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INVESTIGATING THE LINK BETWEEN ETHNICITY AND CIVIL WAR ONSET
A CASE ANALYSIS OF ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Scholars have diverged sharply in their opinions about the link or proposed link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war. Research has yielded diverging results: some studies have shown that ethnicity is a statistically significant determinant of the onset of civil war and others have determined that ethnicity is not a statistically significant variable. These studies have primarily utilized statistical methodologies measuring ethnicity using the ethno-linguistic fractionalization (ELF) index as well as the N* index. While these studies warrant attention, little research has been conducted using a case study approach to explore the speculated link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war. The goal of this study is to employ carefully selected comparative case studies to determine if there is a link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war. In order to find answers to this pertinent question, data from identified minority groups in India over the period from 1975 to the present was collected and analyzed. Results suggest the existence of a link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war.

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Introduction

With dismaying regularity, the media produce reports of countries and nations plagued by civil wars lasting days, years, and in some instances, centuries. Each country and nation state has their own unique story perpetuated by local, national and, many times, international media. The media, many times, paints these civil wars as "ethnic conflicts" or "ancient grievances" manifesting themselves between ethnic minority groups, or between a minority group and the central government. As a result, the public seems convinced that civil wars are ethnically based or stem from inherent ethnic grievances. While this may be the case, many scholars argue that the link between ethnicity and civil war onset is weak. In fact, many studies have revealed that ethnicity is not a statistically significant variable in analyses of the onset of civil war. There is a clear disconnect between social scientists and common public perception with regard to ethnicity and civil war onset. So, which is correct?

This research project is particularly interested in exploring the link, or proposed link, between ethnicity and civil war onset. With so much contention surrounding this topic of debate, it merits further examination. If invariable contention alone does not warrant additional analysis, then perhaps the far-reaching consequences of differing results provides the basis for additional research. Ethnic polarization, or ethnic contention, is quantitatively expressed using the ethno-linguistic fractionalization index, commonly known as the ELF index. While the ELF index has been used in countless scholarly articles, the specific methodologies employed by the ELF index have rarely been criticized. This research project also is able to critically evaluate the ELF index in order to explore its far-reaching implications.

Specifically, this research project explores identified ethnic minority groups in India in order to explore the link between ethnicity and civil war onset. It is expected that there will be strong support for a strong link between ethnicity and civil war onset. Through the research conducted and reported here, strong support is found for a link between ethnicity and civil war onset in India. As expected, when ethnic minority groups are discriminated against by the central government, their ethnic grievances make them more likely to rebel. Moreover, the direct oppression by the central government of targeted ethnic minority groups helps to mobilize members of the persecuted ethnic minority groups to rebel against the government.

In this thesis, I first review related scholarly articles that provide the foundation for research related to ethnicity and civil war onset. In addition, in the "Literature Review" section I review past theories about ethnicity and civil war onset. In the "Theoretical Framework" section I describe the theories and framework for my specific research project, and present my main hypothesis. Next, in the "Research Design and Data Measurements" section, I describe the qualitative methodology for my research, which consists of a comparative case analysis of identified ethnic minority groups in India. Following that, in the "Analysis" section I share my results, offer possible reasons for observed results, and provide a self-critique of my analysis. In the final section labeled "Conclusion", I show how research like mine may prove to be useful in further investigating the link between ethnicity and civil war onset, while also offering improvements for additional studies.

Literature Review

  While knowledge, direct study, and research about contemporary civil wars is not limited by any means, research of this nature typically dilutes the impact of ethnic grievances. Research focusing on civil wars traditionally measures and emphasizes the impact of logistical factors while de-emphasizing the impact of ethnicity. In many studies ethnicity is not a statistically significant variable with regard to the onset of civil wars. However, many politicians and journalists describe and portray these same civil wars as "ethnic wars" or conflicts featuring "ancient ethnic hatreds". This research project is particularly interested in gaining insight into this disconnect between social scientists/popular belief with regard to ethnicity and the onset of civil wars. Literature directly related to ethnicity and civil war onset are typically separated into two distinct categories: either citing ethnicity as a statistically insignificant variable, or citing it as a statistically significant variable. The differences may depend upon how the variable is measured. The literature review below provides a framework for understanding current research related to ethnicity and consequently its perceived statistical significance in contemporary civil war research.

  Collier and Hoeffler (1998) established and laid the foundation for research related to the economic causes of civil war. Collier and Hoeffler (1998) primarily used expected utility theory to determine the likelihood of civil war onset with regard to the following variables: initial income, ethno-linguistic fractionalization, the amount of natural resources, and initial population size. Collier and Hoeffler (1998) used logit regressions covering the years 1960-1999 to determine, holistically, the risk of civil war onset for each 5 year segment studied. Results showed that all four variables were

significant and directly related to the probability and duration of civil wars (1998).

Perhaps the most pertinent finding presented in Collier and Hoeffler's research was

"…that the relationship between civil wars and ethnic diversity is non-monotonic; highly

fractionalized societies have no greater risk of experiencing a civil war than homogenous

ones" (563). Simply put, results can be interpreted to mean that the presence of ethno-

linguistic fractionalization is not a determinant of civil war in and of itself, instead "it is

the degree of fractionalization which most facilitates rebel coordination" (Collier and

Hoeffler, 570). Countries with completely homogenous populations as well as countries

with highly fractionalized ones are equally prone to civil wars (1998). It turns out that

countries moderately fractionalized have the highest risk of civil war.

Collier and Hoeffler (1998) measured ethno-linguistic fractionalization (ELF)

with the ELF index, ranging from 0-100, where a value of 0 would mean a completely

homogenous society and a value of 100 would mean that each individual was in a

different ethno-linguistic group. "Cultural distinctness is measured by an index of ethno-

linguistic fractionalization. This variable measures the probability that any two citizens

will be drawn from a different ethno-linguistic group" (Collier and Hoeffler, 567). Collier

and Hoeffler (1998) determined that the danger of civil war heightens when a society is

polarized into two separate, similarly sized ethno-linguistic groups, represented by an

index value of 38. "Polarized societies have around a 50% higher probability of civil war

than either homogenous or highly fractionalized societies" (Collier and Hoeffler, 572).

Collier and Hoeffler's (1998) research laid the groundwork for research with

regard to ethno-linguistic fractionalization and promoted the expansion and specific focus

on the distinct role ethnicity plays in civil war, with regard to its statistical significance.

Collier and Hoeffler (1998) only explored ethnicity with regard to the ELF index explained above, which is the primary reason we might prefer not to regard their findings as definitive.

