situations, religion, politics, and culture and are based on who has the power in these structural situations.[34] Given the militarization in many part of Sub-Saharan Africa, reflected in high rates of violence and armed conflict, it would follow that a terrorist organization like Boko Haram would maintain a structurally male hierarchy and leadership, while many women in the militant camps are subjected to chores, domestic servitude, sex work, and child-rearing, and would consequently be more inclined to engage in suicide bombing attacks to maintain a semblance of autonomy and agency.

Doing Gender: Gender as performance and action

Incorporating choice and personal decisions into action and social performance, West and Zimmerman (1987) suggest that gender should be understood as "a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction" (p. 125). The concept of 'doing gender' therefore "involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast

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[34] Within the male-female gender categorization and hierarchy, however, gendered personas vary by and are further ranked based on class, race, ethnicity, education, and occupation as well (Huber, 1990).

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particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'" (p. 126).[35] Countering

prior theoretical constructs of gender, 'doing gender' suggests that gender is not a role, set of

traits, or variable, but the product of social performances. West and Zimmerman also suggest

that the performance of gender is consequently unavoidable due to the social process of being

assigned a sex category and the reinforcement of that category, which in turn effects "the

allocation of power and resources not only in the domestic, economic, and political domains but

also in the broad arena of interpersonal relations" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 145).

In situational contexts, individuals display and do gender by managing actions in such

occasions by performing what is deemed or learned as gender-appropriate given that context.[36]

Reinforcement of gendered behavior and displays through learned sex category by others holds

the person accountable to perform actions that fit into that category, legitimizing or discrediting

the activities. Women can engage in masculine behavior, but if a woman oversteps the gender

boundary, she may be punished or treated more harshly than if a man were to have performed the

same act (Miller, 2002).[37] Following this framework, an individual may display many social

identities given varied situations, but the master identity of male or female will always guide

action and response to those actions.

While Goffman suggests that gender behavior is a display of repetitive stylized behaviors

produced because of a person's gender role, West and Zimmerman (1987), instead counter the

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[35] West and Zimmerman (1987) develop a purely sociological explanation of gender as a "routine, methodological, and reoccurring accomplishment." (p. 126).

[36] Competing and prior theoretical frameworks suggest that gender is much less of an "achievement" in other fields of inquiry and more so the differences and developments of the division of labor, formation of gender identity, and the social subordination of women. Specific gender behavior is learned by watching others, listening to criticisms about particular behavior that reinforce what is deemed normative for that role and situation, and modeling the learned display of behavior.

[37] A person may experience gender role conflict if they can easily identify that they are out of place in a certain context, and that if they were not in that context they would not be feeling tension or conflict (either internally or externally) (West & Zimmerman, 1987), but this does not seem to be the case for women involved in violence and who intentionally join violent groups or armed conflicts.

position and importance of gender as role or display. They suggest that gender role obscures the work that is involved in producing gender in everyday life, and gender display positions 'gender' as a less important function of interaction. Doing gender does not mean to always follow mainstream or traditional feminine or masculine conceptions, but to engage in certain behaviors "at the risk of gender assessment," (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 136), and how people choose to navigate these and act upon them will produce a judgement and reaction from others. Gender actions, assessment, and judgement may be especially pronounced in traditionally masculine avenues such as war, violence, and crime.

From a structural perspective, the hegemonic order states that one must be either masculine or feminine but cannot be both (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Differences created by positions and characteristics can be framed as fundamental and enduring. Males being portrayed as dominant and females as deferent through "doing gender" results in a social order that "reflects natural differences" and reinforces the learned dominant or deferent roles (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 146).[38] Furthermore, hegemonic masculinity pushes to keep individuals in subordinate positions by constructing a male cultural and structural social order, which can lead to militarization, that seems as though it's the biological or natural order of society, making gender as a construct disappear for those who do not observe it. With each person performing gender as socially constructed and assigned, the current dominant/subordinate, male status over female status, system prevails. In the contemporary structure, women are perceived as being 'communally' oriented, whereas men are viewed as 'agentic' or 'instrumental' (Ridgeway &

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[38] This point is considered when looking at female suicide bombers and how they act prior to the attack or in the way they attempt to infiltrate targets or areas. It is assumed that the assumption of nonviolent females by male guards or security operatives would not expect a female to behave in a way that is counter to the performance of the gender that is expected, creating an element of surprise.

Correll, 2004)[39]. Consequently, if a person fails to do gender appropriately, by not following the cultural perceptions of what that gender should be doing, the person, not the institutional construct that created what is appropriate, will have to account for why they chose to act the way they did, such as female militants in wartime or conflict zones, female activists, and female rebels during, and in the aftermath, of the violence.

Additionally, prior research states that "men [were] preordained for agenic functions and women for expressive and communion functions," suggesting that men possessed the ability to choose outcomes and actions in their lives, but women were merely acted upon and on as emotional and familial resources. Consequently, placing gender and sex status together in a binary system "legitimates social arrangements as accommodations to differences attributed to inherent nature", and thus continues to establish *woman* and *female* under hegemonic definitions (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; West & Zimmerman, 1991). This binary system, however, is not static, and often changes in times of political violence and conflict, where the traditional stereotypes of passive females can be dissolved (Turshen, 1998).

A discrepancy that is not commonly addressed in research is that not all individuals in the same situation will behave the exact same normative way. Agency is what accounts for the differences in the outcomes of behaviors given the same structural situations. Individuals can produce gender by actions considered appropriate, while others rebel against norms. Gender norms are reinforced through sanctions and punishments through peers, family, formal sanctions, cultural differences, and further issues like occupying forces or conflict (Lorber, 1994). Consequently, a person's survival may depend on how they can navigate certain gendered

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[39] For further reading on the sex differences on agentic and communal behavior and characteristics, see Eagly, Wood, and Diekmar (2000) *Social Role Theory of Sex Differences and Similarities: A Current Appraisal,* in The Developmental Social Psychology of Gender (edited by Thomas Eckes and Hanns Trautner).

situations (West & Zimmerman, 2009), especially in circumstances of violence or conflict where there are high levels of kidnapping, rape, and other forms of violence against women. Environment and culture, within the framework of hegemonic masculinity, develop differently depending on resource availability and particular social customs that have been established as normative.[40] It is within these contexts that a person can perform gender, and do gender, and it is these structural constraints that shape and frame the way in which this is performed.

Much of the research that has been done on women and crime, violence, and political violence frames the actions of women as victims of their own circumstances. These notions further the hegemonic narrative that suggests that it is only men who can be a*gentic.* As will be demonstrated, women do gender in numerous types of situations and styles. Miller (2002) states that women use gender as a means to navigate certain situations to the best of their ability. In the context of violence, women are not helpless victims of the situation. Though violence and victimization do occur and is often gendered, women also do gender by choosing specific actions or responses over another, as can be seen in women's engagement with suicide bombing.

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[40] The meanings and definitions that people prescribe to particular genders, races, or classes as to what is appropriate behavior comes from "historically specific institutional and collective practices in the 'natural' (and thus, 'rightful') allocation of material and symbolic resources" (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 213).

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN, GENDER, AND VIOLENCE

Female Involvement in Violent Behavior and Groups

Much of the prior literature on gender and offending behavior has focused on several of the

primary gender regimes (Connell, 2009), or the gender arrangements within a given institution or

organization (Connell, 2002), including the family (Heimer & DeCoster, 1999), the streets and

drug economies (Miller, 1986; Maher, 1997), street gangs and offender networks (Miller, 1998A,

1998B, 2001; Mullins & Wright, 2003) and militarized groups (MacKenzie, 2009, 2012;

Kramer, 2012; Utas, 2005). These gender regimes are not exhaustive and further research should

include terrorist organizations, where gender and patriarchal norms dominate the organizational

and strategic aspects of the group, which is one goal of the present research. This chapter,

therefore, will focus on the gender regimes that have already received scholarly consideration

that focus on the criminological aspects of gendered behavior.

When examining these gender regimes, and violent and criminal engagement, one distinct

gendered factor is clear throughout each area: there is a disproportionate number of males

compared to females who engage in serious violent crimes. Not only has this undoubtedly led to

the greater focus on male offenders in criminology, but has led to what scholars deem "gender-

neutral" theories regarding male and female offenders, assuming that traditional criminological

variables such as delinquent peers, abusive or neglectful families, inconsistent discipline,

supervision and guardianship, and opportunity, among others, are perceived the same and have

the same meanings/definitions for males and females. These variables, however, vary in level of

influence within and across gender and context (Miller & Mullins, 2006). How then do females

become involved in crime and violence and why? Further, why do men commit more serious

violent crimes than women, and in what context? Why and when would women engage in

violent crime? Why is there a greater gender gap in serious offenses and less so in smaller, petty

offenses? These are the questions generally asked by feminist researchers. The situation and the

context within which the act is occurring plays a role in actions and behaviors, but there are also

overlapping gendered features across female involvement in violent criminal acts. As such,

scholars have deplored several methods of examining these areas, using either a singular

theoretical conceptualization, blending feminist and criminological theories, or placing gender

within a particular area of inquiry.

Chesney-Lind (1986) stated that, even with an increase in female autonomy, there had been

no major increases in female involvement in serious "masculine" violent crimes, as some

theorists suggested would happen over time. Increases in female criminal activity was primarily

only seen in traditionally female crimes, such as shoplifting, prostitution, and fraud. Several

decades later, this trend remains relatively stable. How then do we account for females who *do*

engage in serious, violent activities? One highly cited theory is the "blurred boundaries"

argument that suggests that prior female victimization often leads to a greater chance of female

offending (Anderson, 1986; Ferarro, 2006; Gilfus, 1992; Kruttschnitt et al., 2002; Maher, 1997;

Miller & Mullins, 2006). Framing all female offending as a product of prior trauma and

victimization, however, negates other contexts that are favorable to violent or criminal activity,

such as for economic gain, status, social recognition, reduction of boredom, excitement, or

revenge (Miller, 2002; Miller & Mullins, 2006). Research on female involvement in criminal

activities must incorporate situational elements of the event as well as gendered elements of the

decision-making process that led to and during the event, and the ways in which "gendered status

structures this participation" to construct a full narrative of female criminal behaviors (Maher, 1997, p. 13).

Another feminist approach to examine situational contexts of women and crime is by incorporating sociological theories on gender as either a performance or as a situational accomplishment, otherwise known as "doing gender" (detailed above) (West & Zimmerman 1987, West & Fenstermaker, 1995). The gender as performance approach emphasizes how women and men "do gender" in variable situations based on what is perceived to be the normative way of acting. Feminist criminologists have thus attempted to apply this concept to the study of crime and criminal behavior as a "means of explaining differences in women's and men's offending" patterns (Miller & Mullins, 2006, p. 233). Violence and acting violently is therefore viewed as a "resource for… demonstrating masculinity within a given context or situation" (Simpson & Ellis, 1995, p. 50). Analyzing crime and violence as a resource has been applied successfully to the context of male offending and masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1997, 2000), however, there has been considerably less success in the application to female offending and criminal behavior (Miller, 2002).

In a study that incorporated both criminological and feminist theory components, Heimer and DeCoster (1999), focusing on social structure and culture, state that different social positions, differing by gender, race, and economic status, result in variations in family controls and peer associations. The authors found that women are frequently taught to value interpersonal relations more than males. Indirect controls are therefore a result of emotional bonding with the family and are the primary controls over female behavior, but not male behavior. Additionally, boys were more likely than girls to have friends who engaged in aggressive or violent activities, increasing the level of exposure to definitions that are favorable to violence, normalizing the

behavior. These two factors influence the violent and gender definitions a person can learn.[41]

Those who internalize definitions of violence are likelier to engage in violence. Definitions

favorable to violence, however, are not in line with stereotypical perceptions of femininity,

which emphasize female characteristics such as "nurturance, passivity, nonaggressiveness, and

physical and emotional weakness" (Heimer & Decoster, 1999, p. 283). Therefore, the definitions

and beliefs that females learn about what is appropriate femininity and female behavior will

directly affect the likelihood that they will engage in violence.[42]

Instead of viewing gender and crime from a purely theoretical framework, Daly (1998)

created a conceptual schema for examining gender and crime, which incorporates the various

theoretical components into each area of inquiry: *gendered pathways to lawbreaking, gendered

crime*, and *gendered lives.* Gendered pathways to lawbreaking emphasizes "biographical

elements, life course trajectories and developmental sequences" (Daly, 1998, p. 97). An

important aspect of gendered pathways is the "blurred boundaries," or the victim and offender

overlap. Chesney-Lind and Pasko (2004) suggest that experiences of victimization by young

girls "set[s] the stage for their entry into youth homelessness, unemployment, drug use, survival

sex (and sometimes prostitution), and, ultimately, other serious criminal acts" (p. 5). Girls who

engage in juvenile delinquency, sex work, and other criminal activities are doing so out of

necessity and as a survival strategy, which pushes these young women further into a criminal

lifestyle (Gilfus, 1992). Though prior victimization experiences can be what Daly (1992) calls a

"leading scenario' of women's lawbreaking" (p. 136), it is not all inclusive, and some scholars

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[41] See chapter on Gender Theory for an explanation of the development of gender-favorable definitions.
[42] The findings by Heimer and Decoster suggest that females often do not learn and imitate definitions that are conducive to violence given family factors, socialization with peers, and the structural constraints on how females are supposed to behave in the first place. Women are affected more by indirect controls and emotional bonding with family members. But, could this be a product of female children having less access to peer socialization and experience outside the domestic sphere where there would be less opportunity to learn and internalize violent definitions in the first place?

argue that it needs to be expanded/broadened to include multiple aspects and scenarios to female offending. Plus, solely focusing on victimization as a pathway to female offending could lead to overlooking other key risk factors that may lead to various types of offending behavior.

The gendered crime element of Daly's (1998) schema seeks to examine what the specific contexts and qualities of female and male offending include and how the various aspects of offending are socially organized. The commonly cited "blurred boundaries" element may act as a background risk for female involvement in crime, but research has demonstrated that a victimization experience could be the main situational factor that led to the offensive behavior, commonly seen in situations where an abusive spouse is killed after a period of repeatedly victimizing their partner. However, it should be noted that only examining female violence as a condition of prior victimization furthers the gendered narrative of male violence as instrumental, direct, and physical, while female violence is perceived as expressive, indirect, and relational (Steffensmeier & Allen, 1996). Perceiving and formulating female violence as simply expressive "often functions to discredit and undermine their more instrumental goals" (Miller & Mullins, 2006, p. 234).

Finally, Daly (1998) describes the notion of gendered lives, or, how gender organizes the daily lives of individuals and how gender structures the opportunities available, including those pertaining to crime and criminal activity. This aspect is the most challenging of the three areas to study, however, because it incorporates more aspects than just crime, which would instead be a correlate of gender and not vice versa. Maher's (1997) ethnography of the lives of women involved in a drug economy demonstrates that gender inequality is also institutionalized on the streets through segregation and traditional female stereotypes of weakness. Maher moves beyond the "blurred boundaries" approach and reveals that women are not simply drug using victims of

circumstance and or the hyper-sexualized perception of the female substance user as someone who is co-dependent and willing to resort to sexual favors for drugs. These females are, instead, tenacious in their situations and engage in various legal and illegal activities in order to get money, including the act of robbing sex-clients (or "viccing"). The study is thus a strong counter-argument to the feminist inclination to rely on female victimization as an over-arching reason for female crime and involvement. To assume that most women engage in crime and violence only as a reaction to a victimization experience is a direct negation of female agency, solidifies the patriarchal cultural alignment of society and the female place in that society, and confirms that women are dependent and weak natured, incapable of violence for a cause.

'Blurred Boundaries'

Early feminist scholars suggested that the women who are aggressive or engage in delinquency "do so largely out of desperation and in relatively minor ways" (Chesney-Lind, 1986, p. 96). Though Maher's (1997) ethnography of women's involvement in a drug economy supports the notion that certain types of female offending occurs because of victimization experiences and the sexist nature of street life and addiction, females often personify violence and develop violent reputations to prevent being victimized.[43] Other women in Maher's research were initiating robberies of male sex clients, which differed from traditional robberies given "the motivations undergirding it are more complex and, indeed, are intimately linked with women's collective sense of the devaluation of their bodies and their work" (Maher and Curtis, 1992, p. 246). Though these women may have portrayed a violent attitude or engaged in violent actions, it

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[43] The projection of a violent or bad attitude is used as a protective measure and women in street cultures seldom actually resort to using violence.

could be speculated that many were utilizing violence as a way to navigate a male dominated

culture that sought to reduce the value of the females in it for their own personal gain.[44]

Some girls and young women join gangs and violent groups to protect themselves from

victimization experiences and perceived threats. Female gang members, for example, often

support the notion of cumulative risk factors for their involvement in gangs (Miller, 2001), as

many of these young women have prior experiences of victimization compared to nongang

females (Miller, 1996). Membership in a gang may insulate these young women from future

familial/oppressive home conditions (Portillos, 1999), or male abuses (Miller, 1998B). Miller

(1998B), however, suggests that gang membership can expose girls to other types of violent

victimization, many of which have a gendered connotation. The study demonstrates that gang

membership can reduce certain types of risk exposure (male strangers, acquaintances, abusive

family members), but also makes the female members more vulnerable to specific forms of

victimization by the actual group members, generally sexual forms of abuse, which male

members consider to be more acceptable with the females.

Additionally, girls attempting to join gangs could be "sexed in," whereas boys could not

be. This sexual practice was aimed at devaluating the girls attempting to join the gangs and

consisted of the female having to have sexual relations with multiple male members. Not only

did this give other male gang members the perception that the "sexed in" girl was sexually

available and promiscuous, but this perception also often extended to other female gang

members and male perceptions of female members in general, even if they joined the gang in a

more traditional way. The option of "sexing in" to the gang keeps females disempowered and

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[44] Some evidence suggests that when violence does occur, it is generally in response to a perceived threat or possible victimization and can be tied to self-defense (Ness, 2004), which is consistent with prior literature that frames female violence as being out of necessity or emotion and not in an instrumental way.

exploited by the male hierarchy and increases the level of mistreatment the girl could receive from fellow gang members (Miller, 1998B), which often led to further sexual victimization experiences.

Sexual forms of violence, oftentimes rape, are widely utilized in violent groups and social situations, where rape becomes more than an assault on the woman. In civil wars and insurgencies, even when women are combatants, groups often resort to 'dirty' war tactics, where mercenaries, criminal gangs, death squads, and guerilla fighters frequently target women with rape to shame them, take their honor, and symbolically attack the males in the victim's family or community (Turshen, 1998). Rape is thus perceived as a symbolic win when it is successfully accomplished because, "in violating women, the opponent nation can be attacked in its 'heart', in its reproductive and its symbolic foundations" (Zuckerhut, 2011, p22). In the Liberian armed conflict, however, rape was not viewed as a specific form of ethnic or symbolic attack. Instead, rape during the war in Liberia was a "celebration of hyper-masculine warrior identity" (Utas, 2005, p. 418), and a "denigration and objectification of women-as-sex" (Dilorio, 1992, p. 54).[45]

Women involved in violence can also become the victims of their own group. As with violent gang life, women in armed conflicts can face serious victimization experiences if suspected of disloyalty to the group; and, because of their status as a woman, females perceived as disloyal or over-stepping their gendered boundaries may face "heinous consequences" (White, 2007, p. 874).[46] The devaluation of women in situations of violence and the blurred boundaries effect is reflected in accounts of female combatants in armed conflict in Africa. These women

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[45] In the Liberian conflict, women were often victimized as sexual objects regardless of cultural or political background.
[46] As noted in the chapter on gender theory, women who do not act in the subscribed manner that other group members think they should act (female/feminine, not masculine) risk more severe punishments (negative consequences) from other members of the group (males) who want to maintain the dominance hierarchy.

often stated that even in the military (serving as soldiers) they felt a lack of agency "as a result of increased vulnerability to gender-specific human rights abuses perpetrated by enemy troops as well as by their own comrades. These abuses include rape, torture, brutal abductions, forced pregnancies, forced sex work, and other forms of sexual harassment, molestation, and discrimination" (White, 2007, p.868-869). These experiences are also reflected in women's involvement in other forms of violent groups, like gangs. Women may join the group knowing that there will be a level of victimization, but they do so willingly because they know where the victimization is coming from, i.e. a "friend" over an enemy combatant. Thus, women may choose the known victimization experiences, over a potentially worse unknown victimization experience, for the perceived benefits of being in the group, demonstrated by some women's decisions to engage in relationships with enemy combatants for security and protection in an otherwise hostile war environment (Utas, 20005), and in the case of the rebels in Northern Uganda, who would force girls and women into marriage but would rarely engage in rape outside of these marriages (Kramer, 2012). These relations, however, were often polygynous and women were frequently living in a "warlike atmosphere even domestically", given the high prevalence of female competition over resources and domestic power, made worse by intoxicated and armed boyfriends high on dope, alcohol, and power (Utas, 2005, p. 416).

Most women do not want to be viewed as victims, whose agency is often denied by the circumstances and structures in which they live. Few women, however, feel empowered by the armed conflicts and insurgencies surrounding them. In situations of political violence women are able to gain a sense of accomplishment by contributing in some way to the cause of resisting female oppression and bond over this similarity with other women who shared this experience. Thus, even where victimization experiences may have occurred, some women choose to focus on

the bonds they formed with other women, the greater sense of responsibility and confidence in their selves that was learned, and to see how the patriarchal structures in which they lived effected the order of their lives (White, 2007). Others, however, utilize their victimization experience as something to be avenged, which can lead to extreme forms of violent acts.

Peripheral Roles

In criminal behavior and violent actions, women are often in more peripheral roles. This can be seen across numerous types of criminal actions and in varying contexts. Chesney-Lind (1986) suggests that sexism "is as real in the criminal world as it is in the straight world" (p. 86), thus, women are often left with secondary roles and positions in criminal networks and violent actions (driving the getaway car, being a lookout, luring male victims into more vulnerable situations for male attackers) (Maher, 1997; Steffensmeier, 1983). Mullins and Wright (2003) examined the ways in which gender structures a person's access and participation in accomplishing residential burglary, oftentimes seen as a group-based offense (See also Miller 1998A for an analysis of gender and street robbery). This study explores how a person's gender affected their ability to join burglary groups, what function and role the person had in the group, and ultimately their ability to desist from further engagement with these groups. The authors demonstrate that men are the "gatekeepers to the social world of residential burglary" (Mullins & Wright, 2003, p. 821), and that women need men to vouch for them as burglary crew members, usually a romantic partner or male relative. The women who can join burglary crews remain in peripheral roles to the male group members and rarely move beyond this position.

Consistent with literature on women in street networks, women also face numerous difficulties moving past a peripheral role in armed conflicts and situations of political violence. In violent situations in Africa, White (2007) states that women actively joined forces fighting

against colonialism; however, many women joined these positions as a show of solidarity for anticolonialism, to gain protection for themselves and their families from violent groups, to avoid potential victimization and domestic violence, earn income, and for self-improvement aspects. These women were generally in support roles as domestic servants, messengers, decoys, combat trainers, distributors of propaganda and ideology, sex workers, and recruiters of other women and children. Violent groups have also been more open to allowing women to engage in the violent events because of tactical advantages (MacKenzie, 2012). Due to perceptions of women as non-violent and more engaged in promoting peace, women have been able to provide useful services in violent conflicts, which are "predicated on the assumption that [the opposition] would not suspect women of insurgency," or other active engagement (Turshen, 1998, P.6).

Though women have played a multitude of roles throughout instances of violent conflicts, many positions, peripheral or otherwise, are downplayed and, instead, sex work positions are generally the most discussed, framing women's involvement in an over-sexualized way and furthering the gendered structural narrative. In Sierra Leone, post-conflict programs excluded women on the grounds that women and girls were not "real" soldiers, and instead were framed as "abductees, camp followers, domestic workers, and sex slaves" (MacKenzie, 2009, p.245), while the active roles these women played and their self-perceptions as soldiers were largely ignored.

Not all groups that have female participation place women in fully peripheral, sexual, or gendered roles, however. With the defeat of Arab nations in 1967, Palestinian women's participation and involvement increased in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and with various Palestinian guerrilla groups that supported violent conflict for Palestinian liberation (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011). In this context, women's resistance to patriarchal norms and an

increase in female equality was fought on two different fronts: the public, political front in

guerrilla fighting groups, and in the private, domestic sphere. Consequently, Palestinian women

saw a shift in the balance of power between men and women, where women became militants

and activists and "glorified icons of nation" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011, P. 42).[47]

Motivation for Violence Perpetration

Women are motivated to engage in violence for various reasons. While some individuals are

engaging in violent actions in micro and meso level situations (inter-personal or neighborhood

level violence), others are motivated to engage in violent activities for a larger group-based or

political cause. Though women's engagement in the violent activities, on any level, is often

shaped by male influence or connections with males who are involved, not all violence should be

viewed as a form of resistance to male oppression and patriarchal cultures. Women are often

motivated to engage in violent actions for similar reasons as men.

Miller (1998B) suggests that motivation for violent behavior is shaped by social contexts. For

individuals involved in violent gang activities, community level factors, such as urban areas of

economic disadvantage, may increase a person's proclivity to use violence. Individuals in these

areas may view violence as an appropriate response to feelings of resource deprivation,

inequality, segregation, or economic dependence on males (Campbell, Muncer & Bibel, 1998).

Additionally, males and females who commit violent robberies may be motivated by money,

drugs and the ability to buy more drugs, and material possessions (Miller, 1998A). Females may

commit crimes for non-economic reasons because "community norms may give women wider

latitude for obtaining material goods and economic support from a variety of sources, including

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[47] As noted in the introduction with the late 19th century female Russian terrorists, depending on the time and place, violent or active women are often portrayed with a duality of glorified martyr or a crazed villain and are praised or condemned depending on the current culture and social order.

other females, family members, and boyfriends; whereas the pressure of society's view of men as breadwinners differentially affects men's emotional experience of relying on others economically" (Miller, 1998A, P. 45).

Given that women are more likely to engage in petty offenses compared to serious or violent offenses (Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Zhong, & Ackerman, 2005), the women who are motivated to engage in violent actions could stem from a desire to increase their status, recognition in their group or community, or as a resource for identity enhancement (Ness, 2004). In violent contexts, status is often only gained through the use of violence or by engaging in dangerous activities or crimes, generally reserved for males and classified as masculine, which most women lack the opportunity to engage in, or have a greater aversion to in general (Steffensmeier et al., 2005). Other studies suggest that females are likely to engage in violence if their sexual reputation is brought into question, in obtaining and maintaining access to resources, and when competing for males with greater access to resources (Campbell, 1993, 1999, 2004; Stockley & Campbell, 2013)

For women involved in violent actions in the context of armed conflict or political violence, many women engage in institutionalized violence. As Turshen (1998) describes, women who became officers or spies in South African conflicts inflicted high amounts of torture on imprisoned and ethnically minority women, with torture levels generally higher than the male officers. Women in this conflict were also organizing sex slavery and coercive sex work groups of less fortunate women caught in the local violence for male combatants. Further, in many communities, women were the main perpetrators of the act of "necklacing," or throwing a burning car tire around a victim's neck/throat, of people who were branded informers, and witch-

burning. Other women, however, are forced to "adopt illegality as a mode of survival," which often violates a woman's "sense of integrity" (Goldblatt & Meintjes, 1998, P.33).

Women in situations of political violence may be motivated to act violently for reasons that differ from motivations of women in lower, or street, level forms of violence. Some women are tricked or threatened into violent behavior, coerced into action, or feel unable to resist, given political or economic incentives; whereas other women may feel a sense of empowerment, authority, and personal autonomy by engaging in violent acts or baring arms (MacKenzie, 2009). The female spies, for example, received monetary compensations for engaging in violent acts, and found the economic incentives difficult to turn down given the unstable social climate and low chances for traditional female employment, especially for minority women (Goldblatt & Meintjes, 1998). Still, people often question how women can engage in violent actions towards other women, even in volatile settings, and speculate that the overarching masculine militarization of society would provide a platform to unite women in solidarity.

Women surrounded by violence, living in fear, and trying to provide for their families, however, often feel anger and resentment at their position in society and their inability to do anything about it. Thus, anger and aggression are misdirected at women in vulnerable positions, like political detainees, who were able to break away from traditional domestic norms and roles (Goldblatt & Meintjes, 1998; Turshen, 1998). In areas with classic patriarchal systems, female solidarity is strictly limited. Young women who marry are often only able to gain status in the new household through producing a male offspring. The new brides are in subordinate positions to men and the senior women of the household and face situations of "deprivation and hardship" which is "eventually superseded by the control and authority she will have over her own subservient daughters-in-law" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.279). Consequently, instead of forming

female bonds, women manage a subservient role with the knowledge that they will have greater power and authority over future young girls, thus maintaining the cyclical nature of the classic patriarchal power dynamic.

Using gender in violent situations and settings

Women can utilize gender and perceptions of gender in order to accomplish violent acts or in situations involving violent behavior. In such instances, women can use gender to accomplish a criminal objective, to gain status, to increase monetary position, maintain security, or to shame or humiliate a rival or member of the opposition.[48] Women can use male perceptions of females as weak, sexualized, and I to maneuver men into more vulnerable positions and circumstances where a successful perpetration can be committed. Women will develop techniques that reduce the chance of failure, while maximizing their ability to accomplish the act (Miller, 1998A). Therefore, female perpetrators use gender to accomplish various violent actions and goals effectively.

