

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2479886 DCU Charles
Dissertation Title	Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab Resiliency and Incumbent Governments' Ineffectiveness: Rethinking Counterinsurgency against Salafist Islam-inspired insurgencies through a Wicked Problem Analytical Approach

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Reviewer 2 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Late Submission Penalty <i>Select from drop down list</i>
Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail) Word Count: 23,247 Suggested Penalty: no penalty		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied). Before Penalty: A2 [21] After Penalty: A2 [21]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Excellent
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Excellent
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Very Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Excellent
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Very Good
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes

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• Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)	Not required
• Appropriate word count	Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

I very much enjoyed supervising this piece of work. Throughout the whole period, the author was responsive; displayed an immense ability to work with complex issues; asked original questions and continuously sought to improve the dissertation. As a result, the dissertation is original as the author didn't shy away from posing provocative questions. It's rested in the enormous body of literature that the author was capable of reviewing and systematizing. It's driven by a conceptually well-defined research question. It is theoretically informed. It deals parsimoniously with empirically well-researched case studies. It is well-structured; analytically solid; and well-executed. While I have some reservations as to the use of a comparative approach, I still consider it fairly relevant for the purpose of the dissertation that seeks to advance a novel conceptual model. The dissertation has certain shortcomings pertaining to methodology, case selection, and the general utility of the concept, yet it is my understanding that following a round of revisions, it could be transformed into an article that could be published in a solid research journal.

Reviewer 2

This is a very original and extremely well executed piece of research. The originality of the topic rests in the conceptualization of Jihadi insurgencies and COIN as wicked problems, demonstrating a propensity for broadening disciplinary boundaries. The organization and presentation of the research problem and argument are very well executed, also demonstrating a depth of understanding of the relevant literature. Particularly impressive is the extent of work that went into the elaboration of a new conceptual model in both its theoretical and graphic representation, and the identification of research gaps and future research potentials that this new conceptualization may lead to. What could have been exploited more in this research is the use of two case studies as opposed to one. The two cases, Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, have not been used to assess the efficiency of the model, to expose its weaknesses or to advance a more elaborate discussion of how, if applied in practice, the model should have been adapted to the Nigeria and the Somalian context. This raises questions on the utility of employing two case studies to a model when there is no element of comparison exploited. A second aspect that left me perplexed is the chosen methodology of content analysis. After having elaborated such a complex model and strong theoretical framework, I wonder whether the methodology section should have addressed methods more than methodology in greater depth. That is, the logic that led to the conceptualisation of the material (the why and how of the criteria used for focusing on particular thematic areas more than the how these thematic areas have been coded). Lastly, while the first part of the question is very well executed and addressed fully, demonstrating how the two groups can be conceptualised as a wicked problem, the second part of the question, 'if there is utility in looking at Jihadi insurgencies and COIN as wicked problems', is less elaborated upon. As a reader coming to the end of the work, I would have wanted to know more about how this conceptualization could have been applied in practice in the cases of Nigeria and Somalia, beyond broad suggestions for national, international and transnational cooperation, which already dominate the literature. Overall, this is an excellent dissertation. The student fully demonstrated expertise on the topic and mastering of the literature, as well as originality, creativity and ability to expand research horizons.