James Fearon and David Laitin (2003) explored the root causes of civil wars after the World War II in order to test the conventional sentiment that many, if not a majority, of these civil wars were a direct result of ethnic differences. In order to do so, Fearon and Laitin (2003) explored the effects of ethnic diversity in a country and on the onset of civil war Results showed that civil wars were not ethnically based. Instead, their results suggest civil wars result from factors that favor a particular form of war known as insurgency In order to substantiate the claim that ethnicity was a non-factor in their study, Fearon and Laitin (2003) explain that ethnic grievances are ubiquitous and that this type of "spark" always exists, and thus it is a constant. With that being said, it is logically necessary that a constant cannot cause a variable, or in this case, ignite a war, and this logical argument (in addition to their statistical results) thus is used to discount ethnicity as a cause of civil war. To reiterate, Fearon and Laitin (2003) solely relied upon the ELF index in their study, and this is a primary weakness of their article. While their conclusions merit consideration, and prompted others to look into the role ethnicity plays in civil war onset, the methodology used may have been too narrow in scope.

Halvard Buhaug, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Jan Ketil Rod (2008) abandoned the ELF index, in favor of a radically different approach to studying ethnicity and its influence on civil war onset. Both Collier and Hoeffler (1998) and Fearon and Laitin (2003) captured ethnicity in terms of ethnic fractionalization or polarization using the ELF index. ELF is a country-based index of ethnic diversity. Buhaug, Cederman and Rod

(2008) explain that studies relying solely on "such aggregated measures are likely to conceal the actual operation of actor-specific mechanisms" (Buhaug et al, 531). Instead, Buhaug, Cederman, and Rod (2008) explored and analyzed ethnicity and conflict using a disaggregated approach. Specifically, the researchers divided "ethnicity and conflict to the level of explicitly geo-coded center-periphery dyads" (Buhaug et al, 531). By doing so, they were able to analyze, measure, and report on ethnic groups and leading actors in terms of the following variables: group size, distance between the center and the periphery, and terrain roughness (Buhaug et al, 530). Buhaug, Cederman, and Rod's (2008) cases in their analysis were all dyads in which the ethnic group was different from the ethnic group in power (i.e, the government). Thus, Buhaug et al. (2008) were unable to show that ethnic differences between the government and ethnic groups cause civil wars, because in all of their cases the actors are different ethnic groups. Simply put, Buhaug, Cederman, and Rod's (2008) central question becomes not: do ethnic groups rebel, but rather: when do ethnic groups rebel? Their analysis focused on exploring the dyads in terms of geographic as well as demographic variables By digitizing, with geographic information systems (GIS) data, the ELF index, Buhaug et al. (2008) were able to code the locations of ethnic groups and prominent actors. With this information, Buhaug et al. (2008) were then able to overlay this information on terrain and the capital cities of the countries/areas studied. Results indicated that stronger rebel groups are more likely to rebel. Simply put, the more equal (in size) the rebel group is to the government/group in power, the greater the likelihood of revolt (Buhaug et al, 532). In addition, Buhaug et al. (2008) concluded that distance from the capital is a determinant of civil war. Specifically, groups further away from the capital city are more likely to rebel

than those in close proximity. Perhaps the most beneficial facet of Buhaug et al.'s (2008) research is that it casts serious doubt on prior studies that reject ethnicity as a determinant of civil war. Moreover, Buhaug et al. (2008) provided the framework for the dyadic application to civil war onset study.

Lars-Erik Cederman and Luc Girardin (2007) further study the link between ethnicity and civil war onset; however, with a distinct difference compared to prior studies. After establishing and elaborating on the weakness primarily associated with relying fully on the ELF index, Cederman and Girardin (2007) introduce a new index, known as N* to measure ethnic-fractionalization. The index, N*, "deviates from standard fractionalization measures by introducing state-centric, rather than symmetric, ethnic configurations and by postulating group-level, rather than individual level micro mechanisms of mobilization" (Cederman, 173). First, Cederman and Girardin (2007) reference Fearon and Laitin's (2003) and other studies which have concluded that ethnic conflict has no impact on civil war onset. Then they describe the shortcomings of the ELF index. Cederman and Girardin (2007) performed a regression analysis in order to test and analyze results based on the new measure of ethnic fractionalization, N* (2007). Building from Fearon and Laitin's (2003) data set, Cederman and Girardin, (2007) ran a logit regression on the same variables used in the Fearon and Laitin (2003) study; however, substituting for the ELF index with the N* index. While all other findings remained the same with regard to significance, when substituting the N* index a high level of significance was now found for ethnicity. Results proved very significant, which cast doubts on the tendency to negate or ignore "ethnic politics as an explanation of civil wars" (Cederman, 173). The primary weakness of Cederman and Girardin's (2007)

argument lies in the narrow scope of their data set, limited to only 127 cases. As a direct result of this, it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions from which to extrapolate and generalize. Aside from this, Cederman and Girardin's (2007) research was important in bringing to the forefront the shortcomings of the ELF index and proposing an alternative in the more dynamic N* index.

In direct response to Cederman and Girardin's (2007) article, James Fearon, Kimuli Kasara, and David Laitin (2007) set out to re-test the link between ethnicity and civil war onset, this time acknowledging the new N* index. Specifically, Fearon et al. (2007) sought to see if countries/states controlled by an ethnic minority were at a higher risk of civil war onset. Using a data set of 161 countries, researchers paid particular attention to "whether the head of state is from a minority ethnic group, and the difference between the size of the plurality ground and the leader's ethnic group (Cederman et al., 187). Results from Fearon et al.'s (2007) study using the N* index acknowledge that the states with ethnic minority groups are at a higher risk for civil war; however, they claim the link is weak. Fearon et al. (2007) continued to state that the relationship "is neither statistically significant nor substantively strong" (Fearon et al., 187). Fearon et al. (2007) also claimed that in their research "the estimate of N* impact nearly vanished" (Fearon et al., 187). In order to extrapolate results, a larger data set must be used.

With varying viewpoints present, a concrete and definitive answer has yet to be found. The question still remains; is there a link, and if so what is the link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war?

Theoretical Framework

Although contention may be omnipresent regarding ethnicity's significance in the onset of civil war, the inquiry merits further consideration. Halvard Buhaug, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Jan Ketil Rod's (2008) dyadic approach to the study of ethnicity and the onset of civil war used the exclusion theory as the basis for their examination. The exclusion theory will also serve as the foundation for my theoretical framework, described below. The exclusion theory states that ethno-linguistic conflict is a direct result or consequence of "one particular path of nation-state formation" (Buhaug et al., 532). Exclusion theory is clearly operating in states that are unable to integrate the vast majority of their population into the general community of the nation. As a direct result, such a country is composed of multiple ethnic groups with grievances. A country's composition, with regard to the number of grieved minorities, dictates the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the country's composition, thus directly influencing political, economic, and social policies.

In states where the process of building a unified nation (nation-building) is successful, multiple ethnic groups with grievances are rare, and those states are strong and resourceful in including and integrating all of the population into civil society. On the other hand, in countries where nation-building is weak, and thus ethnic groups are excluded from power, there is an increased risk of civil war. Fractionalization of ethnic groups is ever-present and tension between minority groups and the central government episodically escalates, thus directly influencing the onset of civil war.

The logic detailed above yields the first hypothesis:

H1: When ethnic groups are discriminated against by the central government their grievances make them more likely to rebel.