Research indicates "women must take into account the gendered nature of their environment" (Miller, 1998A, P.60) to be successful in violent and criminal perpetration. One method is to target individuals that may appear weaker or more easily victimized; therefore, women often target other women under the impression that females are less likely to be armed, more easily victimized, and will be more easily intimidated. Miller (1998A) states that there are three ways in which women commit robberies: targeting female victims in a physical altercation, targeting males by sexually luring the male into a more vulnerable situation, and robbing males with male accomplices. Each form of perpetration is considered in a gendered way, where

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[48] The notion of shame and humiliation is also seen in terrorist groups utilizing females in operational roles, as suicide bombers, to coerce and guilt males into joining the group or participating in a suicide bombing. This is discussed further in the following chapter on Women in Terrorism. See also Bloom, 2005 and Davis, 2017.

women either target females for their perceived weaknesses, or target males by utilizing the female gender and male sexual perceptions of females, or engaging in the act in a peripheral way through seducing or luring a man into a more vulnerable position to be victimized by other males. As such, women's robberies of other women are sometimes committed alone, but there are usually two or more women engaging in the act. Female robbers, however, do not target other women with male accomplices or use lethal weapons as they do when targeting males victims.

Women also use gender to increase status. Some women involved in gangs construct a gender identity using masculine traits, which may increase their level of status and ability to participate in roles outside of peripheral positions. Due to the peripheral roles women fill, females generally have fewer responsibilities and more flexibility than males in violent groups; thus, some women may do gender situationally where they gain status by being "particularly hard and true to the set." (Miller, 1998B, P.441). Women must do gender to show that they are tough enough to be a part of the group, and many find that they must go above-and-beyond the male members to prove that they deserve status or respect, or their seriousness and commitment to the group or cause.

Women may also use gender to shame other women as a tactic to damage reputation, decrease another woman's social standing and status, or as a power strategy. In armed conflicts, women's bodies are often viewed as objects or territories that can be conquered through sexual violence. However, if a woman was sexually victimized and the act was not consensual, she can still be stigmatized by others and her reputation called into question (Ericsson, 2010). Thus, women may choose to engage in relations with an enemy fighter if she is able to receive better benefits or resources after a victimization experience because the enemy fighter may not know of

her prior victimization. Consequently, women often find themselves in situations that are difficult to navigate where they need male protection for security and safety, while also not jeopardizing their life if they end up with an enemy partner who is willing to care for them. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where polygyny is common, this form of sexually shaming and stigmatizing other women is common during armed conflicts. Soldiers and rebels can provide looted goods to their girlfriends or wives that can be used or traded for resources needed to care for their self or children that women usually did not have access to. If one girl is favored over the others, though, violence can erupt, and the favored girl victimized, once the boyfriend leaves and the women are left alone (Utas, 2005). In these situations, women must manage and effectively navigate interpersonal relations not merely with male partners, but with females as well, because gossip and slander could jeopardize a woman's security and position.

Women's involvement in violence is often explained using the blurred boundaries approach, suggesting that most women who engage in violence have experienced prior trauma or victimization before engaging in criminal behaviors, and consequently are more prone to behave in violent or criminal ways. While there is ample evidence to support this notion, it also suggests that female violence is a result of emotionality and lacks the similar instrumental function as male violence. [49] Violence perpetrated by women, however, can have an objective or instrumental function as well, and is demonstrated in the previous literature through various types of motivation for behaviors, such as status, resources, and survival; but, the perpetration

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[49] How many men who engage in violence have prior victimization experience as well (the blurred boundaries of male criminal behavior)? Though connections could be made to the domestic violence and child abuse literature, this is hardly cited in the gender and crime literature (Manchikanti Gómez, 2010). The gender literature often cites how females are affected by prior trauma or victimization experiences, and how this is a contributing factor to their future criminal behavior but lacks the male victimization narrative. More recent research is beginning to address this gap, see Steve Stanko and Kathy Hobdell's *Assault on Men: Masculinity and Male Victimization (Chapter 7, 2017)* in *Crime, Criminal Justice and Masculinities.*

and the way the crime is accomplished is often done in a gendered way, seen in the tactics,

targets, who the accomplices are, and what role the woman has in the crime commission.

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN IN TERRORISM

In the early developments of gender and crime, Chesney Lind (1986) suggested that anyone who is examining women's criminal behavior must consider the role of the criminal justice system in the maintenance of modern patriarchy. The dual nature of women, produced and maintained by patriarchal social institutions like the criminal justice system, is commonly framed as either the Madonna or the whore, which creates a unique relationship between women and criminal justice, where women are still in roles that reinforce stereotypical and traditional social views of femininity and womanhood. Early female suicide bombers have also been cast in this dual light: those who are seen as martyrs and those who are framed as the emotional, irrational, vengeful bomber. A variation to this dual narrative also demonstrates the biased framework in which many of these women are portrayed as either "extreme feminists" or "love-struck girls," casting females' involvement in a patronizing manner (Makin & Hoard, 2014; Talbot, 2001). In high profile media cases, these ideas are reinforced. Women who engage in terrorism, however, are like the women who engage in other forms of crime and violence. They are navigating, reacting, and responding to the social and cultural situation in which they live and making their own choices. Though there are patriarchal constraints to the opportunities available, female terrorist behavior, and more frequently, female suicide bombing behavior, is a choice based on personal, familial, or cultural reasons, that is directed by group objectives and goals, that is enacted in gendered ways.

Women have been participating in terrorist activities and operations and have been members of terrorist organizations on a global level throughout history. Perceptually, women are

viewed in a gendered context and, as such, are perceived as more caring, compassionate, and maternal by nature (Naaman, 2007; Nacos, 2006), and not capable of carrying out acts of terrorism. The feminine identity still espouses women to be regarded as "mothers, sisters, and wives, but not killers." (Cragin & Daly, 2009, p. 1). Women are often portrayed as the victims of violence and not the aggressor (Dalton & Asal, 2011). These preconceived notions of women, and symbolically what women signify, is reflected in how organizations have utilized women in operations and fulfilling organizational goals in the past. Limited research has incorporated these gender concepts and female actions with a criminological framework that focuses on the operational accomplishments of the females involved.[50] The majority of studies on women in terrorism thus far have tended to focus on the pathways into the group, the individual or personal types of motivation, and the organizational benefits that using women in different roles within the group provides, including as suicide bombers. Though these areas are important and relevant to understanding the nature of why individuals join groups and the activities they conduct, it is missing the narrative of how these acts are accomplished and the gendered differences in the enactment of different types of attack. According to LaFree and Dugan (2009), "future research would benefit from a more complete understanding of the operational aspects of terrorist behavior, including variation in the decisions of terrorists to target or kill, by which tactic, and using what types of weapons," that also integrates sociocultural influences of "ideology on strategy and tactics" (p. 417). By incorporating gender and feminist criminological perspectives into the analysis of terrorism, the current study seeks to fill part of this gap by examining the female bombers of Boko Haram and discussing this type of attack within the context of the

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[50] Such as what has been done with other forms of crime. See prior sections.

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Nigerian and Sub-Saharan African cultural structure and the accomplishment of this type of violence.

Individual Level Motivation

Motivation to commit terrorist acts varies across groups and individuals, time and place, but there are some consistent themes that cross between the individual nature and the rise of a new terrorist group. Rational choice theory has been applied to analyze motivating factors behind jihadist suicide bombers, demonstrating that most bombers are motivated by the expected instant and projected gratifying benefits of the act, and suggest that there are no major fundamental differences between the motivation of terrorists and common criminals (Perry & Hasisi, 2015). The self-gratifying behavior is consistent with the notion that the most effective and successful suicide bombers are not those who have nothing to live for, but those who have something to die for (Iannaccone, 2006). According to Arce and Siqueira (2014), these can include supporting factors, such as a sympathetic environment, a community that supports the act, and a "media that ensures wide coverage," (p.689) and personal factors. The most prominent personally motivating factors from this study included a desire for revenge[51], a religious motivation, and a social or nationalistic motivation. Females are also motivated to participate in suicide terror because of individual level factors and have increasingly joined groups or causes and engaged in terrorist acts for similar reasons as male group members and bombers. As stated in Qazi (2012), "women who join militant groups face common (and, often, gender-specific) social, cultural, and religious contexts which may motivate their participation of support of violence," however, each motivation will be unique to each individual bomber (p.29).

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[51] Revenge as a motive can include the death of a family member or spouse, being detained, being humiliated or shamed by occupying forces, and experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. The greater the actual or perceived grievance caused by one of these experiences, the more likely a person is to participate in suicide attacks (Arce & Siqueira, 2014).

The unsuspecting nature of females, however, frames female terrorists in a distinct way that the group can exploit for its own benefit as well. Women provide tactical and strategic benefits to the group and are able to accomplish some objectives that male members are not able to.[52] But, the motivating factors and actions behind female suicide bombings is still a debated subject and reflects a divide between those who perceive many female bombers as being victims of circumstance or prior trauma and are oftentimes coerced into action, and the females who act on their own volition. The group, culture, and circumstances surrounding the violence often dictates female participation, the extent of the participation, and the pathway to becoming an active suicide bomber. As Qazi (2012) notes, with "more women join[ing] terrorist organizations, they appear to shed their function as nurturers of their children and communities for the more active, operational role of the female suicide bomber" (p. 2) and effectively participate in historically male-dominated groups. Accordingly, women may view the opportunity to be active and involved in the group as a means to enact agency in an otherwise patriarchal society or primarily domesticated lifestyle.[53]

Blurred Boundaries

Studies state that women engage in terrorism and violent actions because of a prior victimization or trauma, to contribute to action against a group grievance, to improve social or living conditions, through coercion, and because of personal safety (Bloom, 2007; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013; Kruglanski et al., 2009; Moghadam, 2003; Moghadam, 2009;

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[52] Crenshaw (2000) notes that most terrorist analysts do not see significant gender differences when accounting for psychology and personality factors as contributors to terrorist actions.
[53] It is commonly cited that males who engage in suicide terror or martyrdom may receive some sort of financial compensation for their family, this is not the case for women. Shay (2004) describes how some state regimes supported the use of suicide attacks, and in some instances, like Iraq, there was a clear "differentiat[ion] between the categories- which was not customary among other Arab nations that transferred funds to the families of the shahids- to distinguish between the financial grant transferred to the family of a 'regular' martyr and that bestowed upon a martyr who died during a suicide mission" (p. 156).

Schweitzer, 2006). Pearlstein (1991) discussed how one of the founding female members of the German Red Army, Ulrike Meinhof, had experienced numerous traumatic events in her life that subsequently caused psychological issues, like low self-esteem and fear of failure, which contributed to her high level of involvement in the group. As Steinhoff (1996) notes in a study of Japanese terrorist organizations there are many instances where women's actions are framed by the public, media, or mental health experts as attributable to problems with mental illness. What these examples demonstrate is the notion of a "maternal-sacrificial code" (de Cataldo Neuberger & Valentini, 1996, p. 78) that Crenshaw (2000) describes as being "highly developed in women because of their childhood development, the patriarchal pressures of society, and their genetic disposition to protect and sacrifice for their children" (p. 409).

Bloom (2011) argues that women are motivated by one of five reasons: revenge, redemption, relationship, respect, or rape, where rape is used to coerce women into participation through shaming tactics. There is evidence to suggest that, in some violent conflicts, willing participation in terrorism can fade into high levels of coercion, signifying that women might be engaged in terrorism because of outside forces and not due to personal feelings of obligation, empowerment, or justice (Bloom, 2005; Bloom, 2007; Bloom, 2011; Davis, 2017; Kruglanski et al., 2009).[54] There has been wide debate regarding whether or not suicide attacks can include acts that are coerced or if the act has to be directly resulting from free-will. As Crenshaw (2007) notes, though, the level of coercion is not a fact that is easily known.[55]

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[54] It should be noted that females are not the only individuals or members who are coerced into terrorist activity or actions. Males also experience levels of coercion and mandatory obedience to group leaders and the mission of the group. For example, Crenshaw (2000) describes how the charismatic leader of Aum Shinrikyo, a cult-like group from Japan that utilized biological attack tactics, forced obedience on members. If members failed to comply with the absoluteness of this, they were coerced into doing so.

[55] Additional literature on the definitions behind a suicide attack/mission and how other scholars have dealt with the issue of coercion, see Gambetta (2005) *Making Sense of Suicide Missions;* Hafez (2006) *Manufacturing Human Bombs;* Shay (2004) *The Shabids: Islam and Suicide Attacks;* Victor (2003) *Army of Roses: Inside the World of Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers.* While the aspect of coercion in suicide attacks is an important factor to

Women in violent conflicts often experience coercive behaviors, commonly in sexual forms of victimization, which is a tactic widely utilized in violent groups and social situations, where rape becomes more than an assault on the woman. In civil wars and insurgencies, even when women are combatants, groups often resort to 'dirty' war tactics, where mercenaries, criminal gangs, death squads, and guerilla fighters frequently target women with rape to shame them, take their honor, and symbolically attack the males in the victim's family or community (Turshen, 1998). Rape is thus perceived as a symbolic win when it is successfully accomplished because "in violating women, the opponent nation can be attacked in its 'heart', in its reproductive and its symbolic foundations" (Zuckerhut, 2011, p. 22). Most women do not want to be viewed as victims, whose agency is often denied by the circumstances and structures in which they live. However, some women utilize their victimization experience as something to be avenged, which can lead to extreme forms of violent acts, like suicide bombing.

Ethno-nationalist Vs. Religious Groups

Many studies reflect how women can be personally motivated to join terrorist organizations and have individualized investments in the group's political or ideological cause, such as the women of the LTTE, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Chechen Black Widows, or the Palestinian female suicide bombers (Holt, 2003; Hopgood, 2005; Kruglanski et al., 2009; Naaman, 2007; Nolen, 2006). Additionally, there are ideological, religious, and social factors that should be considered when looking at women in terrorism and political violence (Kruglanski et al., 2009), especially with groups that are focused on ethno-nationalist versus religious or ideological goals. Scholars have also demonstrated that the age of the terrorist group is a strong determining factor as to when the organization will utilize women in suicide missions.

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address and the need to eventually come to a unified definition of what is included in suicide missions is necessary, it is not within the scope of the current study.

The LTTE, formed in 1976, and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), formed in 1978, both waited 18 years before using women as suicide bombers (Dalton & Asal, 2011; Davis, 2013), even though women were used in other roles in these organizations since their inceptions. Overall, like women's constraints and opportunities in other forms of crime and violent behavior, many of the socially conservative, religious groups that engage in terrorism traditionally have less female participation than ethno-nationalist groups, and many women face numerous difficulties moving past a peripheral role in political violence.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka originally based their tactic of suicide bombing from Hizballah, the first group to utilize this method. The Tigers quickly adopted this method for targeted and direct attacks on specific military and government targets and were successful in its use. The LTTE "practiced the human bomb technique for more than 20 years," resulting in the professionalization of terrorism and the utilization of suicide tactics in a sophisticated and organized way within this secular nationalist group (Crenshaw, 2000, p. 414). The women who became the suicide bombers developed their own elite suicide group, complementing the male Black Tigers suicide unit (Cragin & Daly, 2009; Hopgood, 2005; Sprinzak, 2000). The women of the LTTE were just as invested in creating an independent state from Sri Lanka as their male counterparts, but the use of women as suicide bombers did not occur until many years after the formation of the organization compared to males as suicide bombers (Dalton & Asal, 2011).[56]

Similarly, the Chechens fought for independence from Russia and utilized women as suicide bombers, commonly referred to as the Black Widows. Some evidence suggests that many

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[56] One thing the LTTE did not utilize suicide missions for was the targeting of civilians. Because the LTTE was motivated by secular goals of establishing their own independent state, the often-cited terrorist goal of spreading fear was not a factor in the mission of the organization or the tactics utilized. In fact, if the LTTE had targeted civilians, the level of public support for the group's cause would have severely diminished (Crenshaw, 2007).

of these women were sexually victimized and coerced into becoming suicide bombers, while other accounts demonstrate that the Black Widows may have engaged in suicide tactics to avenge the death of a husband or other male family member by enemy forces (Bloom, 2011; Davis, 2017). Additionally, the women of the PKK (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, or Kurdish Worker's Party) of Turkey were used in both operational and supporting roles to help establish an independent Kurdish state and were well known for their female suicide missions (Cagin & Daly, 2009). The PKK operated in the late 1990s and primarily targeted government buildings and military targets. While the suicide attacks had limited casualties (Pape, 2003 cites 22 people killed), the violence inflicted by the organization resulted in the deaths of thousands of Kurdish citizens. These organizations did not deploy women as suicide bombers immediately during the respective conflict.

Religious motivation has been a primary feature of the concept of "new" terrorism.[57] Several scholars state that "new" terrorism is dominantly motivated by religious beliefs and is more "fanatical, deadly, and pervasive than the older and more instrumental forms of terrorism" (Crenshaw, 2000), with differences in group goals, attack methods, and organizational structure than secularly-focused groups (Hoffman, 1999; Laqueur, 1999). The change in what kind of group is expected to resort to terrorist tactics and the means of accomplishing terrorist goals, however, does not signify a major change in group gender dynamics or the allowance of female members. Like other forms of crime and violent activities, terrorist groups have lower female participation. This gender ratio becomes even more apparent when examining the socially

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[57] Crenshaw (2000) describes the debate between "new" and "old" terrorism and how the concept of "new" terrorism has dominated modern terrorist activities and goals since it first became prominent at the end of the 20th century. She furthers this debate between "new" and "old" terrorism in a paper that was prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in 2007, titled *The Debate over "New" vs. "Old" Terrorism.*

conservative, religious terrorist groups have significantly less female participation.[58] In the modern, religious wave of terrorism (Rapoport, 2002), women's involvement in group operations are subjected to strong patriarchal social conditions that are reflected in a terrorist group's operations and strategies and can shift into high levels of coercion (Bloom, 2011). There has been some research, however, that has demonstrated that previously male-dominated religious groups may be widening the pool of recruits to allow for females to join the organization as well, changing the overall opportunity and type of female involvement (Makin & Hoard, 2014).

While there are varying opinions on the acceptability of female involvement in religiously based groups, Muslim scholars and clerics agree that "women serve important supporting roles" (Qazi, 2012), and are not as likely to engage in the operational functions of the group. Politically violent groups, such as Hizballah, the group of Shi'ite militants from Lebanon, founded in the early 1980's, has fought against the presence of U.S, European, and Israeli forces for several decades. Throughout this time, there has been no use of women in operative roles, but the group has deployed women as recruiters, logisticians, and political proponents (Cagin & Daly, 2009; Davis, 2013). Hizballah was the originator of the tactic of suicide missions, but mostly only attacked military targets (Crenshaw, 2007). Similarly, Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyy'a), founded in the late 1980's in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to fight for an Islamic Palestinian state, has utilized women in a predominantly supportive role, but the group has deployed several female suicide bombers (Holt, 2003; Zedalis, 2004).

One of the most recent terrorist groups that have used women is Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda affiliated groups in Iraq, even though the group was ideologically against using women when it

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[58] Scholars note that the "militant and exclusionary ideologies," that include jihadist doctrines, "can shift cost-reward ratios [about what is possible, permissible, and required] by convincing people induced into terrorist acts that their sacrifices will have payoffs- if not in this life then in the next," (Red Robert Gurr in The Roots of Terrorism, edited by Louise Richardson, 2006, p. 91).

first formed (Davis, 2013; Davis, 2017; Stone & Pattillo, 2011). The dramatic shift in the Iraqi

affiliated groups' use of women can be reflected in the fact that from 1980 to 2003 there were

462 suicide attacks total globally, of which 59 were committed by females (Pape, 2003). At that

time, Al Qaeda accounted for none of these female attacks (Pape, 2003). A more recent study,

using data from the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, states that since the early

2000s, there have been 62 suicide attacks perpetrated by women affiliated with terrorist groups

in Iraq, accounting for almost a quarter of all female suicide bombing attacks in the world

(Davis, 2013).[59] The initial lack of female suicide bombers by Iraqi groups and then the sharp

increase in female bombers indicates that the Iraqi and Iraqi affiliated terrorist groups have only

recently begun to deploy women in more operative roles, but they are doing so at relatively high

frequencies compared to other organizations.

Instrumental Use of Women in Terrorism

Terrorist organizations began using women more frequently in operational roles at the

end of the 20th century (Atran, 2006; Bloom, 2007, 2011, 2011; Cruise, 2016; Weinberg &

Eubank, 2011; Zedalis, 2004). Though some scholars argue that women are not merely

organizational assets in male-dominated terrorist groups, citing female involvement over the

decades and the more modern development of the female suicide bomber (Bloom, 2011), there is

a growing trend to utilize feminine qualities for organizational gains. Especially since the

beginning of the 21st century, there are numerous trends emerging that signify not only

ideological shifts in terror groups, but organizational changes as well, such as utilizing women as

bombers more frequently because of the perceived benefits of feminine qualities in operational

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[59] While Iraq has contributed to the second highest number of female suicide bombers overall, Crenshaw (2007) notes that "suicide attacks in Iraq outnumber all other campaigns," so while there might be a high amount of female involvement and attacks, when compared to the overall amount of violence that is occurring it could be comparable to other groups. Further research should flesh this out.

positions (Davis, 2013, 2017; Drake, 1998; Gonzalez-Perez, 2011; Jones, 2012; Moghadam, 2003; Musias, 2016☺). As Dalton and Asal (2011) note, the trend towards using women in more operational roles "by formerly conservative organizations is reflected in the shift toward greater compatibility between such practices and Islamic fundamentalists' interpretation and justification for using women as violent attackers" (p. 807). Consequently, highly conservative and patriarchal groups such as al Qaeda, Iraqi affiliated groups, and more recently Boko Haram, have deployed high numbers of women in operational and violent roles (Davis, 2013; Stone & Pattillo, 2011).

The increased use of women could be a calculated response by terrorist groups for the perceived benefits of ever-changing strategies and a tactic of surprise. Crenshaw's (1987) instrumental approach to terrorism incorporates strategic theory (cost and risk of actions compared to consequences and reward) and states that "violence is seen as intentional," and that "terrorism is a means to a political end," where terrorist actions are designed to change the opposition's behavior (Crenshaw, 1987, p. 13). The terrorist organization makes decisions that are calculated in nature by examining the potential costs and benefits of possible actions, with the goal of causing the most damage, physical or psychological, with the lowest possible cost to the group (which could include valuable group members, training resources, or time) (Crenshaw, 1987). Changes in tactics and new methods of attack are utilized to maintain a level of surprise over the capabilities of state forces (Rapoport, 1987).[60] Following this perspective, Davis (2017) states that group decision making around the use of women can be explained by the instrumental perspective since it examines the group actions and decisions (including strategic choices,

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[60] An organizational point to allow women in operational roles. Women, by nature, are less likely to arouse suspicion and are not perceived as capable of extreme or instrumental violence.

resource distribution, and target selections).[61] By using suicide terrorism, and having women carry out the attacks, the group demonstrates that they will go to any length to remain relevant, maintain a level of tactical surprise at a low cost, and continuously escalate tactics (Bloom, 2011; Crenshaw, 1987).[62]

Terrorist organizations and insurgency groups use suicide bombing tactics to incite public fear, inflict a negative psychological effect on society, demonstrate a weakness in the government, and promote the group's ideology (Bloom & Matfess, 2016; Drake, 1998; Horgan, 2014; Schweitzer, 2000; Von Knop, 2007). Groups deploy women on suicide missions at a low cost, given the limited amount of training required, and produce quick "wins," which is seen in the damages and fatalities, or increased media attention. Some scholars argue that women are more fatal in their attacks than men because of their ability to infiltrate crowds more easily and hit civilian targets where crowds generally gather (Davis, 2013). Women are therefore perceived as being able to inflict high levels of damages in the form of casualties and property damage at a low cost to the terrorist organization or group (Cragin & Daly, 2009; Davis, 2013, 2017; Pape, 2003; Zedalis, 2004).

Women provide several advantages to a violent group: tactical benefits, media promotion, and direct and indirect recruitment opportunities. Terrorist groups utilize women for tactical purposes because they are stealthier and able to pass checkpoints undetected, are often searched less because of conservative views of women and modesty, can blend in with crowds of civilians better, and can be used on soft and hard targets; while others argue that, due to socially constructed views of women being nonviolent and nonthreatening, groups can utilize female

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[61] Terrorism is also utilized as a propaganda mechanism to show weaknesses in the established government or as a tactic of last resort for the group (Crenshaw, 1987).

[62] Suicide terrorism is considered a weapon of the weak given the group carrying out the attack is lacking the means to effectively win any sort of traditional way (Ganor, 2012)

stereotypes to infiltrate areas and targets with reduced suspicions (Bloom, 2007, 2011; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Nolen, 2016; Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011; Weinberg & Eubank, 2011).[63] Terrorist groups also use women as suicide bombers to increase media attention and promote the group's propaganda agenda (Davis, 2017; Nacos, 2006; Von Knop, 2007). Studies have shown that female suicide bombers receive higher amounts of media attention than their male counterparts (Naaman, 2007; Nacos, 2006; Sprinzak, 2000). Higher media attention increases the level of publicity the group receives and gives the group a larger outlet to spread their ideology and messages and instill fear in the public. Terrorist groups also benefit from including women to increase the number of recruits, members, and combatants available (Zedalis, 2004). Women not only personally increase the number of available bodies for a group, but, according to studies, may in fact shame men into joining the cause as well (Bloom, 2005; Davis, 2017; Khalili, 2005).

The tactical and strategic effects are often amplified using female bombers, which has led to organizational changes and the increased use of women in these roles even in ideologically conservative groups. Many Islamic fundamentalist groups are against the use of female suicide bombers due to their socially conservative views of women; however, some leaders are now describing the use of female suicide bombers as a "significant evolution for the [local] brigades. The male fighters face many obstacles on their way to operations, and this is a new development in [the] fight against the enemy" (Regular, 2004). Consequently, though a group may be male-dominated, with low rates of female involvement, the benefits that women provide have begun to

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[63] Crenshaw (2007) describes suicide terror as a simple and "tactically efficient" strategy that possesses a "high-symbolic value as well as versatility," (p. 141). She further states that suicide bombers can acquire access to targets that are difficult to reach or have high levels of security, inflict a high number of casualties and damages, and incite fear into the enemy and public. She does not differentiate between male and female bombers here, demonstrating that the tactic of using suicide is effective for both males and females in this regard. The difference may be the extent that gender plays on each of these variables. Further comparative gender analyses are needed.

outweigh the patriarchal norms that most religiously conservative groups practice, allowing for higher rates of female recruitment and opportunities in the group.

Boko Haram, Women, and Suicide Bombing

Boko Haram has used more female suicide bombers than any other terrorist group since the beginning of its insurgency in 2002. (Bloom & Matfess, 2016; Davis, 2017; Zenn & Pearson, 2014). While utilizing female bombers helps fill organizational needs, systemic and institutionalized gender inequality makes Boko Haram appealing to many women in the area. Given that many of the Sub-Saharan Africa countries score considerably low in areas of gender development and equality, including literacy rates, educational attainment, employment, reproductive health and adolescent birth rates, and political involvement (Gender Inequality Index, GII, 2017; Gender Development Index, GDI, 2017; Human Development Index, HDI, 2017), the opportunities and freedoms, even within strict religious constraints, that Boko Haram presents can outweigh navigating the traditional social order. Consequently, many women join the group to escape the patriarchal trappings of domestic life with limited means to improve status; others, however, are abducted or kidnapped, and coerced into participating in the group, but even this has varying layers and nuances. According to Matfess (2017), "Girls and women who join Boko Haram simply tend to see it as the best option available to them" (p.1). What reports and interviews demonstrate, is that some women are joining voluntarily, while others are being coerced, and those who become the female bombers are just as varied.[64]

Group Development

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[64] The International Crisis Report (2016) differentiates between the younger and the older female bombers. The report suggests that the youngest female bombers, with some estimates placing the youngest around seven years of age, are victims themselves and are often "duped by relatives or possibly drugged," which is consistent with other findings (p.11). The older, meaning teenaged to adult (the largest age group of female bombers are teenagers), female bombers are generally willing to participate and are motivated by their commitment to jihad, religious teachings and writings, and entry into paradise upon completion of the mission and death.

The insurgency is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. The violence and riots that are transpiring are a mirror image of the 1980s Maitatsine uprising that occurred in an attempt to impose strict Islamic ideologies on a secular Nigerian state (Adesoji, 2010). The high rates of poverty, high levels of inequality, government corruption, religious tensions and social alienation that were present in Nigeria during the 1980s were never resolved and, subsequently, created a platform for Boko Haram to develop a mission and followers (Adesoji, 2010, 2011; Walker, 2012).[65] Yusuf gained a following first from unemployed students and academic graduates "because education had not lifted them out of poverty" (Duckstein & Sandner, 2014). He was also able to attract female support and followers to the movement as well. Some of these women had received various levels of western education and participated in the destruction of their certificates and degrees with male students to demonstrate the disappointment of the social situation and the Nigerian government and to show allegiance to the group. The women who joined were attracted to the opportunity to study and learn the Qur'an and Arabic and find suitable marriage partners to ease financial burdens and the necessity to work manual labor jobs. As time progressed, female group members clothing and appearance was emphasized, and further restrictions began to be implemented.[66] Women began wearing the *hijab*, which covers the face and body, and male and female separation for education occurred. Females were to remain in the domestic sphere and only males could enter mosques (International Crisis Group, 2016). The widespread poverty and unemployment in the area, however, made it easy for Boko Haram to gain recruits and maintain a following.

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[65] Though the insurgency began gaining momentum early on, Boko Haram did not begin using extreme violence until 2009 when an uprising led to the death of 800 Boko Haram militants, including the death of Boko Haram's former leader Muhammad Yusuf (who was replaced by Abubakar Shakau) (Zenn & Pearson, 2014).
[66] Including purdah, a practice in some Muslim cultures where the women are kept inside, modesty and conservative dress is imposed, and the women are secluded from men and the public.

