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The Effect of State Capacity on Civil Conflict in India

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The Effect of State Capacity on Civil Conflict in India

by Rimen Singh

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

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ABSTRACT

RIMEN BRAR SINGH: The Effect of State Capacity on Civil Conflict in India
(Under the direction of Matt DiGiuseppe)

This thesis seeks to study the relationship between state capacity and civil conflict in India. This thesis provides insight on concepts such as state capacity, intrastate rebellious conflict, and greed and grievance, but the main focus of this thesis is on sub-national differences. The thesis attempts to demonstrate how sub-national differences may affect state capacity and influence intrastate conflict. Two aspects of sub-national differences are investigated: topography and roads. Specifically, data for topography and roads are confined within India. India is chosen to be a case study due to its diverseness in people and geography. The methods used to record this data involve carefully examining maps within each sub-national region and recording these examinations into SPSS to determine possible correlations to conflict. Three categories of recorded conflict are used as independent variables: state based violence, battle deaths, and terroristic deaths. These independent variables consist of measured activities in India from as early as the 1980s to as late as 2011. The findings from a regression analysis of this data suggest that topography and roads is correlated to conflict. The study concludes that increased topography correlates to an increase in terroristic deaths, and a lack of roads is related to increased battle deaths, state based violence, and terrorism deaths.
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Introduction:

Why do rebels challenge the government, the authority that has a monopoly on coercion within the state? No matter what kind of government prevails in an area, one aspect remains constant among them: each government has some sort of state capacity. Hendrix states, “state capacity is a state’s ability to deter or repel challenges to its authority with force.” Yet, state capacity is not limited to these aspects as state capacity can also include political democracy and dominance over citizens (Hendrix 2010, 274-275). In other words, state capacity is the measurement of how well a state can ensure stability within its territory through militarized and political means. To maintain stability, states require resources. Not all states possess the same types and level of resources; these major resources can include technology, capital, military, and governmental efficiency. A resource advantage could be instrumental for the containment and prevention of conflict (Fearon & Laitin 2001). High capacity states are considered as states that are able to supply significant public goods such as effective domestic and interstate security, health services, and freedom in the development of physical and social infrastructure. Therefore, high capacity states receive mass abidance from citizens under their domain as essential living requirements are provided while these benefits could be lost without the formation and proper structure of these states (Ottervik 2013). Plus in general, well structured policing lowers the potential of all forms of domestic violence (Mueller 2000). Low capacity states are seen as states which struggle to and are ineffective in providing these major and essential public goods. The consequences of the
lack of state capacity include “low social trust, low development levels, regime, or even state failure.” Governments, especially democracies, are highly vulnerable to collapse if high state capacity is not maintained (Ottervik 2013, 3). Bugajski explains,

State weakness can spawn the creation of armed criminal gangs and armed vigilante groups, provoke inter-ethnic conflicts, anti-immigrant pogroms, separatist movements, and significant refugee outflows. Such developments will also stimulate the growth of organized crime and smuggling operations transcending national borders (2011, 1).

Thus, state capacity is an important concept. Because state capacity is based on the effectiveness of a state to withstand opposition from forces ranging from citizens to other states, state capacity is a huge determinant to whether a state exists at all. The ability to recognize whether a state is low capacity or high capacity could be invaluable when analyzing international events and relations. As already mentioned, low capacity states risk collapsing due to their weakness and lack of effectiveness in providing basic goods. (Ottervik 2013). Apart from the massive repercussions within a state, how grand of an impact on an international scale can occur with the collapse of a state? At the time of this thesis, the world is experiencing the effects of the breakdown of Iraq and Syria and the expansion of an insurgency known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Millions of people are being displaced, many are dying in the attempt to reach safety, and tensions are soaring in Europe over what actions to take about this insurgency and refugee crisis (Dearden 2016). The Middle Eastern turmoil is not what I will be explaining in my thesis, but it provides a strong example of why considering state capacities before turmoil occurs.
might be a good idea. In my thesis, I do not specifically analyze the effects of states losing control or what could be done to improve state capacity, but rather I take a step back. I seek to determine the correlation between state capacity and conflict from a sub-national setting.

To make this determination, I examine the state of India. I find India a remarkable case to study due to its incredible diversity; the state composes of numerous religions, ethnic groups, as well as multitudes of languages. The geography of the state is interestingly diverse with India having regions which compose of deserts, forests, plains, tropics, islands, and mountains (Central Intelligence Agency 2016 B). In my observation, I look at the impact of state capacity both sub-nationally and across time. I do my research by viewing measurements both natural, such as in agriculture and geography, and man-made, including terrorism, violence, and roads.
Literature Review:

A critical concept to note when examining conflict is to understand what constitutes conflict. A conflict generally defines a heavy contention that may or may not result in violent clashes, so the term “conflict” itself is very broad. There are different areas of conflict such as interstate conflict, trans-state conflict, and intrastate conflict. Interstate conflict is conflict between two or more separate states. Interstate conflict can be based on territorial contesting, conduct with ethnic groups, and resources. Trans-state conflict is not limited within a specific place and involves “international terrorism, economic sabotage, and cyber-attacks that precipitate state paralysis, undermine national security, or provoke international conflicts with sponsoring states.” The area of conflict where this thesis will focus on is intrastate conflict which involves “civil conflicts precipitated by deepening political cleavages, economic distress, and growing inequalities.” Intrastate conflict can result in “erosion of government legitimacy, a breakdown of law and order, and escalating ungovernability” (Bagajski 2011, 1).

Conflict can also be broken into three different categories. A crises is when a group feels threatened and military conflict seems likely to occur. A dispute can actually involve force as it occurs when military force is used, but deaths as a result of the force used are supposed under 1000 to be classified as a dispute. War is the most extreme form of conflict as war involves over 1000 casualties while typically being fought over a prolonged period of time (Sambanis 2001). Thus, conflict is definitely a highly concerning matter for states. The principal of a state is to assert control over its claimed
territory. In fact, Weber is the founder of the standard and widely accepted
definition of a state; he defines a state as “the human community that successfully claims
the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory,” and Weber
rules that “if a state is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the
powers that be” (Ottervik 2013, 6). The formation of conflict itself is a challenge to the
authority of a state. As mentioned previously, conflict infers violence or the likelihood
that violence will occur, and groups tend to consist of goals which are against the
interests of other parties. Thus, conflict hinders the domestic stability of a state and
threatens the intentions of the leaders of a state.

Before internal violent conflicts occur, states usually have to deal with protests or
the displaying of intense demands from a certain group. States have massive influence
over the outcomes of domestic protests as leaders may choose to appease the unsatisfied
through concessions or deny protesters any concessions. High capacity states tend to
accurately recognize the interests of protesters, contact the group's uneasy leaders,
encourage and take part in negotiations, and provide enforceable agreements whereas low
capacity states tend to have difficulty and often failures with these provisions. As protests
are often against the policies and interests of leaders, the displays may discourage
interaction in some instances as leaders could interpret protests as disrespectful. For a
protest to be effective, it must rely on organization and disruption; organization assists in
the management of demands while disruption results in state leaders gaining incentives to
take care of the demands of protesters. Repression of protests is much more difficult for
democratic states than authoritarian states as democratic states provide citizens the right
to “complain, petition, organize, protest, demonstrate, and strike” whereas authoritarian
states are not constricted by these obligations. Regardless of governmental structure,
repression and failure to properly address demands results in groups gaining ill-feelings
which could result in groups committing greater actions (Sullivan 2013, 16).