Furthermore, if the exclusion theory is correct, ethnic minorities excluded from power by the central government would have an increased likelihood of initiating conflict. In response, the government might actively oppress the minority group in order to maintain and retain power. Those ethnic minorities oppressed by the central government would likely rebel against the government if sufficiently motivated and if the expected benefits outweighed the costs of rebellion. Due to the specific nature of the central government's oppression (that it is directed at a particular ethnic minority group), ethnic minority groups may collectively join in order to retaliate and yield the best possible result. Ethnic minority groups, easily identified by ethnic ties with one another, are more likely to rebel. Ethnic ties or communal likeness (to be explained below) can be based upon the following: shared religion, national or racial origin, language, or territory. Ethnic groups rebelling due to ethnic grievances are typically easy to identify due to their long history and shared story of victimization.

Generally, there is expected to be a positive relationship between repression by the central government and the likelihood of rebellion. For example, say an ethnic minority group A is repressed by the central government. Group A is more likely to unify its group members together and they, the united Group A, will thus find it easier rebel. It can be inferred, that grievances heighten people's ethnic identity and ethnic awareness which makes mobilization easier. This general relationship between repression and rebellion spurs ethnic minority group leaders to leverage or use the repression to mobilize

others. It is expected that ethnic minority group leaders would draw individuals in as a direct result of the repression.

Ethnic leaders are able to recruit and retain members successfully due to intricate community ties. With both positive and negative sanctions in place, ethnic minority groups may be able to create a moderately stable institution capable of rebelling against the central government. Due to the intricate network in place, ethnic minority groups are able to facilitate a "community organization" or "community tie" in which members feel embedded and invested. As a direct result of this increased investment in the group, ethnic minority members feel compelled to cooperate as a result of the generalized reciprocity ideal. Most importantly, community ties are imperative in mobilizing ethnic minority groups. **"**Ethnic identities often link individuals to a host of informal institutions and networks that may facilitate trust by promoting the flow of information about reputations, enabling sanctioning, and generating expectations that cooperative overtures will be reciprocated" (Ostrom and Ahn).

While this rationale follows logically, it may be regarded as simplistic and does not go uncontested. One plausible objection raised includes Fearon and Laitin's (2003) central argument that ethnicity or ethnic grievances are ubiquitous, and thus a "constant" not a variable. As a direct result of an ethnic grievance's ever-present nature, it acts as a "constant" that can not directly influence the dependent variable, in this case the onset of civil war. The rationale behind Fearon and Laitin's objection stems directly from the idea that if the grievance exists all the time, but civil wars are episodic, then ethnic grievances cannot be a statistically significant determinant of the onset of civil war. While this objection is noted and taken into consideration, its gross generalization of ethnic

grievances is its main shortcoming. While ethnic grievances are ubiquitous in some countries, there are points in time when ethnic tensions are heightened or lessened due to laws and/or other sanctions put in place by the central government. During these contentious times, the actions taken by the central government may propel specifically targeted ethnic minority groups to rebel. To summarize, the ethnic grievance in combination with the actions of the central government drive ethnic minority groups to rebel and directly lead to the onset of a civil war.

An additional objection to the proposed hypothesis might be that the abstract nature of ethnicity greatly increases the difficulty of formulating a valid measure of ethnic makeup. Simply put, what constitutes ethnicity? While this concern for measurement of ethnicity or ethnic makeup is valid, with careful precision and accuracy ethnicity can be properly measured. In countries where the ethnic grievance has historical roots, it is easy to identify the ethnic minority and build a case to support it. While ethnicity may be an abstract concept, by using a specific methodology that is clearly identified and understood, ethnic grievance then becomes a valid independent variable. Directly related to the concern regarding measurement of ethnicity is the idea of linking this abstract concept to the mobilization of groups. What constitutes mobilization can come into question. While this concern warrants attention, mobilization of ethnic minority groups is clear and undeniable in some circumstances. For example, it is difficult to refute the idea that if an army is all of the same ethnicity that this is the common factor upon which mobilization was based. Moreover, an additional objection to the proposed hypothesis is that it may be difficult for some to understand why it is easier to mobilize those of the same ethnic group. It is plausible that it may be difficult;

however, it is also plausible that the commonality between each individual makes mobilization toward a common enemy much easier.

All in all, the hypotheses proposed warrant consideration in order to determine the link or proposed link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war. While the explicated objections are plausible, the theoretical framework proposed allows for objections to be understood while also exploring the hypothesis outlined.

Research Design and Data Measurement

Case Selection:

In order to investigate the proposed link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war, I have chosen to study ethnic minority groups in India from 1975- present day. The cases and/or ethnic minority groups selected were identified by Lars-Erik Cederman and Luc Girardin in their article *"Beyond Fractionalization: Mapping Ethnicity into Nationalist Insurgencies".* Ethnic minorities listed were part of a comprehensive list comprised of identified Ethnic Groups in the Eurasian and North African areas covered by their study. The identified minority groups of India are as follows:

Table 1: List of Ethnic Minority Groups in India

Minority Groups in India	Percentage of Population
Bengali	8.22
Telugu	7.8
Marathi	7.38
Tamil	6.26
Gujarati	4.81
Kannada	3.87
Malayalam	3.59
Oriya	3.32
Punjabi	2.76
Sikhs	2
Assamese	1.55

The eleven minority groups listed here will comprise the minority groups analyzed in this study.

Ethnicity was a case selection mechanism that helped to determine which country was to be studied. Ethnic groups, specifically ethnic groups in India, are studied in order to understand why some rebelled while others did not. India was selected as the country of study due to the large number of ethnic minority groups there. Hindu speakers, which

make up approximately 39.9% of India's population, are the ethnic group in power. After them, however, there are eleven ethnic minority groups potentially vying for power. Viability was a major concern when making my case selection. I wanted to select a country with a large number of minority groups. India is clearly a data fertile region. Not only is it characterized by a large number of potential ethnic rebels, but it is also a state with a record of many civil wars. To clarify, this is not a case study of India. Rather, it is a series of case studies all of which are drawn from India, in order to control for extraneous variables. By choosing a single country to explore, in this case India, I am able to control for time period, region, government type, level of development, and a host of other variables such as colonial history, past instances of civil war, international status, etc.

The downside to choosing all of my cases from India is that it may be difficult to generalize to ethnic groups in other parts of the world. India, unlike many other nations that suffer from ethnic unrest, is a large democratic nation, with a moderately stable economy. While the nation suffers from mass poverty, overall the democratic framework of India's government makes it a stable nation state. In addition, India is a large country, with a large population, as well as harboring nuclear weapons.

Data Collection and Variables Defined:

The data I used to test my hypotheses, explicitly stated in the theoretical framework section, come primarily from two academic resources. In order to determine if the ethnic minority group selected qualified as minority groups that had been discriminated against, and thus had an ethnic grievance (independent variable), I used the *Minorities at Risk* database. The *Minorities at Risk* (MAR) database tracks politically-

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active ethnic groups from around the world. Specifically, the MAR database is able to articulate where these groups are, what actions they take, and what happens to them as time goes by. The minorities at risk database focuses primarily on identifying "ethno-political groups, non-state communal groups that have "political significance" in the contemporary world because of their status and political actions" (MAR). Political significance is determined using these defined criteria:

1. "The group collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other groups in a society; and" (MAR).