The primary goal of the Boko Haram group is to establish an Islamic Caliphate in the

north-east Nigerian region, which is composed primarily of Muslims, while Christians make up

most of the southern Nigerian region (Adesoji, 2010, 2011). The group believes that the

government is corrupt, and politicians pay their way to power, while the rest of the country

suffers in poverty. Boko Haram also views most of the Islamic leaders as too moderate or

mainstream and are not preaching the true vision of Islam, and as such, these leaders are part of

the problem with society (Adesoji, 2010). Therefore, due to these social and economic

conditions, Boko Haram increasingly used violence to establish a "pure" Islamic state for true

believers (Walker, 2012). Such maneuvers led to a cycle of violent attacks and counter attacks

between Boko Haram and the Nigerian state and the use of increasingly extreme tactics, such as

the deployment of high numbers of women as suicide bombers, which has had a devastating

impact on women and communities in the Nigerian region. The new leader, Abubakar Shekau,

drove the increase in violence and continued the use of "revenge terror and guerilla attacks,"

while also recruiting men and women with "a mixture of coercion and incentive" (International

Crisis Report, 2016, p. 6).[67] The move from primarily urban targets to rural areas led to the

increase in female recruitment or forced conscription, while male civilians are often pulled from

their homes and killed.

Female Supporters

For some young women, Boko Haram presents a unique opportunity for different

prospects at life, which many view as a better alternative with more opportunities available given

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[67] After Yusuf was killed, his deputy Abubakar Shekau took over the leadership position. At the time, there was only one group. The group has since split into two main factions with other splinter groups active in the area. The main cause of the split was the beginning of an allegiance with the Islamic State (IS, ISIS, ISIL). Boko Haram pledged to be the West African faction of the Islamic State, calling themselves The Islamic State in West Africa since 2015. IS wanted a change in leadership in Boko Haram and wanted to replace Shekau with Abu Musab al-Barnawi but was met with resistance and the group split into two dominant factions. It has been suggested that Shekau's faction is likely to use females and children as bombers and extreme violence as tactics.

the political and social climate of the Nigerian region. The group has placed strict restrictions on some female activity, especially in the earlier years of the group, while at the same time promoting Islamic education and opportunities for financial empowerment. As a report conducted by the International Crisis Group (2016) concisely describes the situation for women, "with patriarchy, poverty, corruption, early marriage, and illiteracy long thwarting their life chances, some women saw an opportunity in Boko Haram to advance their freedoms or reduce their hardship. Many valued the religious and moral anchoring," (p. i). The combined issues of gender inequality (low education and economic status and high rates of illiteracy) continuously propagated by the political male leadership and hierarchy, along with the cultural patriarchal norms, left women marginalized with few options and even fewer chances to change their situation. Mixed with the insurgency violence caused by Boko Haram, resources and chances for financial stability became a scarcity while villages and towns were destroyed and homes evacuated. Countless individuals, primarily women and children, ended up in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps where food and water shortages were frequent, victimization occurred, and healthcare was limited (International Crisis Group, 2016). Consequently, some women were driven to Boko Haram.

Many former female members are describing their time in the group as willing and chose to marry militant fighters in the camps for status, respect, and money (Oduah, 2016). Among reasons for joining the group, power and freedom are commonly cited, as is the increase in status and opportunity (Guilbert, 2016; Nwaubani, 2017). Those who married high ranking fighters often recall the amount of power they maintained as a wife and the luxuries of such a status, represented in the numerous amounts of kidnapping victims turned slaves to carry out domestic chores for the wives (Maclean, 2017; Nwaubani, 2017). Not all kidnapping victims became camp

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slaves and these girls and young women were frequently courted by fighters and officers of Boko Haram as well (Nwaubani, 2017). Many of the female supporters had active husbands in the group, dependent children with a member, and were loyal to their family and the group's objectives.

The women who were able to marry higher ranking officers or fighters in Boko Haram were better off than the young women who either married lower status individuals or refused to marry at all. Those who refuse marriage proposals are often sexually victimized, are used as domestic and camp slaves, or are sent on suicide bombing missions (Searce, 2017). Social workers in Nigeria, who have been able to speak to some of the surviving wives of Boko Haram fighters, state that they are afraid of the women because they "know it's Boko Haram wives who used to bring the bombs" (Guilbert, 2016). Additional interviews with former female members further this narrative and state that many of the young women volunteer to be bombers, contrary to what many human rights organizations are documenting. One former member said that, "It's OK to be a suicide bomber. It's normal," and that many girls are motivated by the death of a relative. Social workers have also said that some girls are duped or lured into carrying out an attack by a man or someone they consider a potential husband. In some instances, a man will strap a bomb to a girl and then to himself, and then tell the girl that if they carry out the attack then they can be together again in paradise. The girl will carry out her attack, while the man watches her blow up from a distance, only to repeat the process with another girl (Guilbert, 2016).

Kidnapping and Victimization

The use of women in suicide attacks began shortly after a series of kidnappings by Boko Haram occurred in 2013 in response to similar tactics done by the Nigerian state. The increase in

kidnappings began after the Nigerian government imprisoned numerous Boko Haram militants'

wives and children, including the leaders (Zenn & Pearson, 2014). Initially, the kidnappings

were strategically done to use the kidnapped individuals as collateral to force the Nigerian

government to release the captured Boko Haram members (Bloom & Matfess, 2016; Davis,

2017; Zenn & Pearson, 2014). Though other groups that have engaged in political violence or

terrorism have utilized kidnapping and hostage tactics like the strategies deployed by Boko

Haram, other groups kidnap smaller numbers of individuals and often release the women or all

hostages when the conflict has been resolved (START, 2018). In colonial occupations and

conflict issues throughout Africa, high levels of kidnappings and violence against women has

occurred, thus, in this regard Boko Haram may better reflect some civil war and post-colonial

conflicts in Africa compared to other terrorist organizations. Some estimates speculate that Boko

Haram has kidnapped around two thousand people, mostly women and young girls, since 2014

(Davis, 2017). Consequently, the vicious cycle of kidnappings, trade negotiations, and escalating

tactics that occurred between the state and Boko Haram led to a large numbers of women and

girls being taken and held in militant camps.

Zenn and Pearson (2014) note that Boko Haram's kidnappings were purely instrumental,

"as none of those captured on either side had any direct involvement in the conflict" (p. 48). The

kidnappings, however, are also deemed as "tactical" in nature given that many girls are used to

carry out attacks and made to "lure government soldiers into positions where they could be

targeted" (Zenn & Pearson, 2014, p. 50). The female bombers are told things like "act like a

woman" and "be attractive," until they get close enough to detonate the explosives successfully

(Searce, 2017), utilizing the perceptions of female appearance and behavior.

Some women who are kidnapped are also being used as slaves in the militant camps as "a means of satisfying insurgents and cultivating loyalty" to the group (Bloom & Matfess, 2016). Bloom and Matfess (2016) further state that the forced marriages that many kidnapped girls are subjected to serves multiple tactical purposes like "increasing group cohesion through the provision of women as prizes, cultivating loyalty through enhanced status following 'marriage,' and increasing local fear of the insurgents" (p. 110), which is similar to prior African conflicts involving women as "war booty" (Utas, 2005). Boko Haram is also using women and girls as suicide bombers to quickly and effectively evolve their tactics to the growing counterinsurgency to produce frequent and effective attacks, both physically and symbolically (Walker, 2012). The gendered tactics and treatment of women can be seen in countless violent conflicts in Africa, where women and girls are kidnapped for the "sexual amusement of the men, or to cook, clean and do the laundry" (Antonio De Abreu, 1998, p.74), and to fill organizational needs (Galehan, 2019).

To frame women engaging in violent activities affiliated with Boko Haram as only victims of circumstance would be to deny their agency in the situation and does not consider voluntary participation, survival choices, navigation of the circumstance, and the counter argument that coercion could also turn into willing participation as well. The circumstances surrounding the rise of Boko Haram, the patriarchal social order, and the limited access and options for women led to the increase in women joining Boko Haram willingly and the increase in abductions and kidnappings by the group. The group can utilize the social issues with females and limited social roles to promote female and male recruitment for the perceived benefits for both genders. Females obtain more freedom and opportunity, power and status in some cases, while males can marry and produce children and have disposable economic resources. Not all

women join Boko Haram willingly though, and there have been high rates of kidnappings and abductions by the group. Thousands of young women and girls have experienced this form of victimization and are held in the militant camps either for collateral and bargaining positions, to utilize in a sexual or domestic role, as wives, or as bombers, but these lines blur when the kidnapped girls willingly choose to marry fighters, engage in the education, or willingly go on a bombing mission. For the female bombers, the background of the individual female, how she came into the group, and her experiences within the group shape what choices she makes during the commission and accomplishment of a suicide bombing attack.

CHAPTER 5

DATA & METHODS

Data Source

The present study utilized the Global Terrorism Database (GTD, 2018), which is an

open-sourced database that is made available through the University of Maryland and by the

National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). The

GTD includes information on global terrorist events from 1970 to 2017 and was developed to be

a comprehensive and methodologically rigorous longitudinal dataset of terrorist incidents.[68] The

goal of the GTD is to provide a greater understanding of the terrorism phenomenon and allow

researchers the ability to increase their knowledge and analyze information in this field.

Information that is included in the GTD is obtained from publicly available, open-source

materials, such as digital news archives and electronic access of news articles, existing datasets,

secondary materials from book and journals, and legal documents. The GTD makes every

attempt to verify all information found in these open sources through the utilization and inclusion

of multiple, independent open-sources per each incident. However, the database developers state

that there are no claims to the full reliability of this information, which is reflected further in the

GTD's open and transparent methods that are available to all database users. The incidents that

are incorporated into the GTD provide numerous variables related to each terrorist incident, of

which, 75 of the coded variables can be statistically analyzed.[69]

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[68] Traditional criminological sources of data, official data (UCR), victimization data (NCVS), and self-report data provide a limited usefulness to studying terrorism, resulting in the high reliance on open-sourced databases like the GTD (LaFree & Dugan, 2009).

[69] For further information on the Global Terrorism Database, how the GTD was created, data collection efforts, and the strengths and weaknesses of the GTD, see *Introducing the Global Terrorism Database* (LaFree & Dugan, 2007), and *The Global Terrorism Database (GTD): Accomplishments and Challenges* (LaFree, 2010).

Definition of Terrorism

The GTD data from 1970 to 1997 (GTD1) utilized the PGIS (Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services) definition of terrorism, which states that terrorism is "*"the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation."* The PGIS definition was originally used because the PGIS was the original dataset that was obtained by the University of Maryland and did not evolve into the GTD until 2001. However, due to the divergent nature of defining terrorism, the variables that might or might not be included in the definition, and the debates that defining such a politically heated word produce, the second phase of the GTD data (GTD2: 1998-2007) divided the PGSI definition into pieces and coded each terrorist incident listed in the GTD so that individuals who are analyzing or examining the GTD data are able to include cases that meet their own defined definition of terrorism. As such, the agreed upon aspect of the definition of terrorism that must be met to be included in the GTD2 states that each incident had to be an *intentional act of violence or threat of violence by a non-state actor*, in addition to two of the following three criteria: (1) The violent act was aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal; (2) The violent act included evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) other than the immediate victims; and (3) The violent act was outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law. Therefore, the current study includes events where at least two of the three criteria of a terrorist attack are met, and the attack must have been classified as a suicide event. (START, 2018 can provide more details about the GTD definition of terrorism or what is included in the database).

Suicide Bombing

The GTD provides attack information for each incident of terrorism, including whether the

incident was a suicide attack and the attack type. Each incident in the current study had to be

specified in the data as a suicide attack (See Appendix A for GTD categorization of Suicide

Attack). Given the nature of a suicide attack, one of the requirements is the use of explosives

during the attack, successful or not. A suicide bombing has been defined as "the use of

explosives against one or more people by one or more attackers. The attackers enjoy

organizational support and know in advance and with certainty that their actions will result in

their deaths," (Araj, 2012). Therefore, all suicide attacks in the sample utilized a

bombing/explosion attack type that is documented in the GTD.[70] Following the GTD definition

of successful attacks, Boko Haram implemented 131 successful suicide attacks and 20

unsuccessful attacks.

Sample

In order to develop a dataset of suicide bombings perpetrated by females, a gender

variable was created, and events were coded as female (1) or male (0) by information provided in

the "summary" section of the GTD data, where an incident summary of the attack is provided.

Female classification is listed specifically if it is known. There may be suicide bombing events

where the gender of the attacker was unknown and consequently was left out of the final sample

to ensure a greater level of sample validity. For the present analysis, included events contained

wordage in the summary section that reflected that the attacker was a female or that the

perpetrator was utilizing female attributes to carry out an attack, the most frequently used phrase

being "female suicide bomber". The data was further checked using additional criteria to make

sure that all the female suicide bombing attacks were considered and included. These additional

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[70] For a further definition of what constitutes a Bombing/Explosion Attack Type in the GTD, see Appendix A.

search criteria included terms and phrases such as "woman", "woman suicide bomber", "female", and "girl". The filters added several additional incidents to the sample.[71] Therefore, the sampling method used gender perceptions of the attacker for inclusion criteria.[72] The use of open-sourced materials is another reason for coding as gender. Witnesses, residents, and officials give the most accounts included in the data. Unless a body was recovered or an identity confirmed, the gender of the individual bomber is subjective to the views of those who saw the incident occur. The final total of female suicide bombings, following the inclusion and definition criteria outlined above, listed in the GTD for incidents affiliated with Boko Haram and the region the group occupies/targets is 151 incidents between 2014 and 2017.

 The year with the highest number of female suicide bombings was 2017 with 71 incidents, demonstrating a progressive increase in the rate of female suicide bombers over time. The country with the greatest number of female suicide bomber incidents is Nigeria (N=119). Boko Haram has a significantly higher number of female suicide bombers than any other group (N=135). This does not reflect whether any of the 68 female bombing incidents listed in the GTD as "unknown" were attributed to Boko Haram, which is why country and group are incorporated into the analysis. After country is accounted for, Boko Haram and the region that Boko Haram influences produces 151 incidents of female suicide bombings.

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[71] The full dataset revealed examples of men disguising themselves as women to carry out a suicide attack (n=10), but none of the cases where male perpetrators dressed as women were carried out by Boko Haram members. This was seen mostly in parts of the Middle East (Iraq) and South Asia (Afghanistan). Further research on female suicide bombing perpetration that includes cases where men are disguised as women should be included in the sample for several reasons 1.) If the research uses gender as an explanatory theoretical factor; a man using the female gender to orchestrate or carry out an attack falls within this construct; 2.) The men are utilizing female stereotypes and gender to accomplish a suicide bombing attack; and 3.) For possible comparative purposes with the women who are suicide bombers.

[72] When the sample still contained the Middle East & North Africa, the sample was first identified by sex (female classification stated), and then furthered by the addition of male bombers' use of gender for deception and presentation of the female gender to enact a bombing (6 incidents where men were dressed as women from Iraq).

The majority of the suicide attacks by Boko Haram were carried out as bombings (n=150), while there was one female perpetrated assassination suicide attack were carried out in Nigeria (n=1). Most of the bombs/explosives were carried bodily by a human being, generally utilizing a vest apparatus (146 incidents). The remaining attacks utilized vehicles to carry out the attack, with the highest number coming from Nigeria (n=5 female suicide bomb attacks used vehicles). The most frequently occurring target of female suicide bombing attacks was private citizens and property (SSA 44%), followed by military targets (SSA 14%).

Over half of the suicide attacks were carried out by only one female perpetrator (n= 81, or 54% of total attacks affiliated with Boko Haram). While attacks that utilized two or more female suicide bombing perpetrators during an attack made up included 48 incidents, attacks that included more than one perpetrator (including pairs and groups of perpetrators) composed 44% of cases documented. Three of the incidents had an unknown number of perpetrators. The female bombers had a success rate of about 87% of female suicide attacks. Given that research on Boko Haram's female bombers suggests that more perpetrators than usual are surrendering before detonating explosives, it could be speculated that this number would be substantially lower.

There was an average of about 6 deaths per attack. The highest number of fatalities in an attack was 65 casualties, taking place in Nigeria. To contextualize the number of attacks, when comparing the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region to the Middle East & North Africa (MENA), SSA has had more female suicide bombing attacks, but the MENA region has caused more casualties per attack. Additionally, of the attacks where there was known property damage, there were no Boko Haram affiliated attacks that caused major property damage (defined as more than $1million and less than $1 billion in damages), but there were 30 incidents where there was

minor property damage (less than $1 million in damages), consistent with frequent attacks on marketplaces, mosques, and educational institutions.

Complementary Dataset

Each terrorist event in the GTD includes credible news media source citations from which information is obtained about each attack, coded, and added to the database. Though media sources can provide a potential bias with framing issues, bias, and sensationalizing some incidents over others, utilizing open-source data "may be uniquely useful in the study of terrorism," especially given the "unique interest that terrorist groups have in media attention" (LaFree & Dugan, 2009, p. 417). Once the final sample of female suicide bombers was compiled, the cited news sources for each event was searched for, and if available, added to a complementary data set of open-sourced qualitative material for each incident. For the 151 events, the GTD has 358 source citations provided (variable names scite1, scite2, and scite3 in the GTD). Of the open-sourced materials listed, 212 were available and compiled into a qualitative dataset for further analysis, which equals to a success rate of gathering the listed citation data at about 60%. Some sources were no longer available in their original location and several no longer had the content listed. Though some individuals state that news articles can be a source of bias and framing issues, especially when examining issues of gender and violence, the GTD, and the complementary dataset include a substantial number of sources from domestic news reporters. For example, incidents attributed to Boko Haram and the region where Boko Haram carries out attacks contributes to over half of the events in the final sample. Of these incidents, about 40% of the sources available were from domestic (Nigerian, Sub-Sahara African, West African) sources, almost 40% came from international sources, and the remaining

were western based (see Figure 4 for examples and classifications of the open-sourced materials).

The full sample of Boko Haram affiliated female suicide bombing incidents contained identical open-sourced media citations that were utilized in multiple incidents. To account for repeated use of the same media source, incidents where there were identically repeated sources were removed from the final sample so the sources would not be double coded during the analysis. Some incidents contained one or two repeated sources, but a second and/or third source that was not identical to another incident. In this case, the incident was still included in the complementary dataset. The final sample included in the qualitative content analysis was 102 incidents of attacks perpetrated by female bombers.

Analytic Strategy

The present study was guided by feminist criminological and gender-based theoretical perspectives of violence to examine female suicide bombers across time and place. The goal of the analysis is to examine female suicide bombing incidents in a manner outlined by Daly (1998) regarding *gendered crime,* which seeks to examine what the specific contexts and qualities of female offending and violence include and how these are socially organized and implemented. The study proposes that a content analysis approach is used to analyze the media sources in the complementary dataset. For the present study, content analysis was the best method to use because it guides the coding process, establishes trends and themes, and allows the codes and themes to be quantified (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013).

Downe-Wambolt (1992) states that content analysis is more than a quantitative process of counting themes, given that the goal of utilizing this type of method is to form connections between the results of the study to the context or situation that produced it. Therefore, the author

defines content analysis as "a research method that provides a systematic and objective means to make valid inferences from verbal, visual, or written data in order to describe and quantify specific phenomena" (Downe-Wambolt, 1992, p. 314). This is a beneficial aspect to utilizing content analysis for this portion of the study given the quantitative nature of the original dataset. Content analysis allows qualitative research to utilize similar concepts as quantitative studies, which is not generally permissible when using other forms of qualitative methodologies (Long & Johnson, 2000). Additionally, Bengtsson (2016) states that, "In contrast to qualitative research methods, qualitative content analysis is not linked to any particular science, and there are fewer rules to follow. Therefore, the risk of confusion in matters concerning philosophical concepts and discussions is reduced," which may be useful to the study because of the data being utilized and the lack of ability to assume what an individual perpetrator may be thinking or the direct motivation for the action.

Additionally, an inductive approach to the data is proposed for the content analysis process, as opposed to deductively examining the data, since one of the goals is to flesh out different characteristics or nuances between groups that utilize female suicide bombers and the tactics different women use when perpetrating an attack (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Given the study is descriptive and exploratory in nature, inductive reasoning is the best process to use because it necessitates an open mind when analyzing the data and allows new information and ideas to flow together into conclusions and theories. Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, limits the scope of the analysis and instead attempts to test a predetermined hypothesis or theory (Berg, 2001; Polit & Beck, 2006). Though the present study is utilizing gender theories as a foundational framework to understand the material, the nature of examining the data is fluid and open to other possible explanations for female suicide bombing behaviors.

Several guiding questions initially emerged that assisted in the direction of the analysis:

- How are Boko Haram's female bombers infiltrating targets to carry out suicide attacks?

- What role do Boko Haram's female bombers play in the enactment of the attack?

- How do locals and authorities respond to the female bombers; and relatedly, do the female bombers react to being intercepted in a stereotypically gender-consistent way, i.e. surrender, take opportunity not to detonate, claim victimhood, desist from perpetration

Guided by the prior literature and the data, several preliminary codes emerged to flesh out these questions: the perpetrator's role in the attack (supportive or direct), choice of target/victim (hard targets or selecting soft targets like other women, IDP camps, markets), solo perpetration or in a group, using gender stereotypes to accomplish attack (luring guards from posts, pretending to be a victim/faking needing help), and gendered actions (carrying a baby or walking with child/perceptions of motherhood, faking pregnancy, dressing as the opposite gender). As such, the present study seeks to expand the gender and terrorism literature by addressing the *gendered crime* elements of female suicide bombing perpetration within the terror group Boko Haram.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study is to examine the female suicide bombers of Boko Haram and the gendered accomplishment of committing such acts of violence. There is a common perception that women who engage in suicide bombings are either victims of circumstance, rape or coercion, or are acting entirely on their own volition (the Madonna and the Whore duality). Though prior research has demonstrated that a traumatic or victimization experience may open the door to violent or criminal behavior that the individual might not have engaged in before the experience, only examining female violence with this view removes agency before, during, and after the accomplishment of such an act. The blurred boundaries framework casts a shadow over all behavior that may not stereotypically be what a female is supposed to be engaged in by assuming that violence is always an overlapping product of prior victimization and cannot be utilized to accomplish a goal or be utilized in an instrumental way. Therefore, this study examines the actions of female suicide bombers, and includes the various stages of behavior during the commission of the act, who the female is acting violently with and the female's role during the attack, and how the bomber is reacting and responding during the crime.

The final sample of bombers consisted of 102 incidents that were further qualitatively analyzed. The largest number of cases came from 2017 and from Nigeria, consistent with the overall number and frequency of attacks.[73] Males were not included in this study, as there is still

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[73] The original sample consisted of two different regions (Middle East & North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa) for a comparative purpose. After careful consideration, however, given that Boko Haram has the highest number of female bombings, something noted in numerous studies at this point, it seemed like a more imperative issue to examine what is different about Boko Haram, what is going on in this group, and why they are different in this regard from all other groups.

a lack of literature on female suicide bombers overall, and new and emerging research is still

evolving as the insurgency with Boko Haram is still occurring; but, a few comparisons can be

made between male and female bombers from a preliminary comparison using the GTD data.

Both male and female bombers target private citizens and property most often. Male bombers,

however, target military and religious institutions more than females, which is consistent with

literature on the differences between hard and soft targets and gender (See Figure 5: Targets by

Gender). Male bombers utilize vehicles to carry out an attack more than females, though the

difference is not major (7% male use of vehicles, 2% females). Males perpetrating suicide

attacks also participated in hostage taking (kidnappings), while females from the sample did not.

For males and females, about 55% of the sample perpetrated the act alone, while females

frequently perpetrated attacks in pairs. Additionally, while 8% of attacks committed by males

were claimed directly by Boko Haram, only 3% of female attacks were claimed.[74] While this

does not seem like a significant difference, there could be underlying reasons (or gendered

reasons) for why the group would be more willing to claim a male bomber attack over a female

attack. A future research objective should be to compare the male and female bombers of Boko

Haram to account for gendered differences in the accomplishment of suicide bombings.

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[74] While only a small portion of the attacks are directly claimed by the group, the attacks are often affiliated with the group based on other information like who the perpetrators were, the location of the attack, the attack style, and the type of attack. Crenshaw (2000) also notes that in "new" or modern terrorism, groups are less likely to claim attacks because the group does not want popular support (p. 411).
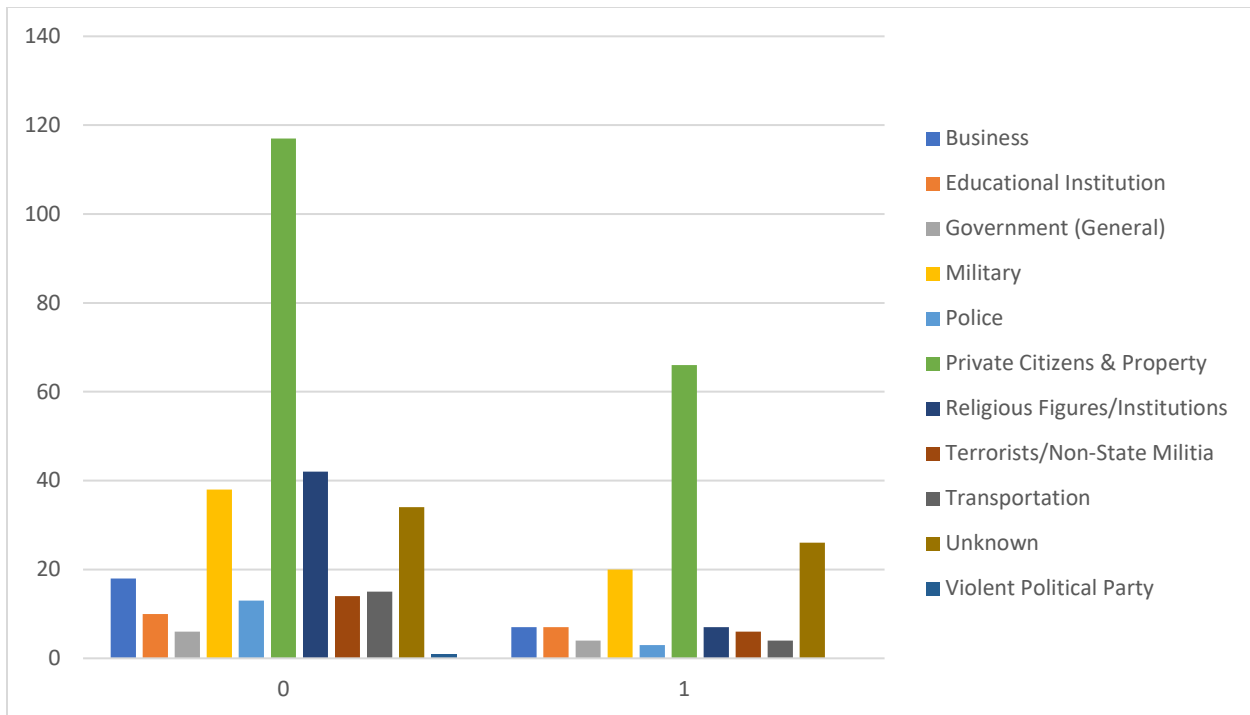
Figure 5: Suicide bombing targets by gender (0 male, 1 female)

Though 102 incidents is still a large number for a qualitative study, even after reducing the overall sample size, the data is based primarily on wire services. Wire services are useful in that the details from the event are described and the events that transpired are included without much animation or glamorization, and more closely attempt to demonstrate just the facts of the situation. The sources from the GTD that are cited are also corroborated with two additional open news sources to increase the reliability of the data from the sources provided (LaFree & Dugan, 2007).

After the final sample was reduced and cleaned, the process of open coding began (See Appendix B for the constructed open codes and operationalization of each code).[75] Some of the

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[75] An almost identical dataset was utilized for a different study and article (Galehan, forthcoming), but consisted of a few variations. A new complementary dataset was constructed and used for this dissertation, but given the prior research experience, the data was considerably familiar. The prior literature and theoretical background for the dissertation, combined with the data experience on Boko Haram's female suicide bombers, gave a solid foundation to the coding process. The codes were consequently not purely constructed from theory but were also different from previous experience due to the incorporation of gender as a concept.

codes were created based on prior research and literature and what was anticipated in the data. Several of the open codes were also variables that are included in the GTD (for definitions and variables utilized from the GTD to narrow the sample to suicide bombings, and for the analysis and coding, see Appendix A). As the coding progressed, some of the codes changed or were added or removed.[76] The *pre-attack behavior* became *infiltration method* and *success of infiltration;* the original *Role* code was divided into several codes: role, number of perpetrators, gender, support level, attack type; *politics* split into *politics* and *military action; escalation of tactics* became *escalation of violence,* which then split into *escalation of violence, type of violence,* and *reaction to escalation.* A broad code for *Boko Haram group actions* was added to provide any additional incident material or group maneuvers/actions that seemed relevant, and *Goals of Terrorism* was added to account for group or individual actions or behaviors that reflected fear in the population, spreading the group message to a wider audience, promoting political, religious, or social cause, or impacting political and social structures. The instrumental theory was included initially as a counterfactual and included the main theoretical components as discussed initially by Crenshaw (1987). This code did not pan out like expected and was later integrated into other codes. Additionally, *non-compliance of the bomber* was incorporated into *bomber reaction*. After the first round of coding and open coding was developed further, the data was recoded for the additional codes and changes.