One specific type of conflict is ethnic conflict. As the term suggests, ethnic
conflict occurs when ethnicity has a direct correlation to the outbreak of conflict. Ethnic
conflict implies dispute between different ethnic groups rather than a dispute among one
ethnic group. An important concept to understand when analyzing ethnic conflict is to
recognize what separates one ethnic group from another. Perhaps Max Weber best
explains what constitutes ethnicity as he describes that ethnic groups can be contrasted
through aspects such as “color, language, religion, tribes, races, nationalities, and casts”
(Sambanis 2001, 261). The goals of ethnic groups usually are “about preserving regional
autonomy, linguistic education rights, ethnic representation,” and religious freedom over
economic possibilities (Sambanis 2001, 267). As Thomas Hobbs suggests, lack of trust
may facilitate violence and even preemptive attacks (Kydd & Walter 2006). Other than
autonomic and policy concerns, ethnic conflict may also be fueled by fear and lack of
interaction. In fact, “high levels of civic engagement can lead to lower levels of ethnic
violence,” so group avoidance is certainly a factor that contributes to ethnic conflict. If
ethnic groups become frightened about their well-being and suspect that an outside group
could threaten their livelihood, tensions may result which could lead to conflict.
Circumstances which could trigger tension include contempt between cultures, intrusion
on another ethnic group's territory, and concern that women within an ethnic group will
be violated by another ethnic group if action is not taken (Brubaker & Laitin 1998, 435).
Thus, ethnic conflict is an important concept to be acknowledged not only because ethnic conflict is a major form as conflict but also since ethnic conflict may threaten stability within a state. Additionally, ethnicity may put the interests of a magnitude of people at stake as ethnicity incorporates broad categories of people such as color, religion, and race. A reasonable assumption is that the more people involved within a conflict, the more violence, deaths, economic loss, and instability there will be. A state’s lack of ability or avoidance in addressing ethnic concerns and tensions may result in these groups engaging in violence due to the unresolved issues. Perhaps another reasonable assumption is that ongoing violence between ethnic groups will be prolonged if a state does not intervene. Regardless of the specific situation, the inability to properly address the formation of tension and prevent the emergence of conflict between massively broad factions of a population definitely demonstrates the limited capacity of a state.

However, conflict is definitely not limited to ethnicity. Conflict may also involve the emergence of insurgencies. The emergence of insurgencies can result from insufficient governmental control in areas such as political, territorial, and militarial. Other factors may include “rough terrain, large population, access to weapons, or foreign support for the insurgency” (Fearon and Laitin 2001, 3). Authoritarian governments tend to have greater advantages in dealing with unruly behavior, whether the behavior be
ethnic or not, compared to democracies. With minimum tendencies towards the concern of human rights, discontented conflict within a state tends to consist of elites promoting shady groups to help take down ethnic rioters. In response, average citizens may turn supportive or intimidated into allowing inhumane tragedies, such as genocide, take place or may provide direct assistance in the violent activities (Fearon and Laitin 2001).

Rebel groups are typically much less resourceful than established governments so, thus, are unable to efficiently fight a direct war. Rebellious groups may result to the use of terrorism as a mean to achieve their political goals, and there are multiple strategies through the use of terrorism. One tactic is attrition which involves terrorists proving and threatening to inflict considerable costs if their demand is not met. Another strategy is intimidation in which terrorists retaliate against public disobedience; when the government is not capable to prevent terrorist enforcement, the public follows the rules of the terrorists. Provocation consists of triggering an extreme reaction from a government which leads more people objecting to government and joining the terrorists' cause. Spoiling is when terrorists disrupt possibilities of a peace agreement by discrediting a party involved in the negotiation. Outbidding occurs when terrorists attempt to gain the support of the public by displaying tremendous firmness in fighting the enemy (Kydd & Walter 2006). The use of terrorism commonly implies that participants seek “regime change, territorial change, policy change, social control, or status quo maintenance” (Kydd & Walter 2006, 52). Giving into the demands of terrorists may seem as a possible but humiliating settlement for peace, however “governments that have already yielded to terrorist demands are more likely to experience additional terrorist attacks” (Kydd &
The importance behind terrorism and state capacity is that terroristic measures may contribute to a diminishment of state capacity. The numerous ways terrorism can be applied demonstrates that terrorism contains multiple possibilities that may alter a state’s ability to maintain stability. This alteration could infer a disruption of social, political, or military harmony and possibly, governmental efficiency. Of course, governmental efficiency is needed for the distribution of public goods such as health services, infrastructure development and maintenance, and security. Thus, successful terrorism could have disastrous effects on a state and its functions. The inability for a state to fulfill its functions may lead to disarray (Kydd & Walter 2006).

According to the empirical findings of Hendrix and Young, the relationship between terrorism and state capacity differentiates depending on the state capacity and the state’s focus. Hendrix and Young divide the concept behind a state’s focus into two categories: administrative and military. States that possess a strong administrative or bureaucratic capacity are less likely to experience terroristic attacks compared to states which struggle with their administrative capacity. Hendrix and Young suggest that well administered states have significant policing and capabilities to confront social grievances which become deterrents for terrorism. States “with more conventional military capacity” are less likely to face terroristic attacks than states with non-conventional military capacity (Cullen & Young 2014, 347). Hendrix and Young suggest the reasoning behind this is that significantly sized and funded militaries could contribute towards grievance as military spending is positively correlated with political corruption, and military spending may be perceived as a form of patronage politics that “saps societal
resources from other uses” (Cullen & Young 2014, 351). A history of terroristic activity may also increase the possibility of terrorist attacks as Hendrix and Young state “more developed countries with larger populations that previously experienced attacks and are embroiled in civil conflict experience more terrorist attacks” (Cullen & Young 2014, 347).

The buildup and continuous existence of rebel groups can be attributed as a result of several different explanations. A possible reason for rebellion is greed. The greed explanation suggests that rebellious individuals and factions may act out of yearning for materialistic or economic gain. Conflict may provide the opportunity for groups to obtain valuable materials such as gold, oil, and diamonds. Other than the raw wealth these products can provide, these goods could turn into a precious resource for leaders as the materials may be used to fund a militaristic campaign or political cause. The availability of and capability to distribute these financial resources correlates to the speed of gathering soldiers and supplies. Another explanation to the formation and preserving of rebel groups is insufficient state handling of inequalities. Inequality refers to the difference between groups in categories such as property, wages, and political rights. In other words, inequality does not pertain to matters or expectations within a group, but it is a comparison of resources between contrasting groups. Inequalities are a concern since major differences between groups may cause resentment or grievances from a disadvantaged group as the group could believe that they have been wronged in being able to obtain similar advantages as the upper groups. The disadvantaged group would also have lower socioeconomic status compared to the upper groups and may gain the
perception of being politically repressed and undesired due to the disadvantaged group's ethnicity which only adds to the bitterness of the situation (Regan & Norton 2005).