2. "The group is the basis for political mobilization and collective action in defense or promotion of its self-defined interests" (MAR).

While many different sentiments, interests, and principles may lead to action by a communal group, the MAR data focus on the shared belief among members of a group. MAR data focus on a communal group's belief that there is a shared value or trait amongst them that separates them from other groups, and thus the separate treatment experienced by this group is vindicated.

If one of the eleven ethnic minorities groups identified by Cederman and Girardin (2007) is simultaneously listed as a minority group in the MAR dataset, then the group is deemed to have an ethnic grievance because it suffers from repression by the central government. If the group is not listed as a MAR, then the minority group does not qualify as having an ethnic grievance. Simply put, ethnic grievances, and subsequent repression of the ethnic minority group, serves as the independent variable. The MAR database records official discrimination of an ethnic minority group by the government, and thus is a more valid (and probably more reliable) measure of discrimination than the alternative

ELF index. Buhaug, Cederman and Rod explain that studies relying solely on the ELF

index are "likely to conceal the actual operation of actor-specific mechanisms" (531).

The ELF index is a country based measurement of ethnic diversity, and does not look at

specific instances in order to gauge ethnic tensions within a country. As a direct result of

this, it likely often underestimates or de-emphasizes the importance of ethnic grievances.

To determine if the identified ethnic minority groups rebelled (dependent

variable), I used a dataset from the *Uppsala Conflict Data Program*. The Uppsala

database collects information on armed conflicts. Uppsala, also known as UCDP data,

analyzes armed conflict and details the following: intensification of violence spread of

violence, prevention of violence, as well as resolution of violence. In order to determine

if a group rebelled, the term "armed conflict" is utilized. According to the Uppsala

database, armed conflict is defined as the following:

> "An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government
>
> and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at
>
> least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in
>
> one calendar year" (Uppsala).

An additional distinction to make is between a minor conflict and a war.

According to the Uppsala database, intensity level varies and is defined as follows.

1. Minor Conflict: "At least 25 but less than 1000 battle related deaths in one

    calendar year" (Uppsala).

2. War: "At least 1000 battle-related deaths in one calendar year" (Uppsala).

The Uppsala database allows users to look at identified conflicts by country. For

this study on civil war onset, only the war and minor conflicts will be analyzed. In the

case of India, with regard to the Uppsala database, there are twelve identified wars and/or minor conflicts to be analyzed.

If my hypotheses detailed in the theoretical framework section are correct, then the Indian ethnic minority groups listed on the MAR database will more frequently revolt (shown by analyzing the Uppsala data) than will Indian ethnic groups not identified as MARs. Simply put, the research design matches the ethnic groups (MAR database) with civil wars and conflicts (Uppsala database) to examine the link between ethnicity and civil war onset.

In addition, after comparing the MAR dataset with the Uppsala dataset, I will also analyze recruitment techniques used by ethnic minority group leaders. As explained in detail in my theoretical framework section, grievances tend to heighten people's intra-ethnic affinity and/or ethnic awareness. As a direct result, this makes it easier for ethnic group leaders to use this repression to mobilize others. Essentially, I will seek to answer the question: For the ethnic groups that went to war with the Indian state, did leaders recruit members based on the repression of the central government? In order to answer this question, I will consult a variety of resources including ethnic minority websites, newspaper articles, and the Uppsala dataset. Key words and or techniques that I will look for to determine if the repression by the government spurred recruitment is as follows:

- Increased membership in ethnic minority groups organizations

- Groundswell of nationalism

- Increased funding to nationalist groups

The strengths of my research design are that it uses ethnicity as a case selection mechanism, then letting me analyze and predict which groups will rebel. In addition, by

analyzing cases that all come from India, I am able to control for many extraneous variables. Overall, the aforementioned research design technique will be leveraged in order to analyze and explore the link between ethnicity and the onset of civil war.

Analysis

This analysis explores the conflict behavior of 11 Indian minority groups identified by

Cederman and Girardin (2007), in order to explore the link between ethnicity and civil

war onset. The analysis begins by discussing the minority group the Sikhs, followed

directly by an analysis of the Assamese minority group of India. The analysis begins with

the Sikhs and the Assamese because both of these ethnic minority groups are listed as

minorities at risk (MARs). As articulated in the theoretical framework section and

reiterated in the research design section, a relationship is expected to exist between MAR

status and the likelihood of rebellion. After the conclusion of the analysis of the Sikhs

and Assamese, an overall analysis of the nine other ethnic minority groups is provided.

At the conclusion of the analysis section, I offer a critical examination of the findings and

offer some interesting points of concern about the data analyzed herein.

Analysis of Minorities at Risk (MARs)

<u>Sikhs</u>

Background: The Sikhs are a MAR concentrated in the Punjab state of northwest India.

Approximately two percent of India's population is comprised of Sikhs. While the Sikhs

comprise a majority of the population in their area, there is massive Sikh dispersion

mainly due to migration in pursuit of economic opportunities (MAR). While Sikhs share

a common language, Punjabi, the main factor that differentiates Sikhs from others in the

Hindu community is their religion. Sikhs believe in Sikhism, which originated in the late

1400s. Specifically, the Sikh religion sought to abolish many Indian customs such as the

caste system and the burning of widows. According to Sikh principles, all individuals

have equal rights with regard to the following: caste, color, race, religion, and sex. Sikhs reject many rituals associated with the Hindu religion such as fasting and pilgrimage.

In 1801 the first unified Sikh state appeared after the consolidation of various Sikh kingdoms by Ranjit Singh (MAR). With the emergence of their own state, the Sikhs had successfully resisted the Munghal empire's efforts to control the northwest portion of India. As a direct result of decreased overall power by the Mughal empire, the Sikhs were able to control the northwest portion of India until the British conquered the land in the mid to late 1800s. The British proclaimed the Sikhs a "martial race," dutifully intergraded into the army up until India gained its independence (MAR).
Toward the beginning of the 1940s, the Sikhs began to fear domination by the Muslims and Hindus, and thus began to advocate for the creation of an autonomous state (MAR). In 1947 the separation of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan resulted in about half of the Sikh population moving from Pakistan to India. As a direct result of the partition of Pakistan and India, almost one million Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs died. In 1996, the Sikhs became the majority population in the Punjab community after the area was subdivided (MAR).

For a time, the Sikhs were rather quiet and self-contained; however, the push for an independent state resurfaced in the 1970s. After the acceptance of the Anandpu Sahib Resolution in 1973 by the Sikhs main political party, the Sikhs proclaimed their independence from those in government (MAR).

Conflict found on Uppsala Conflict Database: Punjab/Khalistan

According to the Uppsala database, the Punjab/Khalistan intrastate territorial struggle was a civil war beginning in October of 1973 and ending in December of 1993. The conflict, which took place in Punjab, was a war between Sikh insurgents fighting against the Indian government in an effort to establish the Sikh state of Khalistan, meaning, "Land of the Pure".