From the initial open coding process, a few key areas emerged. The first was bomber characteristics, behavior and actions. This theme seemed broad, however, and consisted of perpetration characteristics and differences when the perpetrator was with women compared with

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[76] Changes to codes could occur during any part of the coding process, which is why initial codes are still reflected in some areas where the process is described (for example, the second round of coding reflects codes used from the open code process since all changes had not been made at this point).

men or acting alone; whether the bomber surrendered or detonated their bomb, and the responses to the bombers from individuals they came into contact with, including civilians/locals, military soldiers, and informal militia groups. The second area was tactics, and included infiltration strategies, whether the bomber was using gender, the female's role in the attack, the target/victim and the time of day the attack occurred. The final initial theme consisted of those who were arrested or surrendered, and the focus was to try and flesh out more information and contextual data on the females before the act was perpetrated. This theme included camp information narratives, kidnapping and abduction information, whether the bomber or anyone the bomber knew was coerced, drugged, or discussed information pertaining to re-education or indoctrination in the camps, forced marriages, and other victimizations. The data did not provide enough information to flesh out this final theme, however, and most of the open codes that the theme consisted of were eventually integrated into others. From first glance, gendered actions were not coded as often as would be expected and was not a major component of any initial theme.

The second round of coding developed the initial themes into four thematic areas:

1. Tactics of Infiltration: which included using gender, pre-attack behavior, role, targets, time of day, gender difference, and success;

2. Escalation of Tactics: escalation of violence, remote detonation, kidnapping, coercion, volunteered, fear, using gender (are these increasing with time or frequency?);

3. Bomber action and response to action: bomber information, age, kidnap, coerce, non-compliance to suicide bombing perpetration, indoctrination, response to perpetrator by locals, security, military

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4. Macro-level structure and action: media portrayal, fear, actions by Boko Haram as a group, Boko Haram contextual information, Instrumental theory elements, social issues, political action.

A few issues were presented after the construction of these thematic areas, particularly with macro level or structural components. Macro components, like social issues and media, could frame the narrative, but might not be directly relevant for the present study. The media portrayal could also be a limitation given the word choices used or a desire to keep Boko Haram in the headlines of media outlets for higher ratings. Additionally, the motivation of the offender is specifically unknown, though it would appear to be a given that there is a motivated offender since the female is perpetrating an attack.[77] For example, in one incident a security official stated that,

> Personnel at the NNPC station intercepted two female suicide bombers who were targeting motorists on the long queue at the NNPC mega petrol station at about 6:45a.m… One of the bombers got scared and threw away her bomb and was instantly arrested, while the other one began to run after people with her explosive but luckily, she was shot in the leg by out personnel after he chased her to a safe place.

In this example, the female bomber runs after people with the bomb even though security is telling her stop and giving the bomber the opportunity to surrender. If the female was coerced or forced into the attack, it might be expected that she would not act this way, and more like the girl who ditched her bomb and got arrested. However, the girl who threw her bomb away may not have been coerced or forced to commit the attack either and was just scared of dying or being shot, and ridding herself of the bomb was more about survival than surrender or coercion.

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[77] Terrorism research often cites opportunity theory/routine activities as theoretical frameworks for terrorist attacks. This tradition assumes that there is always a motivated offender and that the target presents the opportunity for the offender to attack, often because it lacks guardianship, or in the case of terrorism, some sort of security mechanism or personnel.

Unfortunately, the data does not permit the exploration of these nuances, so the avoidance of assumptions regarding motivation and behavior is limited throughout the analysis.

After the second round of coding and thematic development, the data was then axial coded. The main axial codes were *tactics during suicide bombing attacks* which included how the target or target zone was infiltrated, whether the bomber was using gender, and the bomber's role during the attack; *escalation of tactics*, which incorporated more micro level factors such as kidnapping, remote detonations, coercion, and being volunteered to the group; *strategy and counter-strategy*, which included macro-level variables such as political and military actions, social issues, and changes in frequency of female bombers, targets, or tactics, during times of "political moves;"[78] and *performance*, which attempted to incorporate actions and behaviors that could be perceived as/were gendered, including using gender, gender differences if there was also a male(s) in the sample, the role of the female as either supportive or the direct perpetrator, and the number of perpetrators. Once the data had been axial coded, a matrix was created with all the codes included. The matrix was then filled with passages from the data that reflected each code. The codes were then color-coded to reflect the main themes from the axial codes and subsequent rounds of coding: tactics of infiltration (orange), strategy and execution (yellow), response and reaction (blue), escalation of violence (purple) and goals of terrorist acts (red).

An age variable was then constructed and coded based on the data (See Appendix C). Some ages of the bombers were known, some estimated by officials based on body remains from

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[78] There are numerous macro-level/structural issues in which violence is being perpetrated in Nigeria and the neighboring countries. There is a consistent tit-for-tat battle between the government and military and Boko Haram in which the group has consistently been trying to demonstrate relevancy and power, while the government of Nigeria has regularly stated that the group has been defeated. Additionally, social problems like famine, lack of resources, and high number of refugees are large issues for the region, which are important to monitor given the possible grievances that could stem from individuals being removed from their communities because of the violence of Boko Haram, the lack of basic necessities being met, and countless other issues. These issues of violence and social problems are all in addition to the larger cultural and criminal issues (patriarchal, militarized society, high levels of kidnappings throughout the country), which could intensify the problem.

the scene of the attack, others were guessed from appearance or given a possible age range. From the data, 45 incidents stated some form of age of the bomber. Age brackets were based on a modified version of Makin and Hoard's (2014) terrorist age brackets, but their study did not differentiate between the ages of 25 and under, which was most of the sample of Boko Haram female bombers. Additionally, numerous incidents have multiple perpetrators. In these cases, each bomber's age was coded and included as an individual. 19 of the bombers in incidents with codable ages were under 12 years old, 31 of the bombers were between 13 and 19 years old, and several were between 20 and 50 years old, though not many. Two other non-numerical categories were included, "young" and "women." Though these do not specify age, 'young' indicates a female who is probably prepubescent while 'women' could signify someone who is a little more mature. Age was then charted by month and year, however there were no discernable patterns that emerged (See Figure 6: Age by month and year).
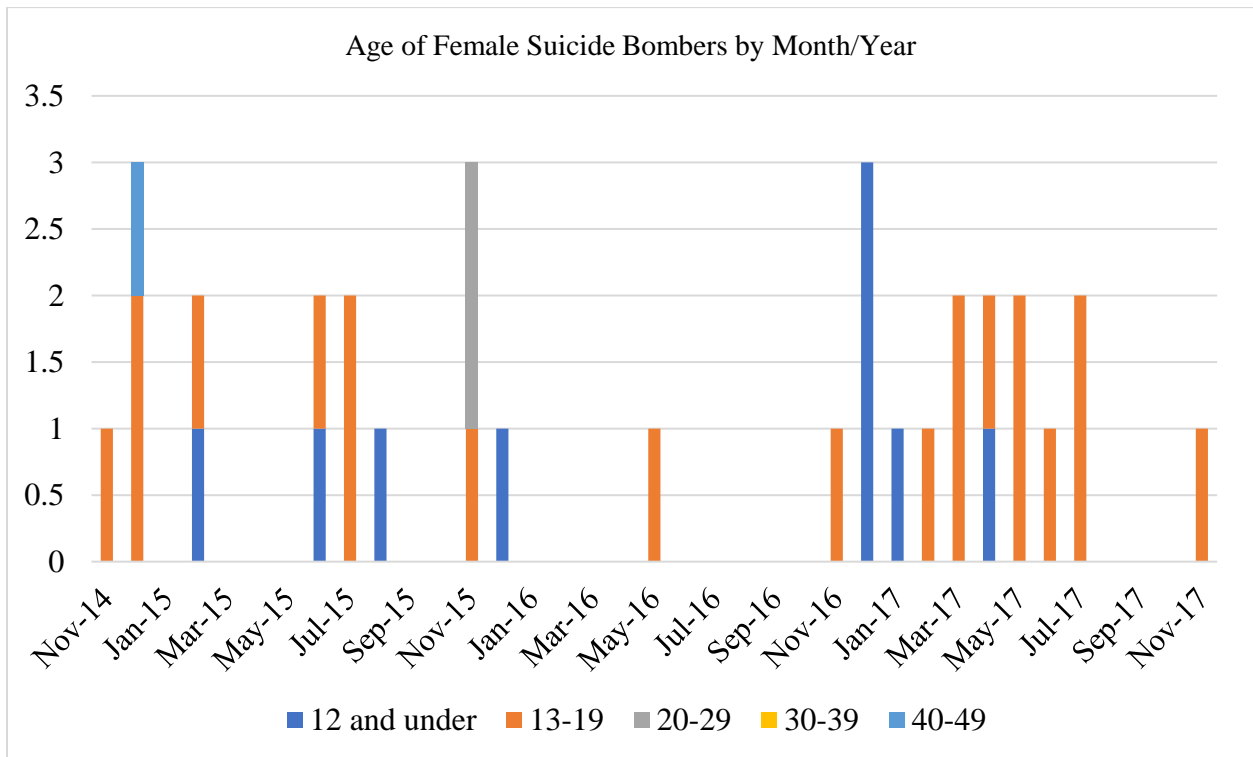

Figure 6: Female Suicide Bomber Age by Month & Year

Time was also coded from the text in the data after the coding process began. The early morning hours seemed to appear in the data frequently, so this was considered and incorporated into the coding process. Most of the incidents had a specific time of day listed (ToD), while others were broader, indicating a period of the day and not a specific time. Time brackets were constructed from this and added to a variable matrix (See Appendix D). In total, 58 of the incidents had a specific time or time frame listed. Due to the violence in the area, a curfew was implemented in the areas most effected by Boko Haram violence and bombings.[79] The curfew was from 10:00pm until 5:00am. Therefore, the time bracket *Night* consists of these times, and the other time brackets were constructed around the curfew hours into a total of four time periods in a day. The time period with the most female suicide bombing incidents was during the morning (30 of the incidents). The time of day was then charted with the month and year of each incident (See Figure 7: Bombings by time of Day and month/year). One noticeable trend based on this data is that there are no night time attacks by the female bombers until 2017. There is a shift in attack times in April 2017, however, and night attacks occur often for about a six-month period. Mid-day attacks occur at the beginning of the use of female bombers but seem to phase out almost entirely by the end of 2015, which could signify the group has learned when attacks might be more effective. Additionally, the time of day of the attack by age of the attacker reflects that the most bombing incidents occur during the morning by 13 to 19-year-old perpetrators (See Figure 8: Time of Day and Age).[80]

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[79] There were other time restrictions in place, but these were not long term. Most of the time, residents were free to conduct daily activities, but the 10pm to 5am curfew remained in effect. The relaxing of the curfew did not begin until 2018, as stated by John Gabriel in a Daily Post article in October, 2018.

[80] In the sample, there were several incidents perpetrated by individuals older than 30. These cases, however, did not have a time of day listed or specified in the data, which is why the chart does not reflect all age groups. Given the low number of individuals in these age brackets, there would not be a major difference reflected in the age group carrying out the most attacks and when it is occurring.
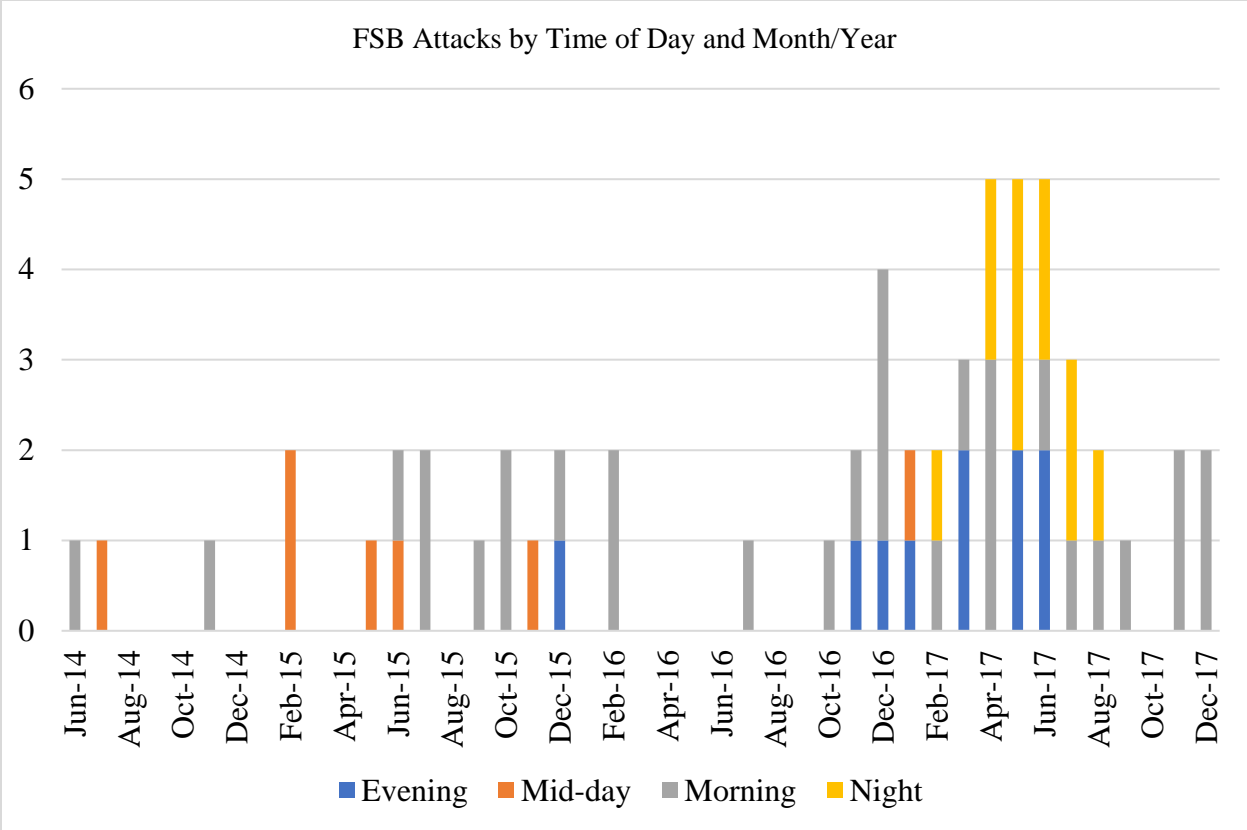
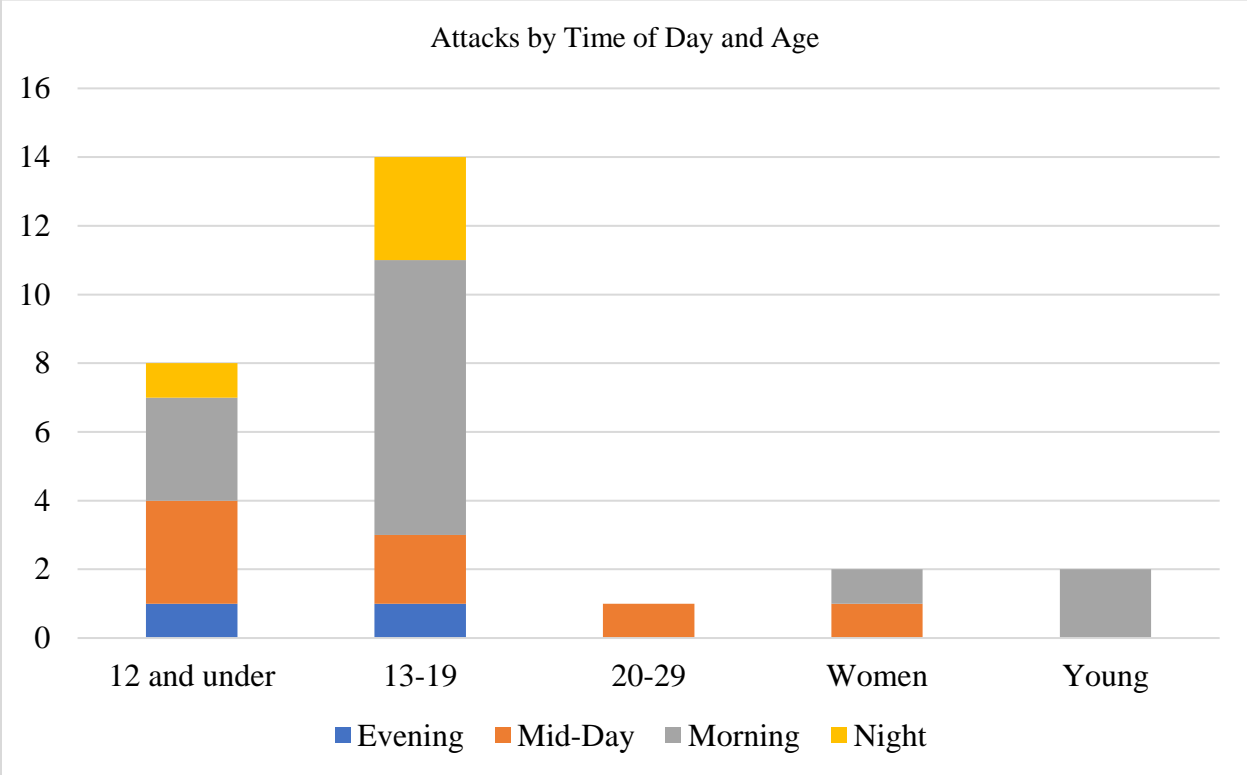**Figure 7: Female suicide bombings by Time of Day and Month/Year**

Figure 8: Female Suicide Bombing Attacks by Time of Day and Age of Bomber

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Once the matrix was created with all the codes and additional variables and color-coded based on axial coding theme development. Each theme was then coded individually, and new labels were created. The main themes were developed further into pre-attack behavior, gender roles, responses and reactions, and escalations of violence. For pre-attack behavior, first, the qualitative data for the behavior was reduced down to a phrase that was the *best fit* for what it was describing, and this short phrase was listed as the infiltration method, as most of the pre-attack narrative was describing the ways and means that the female were arriving at the target site or how they were able to get to the target. For example, a clip of the data from Incident 79 states:

> They entered the town of Kolofata, around 10 km (6 miles) from the border with Nigeria, before dawn, posing as refugees looking for food before the start of the daytime fast for Ramadan. "Two suicide bomber adolescents aged between 10 and 15 years infiltrated the town of Kolofata," Communications Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakary told state radio, adding that both had detonated their explosives.

The short phrase for this listed in the new Infiltration Method section was labeled as "Disguised as refugees." This was done for each incident and labeled accordingly. Once all incidents had been given short descriptive phrases, infiltration tactics categories were created based on the bomber's behaviors. These include using gender, using violence, using cunning, and using transportation/mobility. Each incident with documented pre-attack behavior was coded under one of these infiltration tactics (70 incidents were codable). Using gender included: carrying a baby, pretending to be pregnant, actually being pregnant, using female clothing or appearance, using culturally acceptable female activities for the area (13/70 incidents coded as using gender; 19%).[81] Using violence as an infiltration tactic included charging guards or

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[81] This was noted in cases where women would drive specific carts that many female business owners do and engaging in activities other women commonly do, like obtaining petrol gas, etc.

security with explosives, utilizing coordinated attacks where two perpetrators execute a distraction bombing followed by another bombing or shooting, and armed assaults, where female bombings are just a part of the overall violence that is occurring (13/70 incidents; 19%). Using cunning as a tactic included sneaking into an area, pretending to be someone else (a visitor), using an element of surprise (attacking unsuspecting grieving citizens from different bombing/shooting), utilizing the time of day (cover of darkness, morning prayer hours), disguising self as something else (refugee), and blending into the surroundings (by acting like students, locals, or pretending to be purchasing things at the market) (36/70 incidents where female bombers were coded as using cunning tactics; 51%) (See Figure 9 for Casual Chain model on a successful female bombing attack using cunning tactics of infiltration). The last tactical method of infiltration was using transportation/mobility (9/70 incidents; 13%). Using transportation included entering the target location by car, bus, taxis/rickshaws, and motorcycles (females often dropped at a distance to target destination), while less commonly the vehicle would be the explosive mechanism. Male bombers utilize vehicles as the explosive apparatus in a suicide attack more than female bombers, though it is still not a regular occurrence (GTD, 2018). It would be difficult to provide meaningful conclusions from the transportation category, however, as arriving to the scene by a vehicle may only be one step in the process of infiltrating the actual target.[82] The most common category of infiltration was using cunning, and the most common method of infiltration was "blending in" (11/70 incidents).[83]

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[82] The lack of further descriptive information in the data limits the ability to draw conclusions or make assumptions regarding the attacks placed in this category, though several incidents in the sample did demonstrate a direct use of vehicles and transportation mechanisms to carry out attacks, like rickshaws and busses.

[83] "Blending in" and "sneaking" are not mutually exclusive from what the data has shown, as they are specifically described differently. Unfortunately, there is no opportunity to ask for further information from the source who used these phrases, and it may be a matter of differences in how the journalists frame the reports they are gathering from different reports and officials. Additionally, there is a 'using gender' category in the infiltration tactics categorization, but a separate 'gender' variable was also coded alongside using gender to account for gender use outside of infiltration tactics and other gender scenarios that might come up (gender differences if a male is also
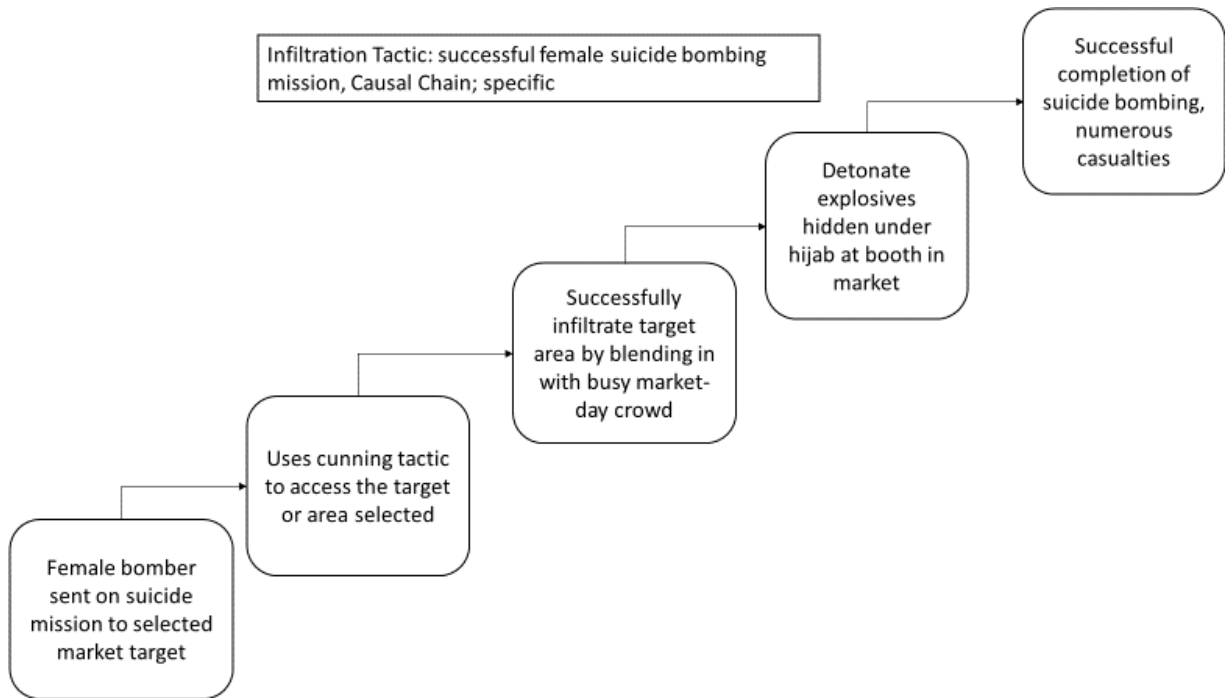
Figure 9: Casual Chain of Successful Bombing Attack

Further examination of the categories reflected a common pattern, and this was the use of deceit or deceitful tactics in order to accomplish the bombing. The infiltration tactics used by women in the "cunning" category all reflect the use of deceit in order to obtain access to restricted areas, places that would appear suspicious otherwise, or being able to blend into civilian groups and places using various tactics. "Gender" as a tactic also demonstrates the use of deceitful behavior by the bomber, such as pretending to have a baby. There is also the symbolic deceit that female bombers utilize, like when they are pregnant. In this type of situation, the presentation of self as a mother and not a bomber is the deceitful aspect of this tactic and plays to

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reported in the same incident but separate event). The separate gender variable is taken into account during the analysis and without it, and there was no significant difference between the outcomes of the crosstabs. Adding the separate gender variable to 'using cunning' increases it by about three cases and puts "cunning" tactics over the 50% success mark. Similarly, using gender is most often coded when a female quality is listed and other tactics are not, like using a disguise, clothes, etc. It is kept separate, however, under the premise that the gender quality would *overpower* other strategies.

the gendered stereotypes of motherhood and nurturing behavior. The symbolic deceit can also be reflected in the underlying nature of the perpetrators. Utilizing being female, and what that represents (perceptions and stereotypes of behavior and attributes) is present in the attack, whether other tactics are utilized additionally or not. The presentation of a female in long robes walking through a market or to a checkpoint elicits a particular image of the behavior the woman would most likely engage in. The surrounding people, whether civilian or authority, already have the underlying assumption of nonviolent, passive, subordinate. To play on this image, is the first action of deceit by the bomber for the enactment of the attack. Therefore, *Deceitful Tactics* developed out of both initial categories.

The success of each tactical infiltration strategy was then coded (Level of Success) and classified under one of the four infiltration tactics. This is different from Success of the attack listed in the GTD because the variable is coded for the Success of the infiltration tactic. More than half of the codable incidents (70) were successful (43 successful infiltrations)[84], signifying that the bomber either reached their target and detonated as planned, was in a pair or group where one or multiple bombers detonated their explosives, or when there was a detonation and damage/casualties, but it was probably not the original target point. Failed infiltration tactics included detonating the explosive early or what appeared to be by mistake, the bomber was neutralized ("gunned down", shot) or intercepted (specifically indicated "intercepted" in the data, stopped by authorities before detonation and did not detonate after being stopped), or the bomber surrendered (a total surrender was a rare occurrence).

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[84] The success rate of the infiltration tactic is slightly lower than the success rate of the overall attacks found in the GTD (61% to 87%, respectively), but this could be a reflection of the reduction in the overall sample and the cases that were included versus not included. Specutively, a case may garner more media attention or have more documented data and evidence about an incident if the authorities were involved, thus reducing the number of successful infiltrations in the final sample.

The second theme, gender and role of bomber during perpetration, was coded by the number of perpetrators involved in the attack and the gender of each, the role during the attack, and the type of attack being perpetrated. The gender and number of perpetrators was categorized as: solo female (one female bomber in the attack), pair female (two female bombers), pair mixed gender (two bombers, one male and one female), group mixed gender (three or more bombers where at least one is a different gender from the other two or more), and group female (defined as three or more female bombers perpetrating the attack). Most incidents were codable for gender and number of perpetrators (94 incidents) (See Figure 10: Number of incidents by gender and number of perpetrators). 21 of the 94 incidents with descriptive data included females perpetrating the attacks with males, which equals about 22% of the total female suicide bombing attacks. Support level was also coded and included direct perpetrator, supportive perpetrator, and a direct and support category (most often in attacks where the female directly attacks and there is another female who does a follow-up attack; 7 of 94 attacks). The attack type was also indicated: suicide bombing or armed assault (8 of the incidents). These were differentiated because most of the female bombing attacks were either strictly suicide bombings or were a set up for another suicide bomber. The armed assaults, however, are labeled as such even though a female suicide bombing occurred because the bombing was part of a larger attack and was not solely a suicide bombing.
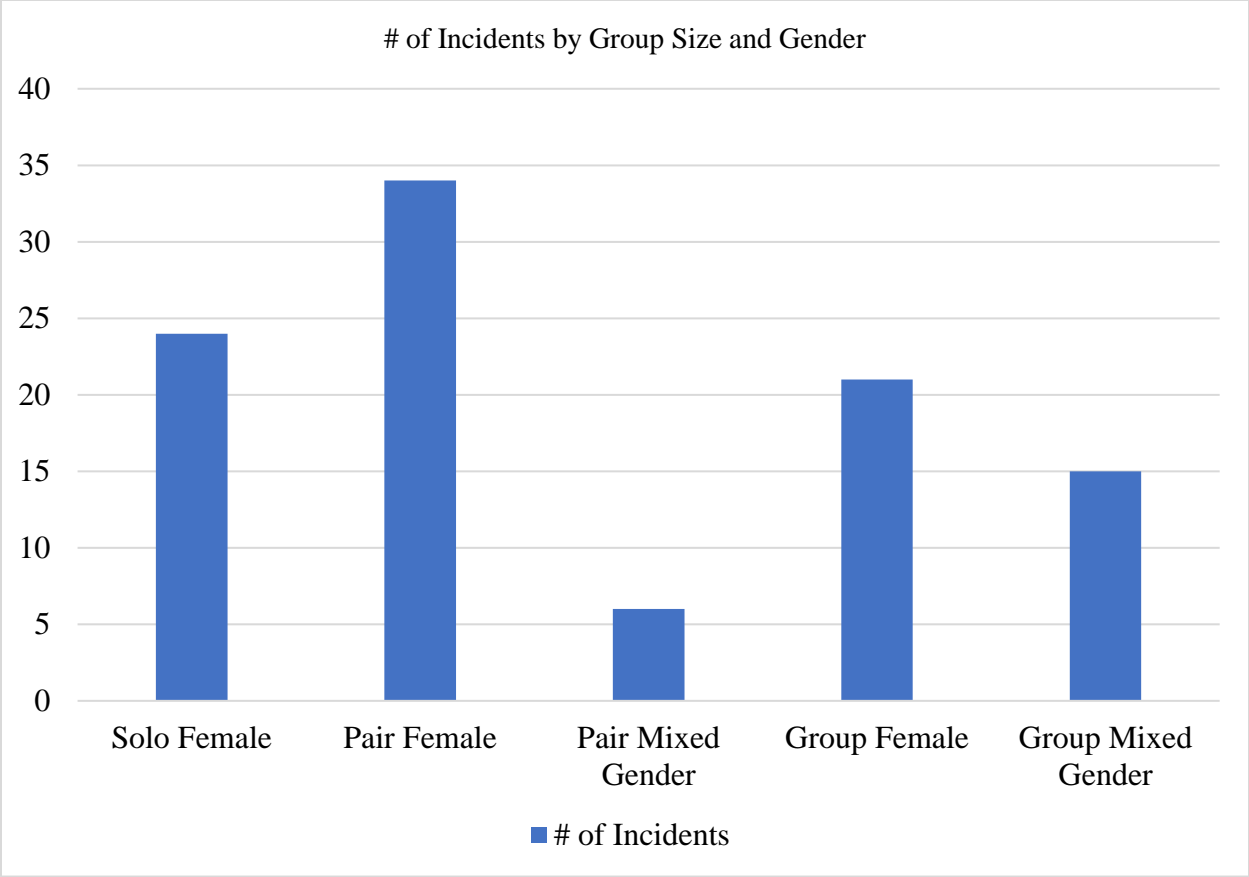
Figure 10: Number of incidents by Gender and Number of Perpetrators

The response and reaction theme was divided into several categories: response to the perpetrator (who is responding to the perpetrator if the perpetrator is detected), who the response was by, the bomber's reaction to the response/responder (which was coded into Response and Reaction Category), and situational factors. Common responders included soldiers and vigilantes, but there were informal and formal authorities responding to the attackers, as well as local civilian militias, civilians, and even dogs. The responders were coded *as is* from the data. Most responders fell under the same categories (police, soldiers, local militia), so new category

brackets were not created for responders.[85] The perpetrators reaction to formal or informal responders was coded (reaction) and categorized: complied with response, defined as bombers who were stopped or surrendered and did not detonate explosives (arrested, surrendered, intercepted); refused response, which included incidents where someone/a group noticed and responded to the bomber (give opportunity to surrender, halt, stop, desist) and the bomber does not comply (by detonating explosive, fleeing the scene, getting shot for refusing to comply/neutralized, and resisting arrest); and a mixed response, which included incidents where one bomber complied with authorities or other responders but another bomber did not, ending in neutralization or bomb detonation. Many of the bombers who refused to comply with responders either continued to detonate their explosives or refused to halt and were shot (See Figure 11 for a cognitive map of female bombers who are stopped or intercepted before they can successfully complete the suicide attack and Figure 12 for causal chain of events most likely to occur during the interception of a female suicide bomber).