Though greed and grievances may play a part in intrastate conflict, the significance of greed and grievances on their own may not be so great. Since actors can be motivated to participate and profit from conflict according to the greed theory, the identities of these actors as rebellious groups or insurgents seems inaccurate. As indicated previously, an insurgency or rebellion defines an instance where a group attempts to overthrow an established government in order to facilitate change, so those who seek to financially profit from conflict are in a different category. Actors who have the primary goal of increasing wealth and engage in violent behavior for this purpose would be better classified as “bandits or pirates” (Collier & Hoeffler 2002, 5). The grievance explanation may lack significance based on the concept of universal grievance. Universal grievance proposes that “all countries might have groups with a sufficiently strong sense of grievance to wish to launch a rebellion.” Therefore, “rebellions will occur where they are viable” (Collier & Hoeffler 2002, 6). As stated previously, rebellions are likely to occur where governments are weak, and contributing factors include governmental military, politics, and geographical landscape. Thus for greed and grievance to be significant factors, they need to be intertwined. For an insurgency to develop, grievances must exist, and those grievances must be directed towards the goal of overthrowing a regime. In order for a rebellion to last, the rebellious group must have the capacity to sustain itself against opposing governmental forces, and sustaining requires supplying troops and gathering equipment which is possible to do through the greed explanation (Collier &
However, Murshed and Tadjoeddin offer a different analysis. They consider greed to be about opportunity, specifically economic opportunity. Economic opportunity can be obtained through three categories: financing, recruitment, and geography. Financing is done by rebellious groups through controlling natural resources, receiving donations by sympathizers who do not necessarily reside in the group’s state, grants sent by outside regimes who unfavorably view the contested state, and even multinational businesses which have their own interests in the area. Among all the finance opportunities, Murshed and Tadjoeddin believe that natural resources are the most crucial. Recruitment is defined as “the opportunity to induct fighting manpower.” Manpower is a necessary component for a group to have the ability to exert tactical force; without force, rebellious groups lack threatening power. Therefore, any of the methods through financing could be negatively altered against rebellious groups if sufficient manpower is not maintained; these groups could lose control of natural resources or lose support from outside regimes and businesses. An ideal setting for recruitment is in an area which contains heavy numbers of young jobless males who are constrained by poverty and lack of education. Geography is another important category for rebellious groups to sustain economic opportunity. Direct conflict with state forces is typically not ideal for rebellious groups, so areas which contain mountains or other types of rough terrain are advantageous for these groups. The correlation between manpower and geography, which the definitions of the term themselves do not involve currency, to economic opportunity is that they provide a needed situation for rebellious groups: the ability to fight or contest against a state.
Through fighting and achievements from fighting, economic benefits can be gained. Murshed and Tadjoeddin mention the empirical findings of Collier and Hoeffler which claims “rebel opportunity or greed akin to loot-seeking are the main reasons for civil war.” Murshed and Tadjoeddin also acknowledge that greed can be seen as a “criminal motivation for civil war.” However, grievance is an entirely different motivational concept than greed. In grievance, groups are not influenced by possible economic benefits. Rather, grievance is centered towards the need for perceived justice in areas such as “ethnic religious divisions, political repression, and horizontal inequality” (Murshed & Tadjoeddin 2007, 5).

In the scenario where a group rebels, the group may face a collective action problem. Collective action occurs when people work together in order to accomplish a goal. While the concept would seem to be efficient, the problem with collective action is that when large groups of people work together, the process opens the possibility for free riding. Free riding is when an actor that is part of a group does not contribute towards the group's goal. Since other actors have interest and are working towards the goal, a non-contributing actor can refrain from providing effort or resources as the actor assumes other actors will achieve the goal anyway. Thus, free riding reduces efficiency and even encourages actors to not work together despite having a common goal. Though collective action generally opens the possibility of free riding, collective action can be structured to make free riding less likely. As Rajiv Sethi states, “collective action problems are not insurmountable....communication and coordination are critical in overcoming them.” Continuous interaction and planning among actors within a group facilitates response to
behavior which encourages activity, cooperation, and fulfillment of responsibilities (2008, 3).

Low state capacity can potentially influence the formation of conflict. As mentioned previously, state capacity defines how well states can effectively respond to challenges, and these challenges include threats to stability. On the sub-national level, low capacity states may struggle with different types of essential services such as the provision of health. The provision of health includes the need for proper healthcare facilities, professionals, and available methods to combat public health concerns such as child mortality. Though medical concerns is different from conflict, the lack of medical services may still play an influence towards conflict as a grievance; plus, a population struggling to combat preventable diseases would not seem very stable. Another area where low capacity states can struggle is with security and bureaucracy. At the sub-national level, security may involve stability and peace from rebellions and intense crime at the local level; “the local level” is emphasized as state capacity may also include a state’s ability to challenge interstate threats, but for the purpose of this thesis, only sub-national threats and influences to state capacity will be addressed. Though peace agreements can be thought to occur at the interstate level, peace agreements are also necessary aspects of the subnational level. A sufficient bureaucracy is needed for societal agreements such as “power-sharing, constitutional reform, democratization, [and] decentralization of authority” (DeRouen Jr. & Sobek 2014, 1). An important area where low capacity states may struggle at the sub-national level is the public sector. This category includes “training public servants, control of corruption, maintaining and
accounting for state assets, and tax revenue collection” (DeRouen Jr. & Sobek 2014, 1).

If a state is unable to efficiently perform these actions, the state’s authority could be weak enough to be contested by armed insurgents (DeRouen Jr. & Sobek 2014).

A significantly agreed upon notion among political science researchers is the resource curse. The resource curse is a concept which explains that the states with high amounts of resources “will experience negative economic, political and social outcomes including poor economic performance, low levels of democracy, and civil war” (McNeish 2010, 3). These resources include minerals, hydrocarbons, water, and land. The reasoning behind the correlation between states having an amplitude of resources and terrible effects is that these states tend to fail in using these resources to enhance their might. The wealth gained from the luxurious amounts of resources is not used to economically strengthen the masses of citizens belonging to the state but rather benefits the limited numbers of individuals who control these resources. The resource curse is a theory which offered a different explanation for intrastate institutional and economic failures rather than previous notions of past imperialism, dependence, and foreign state meddling being the chief cause. This theory is based on resource abundance which is the “high production per capita” of a resource. Resource abundance should not be confused with resource dependency which describes a situation “where resources constitute a high proportion of the country’s exports” (McNeish 2010, 5).

McNeish mentions, “natural resource abundance leads to various types of emotional or irrational behaviour on the part of political elites, in turn contributing to poor economic policy-making and institutional deterioration” (McNeish 2010, 6).
Specifically, these political elites may develop lack of intellectual insight, become sluggish in attempting to make accomplishments, and indulge in an extravagant lifestyle. All of these politically irrational attributes are not adequate for the proper maintenance of a state since the characteristics harm state efficiency and the formation of effective policies. However, rational actors may also be influenced by a resource abundance. McNeish offers the ideas of Ross; Ross argues for a notion he calls “rent-seeking.” Rent-seeking is an action in which “rational political elites will take the opportunity to either directly seize the rents created by resource booms or gain control over the right to allocate them” (McNeish 2010, 6). Therefore, a resource abundance may lead to wealth being distributed politically rather than privately towards “investment, production and economic growth.” Due to this market, states may cater to the financial interests of businesses over the interests of poor or common people (McNeish 2010, 7).

The correlation between the resource curse and intrastate conflict could be significant. The reason the resource curse could play between state capacity and conflict is that the resource curse negatively affects state institutions. As explained, an abundance of resources may provide wealth, but this wealth can be distributed among political elites. Rather than being used to improve state institutions, the wealth is misspent among those in control, and these people become more focused with the obtained capital over the masses of citizens and implement policies that favor their own economic interests at the expense of the citizenry. Based on this knowledge, an assumable effect could be that state capacity is weakened in areas that do not contain valuable resources since political elites are focused on maintaining control of their obtained resources. Plus, greed and grievance
may become conflict factors off of the resource curse. Since wealth is being unfairly
distributed at the expense of the entire state’s benefit, the commoners would be
reasonable in developing grievances against the state’s current regime. With the
availability of mass resources, greed may influence groups who see an opportunity to
take control of the resources themselves and make profits.
Theory:

I theorize that subnational differences have an impact to state capacity. The prevalence and prosperity of regimes in the supplying of goods and prevention of rebellious takeovers may indicate sufficient control over masses of citizens, but there is a characteristic that all states have which could be difficult in administering: geography. The terrain over an entire state can be incredibly diverse. For example, the United States is filled with variations of geographic regions which include plainlands, flatlands, forests, beaches, hills, swamps, deserts, and mountains (Central Intelligence Agency 2016 A). Settlements onto and maintenance in these different areas require different methods which means the diverseness of geography prevents states from enacting a uniform approach to address issues such as bad weather, natural disasters, and even basic services such as security. Law enforcement patrols or locating a dangerous fugitive would be much trickier in a mountainous or forest area compared to searching through flat easily visible land. Though people are known to live in rough terrain, rough terrain seems to not be the most ideal for development and governmental investment. By common knowledge, stable buildings need to be built on solid flat land; otherwise, the building would find difficulty in being stable since the structure would either lean due to an uneven surface or sink since the material underneath does not have the properties to support the structure. Perhaps this inefficiency for structure development partly explains why “numbers of people [decrease] faster than exponentially with increasing elevation” (Cohen & Small 1998, 14009). In fact, Joel E. Cohen and Christopher Small find that “global human population is heavily localized at low elevations” (Cohen & Small 1998,
Thus, states composed of numerous and different sub-national regions will likely have differences in population based on the altitudes of the terrains. The variance of population among contrasting sub-national areas reasonably could result in a state focusing more services towards areas with higher population densities; these are the areas likely to have a stable ground surface for building development which lead to economic incentives for a state to properly maintain the area. Plus with higher amounts of people at these lower altitudes, lower altitude regions likely contain the bulk of the common population. In order for the regime of a state to remain in control, the state needs to either appease or constrain its population (Fearon and Laitin 2001). With more state resources and focus on lower and possibly flatter sub-national regions, an excellent question would be if higher and more uneven terrains experience instability.

**Hypothesis 1:** Topography has a relationship to the emergence of conflict. I predict that the greater area of topography a region has, the more conflict it will experience.

**Null Hypothesis 1:** Topography does not have a relationship to the emergence of conflict.

Topography itself is an intensive landscape. Mountains are tall structures composed of extremely hardened minerals. In essence, mountains classify the terrain of an area as rough and not apparently ideal to for states to settle in or occupy. Because topography is incredibly rough, the ability to maneuver through this type of terrain can be difficult. Mountains cannot simply be cleared away such as forests or drained such as
swamps, so their continued existence is much less guaranteed. Unless rugged territory seems to contain a valuable resource available for extract, such as gold or silver, the area would appear to have limited economic value for a state. In this instance where there are no useful natural resources, governments would be hesitant to invest in these places when capital could be best spent elsewhere such as in areas which could actually benefit the state economically and/or militarily.

However, I think that jagged areas could also be a strain on a state’s capacity. If a state has established sovereignty over an area, the state will seemingly have to take measures to keep the area secured. As mentioned in the literature review, all states contain factions of individuals who would like to rebel, but these notions of rebellions are restricted by incentives and deterrents which make attempted rebellion perceptively not worthwhile (Collier & Hoeffler 2002). With the inclusion of raggedy areas within a state’s territory, these areas may counter the deterrent of a state’s military force. By seeking refuge in these areas, rebellious groups could possibly sustain their movement more ideally compared to being exposed in open terrain that can be easily accessed by an established state that will most likely always have superior resources and forces than an insurgency. Again, avoiding direct battle with governmental military forces is beneficial for rebellious groups as these groups tend to easily lose head on conflict (Murshed & Tadjoeddin 2007). Therefore, since the best tactical interest of rebellious groups is to avoid direct conflict with state forces, topography provides a seemingly ideal way to do so.

Hypothesis 2: Roads have a relationship to the emergence of conflict. I predict
that the less developed infrastructure a region has, the more conflict it will experience.

Null Hypothesis 2: Roads do not have a relationship to the emergence of conflict.

Rough terrain may provide a place for rebellious groups to organize and gradually gain strength as these groups could be away from governmental surveillance. I think that rough terrain not only contains extra natural features compared to flatlands but that rough terrain contains fewer ways to navigate the area compared to highly populated areas such as cities. My reasoning behind this is that the limited population and economic potential would diminish the incentive for building manmade structures, specifically quality roads, for easier access. I realize that an argument against my reasoning could be how rebellious groups residing in an area with low numbers and terrible wealth would not be a credible threat against a state’s capacity considering the group’s seemingly lack of capacity in maintaining itself much less supporting forces which could challenge an existing state. However, my response to this argument is simple: terrorism. Yes, a rebellious faction can challenge state authority and diminish a state’s capacity while the group itself has low authority and limited resources in itself. As mentioned in the literature review, terrorists can engage in several tactics which may push states to giving into the demands of a significantly weaker opponent. These tactics include spoiling agreements between states and parties, provoking states into engaging in actions which causes the state to lose popularity and possibly gain enemies, and any success in terrorist activities could result in outbidding in which terrorists gain public control by proving their dominance over the state (Kydd & Walter 2006).
Research Design:

In this section I will explain the testing of my two hypotheses. I will explain what variables are used, where they came from, and how they were collected.

Regarding the testing of natural and regional factors towards the influence on conflict, I came across a very interesting publication. Gerdis Wischnath and Halvard Buhaug consider and test numerous factors which influence conflict. These factors include climate, agriculture, water shortages, the resource mobilization theory, individual opportunity costs, collective opportunities for mobilization, and grievances. In their analysis, Wischnath and Buhaug use empirical data which ranges from the 1980s to 2011 and encompasses measurements from all Indian states and territories. They find India “a near ideal case” to analyze due to the state having “the highest number of ongoing intrastate conflicts over the last decades” in which the “conflicts involve mostly rural populations living off the land, [and] worsening conditions under climate change have been promoted as a source of escalating violence.” Also exemplary is that India produces the second largest quantity of food in the world, and “agriculture constitutes the largest economic sector in most Indian states” (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014, 9). The experiment is set up with three dependent variables: severity of state base political violence, deadly incidents in states that are scenes of chronic conflict, and number of battle deaths in armed intrastate conflicts. Wischnath and Buhaug state “the main independent variable for this study is an indicator of food production growth” which is based from “annual data on wheat and rice production obtained from the Indian Ministry of Agriculture” (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014, 11).
The results from their experiment supports the notion “that food production growth lowers the intensity of organized violence” while “a loss of harvest is significantly associated with an increase in severity of fighting during the subsequent year” (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014, 13). Interestingly, the bad neighborhood effect, where civil conflict in adjacent areas causes a specific area to also experience increased conflict, is not applicable for India. As expectable, increased conflict severity results in increased fatalities and battle deaths (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014).

Inspired by this fascinating publication which managed to link agriculture to conflict, I decided to conduct my own experiment to test whether additional variables may also have an impact on conflict within India. The experiment which I conducted was designed to add on to the findings of Wischnath and Buhaug, but before I explain the process of my experiment, the critical variables used in both Wischnath’s and Buhaug’s and my experiment should be explained first.

An important variable used was mean neighborhood. Mean neighborhood is a representation of violent conflict in neighboring areas; this variable is important to factor in due to the bad neighbor effect in which conflict among neighboring areas may influence conflict to occur within an area. For the dependent variables, battle deaths is based on battle deaths from Indian states with over 5 years of conflicts during a period from 1990-2011. State base is based on food production and violent conflict from Indian states with over 5 years of conflicts during a period from 1982-2004. The dependent variable of terrorism is based on deaths from terrorism from 1993-2011 (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014).
Another important variable used was food growth or in other words, agricultural yield. Agricultural yield is a critical variable to measure and include as food is a strong living necessity of every person. Without adequate amounts food to consume, the existence of an individual is threatened, and when the life of a person is threatened, he or she is definitely expected to take measures in order to counter the threat. Agricultural yield’s importance is not solely limited to consumption. Many people, especially in India as mentioned by Wischnath and Buhaug, are reliant on agriculture for their economic welfare. The loss or lack of wealth may contribute towards grievance, and those affected by diminished agricultural growth may become unruly as a result if the state does not provide sufficient assistance or suppression. As mentioned previously, data for food growth was received from the Indian Ministry of Agriculture. The data for this variable measured wheat and rice production in India from 1980-2011. The specific major agricultural product of each individual Indian state was recognized, and individual Indian states that lacked decent rice or wheat output were not included as “these observations would be unable to shed light on how variations in food production affect conflict dynamics.” Here is the formula for food growth: Food growth = (Agricultural production \( t \) - Agricultural production \( t-1 \))/Agricultural production \( t-1 \) (Wischnath & Buhaug 2014).