The roots of the insurgency stemmed from the following:

- Sikhs had feelings of economic deprivation (MAR)

- Sikhs pressed for the de-centralization of government power; however, their demands were never met (MAR)

- "Manipulation of religious identities" (Uppsala)

As a result of these factors, as well as the Indian government's decision to enforce military solutions in order to control tensions in Punjab, Sikhs began to mobilize together and created their own freestanding militia. With their militia in place, the Sikhs began to become an active armed secessionist movement in 1981 against the Indian state.

As articulated before, the Sikhs demanded greater autonomy, which was expressed in the Anadpur Sahib Resolution of 1973. Contention worsened in the early 1980s, as organized Sikh militias publically stated their inclination toward confrontation rather than settlement with the Indian government. The Sikhs demanded an independent state, specifically raising concerns of their territorial incompatibility with the Indian government. As a direct result of the highly fractionalized nature of the Sikh insurgents, it was difficult to separate armed conflicts by Sikhs and other groups, so all insurgents are collectively referred to as "Sikh insurgents" (All facts in this paragraph from Uppsala).

The onset of conflict between the Sikh insurgents and the Indian government can be traced back to an armed altercation between Sikhs and Indian police in 1981. This conflict was preceded by ethnic polarization and violence between Sikhs and other ethnic groups in the 1970s. In 1983, armed conflict between the Sikhs and government forces reached an all-time high, "rising to the level of at least 25 battle-related deaths per year and led to the imposition of the Presidential rule in October 1983" (Uppsala). While attempts at negotiations were made, large-scale protests against the government persisted, and all negotiation were unsuccessful.

A definable point in the Sikh and Indian government conflict came when the Indian government launched "Operation Blue Star" in 1984. The primary purpose of the operation was to bombard Sikhs who were seeking secession and utilizing the Sikh holy shrine, The Golden Temple, as a base from which to organize their rebellion. The Indian government responded accordingly by storming The Golden Temple, resulting in numerous causalities. During the operation, the Sikhs leader, Sant Jarnail Bindranwale, was assassinated. Consequently, Birndanwale became a martyr to many Sikh followers. That same year, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was murdered by two of her Sikh bodyguards. With the known identify of the bodyguards as Sikhs, there was heated anti-Sikh violence mostly in New Delhi, resulting in upward of 3,000 deaths, most of which were Sikhs (All facts in this paragraph Uppsala).

Civil war was continual in Punjab from the mid-1980s to 1993. In 1985, an agreement was signed between the government and the Sikh political party Akali Dal. The agreement reached was intended to mend relations between the central government and outer states. The agreement was met with resistance from militants, and thus was not

seen as credible. Land transfers that were intended to ease tension were never completed because a Sikh group known as the Panthic Committee made claims to the Sikh state Khalistan from the Golden Temple (All facts in this paragraph MAR)

In the years following many elected officials tried to pass harsh counter-insurgency policies; however, none were successful at ending the conflict. After the Punjabi state government was dissolved, militants were strengthened rather than weakened by the policies in place. In 1988, negotiation attempts were made with Sikh insurgents. Simultaneously, the Indian government amended its national constitution making it easier for government officials to declare a "state of emergency", thus increasing its power over occurrences in Punjab (All facts in this paragraph Uppsala).

The government of Punjab initiated "Operation Black Thunder" in 1988 in order to target militants using the Golden Temple in Amritsar to coordinate and plan insurgencies. "Operation Black Thunder" was carried out by cutting all power and water to the complex, followed by a series of attacks. After ten days, the rebels surrendered.

During the 1990s, the rebels were able to regain power and land gained by the Indian government during the 1980s. Subsequently, violence erupted and reached an all-time high. The violence reached a peak in 1991, and the Indian government was forced to deploy troops into Punjab. While the main purpose of the troops was to prepare for the upcoming elections, which the Sikh insurgents unanimously boycotted, the efforts of the Indian government failed. The Sikhs were able to decrease voter turnout to 20% through intimidation techniques. Violence continued while insurgents were in control of the territory. In response, the Indian government launched a massive counter-insurgency operation, which was finally able to put the Sikhs on the defensive. In 1993, the Punjabi

police chief was able to proclaim that the insurgency had been defeated. In total, there were approximately 2,350 Sikh deaths over the course of 11 years (All facts in this paragraph Uppsala).

<u>**Assamese**</u>

Background: The Assamese reside in the state of Assam, located in the northeast of India. Originally residing in Burma, the Assamese began to migrate to Assam in the 13th century. Assamese usually do not migrate from region to region; however, there have been influxes of Muslim Bangladeshis into the Assam area. Typically, those within this ethnic group speak Assamese; however, many also speak Bengali. Religions differ as well, as some Assamese are Hindus, while others are Muslims. The country of Assam is well known for its tea plantations and is also a lead supplier in petroleum and natural gas for India (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

In 1826 the British captured Assam and encouraged migration from East Bengal to Assam in order to help with the cultivation of tea. Approximately 6.5 million immigrants migrated from 1826 to the early 1900s. In 1947, Bengalis entered Assam as a direct consequence of the creation of India and Pakistan. In 1956, India was organized based on linguistics. Consequently, the Assam territory was subdivided into four states. Bengalis continued to migrate into Assam after a military intervention in 1971 (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

The Assamese are a target for repression by the government and are continually disadvantaged due to past discrimination. In addition, the Assamese typically support political groups that lobby for increased group rights, to which the central government is

opposed. "Explicit public polices are in place to address Assamese underrepresentation in the economic sphere" (MAR).

With the large influx of Bengali speakers into their native Assam, the Assamese were primarily concerned with preserving their culture and way of life. While many Assamese support regional autonomy, the distinct military group of the Assam territory, known as the United Liberation Front of Assam, is keen on obtaining independence. The grievances expressed are not limited to concerns related to control of territory. In addition, the Assamese are displeased with their current working conditions and wages.

Conflict found on Uppsala Conflict Database: Bodoland

According to the Uppsala database, the Bodoland conflict was a territorial intrastate conflict beginning in 1987 and ending in 2010. The conflict primarily concerned the territorial status of the land north of Brahmapurtra river, in Assam. The conflict, although directly impacted by the central government of India, involved fighting between the Assamese and Bodos. The Bodos were ethnically discriminated against by the Assamese and revolted against them in reaction (Uppsala).

Many of the conflicts in differing parts of India stem from issues surrounding migration. The Bodo conflict can be explained in terms of direct marginalization of an ethnic group. For some time, the Bodos were a majority group on the Brahmputra River area in Assam; however, as a result of mass migrations, they were soon outnumbered. Outnumbered by Muslims, Bengali Hindus, as well as the Assamese, Bodos were left economically disadvantaged and suffered from land-alienation, and rising unemployment. Quite simply stated, the Bodo movement was in response to growing Assamese

nationalism, challenging the Assamese claim for autonomy within a separate state. Bodos called for the equal division of Assam, which molded into their slogan "Divide Assam Fifty-fifty" (All facts in this paragraph from Uppsala).