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[85] There is a distinction that is made between civilian responders and authoritative responders. Authorities are divided into formal and informal responders. The formal authorities include groups like police, soldiers, military, security agents/personnel, while the informal responders include vigilantes and local civilian militias.
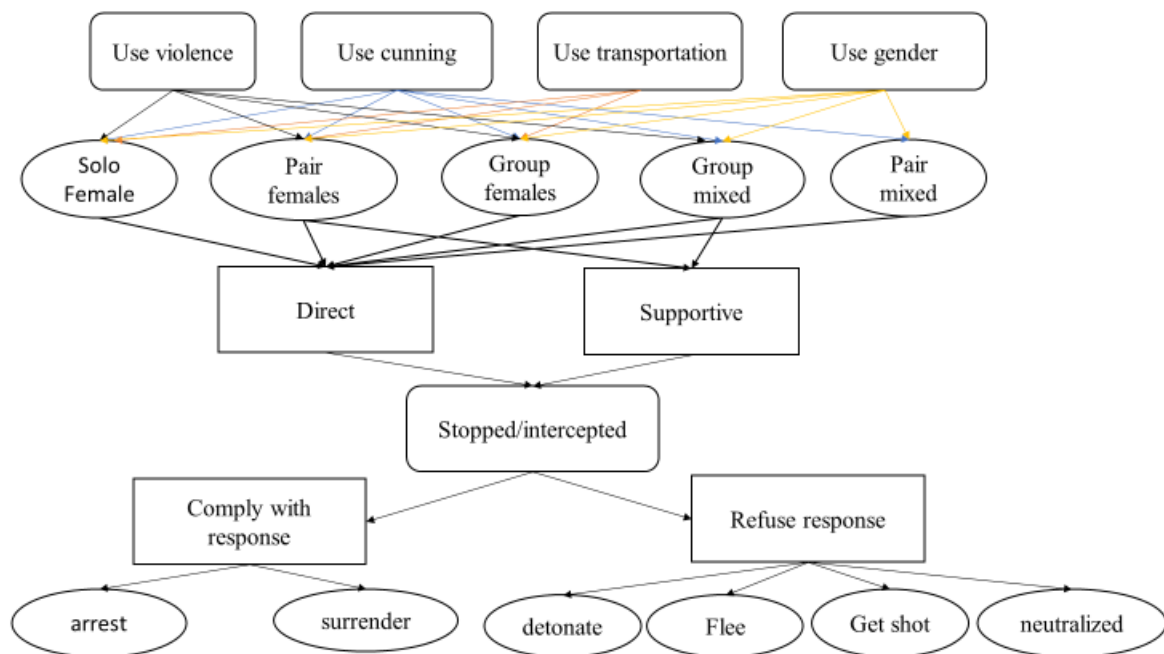
Figure 11: Cognitive Map of Stopped/Intercepted Female Bombers
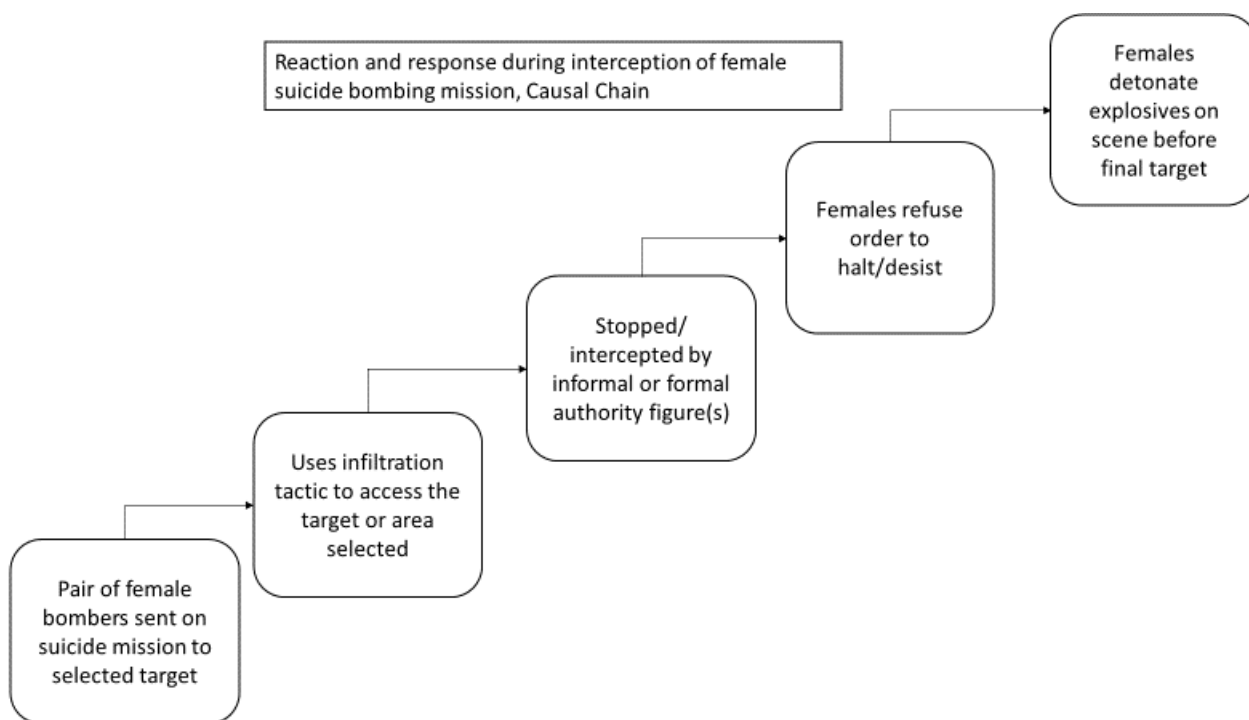

Figure 12: Casual Chain, interception: Response & Reaction

The final theme, escalation of violence, was divided into tactical and strategic escalations of violence and tactics. Strategic violence included macro level escalation of violence by the group or military, the location of violence, frequency of violence, timing, and coercion. Tactical violence included kidnapping, remote detonations, and using child bombers. The original code *coercion* and *volunteered* were merged into one code. This was done under the assumption that if a girl is volunteered to a group by her parents, she is not acting on her own free will to be there or did not make her own decision to join, which could arguably be a form of coercive behavior by the parents. There were only two incidents that indicated girls were volunteered, one of which demonstrated elements that were listed under coercion as well. By joining the two together, coercion went from 6 to 7 incidents. This theme had limited qualitative data available, however, and patterns and themes from the codes were not panning out as anticipated. The lack of thematic development here could be a product of the data being used, coming from news sources. Though there are numerous points of interest from this theme that should be developed further, it is not within the scope of the current study or ability of the data being used.

By incorporating gender theory and prior literature, along with the literature on women in terrorism, themes and patterns began developing consistently during the coding process. Within each theme, categories were constructed that furthered the analysis and allowed for a greater level of comparison across variables and codes. The main themes that emerged, infiltration tactics, the role during the attack, and the response by civilians or authorities to the bomber and subsequently the bombers reaction were not the originally hypothesized themes and have developed further than anticipated by adding the age and time of day variables, demonstrating the instrumentality of the group's tactics and strategies. The escalation of violence theme did not

develop as was expected and instead left more questions to be answered than can be fleshed out with the data. Several rounds of open coding and axial coding, along with charting and dividing patterns as they emerged, and continuously developing themes (through creating matrixes, cross-tabbing codes, and creating cognitive maps, causal chains, and decision models) led to three very distinct thematic areas that the data provide a rich narrative description of female bomber's accomplishment of suicide missions.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS: THE ENACTMENT OF SUICIDE BOMBINGS

The study had several guiding questions to examine gender and the enactment of suicide

bombing, based on prior literature and theoretical frameworks. How are Boko Haram's female

bombers infiltrating targets to carry out suicide attacks; what role do Boko Haram's female

bombers play in the enactment of the attack; how to locals and authorities respond to the female

bombers; and relatedly, do the female bombers react to being intercepted in a stereotypically

gender-consistent way, i.e.. surrender, take opportunity not to detonate, claim victimhood, desist

from perpetration. To answer these questions, a complementary dataset was created from the

open-sourced citations in the Global Terrorism Database. While these sources provide limited

information regarding the bomber's motivation for the attack or pathways to the violent

behavior, it does provide key insights as to how the acts were accomplished and the behavior of

the bomber during the attack.

Female bomber's infiltration tactics

The data describes three dimensions of the enactment of a suicide bombing attack: the

infiltration of the target, the role of the perpetrator and any accomplices, and failed infiltration

attempts. Female bombers often use and are successful using deceitful infiltration tactics, such as

cunning and gender, on soft targets, like marketplaces, IDP camps, and public areas, and the least

successful on government and military targets (not including military checkpoints, where males

and females have equally successful attacks). While male bombers also have higher failure rates

on attacks on government personnel targets, Boko Haram's male bombers are more successful

accomplishing attacks on military personnel (soldiers, troops, officers, forces) than female

bombers (Males: 7 successful attacks, 1 failed attack; females: 4 successful attack, 4 failed attacks). Occasionally, some female bombers use violence and vehicles to infiltrate targets, but this is often in congruence with male perpetrators and is not as common. Most incidents involved either a solo female perpetrator (25%) or a pair of female perpetrators (36%), while groups of females (3 or more bombers) perpetrated just over 20% of the attacks. Occasionally, the women and girls perpetrated the attacks with a male accomplice (6 of the attacks) but it was more common for females to perpetrate attacks with male accomplices in larger groups like armed assaults and coordinated attacks (15 mixed gender group attacks). In attacks where the bomber failed to successfully infiltrate the desired target and were intercepted or stopped by civilians or authorities, most of the women and girls refused to surrender, and instead attempted to complete the bomb detonation to the best of their ability. 50 out of 59 bombing incidents where the perpetrator(s) was intercepted or stopped demonstrated a refusal to comply with demands, and subsequently, over half of these incidents involved a bomb detonation (55%).

Deceitful Tactics

Cunning

The most common form of infiltration tactic used by the female suicide bombers is the use of cunning behaviors, which include blending into crowds or local populations, using disguises or pretending to be someone else (a visitor or refugee), sneaking into target areas, and using an element of surprise on unsuspecting populations. Tactics involving cunning were typically the most successful, meaning that the bomber reached the intended target and detonated the explosives. Typically, the female bombers would target or attack soft targets, or places like markets, schools, IDP camps, and even mosques. Soft targets are generally targets or locations with high civilian populations and low security or authoritative personnel, or a lack of

preventative measures for attacks, allowing easier accessibility and less of a need to utilize violence or weapons to infiltrate the target successfully. The female bombers also utilize gender perceptions and actions to infiltrate targets, which is often done successfully as well. Gendered and cunning infiltration tactics by the suicide bombers are tactics of deceit and can be utilized directly or symbolically.

Boko Haram's female suicide bombers are most successful using cunning tactics on target populations in areas with high levels of civilians, most often in market places and other "soft targets" like educational institutions and IDP camps (internally displaced persons) (chart tactic and target). The female bombers often blend into the population by hiding in large crowds before detonating their explosives. One bomber "was hidden in the crowd at the Kano State Polytechnic (higher education school)," a witness of one incident stated. "It was a huge crowd and people were jostling to go through," at which point the bomber detonated an "improvised explosive device," which killed six people (Incident 4). In another successful suicide mission, a female bomber detonated an explosive device while teachers were undergoing screenings to identify issues of fraud with the state payroll. A staff member who was outside stated that "The first batch [of staff members] had gone in. There were almost 100 people there, including the screening committee and accountants from the bank… there was a huge explosion from inside the hall" (Incident 22).

Given the young age of many of the perpetrators, female bombers are able to blend in with groups of young people as well. Incident 88 states that two women entered a camp north of the border of Nigeria in Cameroon, and "joined a group of young people before detonating suicide belts just before midnight." Bombers are also able to utilize the large number of gathered individuals during market days by mingling with individuals in the crowd while carrying bombs

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in food containers to successfully infiltrate an area (Incident 38), or by carrying the explosives in items like luggage. One woman, described as "middle-aged" "approached the site where chicken sellers attend to customers," but was stopped by nearby vigilantes who insisted on checking her bags. The woman refused to allow the search to occur, insisting that it contained wares for the market, but while the argument continued, "some people gathered at the scene and that was when she detonated the explosive," a local stated (Incident 8).

Similarly, female bombers attempt to sneak into different targets without being noticed or caught by locals or authorities; however, many of these missions are unsuccessful, resulting in either an early detonation from the bomber or the bomber being shot/neutralized by authorities or locals. Incident 70 describes how one bomber was thwarted before she reached her final target when a local resident's dog attacked her. The bomber was "making her way into the gathering at the wedding ceremony before the dog pounced on her… The girl, whose original mission appeared to have been thwarted, detonated her explosives while battling to wriggle herself" from the dog's grip.

Bombers also utilize the late night and early morning hours to increase the element of surprise in the attack and increase the ability to be able to sneak into targets, like villages and IDP camps (Incident 54, Incident 94). In Incident 73, at about 5:00am, three female bombers attempted to sneak into a village, but they were stopped by members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF)[86]. One JTF member stated that during the interception of the bombers, one of them "detonated IED strapped to her body killing herself alone. The other two tried to escape but were shot dead by security personnel on duty."

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[86] The Civilian Joint Task Force is a group of fighters established in the city of Maiduguri, Nigeria, the former stronghold and birthplace of Boko Haram, to help formal authority figures like police and soldiers remove and repel Boko Haram affiliated fighters and attacks.

Female bombers trying to sneak into towns are also intercepted by various locals and civilians. In one case, "residents said the teenage girls sneaked in to the village but did not reach their targets when suspecting members of the hunters group tried to intercept them." The Secretary General of the local branch of the Nigerian Hunters Association[87] confirmed the incident and stated that "Our men spotted them around Tsamiya area trying to enter the town but when they were shouted to stop with guns pointing at them, one of them decided to detonate and they both died" (Incident 86). Not all female bombers are intercepted or neutralized, however, and can be successful on their suicide mission by utilizing cunning tactics and sneaking into harder to infiltrate targets, like military posts. One military official stated that "a teenage female suicide bomber actually crept to the sandbag post of our boys [soldiers] at Molai and before they could realise what was happening she detonated herself and killed three of our boys" (Incident 89).

While blending in to groups and civilian populations was the most common cunning tactic for female bombers to use (n=11), and being sneaky/attempting to sneak into different targets and target areas was the least successful tactic (n=1 successful mission), female bombers who utilized disguises or pretended to be someone else (victim, visitor, beggar, refugee, family member) were the most successful (6 out of 6 successes, and 3 out of 4 successes, respectively). Given the high levels of attacks in markets, the female bombers disguise themselves as beggars and customers to successfully infiltrate the high civilian areas. A chairman of the local government of one attack stated that "two bombers who (were) disguised as customers, detonated their suicide belts at the section of the market selling grains and second-hand clothing"

[87] Different from the JTF, the Nigerian Hunters Association is an association of hunters that has local chapters in various areas throughout the country. Members pledged their support to soldiers in the fight with Boko Haram and were willingly volunteering to coordinate counter attacks and infiltrate the Sambisa forest, where Boko Haram leader Abu Shekau is said to have his faction's stronghold.

(Incident 55). Here, the bombers are not just disguising themselves, but also participating in the social aspects of market day to avoid suspicion. In a separate incident, attackers successfully disguised themselves as beggars to enter the market area. One witness stated that "one teenager exploded as she approached the mosque crowded with people from the nearby Baga Road fish market, performing afternoon prayers during the holy month of Ramadan" (Incident 17). The bombers took advantage of the high rates of casualties that would be gathered from the fish market and the numerous people gathered for prayer during the religious period of Ramadan.

Female bombers also utilize disguises to infiltrate other targets as well. These targets are generally "soft" targets, like IDP camps and areas with high rates of refugees. This tactic can be coupled with taking advantage of social and cultural events and religious periods that are occurring as well (the primary religious period for those in northern Nigeria is Ramadan). Consequently, female bombers "pos[e] as refugees looking for food before the start of the daytime fast for Ramadan," and are successful in infiltrating towns in the Nigerian border areas, where they then detonate their explosives (Incident 79). In a similar attack, displaced individuals were going through routine security checks when a bomber detonated their explosives. One official stated that, "The IDPs, mostly women and children, were stopped for security checks at the checkpoint when the bomber, disguised as an IDP, sneaked in amongst them before setting off her explosives" (Incident 34).

Female bombers also successfully infiltrate targets and target areas by pretending they are also civilians or victims of Boko Haram attacks. According to a statement made by the Nigerian army, in Incident 23, the bomber "pretended she was a visitor coming from Monguno town to check on her parents in Dikwa. Her true intentions were exposed when soldiers on guard recalled that she had arrived from the wrong direction" (Incident 23). In an attack on the border between

Nigeria and Cameroon, which is an area heavily targeted by Boko Haram, female bombers attacked a funeral where "the villagers were gathered for the wake when two suicide attackers joined them, pretending to be family members," a Cameroonian security official stated, at which point the "suicide bombers blew themselves up" (Incident 43).

Female bombers also pretend to be victims as a cunning tactic during larger armed assaults and attacks on villages. One bomber, "who took advantage of the chaotic situation when soldiers were busy engaging Boko Haram fighters in a shoot-out during a repelled attack on the city, pretended as if Boko Haram was chasing her and ran into the compound of a village head, Bulama Isa" (Incident 39). The female bomber did not successfully kill the village head because he happened to not be home, but numerous members of his family were killed. A different female suicide bomber also targeted this village head shortly after the first female attack on his home. The bomber, "who was lurking in the dark as the grief struck head of the family walked into his compound, jumped out and detonated herself." Once again, he survived, but another woman with her baby were killed in this blast (Incident 40).

Gender

Female bombers also utilize deceitful tactics by incorporating gender perceptions or stereotypes into their infiltration tactic. The utilization of female, and what that represents, is continuously present in the attack, whether other tactics are utilized additionally or not. The presentation of a female elicits a particular image of the behavior and actions the woman would most likely engage in or refrain. The surrounding people, whether civilian or authority, most likely assume that a female would be nonviolent or not likely to engage in criminal activities. To play on this image, is the first action of deceit by the bomber for the enactment of the attack. With the increase in the numbers of females being suicide bombers affiliated with Boko Haram,

however, the novelty of a female being a suicide bomber may be waning. The early reports and documentation of Boko Haram's deployment of females in suicide roles clearly specifies the clothing and robes as something specific and unique to the bomber, and something that clearly can hide the suicide vest or belt undetected underneath it. As more females engaged in suicide attacks, however, the appearance and clothing became less of a factor, as did the shock value of women in the role of bomber. Consequently, further gendered tactics have been utilized by these female bombers, however not in a majority way at this point. Along with utilizing the appearance and roles that women commonly maintain, several instances have documented the use of pregnancy or infants to deceive authorities at checkpoints to successfully infiltrate areas. There is also the symbolic deceit that female bombers utilize in the cases of using perceptions of pregnancy and motherhood. In this type of situation, the presentation of self as a mother and not a bomber is the deceitful aspect of this tactic and plays to the gendered stereotypes of motherhood and nurturing behavior.

The most commonly utilized use of gender is in the clothing that female bombers wear and relying on female appearance to infiltrate checkpoints and target areas, mostly commonly markets and private citizens. Clothing and female appearance were consistently cited in 2014 and 2015, which were the first two years that female suicide bombers were being affiliated with Boko Haram. The language used when reporting on the incident reflects this awareness to the female appearance and clothing as a tool to hide the explosives effectively. Incident 2 states that, "A female suicide bomber was isolated as she was walking towards the gate of the university… she had hidden the bomb under her long black hijab" (Incident 2). Soon after, an educational institution was targeted, once by a female bomber and again two days later by a male bomber. The female bomber "tried to enter the class but before she could reach the door the bomb

concealed in her dress exploded," a student who witnessed the incident stated. The male, on the other hand, is said to have disguised himself as a student to detonate his explosive "in the midst of hundreds of students as they gathered for a morning speech from teachers" (Incident 5). The females clothing and appearance are specifically mentioned, while the male is perceived as utilizing a disguise and there is no reference to gender or gender-specific appearance characteristics.[88] The use of female clothing and appearance was occurring frequently enough that some areas began banning the wearing of specific female religious garments. In 2015, "two women dressed in the religious garments blew themselves up," resulting in Cameroon banning "the wearing of full-face Islamic veil, including the burka, in the Far North region, following two suicide bomb attacks." The bombers had "dressed in women's burqas and struck as locals were breaking the Ramadan fast" (Incident 25). The increased use of females using clothing and appearance to hide bombs and infiltrate targets led to an awareness of the use of females as bombers, raising suspicions on women in general.

The second most common use of gender as a tactic is to utilize maternal stereotypes and perceptions with infants. Bombers either fake the perception of having an infant/carrying a baby, actually carry an infant during the suicide mission, or carry out the attack while pregnant. Given the stereotype that women are maternal, caring, nurturing, and caregivers by nature, utilizing

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[88] The incident does not give further specifics, so generalizations cannot be made regarding the full nature of the use of clothing in this incident. However, sources indicate that there are numerous variations to the style of dress and veils used by women across Muslim cultures. In a reflective article on Muslim women's head coverings, Mary Sparrow states that "wearing a veil or head covering acts as a show of obedience to the Qur'an and to Allah, as well as being a symbol of modesty and womanhood," and these vary in style depending on place and culture. In one part of Africa, the Sudan, laws require women to dress in modest ways or risk punishment. However, standards of modesty are subjective, so most women opt to wear a hijab in public, which demonstrates their commitment to the religious practice, maintains the cultural feminine act of modesty, and is useful in weather conditions found in that area. The veils and hijabs are often colorful and stylistic. The burqa and full-face veils, however, are the most restrictive type of head covering and often cover the entire face. Sparrow states that "in areas controlled by the Taliban, women are required to wear burkas in public and in mixed company." Terrorist groups who utilize strict Islamic practices may require the women to wear unadorned head coverings that are more modest than what women traditionally wear in communities. It could therefore be speculated that wearing an all-black full-face veil into the market or a common area would stand out compared to the dress of other local female market-goers.

babies or pretending to be carrying a baby reduces suspicion from civilians and security figures, allowing the bomber to pass by checkpoints and areas with reduced levels of scrutiny, enabling a successful infiltration and attack.

In a dual attack carried out by a pair of female bombers, "the first bomber stood by a motorized rickshaw packed with goods in the bustling market and took a call on her mobile phone. She then dropped it and at that moment she blew herself up… About 10 minutes later, another woman who looked about 19 and carrying what looked like a baby on her back under hijab arrived at the scene that was crowded by rescuers and residents. She then detonated the bomb on her back" (Incident 7). In this attack, which occurred in 2014, the first bomber blended in with locals in the market, engaging in normal social behaviors, before detonating her explosive. The second bomber, who utilized gendered perceptions of mothers/maternity to blend in, was able to infiltrate the gathered crowd and detonate her explosive, increasing the casualties and damages. Though this female bomber was also blending into the crowded market, she was utilizing gender strategies to do so, overpowering the effect of just blending in like a customer like the first bomber. In an attack in 2015 in northern Cameroon, near a town by the Nigerian border, a bomber detonated her explosives "while she had a baby strapped to her back," which could indicate an escalation of tactics by the group from pretending to be carrying a baby, to actually carrying a baby during the attack because of increased scrutiny of women appearing to be carrying babies to infiltrate targets and carry out attacks.

This is furthered by an attack from 2017 involving four female bombers, two of which were carrying infants; "Two were stopped at a security checkpoint, and detonated their devices… the two women carrying infants, however, were not stopped, and exploded their own devices past the security point," a local resident stated, which was later confirmed by The

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National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The resident also stated that, "They [the bombers] blew up themselves after they were intercepted by local vigilantes stationed at the checkpoint at the entry to town… we heard three blasts near the checkpoint" (Incident 63). Additionally, in 2017, members of the Civilian JTF volunteer group "intercepted a pregnant suicide bomber and another woman," who were ultimately shot when they refused to surrender and attempted to attack a security post (Incident 67). Though it is not clear whether the pregnancy of the bomber was an intentional tactic or a coincidence, the gendered aspect of the female bomber being pregnant was superseded by her reaction to being intercepted. The decision to refuse to surrender and continue to attack a security post negates the perception of the female gender in this incident.

Female suicide bombers affiliated with Boko Haram use deceitful tactics to infiltrate targets and civilian areas, such as gendered actions and cunning. Though the underlying element of female is constantly present during the infiltration, female bombers still use additional tactics to successfully accomplish a suicide mission. Commonly, females rely on disguises and the ability to blend into groups of women and shoppers to effectively infiltrate soft targets. Not all female bombing incidents rely solely on these tactics, however. Some female bombers utilize perceptually masculine tactics, like violence and the use of vehicles, to accomplish attacks.

Less frequent Tactics

Most of the suicide bombing attacks are perpetrated by female bombers who are wearing explosive vests or belts and infiltrate the target by utilizing their body as a means to deceive those around and gain access to specific targets or locations. In a few incidents, however, the bomber used transportation as a tactic of infiltration through the use of vehicles as the method of carrying the bomb (as opposed to a vest or belt on the person). Some female bombers opt to use

motorized rickshaws, a popular mode of transportation, and tactic to hit similar targets minutes apart[89]. Incident 51 states that "two suicide bombers riding in motorized rickshaws [in the] morning detonated their explosives 10 minutes apart" (Incident 51). Another bomber who was driving a "motorized rickshaw detonated a device at the entrance to the crowded market around 7:30a.m… The wreckage of the tricycle used by the bomber was there. I saw the charred body of the bomber," a witness to the event stated. Other witnesses stated that the female bomber killed numerous people "at a taxi rank at a crowded market" (Incident 24). Other female bombers have relied on cars to successfully infiltrate target areas. Witnesses of one incident on a military barracks stated that "the suicide bomber exploded the car as soldiers were checking it outside [the barracks] … during the evening rush hour." A fighter with a civilian defense group that works with the military also noted that, "The attack was so daring because the suicide bomber must have escaped several checkpoints to get to the solders' spot" (Incident 15). Not only did the bomber use a vehicle as the mode of infiltration, she also attacked a hard target- military barracks, and was successful in doing so.

Some female bombers use violence to infiltrate targets or areas through coordinated attacks. These differ from armed assaults because of the reduced number of individuals involved, the goal of the attack (raid or take over a village/gather resources; hit target, high casualties), and the higher levels of organization and strategy during coordinated attacks. For example, female bombers successfully infiltrated a market area near a refugee camp where, "The first assailant blew herself up, triggering panic… People were trying to close their shops when two other female bombers triggered their explosives, causing most of the casualties." (Incident 95). Similarly, in a coordinated attack involving two pairs of female bombers, two females detonated

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[89] There is no law prohibiting women from driving, however, they must be legally allowed to do so and possess a driving license.

their explosives near the edge of a village, causing a distraction, while the second pair of bombers were able to successfully infiltrate the village and detonate, causing greater damages (Incident 99). Here, the female bombers utilized violence to distract authorities and locals from the other pair of bombers who were able to get all the way into the village in the midst of the chaos from the first pair.