As mentioned by my hypotheses, two additional variables which I needed to test were topography and roads. These variables were not measured in the experiment of Wischanth and Buhaug. As the experiment of Wischnath and Buhaug examined each individual Indian state, territory, and even several Indian cities, I also scanned through the Indian states, territories and cities in order to collect empirical data. (Wischnath &
The research of Wischath and Bahaug was based on numerous areas claimed and controlled by the state of India. Not only were all individual Indian states such as Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh measured, but data for agriculture and violence was also received from offshore territories such as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Unfortunately, I was unable to find a source which provided a measurement to exactly how much topography covered each individual Indian state or area. Therefore, I needed to conduct my own method and determination. To construct a variable of topography, I used a resource that was available: maps. In order to obtain and analyze maps which depicted topography, I resorted to using online sources. In some cases where geographical maps were not available, I found maps which depicted altitude. I converted certain altitudes to topography based on the fact that mountains are defined as natural elevations which are generally higher than 2000 feet or 610 meters (Mountain 2016). By visually observing these maps, I estimated the percentage of topography covering the state. I understood that visual observation is perceptive which means the results of visual examinations differ from person to person. I understood that if I classified the coverage of topography over an area as 5%, someone else may perceive the coverage as 8% or maybe 10%. Therefore, I needed to make my classifications as accurate as possible. In order to make my topographic perception as accurate as possible, I edited all the maps I obtained by moving the mountainous regions, if there were any, into a corner of the state or territory. Once all the topography had been moved, I estimated how many times it would take for that corner to expand to cover the entire state or territory. For example, if
the corner of topography would need to expand by 5 times in order to cover the whole state, this would suggest that 1/5 of the state or territory comprises of mountainous regions. Since I could obtain a fraction, I could easily convert the fraction into a percentage; 1/5 would convert to 20%, and 20% would be represented as .20 in my data. However, this process only included states and territories as mountains are not parts of Indian cities. In instances where topography for the cities would need to be filled in my data chart, I entered a value of 0.00. Below are samples of the maps I edited in order to determine topographic coverage of areas:

Andhra Pradesh map accessed from Mapsof.net.
<http://mapsof.net/gujarat/physical-map-of-andhra-pradesh>
I hypothesized roads to be an important contributor to intrastate conflict as well. In order to maintain dominance, states need to have sufficient quality access over their claimed territory. Without adequate access, maintaining enforceable order would be difficult and rebellious groups could be motivated to rebel through perceived opportunity.
Plus roads require capital to build and maintain, so I assumed areas with difficulties funding roads would see fewer roads. Thus like topography, the lack of roads increases the roughness and inaccessibility of terrain. Yet again, existing produced measurements for quality and percentage of road coverage among Indian states and territories were unavailable. I resorted to maps in order to produce numerical variables for roads. I found road maps of each state, territory, and listed city. In my observation, I took a look at the size of the area and how well did significant roads, such as highways and major roadways, manage to cover the area. Road coverage was based on a 1-10 scale with 1 describing barely any access to the area and 10 labeling absolute coverage of the entire area. For this reason, cities tended to get a 9 or 10 rating as cities are generally more compact and depend on and have greater access compared to wider areas. Plus, the cities included in the data included well populated and highly developed centers such as Bombay and New Dehli; in other words, these were major cities not just average cities with minimum developed infrastructure.
Empirical Findings:

After I assembled and recorded numerical values for topography and roads, I merged my data along with Wischnath’s and Buhaug’s research data. Once the data was merged, I used SPSS to create a linear regression chart with the same three dependent variables as Wischnath and Buhaug, but also included my two independent variables of topography and roads along with other independent variables in the previous chart. The full results of the regression are observable through the data below:

37 Observed Indian States, Cities, and Territories:

1) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
2) Andhra Pradesh
3) Arunachal Pradesh
4) Assam
5) Bihar
6) Bombay
7) Chandigarh
8) Chhattisgarh
9) Dadra and Nagar Haveli
10) Daman & Diu
11) Delhi
12) Goa
13) Goa, Daman & Diu
14) Gujarat
15) Haryana
16) Himachal Pradesh
17) Jammu & Kashmir
18) Jharkhand
19) Karnataka
20) Kerala
21) Lakshadweep
22) Madhya Pradesh
23) Maharashtra
24) Manipur
25) Meghalaya
26) Mizoram
27) Nagaland
28) Orissa
29) Puducherry
Results of Regression With Added Topography and Roads

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.339 (.316)</td>
<td>1.063 (.430)</td>
<td>1.941 (.425)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food growth</td>
<td>.052 (.154)</td>
<td>-.380 (.252)</td>
<td>-.061 (.243)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>.002 (.007)</td>
<td>.000 (.009)</td>
<td>-.023 (.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td>-.094 (.156)</td>
<td>-.190 (.262)</td>
<td>.239 (.231)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>-.043 (.020)</td>
<td>-.040 (.032)</td>
<td>-.042 (.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log mean neighbor bdbest</td>
<td>-.020 (.020)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bdbest log &amp; lag</td>
<td>.895 (.019)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log mean neighbor statebase</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.107 (.039)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>statebaselag log &amp; lag</td>
<td></td>
<td>.431 (.036)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log mean neighbor terrorism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.039 (.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrorlag log &amp; lag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.864 (.029)</td>
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For topography, the standard of error is too high for battle deaths and state base to determine a correlation between these two variables. The large standard of error leaves the possibility that topography could heavily be related towards battle deaths and state based violence or not at all. To be honest, I am puzzled to why my standard of error is so high when comparing topography to battle deaths and state violence. Since the standard of error is so high, I precisely cannot tell whether topography leans towards a positive or negative correlation to conflict even after going through the precautionary steps of viewing numerous maps, editing those maps, and manually measuring percentages. Based off my research done before the experiment, my guess would be that topography is possibly a non-directional variable that has dependence on the specific circumstances and other variables when the matter is related to state based political violence and battle deaths. Perhaps population density within topographic areas might influence positive or negative correlations to state violence or battle deaths, or maybe even the intensity of greed or grievances within these populations could be cofactors. The greed may be over resources, such as valuable minerals, that could exist within topographic areas and grievance may exist based on unfair uses and distribution of these resources. High populations, greed, and grievance over an abundance of resources might contribute for an increase in state base and battle deaths, but perhaps lack of resources may contribute towards a negative correlation. The reason I suggest a negative correlation with a lack of resources is because greed can be assumed to be diminished in this scenario since
significant wealth would not be able to be claimed from resources. An argument could be made about opportunities for groups to attempt seizures of different types of wealth unrelated to natural resources, but as suggested in my theory, unnaturally based wealth, such as businesses and consumer goods, is unlikely in topographic regions due to lower numbers of people residing in higher altitudes compared to lower altitudes and unstable surfaces for the construction of buildings, vital parts of economically significant cities.