Bodo activists called for demands ranging from "carving out a separate self-governing state from Assamese territory but remaining within the Indian Union, to the demand for an independent, sovereign state" (Uppsala). In both instances, Bodos insisted that the Assamese were illegally occupying their territory. "As a consequence of this, the conflict behavior has to a large extent been characterized by communal conflict and one-sided violence in attempts to locally alter the demographic balance" (Uppsala).

The official call for a separate state by the Bodos was introduced in March of 1987. Soon after, the insurgency gained momentum and by 1989 violent protests and strikes followed. As a result, the Indian government called in the state army in order to meet violence with violence in an attempt to maintain the state. After three years of heated conflict, an agreement was reached by Assamese and Bodo delegates, formally ending the insurgency in 1993. Conflict continued until 2010, however, but it did not reach the same intensity as in years prior (All facts in this paragraph Uppsala).

All in all, the Bodos feared Assamese dominance, and thus engaged in conflict to assert their independence and protect their culture. Throughout the conflict, approximately 700 people were killed (Uppsala).

Analysis of non-MAR ethnic minority groups

Cederman and Girardin (2007) identified eleven ethnic minority groups in their respective study. After cross-examination, two of the eleven identified minority groups were identified by the Minorities at Risk project as MARs. With this in mind, there are nine other ethnic minority groups to be analyzed. None of these other nine groups are categorized as Minorities at Risk. If the hypothesis is correct, these nine groups should be unlikely to revolt. This part of the analysis will briefly highlight important defining characteristics of the remaining nine ethnic minority groups. The order of analysis is as follows: Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya and Punjabi. Details about these groups were found in Wikipedia and a website entitled "Languages of India".

The Bengali people primarily reside in the West Bengal and other eastern state areas of India. In addition, some Bengali people reside in Bangladesh. The primary religion of the Bengali is Hinduism; however, some are also Islamic, Buddhist and/or practicing Christians. The Bengali people primarily speak Bengali, also known as Bangla. Right now, the Bengali people are mostly concentrated in Bangladesh; however, some reside in West Bengal, Assam (India), Pakistan, Malaysia, and the Middle East. There are approximately 70 million people that speak Bengali, and it is the official language in both Tripura and West Bengal (All facts in this paragraph Languages of India).

The Telugu people reside in Andhra Pradesh or the Deccan plateau of India, as well as in neighboring states Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Orissa. The official religion of the Telugu people is Hinduism, while the official language is

Telegu. There are approximately 66 million Telegu speakers, and it is the official language of Andra Pradesh, India (All facts in this paragraph Languages of India).

The Marathi people reside primarily in Maharashtra as well as parts of Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andrah Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in India. A majority of Marathi people are Hindus; however, some Marathis practice the Jewish, Islamic, or Parsee faiths. The Marathi people are an Indo-Aryan ethnic group residing in western India. There are approximately 30 million Marathi speakers, and Marathi is the official language in Maharashtra, India (All facts in this paragraph Languages of India).

The Tamil people are mainly found in Tamil Nadu, India; however, there are significant Tamil populations in Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Pondicherry in India. There are approximately 53 million Tamil speakers, and Tamil is the official language of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry of India (All facts in this paragraph Languages of India).

The Gujarati people, who primarily speak Gujarati, are spread throughout India. Some areas densely populated by Gujarati people include Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan in India. Most of the Gujarati people are of Indo-Aryan decent. There are approximately 41 million Gujarati speakers, and it is the official language of Dadra and Nagar Havelli, Daman and Diu and Gujarat of India (All facts in this paragraph Languages of India).

The Kannada people are mainly found in Karnataka, India. Significant numbers of Kannada people also live in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Goa, and Kerala of India. Kannada people are also referred to as Kannadiga people, and are native to

Karnataka. There are approximately 33 million Kannada speakers, and it is the official language of Karnataka (Facts in this paragraph found in Languages of India).

Information regarding the Malayalam people was only sparsely available. What I could find stated that there are about 30 million Malayalam speakers, and it is the official language of Kerala and Lakshadweep of India (Facts in this paragraph found on Wikipedia).

The Oriya people principally reside in Orissa; however, a small portion can be found in Andhra Pradesh as well as West Bengal. The Oriya people can trace their history back to ethnic groups of eastern India, predominantly of eastern Indo-Aryan nationality and manly practice the Hindu faith. There are approximately 28 million Oriya speakers, and it is the official language of Orissa, India (Facts in this paragraph found in Languages of India).

Finally, the Punjabi people mainly reside in Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi in India. The Punjabi people speak Punjabi and practice a variety of religions including Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Jainsim, Atheism, and Agnosticism. There are approximately 23 million Punjabi speakers, and it is the official language of Punjab, India (Facts in this paragraph found in Languages of India)

Risk Assessment of MARs and Mobilization Techniques

As visually displayed in the chart below, both of the groups identified as MARs rebelled. As can also be seen, none of the other 9 groups are reported by Uppsala to have risen in revolt against the Indian government. Results were found after cross-referencing the MAR database with the Uppsala database. Groups identified as MARs are clearly repressed, and thus it can be determined that using a group's "MAR status" was a plausible measurement strategy. Based on these results, there is strong support for my proposed hypothesis. There is a direct relationship between MAR status and onset of rebellion.

Table 2: Ethnic Minority Groups of India, MAR status, and Uppsala Rebellion

Ethnic Minority Group	Minority at Risk	Rebellion (Uppsala)
Bengali	No	No
Telugu	No	No
Marathi	No	No
Gujarati	No	No
Kannada	No	No
Malayalam	No	No
Oriya	No	No
Punjobi	No	No
Sikhs	Yes	Revolt
Assamese	Yes	Revolt

While assessing the MARs, it is important to look critically at the factors that increase the likelihood of rebellion, in order to explore mobilization techniques used. As articulated in the research design section, grievances tend to heighten people's ethnic affinity, which consequently makes mobilization easier. In this section, the mobilization techniques of the Sikhs and Assamese will be explored.

Sikhs: The Sikhs have two prominent factors that increase their likelihood of rebellion. The two factors are as follows:

- Tenacious and regular protests in the past (MAR)

- Territorial concentration (MAR)

The government of India directly oppressed the Sikh population in order to control their insurgencies. The Sikhs were able to capitalize on the oppression by the central government in order to mobilize the Sikh community. The following examples demonstrate how the Sikhs mobilized as a direct result of oppression by the Indian government.

1. After British India gained independence in 1947, Sikhs were forced to join India. During this time period, Sikhs lost many of their privileges, land, and were deeply upset. As a direct result, Sikh ambition to push toward the establishment of their own independent state gained momentum (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

2. As discontent grew, a Sikh Preacher, Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale, emerged as a leader of affected Sikhs. He is seen as the leader of Sikhs and many joined him in his push toward independence. With this groundswell of nationalism, Sikhs took refuge in the Golden Temple Complex. This was a visible step for Sikhs to

emerge as a disgruntle ethnic group demanding various concessions form the Indian government (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

Assamese: The Assamese have four distinct factors that increase the onset of rebellion. The four factors are as follows:

- Current insurgency
- Densely populated in a concentrated territory
- High levels of group organization
- Oppression by government and state authorities

The Assamese are directly oppressed by the central government of India, which makes the Assamese a likely group to rebel (Bodoland rebellion). Due to the direct oppression by the central government, the following organizations emerged and fought against the Indian government. The following examples provide insight into mobilization techniques used by the Assamese to capitalize on the oppression of the government to mobilize individuals (All facts in this paragraph and above MAR).