Female suicide bombers utilize a diverse range of tactics to infiltrate different targets and areas, but deceitful tactics are the most common and effective methods used by the female bombers. These include the use of cunning and gender tactics, such as disguises, pretending to be someone else or from somewhere else, blending into crowds and groups, and utilizing gender perceptions of motherhood and femininity in both direct and symbolic ways. The female bombers frequently infiltrate and attack soft targets and are often successful in these attacks. Less often, female bombers will engage in an attack that uses strategic and coordinated violence to inflict higher rates of casualties and damages or will utilize vehicle born improvised explosive devices (VBIED) as a method of infiltration and attack.

While most bombers infiltrate areas and carry out attacks using deceit and gendered tactics, some females engage in violence and alternative methods, like vehicles. Though there is a low number of male bombers who also utilize vehicles to infiltrate targets and accomplish a bombing, they do so more frequently than females. When females do utilize alternative tactics, it is also in coordination with male bombers or fighters who are going to engage in a larger assault on an area. Even when engaging in alternative tactics, the female bombers are still likely to attack soft targets and civilians.

Female Role in Suicide Bombing Perpetration

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Most attacks are perpetrated by either lone female bombers or pairs of female bombers who can infiltrate soft targets successfully. By traveling alone or in pairs, the females are able to blend into crowds, or utilize other deceitful infiltration tactics, effectively and have a reduced level of presence in the target area before detonating the explosives. By maintain a low number of perpetrators per attack, the bombers can reach areas that are internal and would be more difficult to infiltrate with a large group without arousing suspicion, such as shops and stands in marketplaces. Compared to groups of females, pairs of females had the most frequent level of success, while solo female perpetrations had the greatest level of success (pair: 50% success, solo: 63% success, group: 15%). Pairs of female bombers were also able to accomplish coordinated attacks, where one female causes a distraction or creates panic, while the second bomber positions herself in the place that would cause the most casualties while civilians are trying to vacate the area. Female bombers also coordinate attacks with male accomplices as well. When a male(s) is involved, the female usually causes the distraction in a coordinated attack while the male either detonates a second explosives or shoots fleeing victims in a mixed firearm/bombing tactic. This tactic is seen on a larger scale during armed assaults, which female bombers participate in as well, alongside male perpetrators.

Solo and Pair Female Attacks

Most female suicide bombing attacks are carried out by lone females or pairs of female bombers, as the direct perpetrator, and on soft targets (markets, mosques, educational institutions). Many of the incidents involve the bombers targeting unsuspecting civilians either during market day or who are in or going to a religious establishment, which lends to a high number of casualties per attack. The unsuspecting nature of the attack can increase depending on the time of day the attack is occurring or how old the bomber is/looks.

In one incident, witnesses said "the young girl was buying noodles from a stall in the Customs area of the city at around 9:30pm on Saturday when she detonated her explosives" (Incident 59). Another bomber "detonated low-caliber explosives packed to her torso at a petrol station in the Hotoro area on the outskirts of the city, targeting women who had lined up to buy kerosene," a police spokesperson stated. A local vendor added that, "The queue was long because the widely used cooking gas is often in short supply and when a new shipment comes in women typically rush to their local vendor" (Incident 3).

In another attack, "a female suicide bomber … blew herself up at a teacher training college in central Nigerian town," several witnesses stated, adding that it "occurred about 12:30 p. m. as students were writing their end of semester examinations" (Incident 5). Another pair of bombers killed nine people when the first female bomber "detonated a bomb in a tiny milk and donut restaurant. The second suicide bomber killed only herself" (Incident 27). The female bombers do not discriminate when it comes to targeting and carrying out attacks, reflected in the majority of soft target attacks, and include incidents where most of victims are "children who [are] selling peanuts or begging for money at the time of the explosion" (Incident 12) or camps for internally displaced people (Incident 42, Incident 51).

Some pairs of female bombers are more strategic in carrying out the attack, either detonating in two different spots in the same target area at the same time, like when "a teenager set off explosives in a local shop, killing two people, and the other attacker targeted a family" (Incident 35), or when 120 children were wounded when "two women suicide bombers blew themselves up at the opposite ends of the market in Madagali town" (Incident 55). The dual attacks on targets by pairs of bombers has been a consistent tactic since the first female bombings occurred in 2014, as can be seen in an attack in December, 2017 where "one of the

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bombers detonated IED strapped to her body within the main market, while the other one

detonated outside the market square" in the yam section (Incident 101).

Other pairs of female bombers coordinate an attack where one bomber detonates and the

other bomber waits for people to flee the scene before detonating the second bomb, increasing

the casualty count and damages. In an attack on a mosque, "At least 24 people [were killed] and

23 injured after an attack by two female suicide bombers… One bomber blew herself up inside

the mosque and the second waited outside to detonate as survivors tried to escape" (Incident 44).

The country's emergency response agency stated about one attack that, "two female suicide

bombers blew themselves up at a mobile phone market… killing at least 14 people and

wounding more than 100 others… One went inside the market, the other stayed outside, then

they exploded, killing themselves and others nearby" (Incident 32). In a strategic coordination

between two female bombers in a marketplace in Maiduguri, the previous stronghold of Boko

Haram, the first bomber "exploded in the crowded market while standing near a rickshaw… The

attack targeted the popular market area." The first blast created panic in the marketplace, as

locals heard the sound of the blast and saw "thick plumes of black smoke billowing out of the

market." A witness said that, "While the people were trying to help the injured the second bomb

blasted. I saw a lot of bodies." A local trader corroborated the story and added that "They were

two suicide bombers. The first detonated herself, killing many people and as people were

running for their lives, the other bomber detonated her own, killing many more" (Incident 7).

While most bombings were perpetrated by females who either accomplished the mission alone or

with other females, some of the attacks were perpetrated by females with male accomplices.

These occurred either in pairs of coed bombers who often utilized coordinated strategies to

accomplish the mission, or in mixed gender groups carrying out larger assaults.

Suicide bombings with male accomplices

While most of the female suicide bombings involved solo or pairs of female bombers, some women and girls participated in attacks with male accomplices, who were either also suicide bombers or were part of a larger armed assault group or coordinated attack. Attacks that were carried out by both male and female perpetrators accounted for about 22% of attacks (group mixed gender n=15, pair mixed gender n=6). The type of attack was only codable for 18 of the 21 incidents where there was both male and female involvement, 13 incidents of suicide bombing only attacks, and 5 incidents where the suicide bombing was part of a larger mixed gender group armed assault. In mixed gender groups that only engaged in suicide bombing, female bombers were mostly direct perpetrators of attacks. When the attack occurred with males in larger groups, female bombers were more often in supportive or peripheral roles as opposed to being the perpetrator of the main attack. This style of attack is also likely to occur during night time hours (10:00pm- 5:00am, which is the curfew in some areas).

In mixed gender perpetrator groups that are not engaging in an armed assault, female bombers still play a direct role (Incident 37, Incident 72). Incident 33 consisted of four perpetrators, three female and one male, who were all utilizing suicide bombing tactics. A military official stated that, "The first kamikaze detonated his bomb in the house of the traditional chief of Leymarie… Five people died including the bomber. Several minutes later, three female bombers detonated their bombs close to the initial site but they didn't kill anyone else because they acted too quickly," though around a dozen individuals were wounded (Incident 33). In an attack involving seven perpetrators, each one a suicide bomber, and six of them women, an IDP camp was targeted for the high number of casualties possible for the attack, though none of the bombers were successful in their attacks. There were no casualties in this

attack because the attack occurred after the 10pm curfew at 11:30pm, and no one was around (Incident 66). Another attack that occurred at night, perpetrated by a mixed gender group, "struck near a sprawling camp for displaced people," followed by a female who "exploded her device in the nearby Muna Kuwait area," indicating that the two females and one male bomber were "obviously trying to sneak into either the IDP camp or neighboring communities under the cover of darkness" (Incident 74).

In several armed assaults that involved female bombers, the females will support the male fighters during the attack by detonating their explosives to induce panic and chaos while the males shoot at individuals fleeing the scene. The earliest incident of a female perpetrating a suicide bombing during an armed assault with a mixed gender group is in July 2015, almost a year after the first incident of a female suicide bombing affiliated with Boko Haram occurred (Incident 21) and is one of the first that utilizes this tactic. The female bombers played a supportive role in the armed assault, though there were several females who detonated explosives. The bombers "blew themselves up in the midst of fleeing residents in a northeast Nigerian village, continuing a series of attacks that have killed some 200 people in just three days," the residents said of one incident. They added that "large numbers of fighters poured into the village, overpowering the government forces deployed to prevent the insurgents reaching Maiduguri… Then, as people began to flee, female suicide bombers started blowing themselves up." A source indicated that most of the casualties came from the suicide bombings (Incident 21).

In a similar attack involving two female bombers using tactics of disguise to infiltrate the civilian population, the attack occurred in a village on a Saturday night "while the residents were running towards a hill following repeated attacks by Boko Haram… Two women dressed as

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locals blended into the crowd and blew themselves up while a group of men fired at the survivors" (Incident 30). Insurgents engaging in armed assaults also attack soft targets that have high casualty potential, like IDP camps. An IDP camp near Maiduguri (Dalori camp at Kofa village) has been targeted repeatedly by armed assaults from Boko Haram fighters and bombers, often resulting in high casualty counts (At least 85 were killed in attack in January 2017). One incident describes how "residents were shot and their homes burned down while female suicide bombers blew themselves up among the crowds of people fleeing from the violence (Incident 85).

While the majority of female suicide bombers involved in armed assaults are in a supportive role, detonating explosives around fleeing residents while male insurgents shoot at civilians, sporadically shoot around the target area, or raid villages for resources, female bombers are involved in armed assaults in more direct ways, though not as frequently. Female direct perpetrations as part of armed assaults include going back to the scene of the violence that occurred earlier and attacking groups of mourners and utilizing males as a distraction technique so female bombers can attack more effectively. One group, that was part of multiple armed assault attacks on a farming community, "snatched 25 bags of beans before setting ablaze [the] livestock and other valuables." A local hunter stated that "They [the insurgents] came and started shooting and killed four people, while 11 persons were injured." He went on to describe how "a few hours later, a female suicide bomber stormed [the] cemetery, where mourners [were] gather[ed] to bury the victims and blew up" (Incident 69). Another mixed gender group of attackers "were making an attempt to invade Maiduguri but were intercepted at Aladuwari village where they exchanged fire with soldiers… but were effectively repelled." Two female bombers, however, were able to infiltrate the area and successfully detonated their explosives,

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resulting in numerous casualties. A spokesman of the Vigilante Group of Nigeria stated that, "There were two explosions, one coming immediately after the other. Those who saw them said there were two women who began to scream as the bombs were about to go off." Officials stated that it "seemed the Aladuwai attack was to create some kind of detour by the insurgents to enable the two female suicide bombers to invade the city from another flank" (Incident 39).

Most of the female suicide bombers used by Boko Haram were direct perpetrators, often acting either alone or as part of a pair of bombers. Though the most common target for all the bombings is market places and high civilian areas, these targets are most often attacked by pairs of bombers, aged between 13 and 19. Females also engage in suicide attacks with male perpetrators, though they are often still direct perpetrators when the pair or group is only engaging in suicide bombings. The females perpetrate attacks supportive roles in larger assaults. Violence is more commonly utilized when the suicide bombing is part of a larger organized attack or armed assault. There are a few instances, however, where women are involved in larger assaults as a more direct perpetrator, but this is not as common.

Response and Reaction During Failed Infiltrations

As the previous two sections illustrate, female bombers often have successful suicide bombing attacks. Attacks are successful most often when the bomber utilizes deceitful tactics to accomplish the mission and are likely to occur on soft targets or civilians. Female bombers also engage in acts of suicide bombing with male bombers while using other strategies, like violence, though this is not as common, and the female has a greater chance of being in a supportive or peripheral role. Not all attacks are successful, and in some instances, the bomber is caught, intercepted, or is under suspicion from locals or authorities, which alerts others on the need to respond to the situation. When this occurs, the bombers utilize agency in situations where they

are confronted with authority figures or civilians while trying to carry out attacks, commonly reflected when the females do not comply with responses of deterrence or surrender presented by the responders. Instead, many of the female bombers continue to carry out the bombing to the best of their ability. When using gendered tactics, specifically babies, as the strategy of infiltration, the young women detonated their explosives upon a response from formal security operatives, even if given the option to halt and surrender. This runs counter to what might be expected with this population of bombers, given that there is high speculation that many of these women and young girls are kidnapped, forced, or coerced to carry out the attacks, and would likely take the opportunity to surrender if agreeing to go on a suicide mission was actually a strategy of survival and escape from the militant camps.

Responders during suicide attacks

Many attacks do not have a responder/response listed or coded because there is a high percentage of successful suicide bombing attacks in which there was no response by locals or authorities during the attack. Of the bombing attacks where the female was intercepted, caught, or stopped, the most common responders were soldiers and vigilantes (n= 23 of 60 incidents with the responder documented). Given the high rate of violence in the area by Boko Haram, formal authorities and military personnel are stationed in target areas with high attack rates or attack probabilities, like market places, educational institutions, and mosques, but overall, all of the targets of the attacks had a wide mix of responders.

A variety of responders are available in different locations and target areas, demonstrating the implementation of both informal and formal security groups in countering the Boko Haram attacks. Soldiers are better equipped to respond to suicide bombings and can deploy tactics that civilians or informal responders are not able to. In a situation involving four

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attackers, two of which were suicide bombers, soldiers were able to neutralize one female

bomber attempting to attack a military post. The failed female attack "was followed up with

another attempt by terrorists, but was decisively dealt with by troops." The soldiers then

confiscated a large amount of supplies and weapons from the attackers, "including two AK-47,

three magazines, 109 rounds of 7.62mm (Special)… three magazine carriers... and some quantity

of drugs" (Incident 52). In larger attacks, or attacks with multiple bombers, formal authorities

like military soldiers can "intercept and destroy" perpetrators, and coordinate ways to prevent

attacks. One larger, coordinated attack demonstrated capabilities when, "The troops laid ambush

on the terrorists' suspected routes… The suicide bombers were intercepted in three different

locations approaching the city" (Incident 40).

 Most responses by formal authority figures, like soldiers, do not end in compliance by the

bomber. One female bomber, hiding the bombs under her robes, "was approaching the army

quarter guard around the railway area, she was heading towards the military post, they [the

soldiers] kept shouting for her to halt. But she kept advancing. One of the soldiers approached

her perhaps too force her to stop. It was at this point that she blew up herself and one soldier"

(Incident 1). The female bombers are often sighted at a distance when approaching checkpoints

or security posts, allowing authorities time to respond to the person approaching. In another

incident, a female bomber "was challenged from afar by the sentry; she refused to stop, claiming

to be coming from Monguno to see her parents in Dikwa [local towns]. Troops sensing the

direction of the approach was suspicious and abnormal, fired a shot at her and the sentry was

proven right as she was carrying a Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device, PBIED, which

exploded, killing her instantly" (Incident 50).

Informal (local militia groups, joint civilian task forces, vigilante groups) and formal authorities (military, soldiers, police, security agents/personnel) respond to the female bombers in similar ways, with limited amounts of compliance from the bombers. Authorities, however, engage the perpetrators more directly than civilians, and can utilize weapons. In one situation where a woman was targeting a university, a police officer prevented her from carrying out the attack by isolating her "as she was walking towards the gate of the university… because she was behaving strangely, and [was] about to ask a female colleague to frisk the woman when she detonated the bomb" (Incident 2). In another incident where the perpetrator refused to comply, two civilians and a police officer were killed, and 29 civilians wounded, when the police officer attempted to prevent the bombers from entering a town, but was killed while attempting "to carry out a routing check" on the bombers (Incident 27).

Civilians also respond to the female bombers but are less likely to use force or weapons. A witness recounts how a group of locals saw a "girl and became suspicious of her movements and when one of us tried to whisk her away, the bomb went off killing both of them and three others while several others sustained injuries…" (Incident 13). Other suspicious civilians, in a separate incident, "asked her [the bomber] to leave because she had no business there and they were not comfortable with her in view of the spate of suicide attacks by female Boko Haram members" (Incident 20). While the civilians were suspicious in this case and have become more aware of the use of women and girls as a regular tactic of Boko Haram, they still did not resort to violence against or attempt to remove the potential bomber from the area. As the conflict has progressed, however, civilians have become more hands on in their approach to dealing with potential bombing suspects, reflected in cases where "villagers made effort to stop the attackers

who quickly detonated the explosives," or where the bombers "were intercepted by villagers who wanted to search them" (Incident 68, Incident 37).

Some authority figures do not take the time to request compliance or conduct body searches on suspected perpetrators. Several incidents reflect how security agents and personnel shoot bombers on sight if they refuse to comply, even in cases where the bomber(s) are female. In Incident 53, three female bombers were killed by security agents "after they tried to gain entry into Maiduguri... They were promptly gun[ned] down and the IED on two of them exploded killing all three of them" (Incident 53). In a later attack, female bombers were "sighted by the troops in their desperate attempt to gain access to the premises and were shot by the security agents on guard leading to the detonation of their concealed weapons" (Incident 75). This is especially the case if one perpetrator acts ahead of the rest of the group or does something spontaneous or unexpected. For example, four female bombers, aged between nine and 12, were spotted heading towards a checkpoint where a group of soldiers were performing checks. An army spokesman stated that they had planned to intercept the bombers for interrogation, but "One detonated their bomb, all of them were bombers, all women." Another army official noted that the "troops gunned down the other three suicide bombers before they carr[ied] out their nefarious attacks" as well (Incident 36).

Where there is compliance from the suicide bomber, authorities will utilize them to gain knowledge or inform the public of safety and security concerns. One 13-year old suicide bomber was found and arrested in a hospital with a leg wound from a different female perpetrator's explosion. She stated that she had been given to Boko Haram by her father, and that she fled the scene from the bombing and found a taxi driver who took her to the hospital. She had left her suicide vest on the seat in the taxi, which prompted the driver to contact the authorities. Police

presented her to journalists and told her to "recount how Islamist militants allegedly forced her to take part in the attack… Police said they had instructed the girl to tell her story to boost public awareness about [other attacks]" (Incident 10).

Bomber reactions to deterrence or desistance

The bombers had a mix of reactions to the responders/responses, but the majority refused to comply with orders to halt, stop, or surrender (50 out of 59 refused to comply).[90] The highest level of noncompliance came from solo female perpetrators (63% noncompliance), followed by mixed gender groups (60% noncompliance), while pairs of female bombers had the lowest noncompliance rate (40% refused to comply).

Upon refusal to surrender or comply with authorities or vigilante groups, the female bombers either detonated their explosives, or were shot on sight. In one incident, a member of a civilian vigilante group shot and killed a suicide bomber with a poisoned arrow. Residents "shot the poisoned arrow at the woman after she failed to stop as demanded" (Incident 47). Another young bomber was "asked to stop by soldiers. But she ignored them. They threatened to shoot her if she didn't stop. She obeyed and she was asked to lift her hijab. She did and explosives were found to be strapped on her. Suddenly she pulled on the trigger and exploded" (Incident 64). The young bomber had the opportunity to surrender, but instead detonated her explosives after she was able to get the authorities in a closer proximity than they were before, resulting in higher damages. Another incident where the bomber had the opportunity to surrender, an official commented that "Our men spotted them [the bombers] around Tsamiya area trying to enter the

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[90] It should be noted that there are several incidents for each category that did not have adequate data to discern whether there was compliance to authorities or not, and a number of incidents where the number of perpetrators was available, but there was no response because it was a successful attack, which may skew the overall percentages.

town but when they were shouted at to stop with guns pointing at them, one of them decided to detonate and they both died" (Incident 86).

Some of the female bombers who do not comply to orders to desist continue to attempt to infiltrate further into the target area. The female bombers of one attack reacted to soldiers' responses in an act of noncompliance. The Major-General of Operation Lafiya Dole stated that the soldiers "intercepted the bombers but three of them resisted and tried to ram into our troops. And, of course, we had no choice but to open fire on them" (Incident 61). Another situation accounts similar actions by a female bomber who tried to attack a mosque that was guarded by joint task force (JTF) militia forces during prayers. The police commissioner said that, "unknown to them [the JTF], the girl was being pursued from another part of town by residents who were suspicious of her movement at the time. When she approached the mosque, they demanded that she stop to be searched but she suddenly bolted into the mosque and set off her bombs" (Incident 90).

When the bombers did comply, it was only to formal or informal authority figures, and never to civilians. The highest level of compliance came from groups of female bombers. All perpetrator categories had some form of compliance to informal or formal authority figures, though compliance was more common with informal authorities (vigilantes). Vigilantes stopped and arrested one woman "who had refused to detonate a bomb after travelling to the [IDP] camp from a nearby town with two other bombers" (Incident 42). A local militia group stopped a young female at a roadblock "who was hiding explosives beneath her veil." The members of the group described when they searched her, "she reluctantly lifted her hijab to reveal explosives strapped to her abdomen." The bomber in this case, complied with search requests and did not detonate once revealing the explosives hidden on her body, counter to what other female

bombers have done in similar situations (Incident 9). Additionally, three female bombers were

intercepted before reaching their targets near a village in northern Cameroon. One of the females

told officials that she was one of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls who were captured several

years prior (2014). The claims, however, were unsubstantiated and the girls were turned over to

Cameroon soldiers for further investigation (Incident 45), leaving speculations about her true

intentions and her claims of victimhood in the face of consequences. Given situational

information regarding cases of compliance, however, many of these bombers would most likely

have carried out the attack if not intercepted and arrested, suggesting a form of survival strategy

over death compared to most of the other female bombers.

The females who used violence as a tactic of infiltration were the most likely to detonate

their explosives, even if intercepted or given orders to desist from actions (66%), while only 47%

of bombers using cunning tactics of infiltration continued to detonate their explosives. Female

bombers using gender as a strategy of infiltration generally detonate upon a response from

formal security operatives. Of the bombers who utilized gender, 11 incidents were intercepted by

civilians or authorities, six detonated explosives at the scene, four were shot, and one

surrendered (55% rate of detonation at scene). In the four incidents where the perpetrator utilized

an infant (either real, fake, or pregnant at the time of attack), all four refused to comply with the

responders. In two of the incidents, the perpetrators detonated their explosives on the scene. One

female, who was intercepted by villagers and refused to be searched, "blew herself up… while

she had a baby strapped to her back in northern Cameroon… At least one individual was killed

in the incident along with the baby" (Incident 37). A female who was pretending to be carrying a

baby on her back detonated her explosives in a coordinated dual attack with another bomber,

making it "difficult to rescue people as the entire place [had] been cordoned off by the military" (Incident 7).

Even if the women are not stopped by authorities because they are carrying children, they still detonate their explosives. In one case, two women, in a group of four female bombers, were mistaken for civilians because they were carrying babies and allowed through a checkpoint while the other two women without babies were stopped. They promptly detonated their devices, "killing themselves, two babies, and four others. They had passed a vigilante checkpoint" (Incident 63). Even if the women are not stopped because of gendered perceptions of motherhood and children, they still complete the mission and detonate their explosives with child in tow. In all, there was only one incident where a female bomber using gender as a tactic complied with responders, but incidents where the female bomber surrendered while using other tactics was also rare.

While it might be expected that a female bomber that was kidnapped or coerced into a suicide mission would take an opportunity to surrender, the actions of the young women and girls demonstrates otherwise. Most of the bombers who were intercepted continued to engage with those who tried to stop or deter them from detonating their explosives or succeeding in the attack. A fully compliant surrender from the female bombers was a rare instance. When the female was not directly shot/neutralized for not complying with responders calls and deterring actions, she would still attempt to charge through checkpoints, flee, evade being caught, or detonate the explosive elsewhere. Though the data does not provide detailed information regarding the camp life of the young female bombers, sources indicate that high levels of kidnapping occur, and hours of indoctrination and schooling transpires for the girls in the militant camps by Boko Haram leaders. With the promise of going to paradise or seeing a parent

again after witnessing trauma or extreme acts of violence, along with the malleable age of most of the bombers, the females who refuse to surrender may choose to continue on the mission for a personally motivated reason, with the impression that the act of the suicide mission will propel them to these greater goals. Other bombers may not feel coerced and are invested in the group cause and mission, which motivates them to attempt to carry out the attack until they are no longer able.

Female bombers accomplished suicide missions in a multitude of ways, demonstrating a wide range of strategic and tactical decisions and actions. While gender is the underlying tactic of infiltration and deceit for the bombers, the increase in the frequency and time of utilizing females as bombing operatives reduced the overall novelty of the tactic. The young women and girls often used other tactics of infiltration that are traditionally used by women to accomplish criminal or violent objectives. The deceitful means that were deployed reflect the indirect ways in which women perform traditionally masculine actions, like violence, and perform in gendered ways to accomplish their goals. Those who utilized gender and cunning tactics were mostly successful in infiltrating targets. The targets were generally of a gendered nature as well, and most of the female bombers kept with soft targets, given the easier accessibility, limited defense, and lower likelihood of a direct counter attack.

The bombers mostly perpetrated attacks either alone or with other females, which is not entirely surprising if the group is using the women as capable bodies, for shock effect, and to incite fear. For the female bomber, she was able to be the direct perpetrator of a mission and utilize quick decision-making if the infiltration tactic failed or she was intercepted. When the female bombers did perpetrate attacks with males, they were peripheral contributors to an overall larger attack. Even in these incidents, the females maintained a level of agency while in a

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supportive position, and it was demonstrated that some of the female bombers made quick, stealthy tactical decisions, to cause more damages or target specific individuals. In all incidents of female bombings, the women and girls perpetrating the attacks made decisions and chose actions that would most effectively accomplish the suicide attack.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

The issue of female violence has been an understudied area of inquiry in the

criminological literature. While this may be primarily because of the gender gap between male

and female violence, and criminal behavior in general, it could also be due to the perceptually

oxymoron nature of the phrase *female violence*. Scholarly pursuits often either assume that

female behavior falls under the same cause, motivation, and outcomes as male behavior, and thus

do not control for gender, assume that females do not need separate theoretical explanations, or

that females who engage in serious or violent criminal behavior is so rare compared to

comparable male behavior that it is almost an unnecessary area to pursue (Mullins & Miller,

2006). The interwoven relations between gender and social control mechanisms, however, is

exactly the reason why female violence and crime as an area of study needs to be developed as

equally as male criminal behavior. Dominant positions in society need something or someone to

be domiantn over, which, in patriarchal cultures, is often gendered. Women take on a subordinate

position while males maintain the dominant status. Culture shapes the hierarchy, however, and in

places like Sub-Saharan Africa polygynous relations are common. Women navigate this

patriarchal system differently than traditional patriarchal societies, like parts of the Middle East

and North Africa. Thus, involvement in violence may be a woman's way to navigate a situation

of armed conflict within the constrictions of a specific patriarchal system. In the case of Nigeria,

Boko Haram seems to have capitalized on these constraints.

Other scholars often cite the blurred boundaries of women's involvement in criminal

behavior, where there has either been a prior victimization experience or trauma, or the woman is

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in a subordinate position in a toxic relationship and has a situationally motivated act of violence (Anderson, 1986; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2004; Ferarro, 2006; Gilfus, 1992; Kruttschnitt et al., 2002; Maher, 1997), as the primary driving force behind female violence involvement. To say that this is the only kind of female violence, is lacking, however, as it promotes the emotional narrative that is placed on women's behavior and lacks the instrumental and agentic functions that violence can play for women as well as men. One of the goals of this study was to examine the instrumental and agentic functions of a specific form of female violence within the framework of a gendered narrative: suicide bombings. Though direct gender comparisons cannot be specifically made, the women and girls in the current study reflect the use of strategy and tactics that are effective and successful to accomplish a suicide bombing, while also demonstrating the constant underlying use of gender and perceptions of gender and gender roles during the enactment of the bombing mission.

The study examined female suicide bombers with a feminist criminological lens. This perspective is different from traditional theories of crime and deviance because it includes the theoretical foundation of gender and the concept that what is gender appropriate and what is gender appropriate for others. Therefore, to further the analysis on female suicide bombers, Daly's (1998) conceptual schema for examining gender and crime was incorporated and the study focused on the gendered crime aspects of female suicide bombing, and examined the specific contexts and qualities of offending and how the various aspects of offending are socially organized.

To examine whether the female bombers of Boko Haram carry out suicide attacks using gender or perceptions of gender, perform roles in the attacks in similar ways to other crimes, and if the bombers are perceived or treated in a gendered way prior to and during the commission of

the bombing, a complementary dataset was created from the open-sourced citations in the Global

Terrorism Database. While these sources provide limited information regarding the bomber's

motivation for the attack or pathways to the violent behavior, it does provide key insights as to

how the acts were accomplished and the behavior of the bomber during the attack. The findings

indicate that female bombers most commonly use and are successful using deceitful infiltration

tactics, such as cunning and gender, on soft targets, like marketplaces, IDP camps, and public

areas, and less successful on government and military targets. Occasionally, some female

bombers use violence and vehicles to infiltrate targets, but this is often with male perpetrators

and is not as common. Most incidents involved either a solo female perpetrator or a pair of

female perpetrators. Groups of female perpetrators were also common. Young women and girls

also perpetrated attacks with a male accomplice, but when males were involved in missions with

females, it was commonly in larger groups like armed assaults and coordinated attacks. In attacks

where the bomber failed to successfully infiltrate the desired target and were intercepted or

stopped by civilians or authorities, most of the bombers refused to surrender. If the female

bomber was intercepted and refused to comply with demands, most still managed to detonate

their explosives. Overall, the female bombers of Boko Haram reflected similarities to women's

involvement in other forms of violence and crime, but there were distinct nuances as well, which

could be a sign of the evolving tactics and learned behavior of the group combined with the

culture and structure of the region.

