

A METHODOLOGY FOR INFERRING MULTI-RESOLUTION CLASSIFICATIONS FOR VIOLENT GROUPS BASED ON BEHAVIORAL ATTRIBUTES

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OVERVIEW

A major objective of both academic and field research on violent groups is to devise a classification system that captures ideological, methodological, and behavioral relationships among them. Such a framework provides investigators with an important tool enabling quantifiable comparison between groups. Comparisons and classifications provide the basis for making higher-level observations about nature of these groups and even tactics that may be used to manage or mitigate their activities.

METHODOLOGY

The ISVG database for the period 2002-2007 contained over 26,000 violent attacks committed world-wide by 1400 groups. Individual profiles for the 1400 groups were constructed based on the frequency with which they used each of 50 different tactics, techniques and/or procedures. These profiles were submitted to a hierarchical clustering analysis.

FINDINGS

Using only the frequencies of attacks using each of 50 TTP variables on 108 terrorist groups, hierarchical clustering analysis produced a tree showing clades which have been linked in previous terrorism research. The resulting tree was also found to be strongly organized by geography.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Future work should be able to refine this promising approach by looking at certain regions, and further investigation of TTP attributes



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