1. The All Assam Student Union (AASU) fought against Bengali immigration, while simultaneously insisting on greater job opportunities. Since its formation, the AASU has grown steadily and is now one of the largest youth organizations having is a root in the pre-independence era. The AASU have been able to mobilize over the course of history in order to bring attention to ethnic grievances. Ethnic grievances connect each member of the AASU, as the group fought directly to press against the Indian federal government to improve upon economic conditions present in the northeast area of India (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

2. In the mid to late 1970s, Assasmese activism heated up as the Asseamese, via the AASU, pushed a campaign to limit immigration. Moreover, the Assamese fought to obtain more opportunities for its group members through statewide strikes against the central government. In 2004-2005, the Assamese banded together and engaged in multiple acts of symbolic resistance. In 2006, 20,000 Assamese villagers rioted after the arrest of a dozen youths thought to have connections with the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). Violent physical acts against the central government of India began in the late 1980s; however, tensions worsened in the 1990s (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

3. As of 2006, no negotiations had been made between the central government and the Assamese people via the ULFA. In fact, the ULFA has refused to enter into negation proceedings with the state government. Assamese were regularly tortured, arrested and punished for their involvement in the ULFA. Progressive movements were restricted and unsuccessful by the ULFA and Assamese people. Progressive attempts were deemed unsuccessful due in large part to the huge military counter-insurgency program put in place by the central government (All facts in this paragraph MAR).

As explained before, the Indian government targets and directly oppresses the Assamese people. As a direct result, the Assamese band together creating intricate networks with common goals in order to protest against the central government. There seems to be a direct relationship between oppression and mobilization. For example, when the Indian government directly targeted the Assamese people, not only did they rebel, but they were able to rebel successfully due to collective mobilization. Moreover,

the oppression by the state government directly increased the degree of Assamese

nationalism. Over the course of time, as oppression worsened, there was a groundswell of

nationalism for the Assamese people. This increased activism and commitment to the

ethnic group, made mobilization and recruitment of new members easier.

Summation of Results

After careful examination and thorough case analysis, it can be determined that

my proposed hypothesis is strongly supported. Simply put, the measurement and research

design strategies employed resulted in strong support for the hypothesis. The support for

the hypothesis is evidenced by the observation that out of the 11 Cederman and Girardin

(2007) ethnic minority groups listed, two of these ethnic minority groups were also

MARs. The two ethnic minority groups that were MARs, the Sikhs and Assamese, were

the only ethnic minority groups that rebelled according to the Uppsala database. In

addition, as articulated before, the direct oppression of the Sikhs and Assamese by the

Indian central government enabled both groups to mobilize successfully.

<p align="center">**Critique**</p>

While the results above are plausible and sufficiently supported, additional information emerged in the process of researching my case studies that requires comment. To reiterate, the 11 ethnic minority groups cited by Cederman and Girardin (2007) are displayed in the chart below.

Table 3: Ethnic Minority Groups of India and Percentage of Total Population

Minority Groups in India	Percentage of Population
Bengali	8.22
Telugu	7.8
Marathi	7.38
Tamil	6.26
Gujarati	4.81
Kannada	3.87
Malayalam	3.59
Oriya	3.32
Punjabi	2.76
Sikhs	2
Assamese	1.55

After careful analysis, it was determined that Cederman and Girardin's ethnic groups were, in fact, language groups of India. Simply put, as part of Cederman and Girardin's research study, language groups of India were treated as ethnic groups. In retrospect, this is a very narrow way to define, explore, and categorize ethnic groups. For

those unfamiliar with India, this may seem like a plausible and feasible way to define ethnicity; however, those familiar with the ethnic makeup of India understand the complexities that result by simply using language groups in place of ethnic groups. By simply using language groups of India, Cederman and Girardin neglected to study many prominent and influential Indian ethnic minority groups. While this is a shortcoming of their specific study, it has far-reaching consequences only visible after careful examination.

In order to understand the shortcomings of limiting and exploring India's "ethnic minority groups" as defined by language, it is useful to consider all of India's MARs listed in the MAR database. The chart below displays the MARs found in India and provides the specific ethnic categorization of each group.

Table 4: List and Type of Ethnic Minority Groups in India

Group Name	Group Type
Assamese	Indigenous
Bodos	Indigenous
Kashmiris	Ethnonationalist
Mizos	Indigenous
Muslims	Religious Sect
Nagas	Indigenous
Scheduled Tribes	Indigenous
Sikhs	Ethnonationalists
Tripuras	Indigenous

In order to explore the link between an ethnic group's MAR status and their likelihood of rebellion, it is important to look at the relationship between all of the identified MARs of India and rebellions (by looking for evidence of group revolts in the Uppsala conflict database). This is the methodology that was employed in the original analysis section to explore the link between the Cederman and Girardin ethnic minority groups and civil war onset. A simple way to think about the argument is to evaluate whether all of the MARs of India have, at some point in time, rebelled. Due to time and length constraints, findings will be summarized in the table below, rather than detailed extensively like the rebellions of the Sikhs and Assamese.

Table 5: MARs in India

Name of Minority at Risk	Rebellion (Uppsala Database)	Name of Conflict (Uppsala Database)
Assamese	+	Bodoland
Bodos	+	Bodoland
Kashmiris	+	Kashmir
Mizos	_	N/A
Muslims	+	Islamic
Nagas	+	Nagaland
*Scheduled Tribes	+	Orissa
Sikhs	+	Punjab/Khalistan
Tripuras	+	Tripura

* According to the MAR database, Scheduled Tribes are referred to as the original inhabitants of an area.

As clearly displayed in the table above, all but one of the MARs listed has

rebelled. This is consistent with my expectation that ethnic discrimination makes

rebellion likely.. Now, after establishing that groups given MAR status are likely to

rebel, it is interesting to explore why the seven MARs were not listed ethnic groups in

Cederman and Girardin's research study. The simple answer is that the ethnic groups

omitted from the Cederman and Girardin study are not language groups of India.