The Gender Gap and Female Bombers of Boko Haram

What is most discernable about the current research is the underlying use of gender and

perceptions of females and female stereotypes to accomplish suicide bombings. In the early

stages of female suicide bombing attacks that were affiliated with Boko Haram, simply being a

female who was wearing a suicide vest or belt was enough to bypass security or infiltrate civilian areas unsuspectingly because of the social perceptions and stereotypes of women and young girls and the behaviors that they should or should not be engaging in (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Females in general are perceived as nonviolent individuals who are incapable of committing serious criminal acts (Heimer & DeCoster, 1999; Lorber, 1994), and many Muslim women are raised to embody purity and "emulate the actions, behaviors, and practices of the pure Muslim women" from history (Qazi, 2012). The gendered element of the suicide mission is therefore an ever-present and constant factor in the accomplishment of the bombings by breaking the traditional domestic female role, while simultaneously symbolically utilizing the pure female image to deceive and violate the social order. Though Boko Haram was not the first group or organization to utilize women or girls as suicide bombers, it has surpassed every other group in terms of frequency and number of females as suicide operatives. Some estimates even place the number of females as more than half of all Boko Haram affiliated bombers, outnumbering male bombers for the first time in terrorist group history, (Bloom & Matfess, 2016, Warner & Matfess, 2017).

Warner and Matfess (2017) created their own database of Boko Haram events from online newspaper stories that spanned from 2011 to 2017 and consisted of 238 instances of suicide bombings (with a total of 434 successful or attempted bombers).[91] The study states that of the 434 total number of suicide bombers, 244 are documented as female, which is 56% of the total bombers and 72.2% of bombers that have a gender specified. While the number of female

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[91] The data included key words such as "Nigeria or Boko Haram" and "suicide bomb or bomber." The data was coded and consisted on 24 dimensions for each attack. The information gathered included the date and location of the bombing, target, number of bombers, gender, approximate age, nature of targets (religious or secular), nature and amount of destruction (casualties and property damage), and cases where a detonation did not occur. While most of this data is located in the GTD, this study did incorporate several aspects that are not in the GTD but were accounted for in the complementary dataset constructed for the current study from the GTD citations.

bombers that Warner and Matfess cite is close to the total number found and coded in the GTD (151 incidents for Boko Haram affiliated female attacks with 233 perpetrators documented and three cases with an unknown numbers of perpetrators), there were 308 coded incidents with male perpetrators between 2014 and 2017, the same years as the active female bombers. From the 308 incidents, there were 467 male bombers, with 38 incidents with unknown numbers of perpetrators. The combined number of suicide bombers from Boko Haram between 2014 and 2017 is 700 suicide bombers, of which about 33% are female. This number does not reflect the other three years of active male suicide bombings. Though the GTD documents more male bombers than Warner & Matfess (2017) and reflects a lower overall number of female bombers in the group, there is still no doubt that Boko Haram has more female bombers than any other group, and the difference is significant. This finding calls the gender gap argument into question with this type of violence.

Gender & Macro level structures: Culture and Patriarchy

There are several possible reasons for the high number of women and the increased use of females by Boko Haram in operative suicide roles. Given the elevated rates of kidnappings occurring across the country in general and by the group itself, it could be assumed that many girls and young women are being kidnapped/abducted and brought to the militant camps to work as camp or sex slaves, perform domestic duties, tend to other children, marry fighters, and produce children (Guilbert, 2016; Nwaubani, 2017; Oduah, 2016; Searce, 2017. The reports and interviews conducted with some girls who have escaped the camps demonstrate that girls who are unwilling to marry a fighter or are more prone to reject sexual advances are likely to become suicide bombers as there is limited use for them in the camp. There could also be elevated rates of female usage due to the patriarchal structure in Sub-Saharan Africa, where there are high rates

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of militarization and hyper-masculinity, low rates of gender equality, and polygynous relationships. These cultural factors could reduce the value placed on women and girls, making them better candidates for the role of suicide bombers for the group.

The patriarchal structure in Nigeria and Boko Haram has a dual nature that maintains a dominant position over women while also promoting female tenacity. Within the Nigerian social order, males dominate the main structural institutions of politics, economics, and military, and women have traditional domestic roles as mothers and housewives, while also being wage-earners (Padarath in Turshen, 1998). The gender responsibilities assigned to women in Sub-Saharan Africa keeps women in subordinate positions by having to provide for dependent children, often being the primary caregiver and resource provider, as relations in this area are oftentimes polygynous. The lack of access to resources and opportunities for women maintains the female reliance on males as the breadwinner for the family unit, who may be providing for several wives and dependent children. The polygynous aspects of the union reduce the amount of overall resources and benefits the woman can receive from her husband, which increases the need for individual wage-earning as well. Boko Haram profited from these structural issues and encouraged men and women alike to join the group. The group promoted marriage, financial independence, status, and education, opportunities many young women would normally never receive. The caveat to these opportunities was the strict Islamic practices that the group supported and encouraged, especially to the female members, who were to wear traditional Muslim clothing that promoted modesty, piety, and religious dedication (the *hijab*). Women perceived the benefits of the group as outweighing the costs and were willing, and even supported, the strict guidelines that had to be followed for the sake of security, stability, economic resources, and status. Boko Haram was able to capitalize on the social issues in the

region and offer young women opportunities outside of the traditional patriarchal structures they did not see a way out of, increasing overall recruitment to the group, and increasing the number of possible suicide bombers.

To accomplish suicide bombings, female bombers must navigate these gendered environments they are interacting in, including the female social position in the Nigerian region, along with perceptions of acceptable female behaviors given these situations and constraints. The appearance and perception of modesty of women can be utilized to look unsuspecting, pious, or innocent. Female bombers can capitalize on these perceptions using gendered tactics along with engaging in typical female behaviors, shopping at the market, using rickshaws, waiting for resources at distribution areas with other women. Using gender as a tactic of infiltration was an effective and successful tactic but it was not as prominent, and the females did not rely on gendered actions to bypass checkpoints or infiltrate targets as frequently as was expected. Though this could be a matter of reporting and part of the issue of using open-sourced data and media sources, it also could be that using gender has been overplayed in prior groups, and given the awareness of it from other conflicts plus the high numbers of females utilized by Boko Haram, civilians and authorities who are also experiencing the group's violent campaign have become sensitized to a *female* bomber. The shock factor that only utilizing a female used to garner is no longer as effective or useful over time, and consequently, this could have resulted in the group turning to escalating tactics.

Given this cultural framework and the opportunities and constraints offered to women in the Nigerian area, it is not surprising that bombers utilize female qualities and underlying assumptions about female behavior to perform attacks. Boko Haram's female bombers utilize tactics of infiltration that are consistent with other literature on women in crime and terrorism

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demonstrating that females rely more on stealth, cunning, and sneakiness and not direct violence to accomplish criminal actions or missions (Goldblatt & Meinties in Turshen 1998; Maher & Curtis, 1992; Maher, 1997; Miller, 1998A, 1998B; Mullins & Wright, 2003; Steffensmeier, 1983; Turshen, 1998; White, 2007). Like women in other armed conflicts, including other terrorist activities and insurgencies (Bloom, 2011; Davis, 2017; Pape, 2003; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Turshen, 1998; Zedalis, 2004), females provide a tactical advantage for the group by successfully infiltrating targets and target areas. Most of the time, the female bombers relied on deceitful types of tactics like cunning types of behavior and gendered actions. Females are already less likely to be suspected of violence because of perceptions of femininity (Acker, 1990; Cragin & Daly, 2009; Dalton & Asal, 2011; Hothschild, 1973; Naaman, 2007; West & Zimmerman, 1987), but the bombers still utilize additional gendered tactics to accomplish an attack effectively and have a higher success rate and chance of completing the mission.

Female Violence and Crime Perpetration

Similar to other forms of violence and crime, females perform suicide attacks in ways that are similar to other acts perpetrated by women. The targets and methods that females select to accomplish bombings are consistent with the methods and selection logic used in other contexts, with numerous similarities reflected between bombing perpetration and armed robbery. Miller (1998A) describes the selection of victims for robberies and found that female robbers will choose targets and the make decisions on the enactment of the robbery based on gendered factors. If a female robber was targeting another female, it was done without the use of a weapon, possibly with other women, and generally in a less violent way. Women also relied on gender perceptions to accomplish robberies. If the woman wanted to rob a male victim, she might attempt to display more masculine qualities, would use a weapon like a gun, and would

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hide feminine qualities. By doing so, the male victim would feel more threatened than if a female was robbing him, in which case the victim may be more inclined to fight back because females are viewed as weaker and nonviolent. When performing robberies with males, the female robbers often lured male victims to places where male accomplices could effectively rob the male victim, placing the female in a supportive role. Female robbers are very strategic in who they target, why that target was selected, and how it is performed given perceptions of gender and gendered roles within a group. Similarly, female bombers select targets that are monitored less by security or soldiers, and most commonly attack soft targets, or places and people that lack security, guardianship, or are perceived as having an easier accessibility or less chance of defense or counterattack. The women and young girls commonly target markets and places where there are high civilian populations (IDP camps) either as solo operatives or with another female bomber (pair). From the viewpoint of the group, having females attack soft targets is beneficial because there is a higher chance of success given the reduced security or target hardening measures, and there is a greater chance of a high casualty count since most soft targets are high civilian areas. Not only does this accomplish the terrorist goal of using violence for the larger purpose of the group's desire to establish an Islamic caliphate in the region, it also is an act of intimidation demonstrating that civilians and refugees are not safe during the violent insurgency.

Role of Bomber During Perpetration

While the patriarchal structure of the group maintains a male leadership and hierarchy, females can be in direct perpetrator roles during the suicide bombing attack, and are direct perpetrators, more often than in supporting roles, which is a distinctive feature compared to women's involvement in other forms of crime. Of the women who carried out a suicide attack, the majority were the direct perpetrators, which is counter to women in traditional criminal

groups and networks (MacKenzie, 2009; Maher, 1997; Miller, 1998A; Steffensmeier, 1983; White, 2007). Mullins and Wright (2003) stated that gender affects a person's ability to join a group and their function and role within that group. While this is still the case for the females of Boko Haram, with reports that many of the young women are victims of kidnappings and abductions, once the female is on the mission, she is most likely going to be carrying out the attack in a very direct and coordinated way. The group may have found that placing the females in these roles is more beneficial to the group because the females act as force multipliers, adding to the number of capable bodies able to perpetrate these attacks.

Female only bomber groups, consisting of very young bombers, were commonly brought to the target via vehicle with a male accompaniment to go on missions. Though more data is needed to flesh this point out further, it cannot be assumed that all female suicide missions where there is a solo, pair, or group of females who are direct perpetrators of the attack did so completely on their own volition. If the females are coerced into carrying out the attack and forced into a vehicle with a suicide vest, some scholars debate whether this could technically be considered a suicide mission (Bloom, 2011; Bloom & Matfess, 2016). This issue gets muddled, and the notion of blurred boundaries becomes apparent. In the context of Boko Haram, Bloom and Matfess (2016) also question whether the female bombers can be considered true *suicide bombers* if the women and girls are forced or coerced into committing the act. Other reports note, however, that many of the bombers are willingly participating in the mission (International Crisis Report, 2016). Though this report does state that the young child bombers are victims of circumstance themselves and can be drugged or tricked into participation, they do not comprise the majority of the female bombers. Further, the question of framing and defining becomes an issue. Definitions of coercion are debatable and subjective depending on the context and women

may frame their experience in a certain way (victim, coerced) depending on who she is talking to and the perceived benefits or consequences of the portrayal (Utas, 2005). The reaction from the bombers in this study, however, demonstrate that the young women will go to great lengths to accomplish the bombing, even if they are discovered and intercepted, or are not able to reach their intended destination or target. The drive of the bombers behavior to reach detonation could be a reflection of their desire to not be arrested or taken into custody, a full commitment to group and mission, or the belief that upon detonation they will go to paradise.

Women are often in supportive or peripheral roles during the commission of a crime when there are also male perpetrators involved. Boko Haram's attacks follow this tradition as well when there are male and female perpetrators committing an act of violence. While being a suicide bomber demonstrates a females ability to act with agency and directly participate in a mission and with the group, a chance not often received, the female bombers are also useful in coordinated attacks and larger armed assaults where they still display a level of conscious decision making, but their role is not the main focus of the attack in many instances. The female bombers are more similar to females in street robbing networks who perform robberies with male individuals and gang related behaviors than other forms of criminal behavior or violence (Miller, 1998A; Miller, 1998B; Miller 2002). Though the female bombers have a more direct role in the violence than many women in criminal and violent organizations and networks, who often perform roles like driving a get-away vehicle, being a lookout, or luring male victims closer to male perpetrators (Maher, 1997; Mulline & Wright, 2003; Steffensmeier, 1983), or tending to wounded male fighters (Qazi, 2012), the Boko Haram bombers still act in a supportive way in most of the larger attacks. Female bombers act as distractions for male bombers or fighters, or participate in coordinated efforts, where the female bomber(s) detonates the explosive at a target

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location with a high civilian rate causing panic and fear, which then gives male militants the opportunity to shoot people fleeing from the scene to inflict more damages. In some instances, however, the female bomber takes advantage of the chaos of the violence during an armed assault and might fake being a victim of Boko Haram to infiltrate a target, a tactic that would probably not be as effective for a male. The female bombers are also able to go back to prior locations and attack grieving people from the armed assaults that recently occurred, contributing to the number of casualties and stowing more fear in the public, possibly as a result of the gendered way in which the females are perceived by the locals. Especially with armed assaults, that have a majority of male perpetrators, the locals would be less likely to assume that there were high levels of female involvement and would not be as wary about females in the area the next day.

Female Perpetration and Instrumental theory

For the female bomber, infiltrating and attacking soft targets provides greater opportunity for success and the completion of the mission. The bombers are less likely to be intercepted since there is less security or soldiers, and civilians are less likely to be carrying weapons or other defensive tools. Many of the successful bombing missions target market areas, town centers, or IDP camps where there are groups of students, shoppers, children, and women which are easier targets than men and soldiers. Female bombers also select traditionally female targets, or places where women customarily gather or go to for work or to purchase household or domestic products, which is similar to female robbers targeting other women for the perceived ease with which the robbery will be accomplished as compared to robbing a man (Miller, 1998A). Soft targets could thus be gendered as more feminine, and hard targets could be deemed more masculine. While male suicide bombers from Boko Haram frequently target markets and soft

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targets as well, the male bombers more often attack hard targets compared to females, like government and military personnel and prisons. These targets will generally have significantly more security and guardianship than civilian areas, making them less appealing for female bombers who are not as likely to engage in violence to infiltrate target areas.

Women, Violence, and Boko Haram

In Boko Haram, women often engage in violent actions compared to other groups and other types of crime and violence. Prior increases in female criminal activity was primarily only seen in traditionally female crimes, like sex crimes and economically motivated crimes. Violent crimes are described as "masculine" and women's involvement in this behavioral area has remained relatively stable over time (Chesney-Lind, 1986; Heimer & DeCoster, 1999). When women do engage in violence, it is generally described as an emotional response to trauma or victimization. Former female Boko Haram members openly describe kidnappings, coercion, and victimization, but they also demonstrate that young women viewed Boko Haram as a better opportunity than their current conditions. Some of the women who became bombers did so out of coercion, but many were also willing participants as well and may feel empowered by the action, which could be seen in the reactions to the responders when a bomber is intercepted. Coercion was also cited as mostly affecting the youngest bombers, those who would fall in the 12 and under age category, who are the victims of violence and conflict themselves. The International Crisis Report (2016) also states that the older bombers are generally willing participants for various individual and person motivations. The largest group of bombers in the sample was between 13 and 19 years old, with several instances of bombers in their later years up to 40s. Following this logic, most of the bombers would therefore likely be willing actors in the suicide bombing attack, while the smaller group of child bombers are most likely coerced or *duped* into

the action. The closing of the gender gap could therefore be a mix between utilizing both coerced and voluntary suicide bombers, and the reasoning for women wanting to join the group in the first place. The cultural and social elements of masculinity, patriarchy, inequality, and resource deprivation combined with the structural issues of reduced opportunity may have invigorated women to join the group seeking better alternatives and made choices based on what they perceived to be the best option for themselves and potentially children. Young women may have felt emboldened in newfound positions or sought to avenge the death of a loved one who was killed by the corrupt system that was now the enemy. While emotion may play a role in the act of a suicide bombing, it is certainly not the only motivating force. The young female bombers may be more prone and willing to enact suicide missions because the perceived benefit and outcome is worth dying for.

By utilizing young women and girls, the group has a regular supply of able bodies that can be used in an operational capacity without sacrificing male fighters, leaders, or resources for increased rates and level of training (Zedalis, 2004), demonstrated with most of these women not being in operational roles outside of suicide bombers. These perceptions of females and the female roles in the group (operational, camp/domestic, other/wife) resemble the methods and roles other violent groups have utilized in various conflicts throughout Africa regarding violence and gender (Turshen, 1998; Utas, 2005; White, 2007). Many African conflicts stem from social issues, where the government is politically weak, and power is further established through increasing militarization measures. According to Turshen (1998), militarization means that "current and former military men displace civil authorities; soldiers replace religious figures, health workers and teachers as the leaders," which is described as disenfranchising, and politically and economically debilitating (p.7). The use of terror as a tactic becomes more

commonplace by the state and insurgent forces and civilians are more frequently targeted. For

women, the dirty war tactics encourage victimization, rape, and kidnapping, turning into daily

fears (Antonio De Abreu in Turshen, 1998). While the Nigerian government targeted the capture

of Boko Haram wives and followers for strategic purposes (and instigated the use of this tactic),

Boko Haram countered with large scale and continuous kidnappings of young women and girls.

Though being abducted or kidnapped itself is a form of victimization, it is unknown how many

of these women eventually assimilated to the Boko Haram group (coercion fading into willing

participation because of perceived and actual benefits of being a group member). After extended

time, the victimization experiences that some of the girls experienced in the militant camps may

be perceived more as *friendly* victimization, where the victim knows the perpetrator and where

the victimization is coming from, so would choose to have this experience over an unknown

victimization (Miller, 1998B). At this point, only speculations can be made, but given the nature

of the conflict compared to other African conflicts, Boko Haram may be encouraging (knowing

and unknowingly) female empowerment within the confines of masculine militarized behaviors.

Terrorist Goals and Rape

By using a female to accomplish these macro-level goals, fear is likely to be a product of

the violent action as well, symbolizing the conquering of the minds and bodies of the local young

women and girls to the point where they will attack their own land and people for the sake of the

group and the religious goals the group espouses (Dilorio, 1992; Utas, 2005; Ericsson, 2010;

Zuckerhut, 2011). The male-dominated violent conflicts often utilize rape and sexual violence to

control the individual woman, as well as the population, while also promoting group goals and

cohesion (Bloom & Matfess, 2016; MacKenzie, 2009; Shalhoub, 2011; White, 2007). The

targeting of women becomes more than an act of power and dominance in an individualized

context and seeps into the structure of the population's psyche by encouraging the growth of fear and subordination from the inside. Sexual violence is already a gendered form of violence and victimization. For women, it is perceived as an ultimate violation and all other victimization experiences are framed in the context of *fear of rape.* If women, who represent the pure image of society and motherhood, are dominated and placed in a *shameful,* subordinate, or impure image, then the men feel subjected to this subordination as well because they did not stop it from transpiring. However, the blame is also placed on the women for not maintaining a pure image, thus the shame and humiliation and social rejection that stems from this behavior is carried onto the women because of the patriarchal social mentality. Women are perceived and collected as war booty and prizes not only for the benefits of the group, but because they will be outcasted by their own communities for tarnishing an idealist female image, creating a culture of sexual violence for the sake of power. Boko Haram not only capitalized on this strategy, targeting young women and girls in large-scale kidnappings, but also integrated many of them into their group through social opportunities the regular communities lacked, increasing allegiance to the group and enabling the female bombers to attack areas and people close to where they were from.

Agency & Coercion

The females demonstrated a wide use of agency during the decision-making process to detonate even after being stopped/intercepted by authorities. It would be expected that more of these women would not follow through with the bombing if they felt coerced into the behavior, but kidnapped and coerced or not, most of the female bombers continued the bombing mission until they were neutralized. Though female suicide bombers might have been perceived or treated in a gendered way prior to the suicide bomb detonation, two developments occurred that

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began reducing the overall impact of gender during the commission of a suicide attack: more females were carrying out attacks, thus the novelty of such an attack was reduced and civilians and authorities were on higher alert of such a tactic and suspicious of females overall (reflected by security official statements in the data); and, the female bombers, even given the opportunity to surrender or desist from the act, mostly continued to carry out the attack to some degree, and consequently were met with much harsher responses from authority figures (shot on sight/neutralized). To flesh out the gendered differences between responses and reactions between authority figures and civilians and suicide bombers, a comparison to a male sample (to compare the number of males the responders told to halt, stop, arrest, desist) to females and their responses to assess gender similarities and differences is necessary. Given the literature on femininity and perceptions of females, however, the reactions from the females was not consistent to what might be expected. In other violent conflicts, even if females were involved with the armed conflict or violence, depending on who they were speaking to, the framing of their involvement varied depending on what the potential outcome might be. Many claimed victimhood to obtain aid and resources after the violence because they would not have received as much help if they were not victims or suggested that they were involved in the violence (Utas, 2005). It was expected that more young women and girls, given the opportunity, would take advantage of being able to surrender and claim some form of victim status, especially with the high number of kidnapped girls and research asserting most of the Boko Haram bombers are coerced. Only one bomber in the study attempted to claim that she was a victim when intercepted and arrested by the authorities. She attempted to fake that she was one of the missing Chibok school girls (who have not been seen as bombers and are most likely being kept for hostage negotiations given the high value they hold for the group), but her claims were found to be

fraudulent and she was taken into custody for further questioning. Overall, females were not responded to in gendered way and did not react to formal responses in the hypothesized feminine way. Many did not comply with requests to halt and detonated their bombs anyway, counter to what would be expected.

A different way to look at the issue of agency and coercion, however, is the empowerment that some young women might feel during the commission of such an act. The patriarchal systems hold women in subordinate positions with limited opportunities to rise in the social hierarchy or have control or authority over their actions or others (Kandiyoti, 1988). With issues of kidnapping and sexual victimization, being forcibly removed from the home and then stigmatized to the point of no return, the female bombers may be acting out of the feeling of freedom, power, and control over their own lives and the lives of others. Whether or not this signifies that the females were committed actors to the cause is questionable as individual motivation is not specifically known from the data. Speculation of the motivations behind these young women's actions consist of fear for the lives of family members still held at the camps, threats from the group to be buried alive, or they had been raped by fighters numerous times and did not want to live with the stigma and shame that still dominates rape culture in the sub-Saharan Africa region. There are those who believed in the cause, however, or believed that they would go to paradise, like many were taught during time in the camps. Others still, may have felt like it was the only chance they would have to being in complete control over an action in their life and so they made the choice to follow through till the end for the sake of their own feelings of accomplishment after living in a society that treated them with inequality. The blurred boundaries approach does offer some merit to explain the actions and behaviors of the female suicide bombers of Boko Haram. Women may have been the victims of kidnapping or abduction

and sexual victimization within the group. After extended time, some of the girls may have been willing to carry out a mission while others were forced or coerced. There are still the women who willingly joined the group for better opportunities given the constraints found in traditional society. Though the blurred boundaries narrative does fit some women's experiences, it is not the only explanation for female bomber behavior. The cultural landscape, the way women are perceived, and the gendered structures and constraints that the females find themselves in are of great importance as well and demonstrate that even if the females have experienced trauma and victimization, they still maintain agency throughout the accomplishment of the attack.

The common perception that females are nonviolent, caregivers, or passive in their actions and choices is called into question by the women who engage in these acts; however, it is also widely noted that many women engage in violent or criminal behavior because of prior trauma or victimization. While victimization experiences are not fully fleshed out in the data, speculation from narratives of the few women and young girls who have surrendered or were intercepted and arrested, along with interviews from journalists, makes it difficult not to assume that at least some of the female suicide bombers experienced traumatic and victimizing experiences while in the Boko Haram camps, ranging from sexual, emotional, psychological, and physical victimization experiences. Many of the women in the camps were also abducted or kidnapped, but there was still a following of young women who joined the group voluntarily. The narratives and interviews from many of the women who did not become suicide bombers reflect that they agreed to marry fighters, not the ones who refused to be married, lending some support to the notion that some of the bombers were sexually and/or physically victimized, were quite young, and were easily influenced, convinced, or coerced to engage in a violent suicide attack. Coercion, however, can turn into personal motivation, where the young female might be

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indoctrinated in the camp, but that re-education forms a new narrative of goals and missions that promote the acts of suicide bombing in order to accomplish these new personal objectives (go to paradise, see parent/family again). The shame culture in Sub-Saharan Africa surrounding rape and the sexual stigmatization of the victimization may also contribute to a woman's desire to fulfill the suicide mission. It could be an absolute way for her to redeem her honor from a sexual victimization experience and feel in control of her body and destiny. If a woman experienced sexual victimization while in the militant camps, her family and community will reject and stigmatize her, leaving her with few options outside of assimilating into the group. The culture and patriarchal framework surrounding the female body and image make it difficult for many women to move forward, especially if they have dependent children with Boko Haram fighters. As established in other violent African conflicts, however, women are tenacious and tactful and navigate the gendered system of constraints to produce the best possible outcome for themselves and their families. While female violence and behavior is often framed as emotional, women in these conflicts, including the female bombers in Boko Haram, demonstrate great instrumental capacity in their actions and utilize their gender and gendered perceptions in a strategic and rational manner to accomplish goals and missions.

Research on other terrorist group's female involvement in suicide bombings incorporates coercive aspects, and Bloom (2011) even suggests one of the main driving motivational factors is the coercive effects of rape. Further, much literature suggests that the Chechen Black Widows are coerced into the suicide acts because of shame, rape, and a need for revenge (due to loss innocence through sexual assault and rape, and death of husbands) (Bloom, 2011; Davis, 2017; Holt, 2003; Hopgood, 2005; Kruglanski et al., 2009). Calling females from one group suicide bombers but not the other because of coercion or force would be counterproductive to the

literature and does not incorporate underlying gendered (and possibly cultural and racial) constructs and actions. Suggesting that the women and girls of Boko Haram are solely coerced into the act of suicide bombing through kidnapping and sexual assault removes their agency from the entire attack they ultimately carry out, which runs counter to the behaviors of these women found in the current study. Unfortunately, the data does not allow a conclusion on this, but mere speculation, and even that is subjective with such an issue as debatable as gender.

Theoretical takeaway

The female bombers of Boko Haram present a unique case to women's involvement in terrorism and suicide bombing. On the one hand, there is the high rates of females participating in bombings compared to other terrorist organizations, which calls into question the usual gender gap differences between male and female offending in serious and violent acts. Though there are differing numbers, all scholars studying this phenomenon agree that women make up an extraordinary number of bombers in this group compared to any other group, while some even speculate that female bombers may comprise over half the suicide perpetrators. On the other hand, while kidnapping and hostage situations occur in other armed conflicts and used by terror groups, Boko Haram has intensified the rate at which kidnapping and abductions occurs, while utilizing individuals less as hostages. The individuals who are kept, primarily women and children, are held in camps and act either as servants and slaves, marry militant fighters, or become suicide bombers. Some estimates speculate, however, that over two-thousand individuals have been abducted or kidnapped, while there have been roughly 151 incidents, involving roughly 250 female bombers, which is relatively low compared to the total number of individuals in the camps. If women and young girls were being kidnapped solely for the reason to commit suicide bombings, one could assume that the overall number of bombers would be higher.