However, my findings confirmed that increased topography is linked to an increase in deaths from terrorism. Thus, the results from the regression table support my theory that topographic regions seem like attractive and beneficial places for rebellious groups to take refuge and administer. What I find interesting about deaths from terrorism increasing with the topography is that, as stated before, the ratio of people living in lower and high altitudes is uneven. As altitude increases, the number of residents decrease. (Cohen & Small 1998). Prior to recognizing these results, a reasonable assumption would be that more deaths would be accumulated at lower altitudes since the population density is greater, and therefore, more people can seemingly be fatally harmed compared to people in topographic regions. Though greater amounts of deaths might be a potential in higher density areas rather than lower density, terroristic activities in India do not take advantage of this based on the results. If more terroristic deaths did not occur in topographic regions, the findings would have displayed a negative correlation between terroristic deaths and topography rather than positive. An explanation for the differences in amounts of deaths could be that greater numbers of fatal terrorist attacks occur in topographic regions. Even in the case where a significant number of people are killed by
a terrorist attack in cities during certain incidents, numerous incidents could occur in
topographic regions causing the number of fatalities in topographic regions to outnumber
those in the cities.

Meanwhile, where road access is limited, there is an increase in battle deaths,
state violence, and deaths due to terrorism. As mentioned in the research design, cities
were usually given the highest ratings; specifically, either a 9 or a 10. Therefore, road
coverage seems to be abundant in economically developed and leveled areas which
supports my previous suggestion that terroristic deaths occur less in cities or high density
areas and are more likely to appear in barren areas. My suggestion for the correlation
between the lack of roads and increase in battle deaths is based on the notion that
rebellious groups need to shelter themselves in rough regions in order to avoid state
detection and direct conflict; existing states tend to be more economically and militarily
powerful than rebel groups, so full-out battle between the two forces is mostly not
preferred for rebellious groups. Since these groups will tend to not be in highly populated
and flat and easily visible areas, they will seek refuge in rougher terrain. My speculation
is that the rougher the terrain, the less road coverage there will tend to be possibly
because of lack of economic potential and higher difficulty in constructing and
maintaining roads compared to flatter and lower altitude areas. For example, here is a
topographic and road map of the Indian state Kashmir
As noticeable by the map, Kashmir is heavily topographic. Also notice that map key indicates, the small lines on the bottom left side of Kashmir are roads; these roads constitute only a tiny part of the entire sub-national area. If rebellious groups are located in areas with fewer road coverage, certainly more battle deaths will be in these areas reasonably because these groups will be avoiding flatter and more developed areas. Therefore, the location of these battles will tend to take place in areas with limited road coverage. With more conflict in these limited road covered areas, of course state based violence will increase. The state would surely need to regain control of areas held by
rebellious groups, but I think the reason state based violence has a correlation to limited road coverage is because lesser road coverage is correlated to terroristic and battle deaths. State based violence is possibly a response or an attempt to limited terroristic and battle deaths.

Now I will compare my findings with the empirical results of Wischnath and Buhaug. Though Wischnath and Buhaug use different terms for the three dependent variables, our independent variables and number of observations for them are the same. Below is a chart of Wischnath’s and Buhaug’s findings. To be clear, ISPS stands for India Sub-National Problem Set and represents state based violence. SATP stands for South Asia Terrorism Portal and represents terroristic deaths. UCDP stands for Uppsala Conflict Data Program and represents battle deaths from intrastate conflicts (Wischnath and Buhaug 12). As noticeable from my results chart, I chose to simplify the terms.

**Empirical Results of Wischnath and Buhaug**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food growth</td>
<td>-0.425 (0.271)</td>
<td>-0.109 (0.131)</td>
<td>-0.314 (0.350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food growth (_{t-1})</td>
<td>-0.514** (0.255)</td>
<td>-0.473** (0.231)</td>
<td>-1.379** (0.414)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>0.004 (0.012)</td>
<td>-0.042** (0.010)</td>
<td>0.031* (0.018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor severity (_{t-1})</td>
<td>-0.203** (0.059)</td>
<td>-0.041 (0.029)</td>
<td>-0.359** (0.142)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict severity (_{t-1})</td>
<td>0.156** (0.059)</td>
<td>0.507** (0.065)</td>
<td>0.692** (0.063)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.775** (0.830)</td>
<td>5.271** (0.769)</td>
<td>1.645 (1.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>0.889</td>
<td>0.736</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OLS with state fixed effects; robust standard errors in parentheses; **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

Resembling Wischnath’s and Buhaug’s findings, my results suggest that
diminished food growth has a correlation to state based violence and deaths from terrorism. Wischnath and Buhaug reason that violence based on the lack of food growth is due to economic factors. They state that “agriculture is the largest economic sector in most Indian states” and that agriculture “employs the largest share of the total workforce” (Wischnath and Buhaug 2014, 13). Based on these facts, I agree with their suggestion, but I think agriculture has another for its significance to a state’s capacity. The fact that agriculture is a resource must be stressed; agriculture is, especially in India’s case, a necessary resource for employment, financial profit, and livelihood. Since agriculture is mass produced, I am reminded of the problems that may come with an abundance of resources. As I mentioned in the literature review, the availability of mass resources may lead to groups gaining greed and seeking to take control of these resources for their own profit. Also, political elites may desire to control these resources for their own benefits as well (McNeish 2010). As a result of the inefficient and wasteful use of agriculture, common citizens could develop grievances. I think a low agricultural yield would mean a resource limit for commoners but not for political elites and possibly those affected by greed. Political elites would seem to possess more capabilities than commoners, so political elites could use their power to ensure they retain capital. Political elites forcefully using their power to maintain profits would fall into the category of state based violence. Deaths from terrorism could be a result of rebellious groups, either through greed or grievance, attempting to prevent political elites from controlling agricultural resources.

However, my findings for a dependent variables differed from Wischnath’s and
Buhaug’s. Wischnath and Buhaug found that the less there is food growth, more battle
deaths would take place whereas my results failed to conclude whether food growth
results in more or less battle deaths due to the high standard of error. As my findings
failed to establish a positive or negative correlation between food growth and battle
deaths, the results opened up the suggestion that possibly greater food growth could lead
to increase number of deaths. DeRouen and Sobek support the logic of this scenario as
they state, “if there is such a base that the rebels can exploit for food, shelter and recruits,
the insurgent army will be able to grow and prosper” (2014, 2). Yet, I feel that both my
suggestion and Wischnath’s and Buhaug’s results may actually both be right. Perhaps
food growth could be a non-directional variable depending on the instance. In a situation
where there is a lack of food for members of a state, individuals may become desperate
and rowdy and fight for a resource such as agriculture. Individuals may rebel due to the
state being unable to ensure the distribution of food, an essential resource. Another
suggestion would be that if these weakened people actually participate in conflict, they
may be more likely to experience fatalities due to the lack of possible food consumption
and their weakened medical state. Therefore, it is possible that the correlation between
food growth and conflict depends on who is receiving or lacking food.
Historical Case Study:

As mentioned by Wischnath and Buhaug, India provided a really fascinating opportunity for a case study. The question I was looking to determine was whether state capacity determines conflict. I became convinced that India would make a good subject in finding an answer to this question, and I was persuaded through several reasons. First, India is a heavily sizable state. The state has sovereignty over 3,287,263 square kilometers, or 1,269,219.34 square miles, of land and water. Additionally, India is bordered by two seas, the Arabian Sea and Laccadive Sea, as well as the Bay of Bengal. Also, six states border India: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, China, Nepal, and Pakistan. Meanwhile, the territory within India is incredibly diverse. The territory provides various natural resources such as “coal, iron ore, manganese, mica, bauxite, rare earth elements, titanium ore, chromite, natural gas, diamonds, petroleum, limestone, [and] arable land.” The state is not immune to experiencing “droughts, flash floods, widespread and destructive flooding from monsoonal rains, severe thunderstorms, earthquakes,” and even volcanic eruptions. Like many other states, India faces environmental issues such as “deforestation, soil erosion, air pollution from industrial effluents and vehicle emissions, [and] water pollution.” The state incorporates 16 official languages: “Hindi, English, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit.” However, these are just official languages used by India’s government; unofficially, many more are spoken among residents. The state has a population of 1,266,883,598 people, and many of these people identify with being a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, or Sikh (Central Intelligence Agency 2016 B). These
facts about India demonstrate that India is a diverse state, but India also contains similarities to other states whether it be through geography, water access, language, and religion. The diverseness within the state and similarities to other states is extremely important for a credible analysis. The fact that this is a case study must be stressed; not every state in the world is being analyzed to determine whether state capacity determines conflict. In this thesis, India is simply a sample state used to help understand an overall general concept. Therefore, India provides an interesting sample to analyze as this one sample contains significant diverseness to possibly represent a broader picture.
Conclusion:

State capacity has a noticeable correlation towards the emergence of conflict. I suggest that state capacity is affected by sub-national differences. The differences I look at is terrain which I find is very significant. Numerous types of terrain may compose of a state; these types include plainlands, flatlands, forests, beaches, hills, swamps, deserts, and mountains. The type of terrain can affect the capacity of a state and some critical issues states may face such as conflict with rebellious and terroristic groups. Plus, terrain also affects population density; the higher the altitude, the lower amounts of people reside in that area. Since states, such as India, claim and attempt uphold sovereignty over these rough areas, they need to display sufficient capacity in these areas, not just in the higher populated and easier to control flatter regions. To be clear again, state capacity is the measurement of how well a state can ensure stability within its territory through militarized and political means. High capacity states are considered as states that are able to supply significant public goods such as effective domestic and interstate security, health services, and freedom in the development of physical and social infrastructure. Low capacity states are seen as states which struggle to and are ineffective in providing these major and essential public goods. The consequences of the lack of state capacity include “low social trust, low development levels, regime, or even state failure” (Ottervik 2013, 3). Governments, especially democracies, are highly vulnerable to collapse if high state capacity is not maintained.

As noticeable from the characterization of high capacity, security and physical infrastructure are two key components. Through my experiment, I tested whether
topography and lack of roads could have effects on conflict. My findings suggested that a correlation exists between increased topography and increased terroristic deaths. However, the standard of error was too high to determine if there is a positive or negative correlation between topography and state based violence and between topography and battle deaths. For road coverage, my findings found that the less road overage of an area, the more state based violence, battle deaths, and deaths from terrorism will take place. These three independent variables are significant because they all deal with either violence or deaths which are constitutes of conflict. The dependent variables of topography and roads are significant because they seem to test state capacity.

Topography is a type of terrain; it cannot be cleared away even if problematic to a state’s stability. Road coverage can possibly be improved, but this improvement can be difficult in rough surfaces and not economically viable, especially in terrain where there is lack of potential for development and where fewer people live. Therefore, these dependent variables might require states to pool in more resources to maintain a necessary capacity. If a state unable to provide necessary security presence in their claimed territory, the state by definition would be a low capacity state.

The weaknesses in my findings and discussions is that they are partly based on speculation and personal reason. For my recordings of roads and topography, I did not have access to resources which provided an undoubtable percentage of topography within each Indian state, territory, and observed city. Rather, I had to estimate and calculate my own percentages. I tried to base my measurements through a method I thought would lead to more accuracy, but at the end of my method, I was still estimating, even if the
estimates became simpler. If this method is repeated by another person, he or she still has
the potential to determine and record different percentages from me. Another flaw is with
other dependent variable of major road coverage. I think measuring road quality would
make a much more valid variable. The maps which I used for roads only displayed
official highways and major roads; there is no data on other types of roads that may be
used but not provided by the state such as dirt or rocky roads. Being able to access data
on the quality of the roads with each Indian state, territory, and observed city would help
form an idea of how well the state capacity is in its provision of infrastructure and
distribution of goods. Thus if I had more resources, I would have been able to strengthen
my empirical testing and possibly with different numerical data, not have encountered
high standards of error for two of my topographic correlations.
Historical Qualitative Analysis Between Indian Sikhs and Rule Under Different State Capacities:

To further analyze the correlation between state capacity and conflict, I examine the ethnic group of Sikhs from a historical point of view. I seek to prove how the dissent of Sikhs because of their treatment is conditioned by state capacity. I hypothesize ethnic conflict is determined by state capacity based on whether the capacity is low or high. For comprehensive purposes, I shall provide a very brief history of Sikhs.

Sikhs are an ethnic and religious group who believe in “the unity of God and the brotherhood of man, without distinction of race, class, or creed” (Gough & Innes 1897, 18). From the beginning of Sikhism in the late 1400s, women have been valued by Sikhs as the second most important creators of life after God and have been seen as deserving equal societal treatment as men. The founder of the main philosophy of Sikhism is known as Guru Nanak, but over time, Sikhism had been led by 10 living gurus in which each guru received the title of guru in succession to the life of previous guru. The spread and wide acceptance of Sikhism conflicted with the interests of the Mughal Empire, a Northern Indian Islamic kingdom which sought to influence the acceptance of Islam in its territory even if acceptance resorted to threats and violent force. Other than violations of civil freedoms, Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims faced economic and political inequality as wealthy elites and nobles dictated the management and prosperity distribution of society. The higher classes controlled luxurious amounts of wealth while poverty was rampant in the lower classes with minimum available economic opportunities and a discriminatory caste oriented social structure. Adding to the mass resentment of the Mughal Empire was
the imprisonment and execution of Sikh gurus; the gurus are considered tremendously holy to Sikhs, and the majority of gurus died through the use of repression and violence orchestrated by Mughal Empire leaders. The tenth and last living guru is known as Guru Gobind; upset over Islamic leaders unfairly treating citizens and the deaths of previous gurus, Guru Gobind led a partly successful rebellion against Mughal rule in which scattered areas of territory became free from the control of the Mughal Empire. He formally established the Khalsa, a set of rules and guidelines which distinguished Sikhs spiritually and physically from other religions and ethnic groups. On his deathbed in October 1708 following wounds received from an assassination attempt, Guru Gobind declared that no more living gurus should succeed after his death. Guru Gobind made clear that all Sikhs should follow the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhs which consists of a collection of hand written teachings from the previous gurus (Purewal 2000).

Following the death of Guru Goband, a Sikh state was created out of territories which had been previously under the rule of the Mughal Empire. Banda Bahadur temporary ruled the state until the Mughal Empire issued a genocide against Sikhs; he and his four year old son were eventually captured and executed. After Bahadur's death, the Sikh state scattered as different factions were run by separate leaders, and the Sikh states allied with feudal landlords for the purposes of defense. A legendary Sikh leader referred to as Maharaja, meaning great king, Ranjit Singh emerged from one of these factions and united all the remaining Sikh factions under a single political and military banner (Purewal 2000). Under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Empire
reached the height of its power. This northern Indian kingdom stretched into multiple provinces: from Malwa and Kashmir to the Afghan border (Gough & Innes 1897). The unity and economic and military power of the Sikh Empire kept the state safe from outside threats, especially the United Kingdom which was heavily expanding into and colonizing much of India. Unlike the Mughal Empire which previously ruled this territory, the Sikh Empire incorporated people from all religions and backgrounds in its political and military ranks. However, the golden age of Sikhs came to an end with the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839. Chaos over who to succeed him divided the kingdom, and the United Kingdom struck during this time which led to the defeat and conquest of the Sikh Empire in 1849. The Sikhs attempted multiple rebellions to overthrow the British, but the might of the United Kingdom was far greater. After Indian and Pakistani independence in the August of 1947, the former territory of the Sikh Empire was broken between the Hindu state of India and the Muslim state of Pakistan. Sikhs were embedded under India rather than receiving their own homeland. Today, Sikhs are spread throughout India and the world but are mainly concentrated in the Indian province of Punjab. Despite the increasing influx of Hindus into Punjab and the massive migration of Sikhs out of Punjab, Sikhs currently consist of around two-thirds of Punjab's population alone. Many Sikhs in and outside India feel grievances towards the Indian government based on issues with human rights, corruption, and the diminishing of Sikh culture (Purewal 2000). Within the Sikh community, there is currently support and push to pursue an independent Punjab from Indian rule which would display a revival of the former Sikh Empire. The new name for an independent Punjab which supporters of this
movement lounge for is Khalistan (Rajghatta 2013).