By omitting established ethnic groups, such as the Nagas, from study the

legitimacy of Cederman and Girardin's conclusions are called into question. After

familiarizing oneself with the ethnic makeup of India, it is not difficult to understand why

the Nagas are not included in Cederman and Girardin's list of minority groups. As a

direct result of the methodology employed by Cederman and Girardin, they chose to

solely rely on the KGB atlas as their sole data sources. Cederman and Giradin chose to

solely rely on the KGB at last because it has geo-maps of where the ethnic groups were,

and think it's likely that no other ethnicity dataset did. In fact, it's quite difficult to

understand why the orginal compliers of the KGB atlas identified only linugusint groups

as ethnic groups in India. The Nagas have been consistently repressed by the government

of India and are currently in the midst of conflict against the Indian government

(Uppsala). Due to their densely populated territorial concentration, and loss of autonomy,

the Nagas have mobilized to fight repression by the government (Uppsala). Over the

course of 55 years the conflict involving Nagas and the Indian government has resulted in

approximately 600-recorded deaths (Uppsala). Still, the Nagas are omitted from the

Cederman and Girardin list of ethnic minority groups of India because the Nagas are not

a language group of India. In fact, the Nagas are comprised of many different tribes

densely populated in the North Eastern part of India, none of which share a common language. Due to the lack of common language, the Nagas were completely omitted from the Cederman and Girardin study as an independent group. (Note: the Nagas may have been either partially included in other language groups or entirely omitted.) The Nagas are just one example of how Cederman and Girardin's limited and narrow definition of ethnic groups may have affected the overall legitimacy of their study's findings.

The 11 ethnic minority groups in Cederman and Girardin's study were used to calculate a cumulative ELF score for India. Ethnic groups known to be either partially or fully omitted from the ELF score are the following: Bodos, Kashmiris, Mizos, Muslims, Nagas, Scheduled Tribes, and Tripuras. In the case of India, many influential ethnic minority groups may have been excluded if not part of a language group. Subsequently, the ELF score used to determine the degree of ethnic-fractionalization and tension in India may be incorrect.

The data upon which the ELF score is based and used in the Cederman and Girardin study, is from the same dataset used in other studies to investigate the link or proposed link between ethnicity and civil war onset. If ethnic minority groups with known insurgencies are omitted from the ELF score, then the legitimacy of the ELF score for India is called into question. If similar mistakes have been made, that is, if non-linguistic ethnic groups have been omitted in other countries, the ELF scores for those states may be inaccurate as well. These concerns raise strong doubts about the frequently asserted lack of relationship between ethnicity and civil wars.

While this particular study is limited in scope, and cannot be extrapolated or generalized past India, it calls into question the legitimacy of ELF scores that are not

fully explained or understood by readers. In future work, it would be interesting to explore all countries' ELF scores in order to determine how groups are classified for inclusion or exclusion. The methodology used could be rewritten and thus more accurate. As a direct result of increased accuracy in ELF scores, there could be a new, fresh perspective on the link between ethnicity and civil war onset. On the other hand, due to the limited scope of this thesis, India could be the only country in which language groups are coded as ethnic groups. If this is the case, then the legitimacy of the Indian ELF score may be the only compromised result.

Additionally, this research project clearly illustrates that by relying on state-level measures like ELF (as existing work does) treats the "presence of ethnic differences" as the same thing as "presence of ethnic grievances" . In actuality, they are not the same thing. Simply put, even if based on "true" ethnic groups, ELF scores treat ethnic differences and ethnic grievances as one in the same. Perhaps the largest contribution of this research study is that it is able to articulate the complexities created by treating "ethnic differences" and "ethnic grievances" as one in the same. This study is able to distinguish between "ethnic" and "aggrieved" groups. By doing so, this study is able to get at the hypothesized causal relationship that exists among discrimination, grievance and rebellion. To clarify, previously, all ethnic groups were explored to assess their likelihood of rebellion. This study is able to separate ethnic groups from aggrieved ethnic groups in order to determine which ethnic groups rebel. Moreover, when we move from "differences" to "grievances", the whole ethnicity-is-a- constant argument put in place by Fearon and Laitin (2003) is clearly gone.

Conclusion

These case analyses were designed to test a distinct hypothesis about the link, or proposed link, between ethnicity and the onset of civil war. While the link, or proposed link, between ethnicity and civil war onset is a broad topic, the contention and differing opinions surrounding this topic made it a viable area of study. Specifically, this study set out to test the hypothesis that when ethnic groups are discriminated against by the central government their grievances make them more likely to rebel. After completing a thorough analysis, I found strong support for my hypothesis. Yet interestingly, while the results proved favorable, it was the unexpected spurious findings that proved most interesting to further explore.

As expected, when ethnic minority groups were marginalized by the central government, these minority groups were more likely to rebel as illustrated by both the Sikh and Assamese ethnic minority groups of India. While these findings were substantial and merit attention, lurking issues, specifically a potentially more valid classification of ethnic groups in India, was raised. After additional study, perhaps the most interesting finding of these case analyses was not directly related to the hypothesis of study. Instead, perhaps the most thought-provoking facet of this study was the realization that ethnic minority groups in India have been mis-categorized by language in standard datasets and studies. Simply put, ethnic minority groups and language groups of India are treated as one and the same. In doing so, the roster of Indian ethnic minority groups is grossly underestimated.

The primary shortcoming of this study is that it cannot be generalized across different countries. Although the methodology used can be applied to any nation

regardless of location, size, or type of government, the results yielded in this specific study are only applicable to India. While the results are only applicable to one country, this study draws attention to an area that warrants additional critical analysis both in India and other nations.

The far-reaching consequences, implications, and complexities of this study found in India, merit additional study. In future work, a more accurate data set should be created in order to directly explore the link between ethnicity and civil war onset. Data used to calculate ELF scores should not only be looking at ethnicity across countries. Instead, data sets should be looking to see which ethnic groups are discriminated against in order to clearly explore the link between ethnicity and civil war onset. In the case of India, a more accurate list of ethnic groups is a necessity. Simply put, India needs a more valid ethnicity data set. While case analysis is not feasible at all times, perhaps this is the best way to go about differentiated between "different ethnic groups" and "aggrieved ethnic groups". Case analysis could be used to determine which ethnic groups are discriminated against, and then quantitative analysis could be used to generalize a countries ELF score.

All in all, while this study produced strong support for the proposed hypothesis, perhaps the most beneficial facet is the clear indication that further examination of how ethnicity is represented is necessary before we will truly know if ethnic grievances make civil wars more likely.

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- *Dean's List*, 2008-2012
- *President's Freshman Award for Academic Achievement*, 2009
- *The Daily Collegian Scholarship for Excellence in Business*, 2009-2012
- *American Collegiate Hockey Association All-American Honorable Mention*, 2011
- *American Collegiate Hockey Association Academic All-American*, 2011
- *American Collegiate Hockey Association Women's Division 1 Community Play Maker* , 2011
- *American Collegiate Hockey Association National Select Team*, 2010

<div align="center">

ACTIVITIES

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- **Captain,** *Penn State Women's Ice Hockey,* 2009-2012 (State College, PA)
- **Member,** *Penn State Women's Ice Hockey,* 2008-2012 (State College, PA)
- **Business Operations Assistant Manager,** *The Daily Collegian,* 2010-2012 (State College, PA)
- **Business Operations Senior Representative,** *The Daily Collegian,* 2009-2010 (State College, PA)
- **Business Operations Representative,** *The Daily Collegian,* (2008-2009)
- **Inaugural Member,** *The Presidential Leadership Academy,* (2008-2012)