Like other terror groups, Boko Haram benefits from using female bombers because of the tactical benefits females provide. The female bombers had successful infiltrations of soft targets and were able to blend into crowds effectively, sneak into various locations with low rates of detection, and could disguise themselves as refugees, locals, or students, allowing greater access to areas. The females also provided a tactical benefit by using gender to infiltrate targets. This evolved over time, however, and the clothing and appearance that once garnered a benefit was reduced. The group also engaged in other gendered tactics, such as pregnancy, faking pregnancy, and the use of infants, though this did not occur as frequently as expected, and did not have any major increase in the number of occurrences using these tactics over time. One distinction, though, is that, while the use of gendered appearances and stereotypes diminished over time, the number of females as bombers increased over time. Thus, while the effectiveness of the use of gender was reduced, the group increased the overall number of females deployed. While there were more male bombers in 2014 and 2015, females became more prominent in 2016 and 2017. Between April and June 2017 women equaled or outnumbered male bombers. Therefore, having the women and young girls available from kidnappings and abductions allowed the group to utilize women as a force multiplier for suicide attacks (See Figure 13).
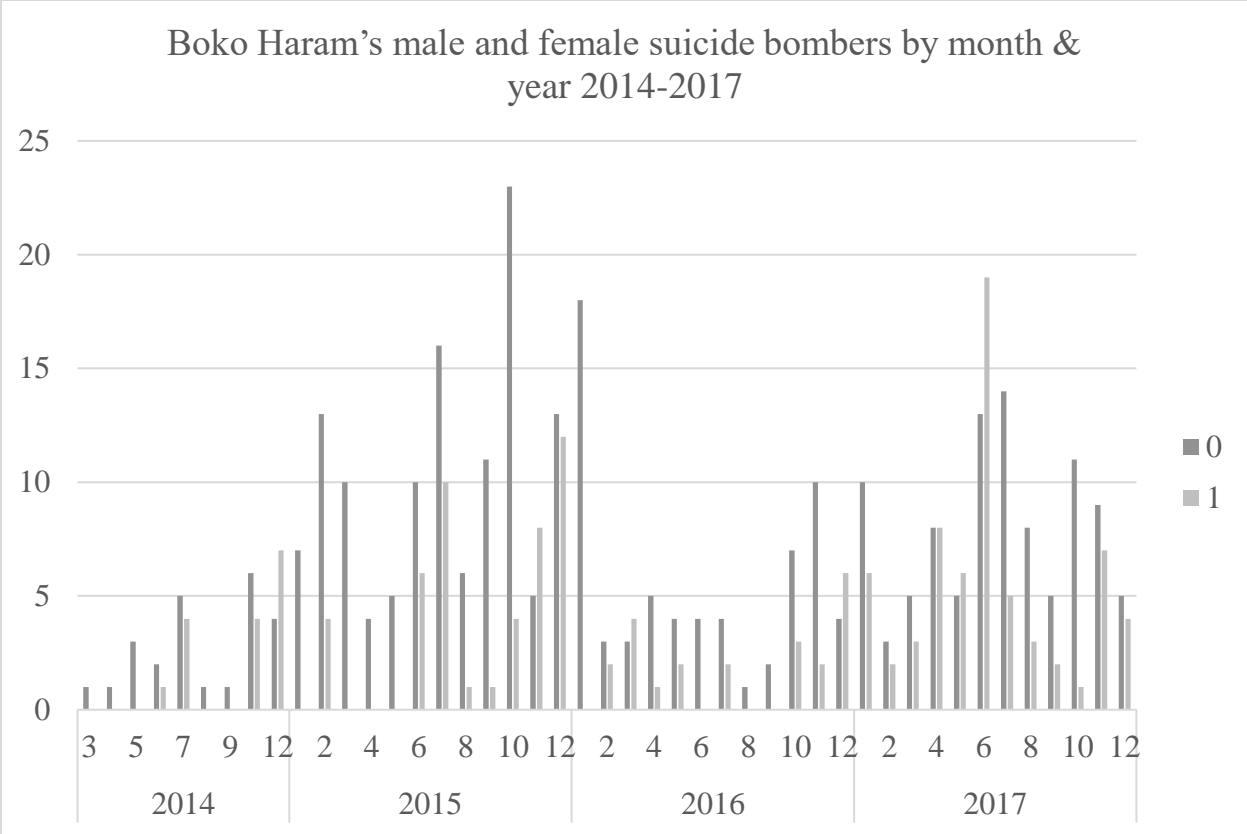
Figure 13: Male and female bombers by month and year (male, 0; female, 1)

Furthering this point, not only did the large pool of women allow for a greater number of capable bodies to perpetrate the attacks, young women and girls do not require extensive amounts of training before a suicide mission. The females receive basic instructions on where to go and how to detonate the explosive vest or belt and then are often brought to a general location by male militants in a vehicle, at which point the bombers continue to walk towards a general target area or proceed to infiltrate more populous opportunities like markets. Not only is this basic degree of training and experience cost effective for the group, the benefits of utilizing the females manifest even if the female is unsuccessful in an attack (i.e. she either does not fully reach the destined target, is intercepted, or the bomb detonates early). This is where the utilization of females as weapons is beneficial for the group in ways that go beyond the actual act

of bombing itself. The females illicit fear and panic in the communities and symbolically dominate the targets as well. The nonviolent perceptions of females are quickly underscored by frequent attacks committed by female bombers, increasing overall fear of women and even children in areas that are typically dominated by women, like markets, IDP camps, and other high civilian areas. Trust in members of the community increasingly lessens causing a disruption to the typically communal social structure. The male community members are faced with the dual issue of having to witness the conquering of the minds and bodies of girls who potentially came from the same communities, while at the same time, are being subjected to fear and violence by the same women, calling their masculinity and ability to defend and protect their own communities and women into question.

This issue corresponds to the difficulty in navigating the problem of rape and sexual victimization that many kidnapped women and possibly female bombers experience and the issue of shame surrounding sexual conduct in the region. Boko Haram is able to attract a multitude of young women willingly through the appearance of opportunities that are not generally available, while numerous others are forced or coerced to join the group. In either case, the women either willingly participate in the activities of the group, primarily through the marriage of a militant fighter or leader and bearing his children or are sexually victimized through continued rape and sexual enslavement. The willing or forced sexual activity, however, *damages* the girls making them unwanted in their own communities. The group can capitalize on shame culture by defiling as many girls as possible and then sending them on suicide missions. For the girls, to surrender means face the consequence of not being wanted by family or other males in the community, but detonation and compliance means redeeming some semblance of honor. These women may feel pressured or coerced into carrying out the attack to the best of

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their abilities to reclaim the power taken from them during the sexual victimization or die without bringing shame to themselves or their families. If the bombers are engaging in the suicide missions for this reason alone, though, it would seem like the patriarchal male powers that they grew up in are imbedded into how the girls think and act and reduces the effect of their own choice over the situation.

Whether coerced or willing, it is difficult to form a clear conclusion at this point. The behaviors during the attack look, from the outside, as though the young women and girls are actively participating in the bombing. Many female bombers perpetrate attacks either alone or in pairs of females and travel to the sight of the attack, which provides a reasonable amount of time and opportunity for the bombers to turn themselves in or seek help to remove the vest and surrender. The successful nature of the attacks tells another story and most of the bombers can successfully infiltrate areas and targets and effectively detonate their explosives. When given the opportunity to surrender, if detected, the girls continue to carry out the attack, also counter to what might be expected if the girls are coerced or do not want to engage in the group's violence. What is reasonable to assert, is that the female bombers are most likely a diverse group of individuals who are engaging in the act for varying reasons. Some of the girls, especially the ones under the age of 12, are convinced that they would see family members again, were 'duped' into the act, were promised there would be no pain, or that they would go to paradise after the bomb detonates. All of these reflect the young and impressionable age of the youngest bombers. The largest group of bombers were teenagers (13-19), an age where marriage and children are normal. By making these young women only sexually available to Boko Haram members because of sexual victimization or marriage, the opportunities to return to communities or seek a marriage partner outside the group is almost completely diminished. The stigma of being part of

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the group, being held by the group, and having relations with a group member takes precedent over any attempt to escape or surrender. The suicide bombing could therefore be a source of empowerment and agency within the confines of the shame culture and the dishonor and stigma that the women would face upon returning to the community and traditional social order. Conclusively, more research needs to be done on the area of female suicide bombers in Boko Haram and other groups to flesh out these nuances. Further research will need to explore a new level of creativity with how and what data is obtained so that the individuals involved have a greater voice in the narrative and the issue of coercion and agency during attacks can be explored in more depth.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been several changes in the frequency of female involvement in terrorist activities, primary as suicide bombers, with the largest number of cases coming from the Nigerian region. The slower growth trend of female involvement that was seen in the early years may therefore be evolving over time and in different groups. Literature on women's involvement in terrorism suggests that female suicide bombers often come from patriarchal societies and cultures where women are more restricted to traditional domestic roles (Bloom, 2007). This is reflected in the two regions with the highest number of female suicide bombing attacks, the Middle East and North Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa region, which represent two idealistic forms of patriarchy (Kandiyoti, 1988). Given the patriarchal cultural constraints, it has been speculated that women may be motivated by a feeling of empowerment in a male-dominated world, resulting in the utilization of suicide attacks to infiltrate the masculine social world beyond the domestic sphere. There has been much evidence to suggest that women are motivated for the same reasons as male bombers, however, and personal feelings of revenge are commonly cited.

While much research has examined female involvement in crime, violence, and increasingly terrorism, there has been limited studies that incorporate gender theory and constructs, and even more limited within the framework of criminology. Many studies on female terrorists examine the pathways to their involvement in terrorism or the motivation behind joining a terrorist group or committing an act of terrorism. What has been limited is the enactment of the actual attacks and how women are accomplishing their objectives, choosing

targets and victims, infiltration tactics, and the social and cultural constraints and structures that shape their opportunities and responses within these situations. The present study sought to bridge this gap. The Nigerian area and Boko Haram present a unique opportunity of inquiry. Like other African nations, Nigeria is a post-colonial nation, has been militarized, faces issues of corruption in the government, is divided internally and geographically by religious beliefs, has some of the lowest rates of gender equality in the world, and has had the most female suicide bombing attacks out of any other group that has utilized this tactic. The insurgent group Boko Haram has capitalized on the internal turmoil and issues to promote the group, recruit members, and become an appealing alternative to traditional female domesticated roles.

The study utilized open-sourced media accounts of female suicide bombing events in the countries effected by the Boko Haram terrorist organization (Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad), and constructed a complementary dataset from the open-sourced citations listed in the Global Terrorism Database associated with each female suicide bomber. The final sample included 102 female suicide bombing incidents affiliated with Boko Haram. For these attacks, 212 articles were included in a complementary qualitative dataset to the GTD, and many of the citations were from regional sources.

Following the theoretical concepts and prior literature, the study was guided by several guiding questions: How are Boko Haram's female bombers infiltrating targets to carry out suicide attacks; what role do Boko Haram's female bombers play in the enactment of the attack; how to locals and authorities respond to the female bombers; and relatedly, do the female bombers react to being intercepted in a stereotypically gender-consistent way, ie. surrender, take opportunity not to detonate, claim victimhood, desist from perpetration. These are needed areas of inquiry, consistent with LaFree and Dugan (2009), who document the gap in the literature

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which includes operational aspects of the act, target selection, tactics, and weapon choices. Therefore, the study explored the gendered nature of female suicide bombings, those who perpetrate these attacks, the gendered ways these acts of violence are committed, and whether female suicide bombers engage in bombing missions in similar ways as women in other forms of criminal behavior.

The study utilized feminist criminological and gender theories to examine female suicide bombers since patriarchal structures and cultural dynamics still effect social norms and values and impact which gendered behavior is enacted and accomplished (Connell, 2009; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Turshen & Twagiramariya, 1998; Zuckerhut, 2011). The study followed the conceptual schema of Daly (1998) to examine female suicide bombers, which incorporates various theoretical components into each area of inquiry: *gendered pathways to lawbreaking, gendered crime*, and *gendered lives.* According to Daly (1998), criminological studies involving women center on the discrepancy between the gender ratios of criminal behavior or on the gendered pathways to crime. Few studies have examined the gendered crime and gendered lives aspects of the behavior. Therefore, the present study focused on the gendered crime features of female suicide bombing, and examined the specific contexts and actions surrounding the performance and accomplishment of this form of violence.

An important aspect of gendered pathways is the "blurred boundaries," or the victim and offender overlap. Though prior victimization experiences can be a factor behind why women may choose to engage in criminal behaviors, it does not incorporate all aspects and scenarios that lead to offending behavior. The current study supports this notion given that many of the young girls experienced victimization to some extent before engaging in a suicide bombing mission, but interviews and bomber behavior during the commission of the act reflect that women were also

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willing participants as well. Women in the sample demonstrated agency, determination, and engaged in instrumental violence, counter to the argument that women's violence is emotional and situational. Another finding that runs counter to other forms of female crime and violence is the gender gap of male to female bombers. Though there are differences in reporting, females encompass a high number of bombers Boko Haram utilizes (estimates between 33 and 52% of the total number of bombers). Generally, males perpetrate violent crimes significantly more than females, and females generally only surpass male perpetration in traditionally female crimes, like petty theft or prostitution. This finding reflects the need for cultural and social factors to be included in any analysis regarding gender and crime.

The study found three main dimensions to the enactment of a suicide bombing attack: the infiltration of the target, the role of the perpetrator and any accomplices, and failed infiltration attempts. Female bombers more frequently used and were successful using deceitful infiltration tactics, such as cunning and gender, on soft targets, consistent with female target selection during the commission of other forms of crime. Some female bombers engaged in the use of violence and vehicles to infiltrate targets, but this was infrequent and mostly occurred when committing the act with male accomplices with the female being in a supporting role. In attacks where the bomber failed to successfully infiltrate the desired target and was intercepted or stopped by civilians or authorities, most of the women and girls refused to surrender, and more than half of those intercepted continued to accomplish at least an explosion before being shot or neutralized. The findings demonstrate that the female bombers use gendered strategies and tactics to accomplish a suicide mission, and these are effective and successful.

The current study also confirmed the underlying use of gender and gendered perceptions during the enactment of the bombing mission. While the female bombers might have been

perceived or treated in a gendered way prior to the suicide bombing by authorities, the frequency with which females were carrying out attacks increased, reducing the novelty of this tactic and arousing more suspicious for young women and girls. Furthermore, most of the female bombers continued to engage with authorities who tried to intercept or stop the bombing from occurring instead of desisting or surrendering, which was not consistent to what was expected from these females. It was expected that more young women and girls, given the opportunity, would take advantage of being able to surrender and claim some form of victim status, especially with the high number of kidnapped girls and research purporting most of the Boko Haram bombers are coerced. Overall, females were not responded to in a specifically gendered way and did not react to formal responses in the hypothesized feminine way. Many did not comply with requests to halt and detonated their bombs anyway, counter to what would be expected.

The study found that the female bombers of Boko Haram accomplish suicide attacks by utilizing stereotypically gendered tactics, along with similar methods to how females carry out other forms of crime. Women can benefit from the male perception of how a female should behave, dress like, and act, and gain an advantage over the situation. Consistent to prior literature, the females were also likely to target places and people that were perceived to be easier targets or victims who would not engage in a counterattack. This behavior and selection process is reflected in the majority of soft targets, like markets and educational institutions, by the female bombers. While male bombers also target market places and targets without security, they also attack hard targets more frequently than the female bombers. When the female bombers did utilize masculine attack types or target harder places, male accomplices were most often involved, and women took on a more supportive role. From a group perspective, by using females in a greater capacity, Boko Haram was not only able to increase the number of available

bombers, but also physically and symbolically attacked communities and the social order by inspiring more fear from the attacks. The targeting of women becomes more than an act of power and dominance over a woman but also on the male social order and patriarchal hierarchy.

The current study contributed to the literature on gender and terrorism by examining the gendered criminal aspects of female suicide bombers from Boko Haram. Though the study examined an area that has garnered limited attention, it left more questions than the scope of this research could address. Future research should address several areas that are currently lacking: gender comparisons of suicide bombers, comparisons of female bombers across groups, the targets and ways of infiltrating these targets across time and group, and the differences in the response and reactions of male and female bombers in Boko Haram and other terrorist groups. Similar studies should be conducted using the GTD to assess the generalizability of these findings to other female suicide bombers, while also comparing male tactics and actions to females to address gender differences. Doing so may provide some insight as to why the gender gap is not as prominent in this violent action as it is in others. Future research should also flesh out the gendered differences between responses and reactions between authority figures and civilians and suicide bombers by using a comparison to a male sample (to compare the number of males the responders told to halt, stop, arrest, desist) to females and their responses to assess gender similarities and differences with Boko Haram. A comparative gender analysis would provide more insight into whether authorities are responding to females in a different way than they would a male suspected of being a suicide bomber, or if they perceive male bombers as more threatening, resulting in more male bombers being shot or neutralized immediately and not being given the same opportunity to surrender as female bombers.

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GLOBAL TERRORISM DATABASE CODEBOOK: INCLUSION CRITERIA AND VARIABLES
Last updated: July 2018

The study utilized the GTD and followed the protocols and variable definitions as closely as possible. Below are the main variables utilized for the sample (only those listed as Suicide Attack are included per the definition and inclusion criteria listed here) and in the analysis and the variable's respective definition, as directly stated in full codebook.

II. Incident Information
(summary)
Text Variable
A brief narrative summary of the incident, noting the "when, where, who, what, how, and why."
Note: This field is presently only systematically available with incidents occurring after 1997.

IV. Attack Information
This field captures the general method of attack and often reflects the broad class of tactics used. It consists of nine categories, which are defined below. Up to three attack types can be recorded for each incident. Typically, only one attack type is recorded for each incident unless the attack is comprised of a sequence of events.
When multiple attack types may apply, the most appropriate value is determined based on the hierarchy below. For example, if an assassination is carried out through the use of an explosive, the Attack Type is coded as Assassination, not Bombing/Explosion. If an attack involves a sequence of events, then the first, the second, and the third attack types are coded in the order of the hierarchy below rather than the order in which they occurred.

Attack Type
Bombing/Explosion
3 = BOMBING/EXPLOSION
An attack where the primary effects are caused by an energetically unstable material undergoing rapid decomposition and releasing a pressure wave that causes physical damage to the surrounding environment. Can include either high or low explosives (including a dirty bomb) but does not include a nuclear explosive device that releases energy from fission and/or fusion, or an incendiary device where decomposition takes place at a much slower rate. If an attack involves certain classes of explosive devices along with firearms, incendiaries, or sharp objects, then the attack is coded as an armed assault only. The explosive device subcategories that are included in this classification are grenades, projectiles, and unknown or other explosive devices that are thrown in which the bombers are also using firearms or incendiary devices.

(attacktype1; attacktype1_txt)
Categorical Variable

Suicide Attack
(suicide)
Categorical Variable
This variable is coded "Yes" in those cases where there is evidence that the
perpetrator did not intend to escape from the attack alive.
1 = "Yes" The incident was a suicide attack.
0 = "No" There is no indication that the incident was a suicide attack.

V. Weapon Information
Information on up to four types and sub-types of the weapons used in an attack are
recorded for each case, in addition to any information on specific weapon details
reported.
(weaptype1; weaptype1_txt)
Categorical Variable
Up to four weapon types are recorded for each incident. This field records the
general type of weapon used in the incident. It consists of the following categories:
6 = Explosives
A weapon composed of energetically unstable material undergoing rapid
decomposition and releasing a pressure wave that causes physical damage to
the surrounding environment. Note that chemical weapons delivered via
explosive are classified as "Chemical" with weapon subtype "Explosives."
Explosives
7 = Grenade (not RPGs)
8 = Landmine
9 = Mail Bomb (letter, package, parcel)
10 = Pressure Trigger
11 = Projectile (e.g., rockets, mortars, RPGs, missiles)
12 = Remote Device (trigger, control, detonate)
13 = Suicide (carried bodily by human being)
14 = Time Fuse
15 = Vehicle
16 = Unknown Explosive Type
17 = Other Explosive Type
28 = Dynamite/TNT
29 = Sticky Bomb
31 = Pipe Bomb
VI. Target/Victim Information
Information on up to three targets/victims is recorded for each incident. The target/victim
information fields coded for each of the three targets include type, name of entity, specific
target/victim, and nationality of the target/victim. The field contains information on both
intended targets and incidental bystanders, and therefore, intentionality should be carefully
considered.
(targtype1; targtype1_txt)

Categorical Variable

The target/victim type field captures the general type of target/victim. When a victim is attacked specifically *because of his or her relationship* to a particular person, such as a prominent figure, the target type reflects that motive. For example, if a family member of a government official is attacked because of his or her relationship to that individual, the type of target is "government." This variable consists of the following 22 categories:

1 = BUSINESS

Businesses are defined as individuals or organizations engaged in commercial or mercantile activity as a means of livelihood. Any attack on a business or private citizens patronizing a business such as a restaurant, gas station, music store, bar, café, etc.

This includes attacks carried out against corporate offices or employees of firms like mining companies, or oil corporations. Furthermore, includes attacks conducted on business people or corporate officers. Included in this value as well are hospitals and chambers of commerce and cooperatives.

Does not include attacks carried out in public or quasi-public areas such as "business district or commercial area", or generic business-related individuals such as "businessmen" (these attacks are captured under "Private Citizens and Property", see below.) Also does not include attacks against generic business-related individuals such as "businessmen." Unless the victims were targeted because of their specific business affiliation, these attacks belong in "Private Citizens and Property."

2 = GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)

Any attack on a government building; government member, former members, including members of political parties in official capacities, their convoys, or events sponsored by political parties; political movements; or a government sponsored institution where the attack is expressly carried out to harm the government.

= POLICE

This value includes attacks on members of the police force or police installations; this includes police boxes, patrols headquarters, academies, cars, checkpoints, etc.

Includes attacks against jails or prison facilities, or jail or prison staff or guards.

4 = MILITARY

Includes attacks against military units, patrols, barracks, convoys, jeeps, and aircraft. Also includes attacks on recruiting sites, and soldiers engaged in internal policing functions such as at checkpoints and in anti-narcotics activities. This category also includes peacekeeping units that conduct military operations (e.g., AMISOM)

Excludes attacks against non-state militias and guerrillas, these types of attacks are coded as "Terrorist/Non-state Militias" see below.

7 = GOVERNMENT (DIPLOMATIC)

Attacks carried out against foreign missions, including embassies, consulates, etc.

This value includes cultural centers that have diplomatic functions, and attacks against diplomatic staff and their families (when the relationship is relevant to the motive of the attack) and property. The United Nations is a diplomatic target.

8 = EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Attacks against schools, teachers, or guards protecting school sites. Includes attacks against university professors, teaching staff and school buses. Moreover, includes attacks against religious schools in this value.

As noted below in the "Private Citizens and Property" value, the GTD has several attacks against students. If attacks involving students are not expressly against a school, university or other educational institution or are carried out in an educational setting, they are coded as private citizens and property.

Excludes attacks against military schools (attacks on military schools are coded as "Military," see below).

10 = JOURNALISTS & MEDIA

Includes, attacks on reporters, news assistants, photographers, publishers, as well as attacks on media headquarters and offices.

Attacks on transmission facilities such as antennae or transmission towers, or broadcast infrastructure are coded as "Telecommunications," see below.

12 = NGO

Includes attacks on offices and employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NGOs here include large multinational non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders, as well as domestic organizations.

Does not include labor unions, social clubs, student groups, and other non-NGO (such cases are coded as "Private Citizens and Property", see below).

13= OTHER

This value includes acts of terrorism committed against targets which do not fit into other categories. Some examples include ambulances, firefighters, refugee camps, and international demilitarized zones.

14= PRIVATE CITIZENS & PROPERTY

This value includes attacks on individuals, the public in general or attacks in public areas including markets, commercial streets, busy intersections and pedestrian malls.

Also includes ambiguous cases where the target/victim was a named individual, or where the target/victim of an attack could be identified by name, age, occupation, gender or nationality.

This value also includes ceremonial events, such as weddings and funerals.

The GTD contains a number of attacks against students. If these attacks are not expressly against a school, university or other educational institution or are not carried out in an educational setting, these attacks are coded using this value. Also, includes incidents involving political supporters as private citizens and property, provided that these supporters are not part of a government-sponsored event. Finally, this value includes police informers.

Does not include attacks causing civilian casualties in businesses such as restaurants, cafes or movie theaters (these categories are coded as "Business" see above).

15 = RELIGIOUS FIGURES/INSTITUTIONS

This value includes attacks on religious leaders, (Imams, priests, bishops, etc.), religious institutions (mosques, churches), religious places or objects (shrines, relics, etc.). This value also includes attacks on organizations that are affiliated with religious entities that are not NGOs, businesses or schools.

Attacks on religious pilgrims are considered "Private Citizens and Property;" attacks on missionaries are considered religious figures.

17 = TERRORISTS/NON-STATE MILITIAS

Terrorists or members of identified terrorist groups within the GTD are included in this value. Membership is broadly defined and includes informants for terrorist groups, but excludes former or surrendered terrorists.

This value also includes cases involving the targeting of militias and guerillas.

19 = TRANSPORTATION (OTHER THAN AVIATION)
Attacks on public transportation systems are included in this value. This can include efforts to assault public buses, minibuses, trains, metro/subways, highways (if the highway itself is the target of the attack), bridges, roads, etc.
The GTD contains a number of attacks on generic terms such as "cars" or "vehicles." These attacks are assumed to be against "Private Citizens and Property" unless shown to be against public transportation systems. In this regard, buses are assumed to be public transportation unless otherwise noted.

20 = UNKNOWN
The target type cannot be determined from the available information.

22 = VIOLENT POLITICAL PARTIES
This value pertains to entities that are both political parties (and thus, coded as "government" in this coding scheme) *and* terrorists. It is operationally defined as groups that engage in electoral politics and appear as "Perpetrators" in the GTD.

GLOBAL TERRORISM DATABASE CODEBOOK ©UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND JUNE 2017

Code	What is it? Operationalization	Open Code Tag
Bomber Tactic of Infiltration	Bomber actions to gain access to target or victim	Tact In
Gender actions	Carrying baby, faking pregnancy, being pregnant, walking with child, dressing as a woman	Gen Act
Using gender to accomplish action	Luring guards from post, pretending to need help, faking being victim	Use Gen
Perpetrator role in attack	solo perpetration, group perpetration, multiple women, men and women, using women as SB so men can open fire/ attack in other ways	Role
Target/victim	What is attacked by bomber, who is harmed- women, children, IDPs, incidental targets/victims- bomb went off early, detonated somewhere other than target	Targ
Response to perpetrator by personnel, vigilante, or security	Shoot, detain, warn, arrest, remove bombs and place in custody	Resp
Gender differences	males and females treated differently, multi-context, BH takes men out of home and shoots, shoots women inside home	Gen Diff
Indoctrination/ conditioned	Direct statements about what is told or taught to bomber in BH camps	Indoct
Coercion	Using force to get person to carry out attack, drugging person before attack	Coerce
Kidnapping	Forced taking of individuals without consent, keeping individuals in BH camps	Kidnap
Fear	Effect of terrorism on community and society	Fear
Volunteered/gave away	Parents or relatives who sympathize with BH placing their children in care of BH for SB or other purposes	Volunteer
Non-compliance to SB act	Not detonating bomb, surrendering, telling authorities there are explosives	Noncomply

Family Ties	Familial connections to BH	family tie
Bomber actions/ behavior	Any other information about person committing act	bomber char
Politics	Policy changes, counterinsurgency, military strategy	politics
Social issues	refugees, lack of resources, poor infrastructure, education, employment	social
Escalation of tactics	Increasing violent actions to remain relevant, cause damages	escalation
Remote detonation	third party bomb detonation by BH members not committing act	remote det
Instrumental theory	Crenshaw, way of viewing outside of gender	Inst theory

CODED AGE OF BOMBER

Age Coded by Text	# Age code in text	# Perps from codes
10	2	2
12	2	2
13	2	2
18	2	2
20	1	1
"A Middle-aged woman"	1	1
"Girl"	1	1
"Teenaged"	1	1
"Three young female suicide bombers"	1	3
"Two teenagers"	1	2
"Women"	1	2
9-12; 30 or more	2	2
10 and 13	1	2
13 and 15	1	2
13 and 18	1	2
19 and unknown	1	2
14 and 40	1	2
7 to 8 years old	1	1
All 9 to 12	1	4
Between 11 and 15	1	1
Children, between 10 and 15	1	2
Two females aged 10 and 18, unknown male age	1	2
Late 20s	1	1
Male 7 years old, female unknown	1	1
Teen	2	1
Teenage	4	1
Teenage girls	1	2
Teenage, 16 years old	1	1
Teenaged female	1	1
Teenager, about 17	1	1
Three "women"	1	3
Young	2	1
Young, 11 and 18	1	2
Young, around 15	1	1
Younger than 10 years	1	1
	45	**58**

Age Bracket	# Perpetrators
12 and under	19
13-19	31
20-29	2
30-39	2
40-49	2
50+	0
"young"	5
"women"	9
Unknown	57

APPENDIX D

CODED TIME OF FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBING INCIDENT

Time coded by Text	Incident Count
1:15pm	1
10:05pm-- 2245 (10:45pm)	1
10:30am	1
10:45pm	1
10:50am	1
11:00pm	1
11:22pm/ 5:15am	1
11:30am	1
11:30pm-2:02am	1
11:40am	1
11am	2
12:30pm	1
1755hrs (5:55pm)	1
19:15pm (7:15pm)	1
1pm	1
2:30pm	2
2221 hrs (1020); 2230 hrs (10:30pm)	1
2am	1
4:20am	1
4pm	1
5:00am	1
5:10am	1
5:10am females; 7:30am male	1
5:30am	1
5:30am (or 4:30am)	1
6:15am	1
6:20am	1
6:45am	1
6am	1
7:30am	3
7:45am	1
7:45pm	1
7am	2
8:20-10:30pm	1
8:40am	1
8:45pm	1

8:45pm (20:45 hrs)	1
8am	1
8pm	1
9:30am	1
9:30pm	1
9:45pm	1
9am	1
Almost midnight	1
Before dawn	1
Early morning	2
Early morning to 6:50am	1
Morning	1
Noon	1
Saturday night	1
Sunday evening	1
Sunday morning	1
Tuesday Morning	1

Time Brackets Constructed
Morning: 5am-11am
Mid-Day: 11am- 5pm
Evening: 5pm-10pm
Night: 10pm- 5am

Time of Day	# of Incidence
Morning	30
Mid-Day	8
Evening	10
Night	11

Month/Year	Evening	Mid-day	Morning	Night
Jun-14			1	
Jul-14		1		
Nov-14			1	
Feb-15		2		
May-15		1		
Jun-15		1	1	
Jul-15			2	
Sep-15			1	
Oct-15			2	
Nov-15		1		
Dec-15	1		1	
Feb-16			2	
Jul-16			1	
Oct-16			1	
Nov-16	1		1	
Dec-16	1		3	
Jan-17	1	1		
Feb-17			1	1
Mar-17	2		1	
Apr-17			3	2
May-17	2			3
Jun-17	2		1	2
Jul-17			1	2
Aug-17			1	1
Sep-17			1	
Nov-17			2	
Dec-17			2	

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