An important occurrence in the history of Sikhs to stress is that the buildup of dissent towards the Mughal Empire led to rebellion. This occurrence provides an example of ethnic conflict being conditioned by state capacity as the reason factions of Sikh states successfully developed was due to the limited and disrupted state capacity of the Mughal Empire. Though simple, an important point to keep in mind is that strong motives may correlate to actions. As mentioned previously, Sikhs had a deep resentment of Mughal rule due to the Mughal's intense intolerance and persecution of faiths and beliefs that were not Islamic, murders of Sikh gurus, and discriminatory and unfair distribution of wealth and resources. Intense Sikh dissent towards the rule Mughal Empire did not occur at the beginning of Sikh ideology and formulation, but rather over time after the buildup of constant abuses (Purewal 2000). Yet simply dissent itself does not result a radical change such as the enactment of a different regime. A substantial objection by a group, in this case Sikhs, to perceived unjust procedures definitely fuels the desires and motives for violent resistance, but as described in the literature review, desires do not necessarily result in action (Collier & Hoeffler 2002). A current example of this is the relationship between the United States and North Korea. North Korea's perception of the United States is extremely hostile, and North Korea has made constant official broadcasts over its desire to attack the United States and unify itself with South Korea by force (US Department of Defense 2016). However, the last major conflict between North Korea and the United States was during the Korean War. The reason for the lack of war between the two states is that the United States has far more economic and militaristic capabilities
than North Korea (Taylor 2015). In other words, there is a major state capacity difference between the United States and North Korea. North Korea is a low capacity state which struggles to provide its citizens with basic necessities such as food and governmental efficiency whereas the United States is the world's hegemony with the strongest economic and military might (Lim 2012) (Bremmer 2015). Thus, a conflict between the two states would be obviously one-sided, and North Korea responds to this understanding by not acting on its desires. Though this example is not focused on ethnicity, the example demonstrates how even a strong desire among a group can be repressed by another group with a greater capacity.

In the case between the Sikhs and the Mughal Empire, the Mughal Empire had a diminished state capacity as the altercation between the Sikhs and the Mughals coincided with a breakdown of the power and influence within the Mughal Empire. The fall of the Mughal Empire is credited under the rule of their monarch, Aurangzib, from 1658-1707. A thorough explanation of the fall of the Mughal Empire could encompass a lengthy essay or even a book, but bluntly, the Mughal Empire experienced multiple failures which included an inefficient governmental structure which favored nobles and did not properly spread wealth to lower classes, unfitness to maintain control of their southern empire, dependence on the use of bribery as a means for control, inability to defeat southern rebellious factions such as the Marathas which inspired even more rebellions, losses of critical economic centers to rebels, and breakdown of economic might. The reason for these failures includes the fact that the Mughal Empire was extremely expansive, and at a point, covered almost all of India. During the Mughal Empire's reign
in India, the empire maintained control over numerous ethnic groups. As shown by the rebellions, not all groups, such as the Marathas and Sikhs, under the control of the Mughal Empire identified themselves with the Mughals. However, the Mughal Empire reigned for over 300 years which means the state had been a high capacity state, or a state capable of defending its outside borders and maintaining control of its claimed territory (Pearson 1976). With the gradual build up of dissent, poor management, and military losses, the Mughal Empire became a low capacity state. Since the Mughal Empire struggled with distributing wealth, apart within its nobles, much of its citizens did not possess an adequate income. The inability for the Mughal state to enforce sovereignty was critical to the breakdown of their empire. In fact, Pearson describes that the Mughals were struggling to put an end to the Maratha rebellion as they were “distracted by other revolts” (Pearson 1976, 235). The loss of control surely only encouraged repressed ethnic groups, such as Sikhs, to rebel as it demonstrated an opportunity to expose a weak point in the Mughal Empire; the loss of control was a signal that the Mughals did not have as much capacity to maintain their territory as previously in their domain.

Yet, even low capacity states are still technically states. Just because a state struggles with the provision of its citizens of necessary standards and fails to maintain complete control of its inner and outer borders does not mean that the state has not some form of government, however weak, and some form of military. Even after the procession of a state turning from a high capacity state to a weak capacity state, the state still possesses power that is diminished but not depleted. For example, modern day Pakistan is a low capacity state that was high capacity, considering its past of being dominated by the
rule of the United Kingdom. Currently, Pakistan struggles with maintaining similar control as the United Kingdom had considering the state is plagued with radical factions, terrorism, and other forms of unruly behavior. However, an official Pakistani government is still in place. Any terrorist or rebellious factions are still met with some resistance by the official Pakistani regime (Masood 2012). A similar scenario was between ethnic Sikh groups and the Mughal Empire. As mentioned previously, the Mughal Empire suffered from structural and military failures which diminished its state capacity and control of its territory to rebellious ethnic groups. However, the Mughal Empire was not completely depleted and maintained governmental and militaristic presence. Therefore, in the altercation with the Sikhs, the problem for the Mughal Empire was not simply that the power of their empire was shrinking, but that by this time, their state capacity had already lowered far enough from a point where they had retained territorial domination of much of India, to the point where their weak state capacity signaled a lack of power with their structure and opportunity for the Sikhs to permanently resolve their grievances against the Mughal Empire (Pearson 1976).

The ethnic interactions between the Sikhs and the British empire displays a different side of the coin. As stated before, the United Kingdom conquered the Sikh Empire in 1849 during a time of chaos after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Unlike the Mughal Empire, the United Kingdom had a much stronger state capacity. Their state was highly capable of not just conquering additional territory but maintaining it as well. The United Kingdom fought two wars, known as the Anglo-Sikh Wars, to conquer the Sikhs. Despite the conflict between the Sikhs and British empire, many Sikhs eventually
became loyal military assets to the British Empire. In fact, “by the First World War, Sikhs constituted a third of the [Indian British] armed forces” despite being just 2% of India's population (Tatla 1999) (Singh 2010). Many Sikhs were deployed to fight for the British in World War I and World War II. Sikhs loyal to the British were also instrumental in preserving the British dominated status quo within India by acting as a counter force for any possible uprisings (Tatla 1999). Compared to the Mughal Empire, the United Kingdom was more wary about a possible threat Sikhs could have over their reign. In order to appease the Sikhs, the British Empire allowed Sikhs to maintain control over Sikh houses of worship, permitted Sikhs serving in the British army to wear religious attire, allowed all Sikhs to wear religious daggers which was an exception to weapon prohibition acts, built canals and roads to benefit the farms and commerce of Sikhs, and employed Sikhs in local administrative positions (Singh 2010). The appeasement towards Sikhs demonstrates proof of a noticeable difference of state capacity between the Mughal Empire and the United Kingdom as the appeasement was a political tactic to prevent Sikh rebellion. As mentioned before, the Mughal Empire was heavily Islamic, and Sikh ideology was seen as a threat to Mughal rule (Purewal 2000). In other words, the Mughal Empire did not have the political capability to control the Sikhs, so the Mughal Empire had to resort to unsuccessful force while the United Kingdom's permitting of Sikh ideology and limited control was an alternative to force.
Bibliography


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