

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2704381 DCU 21109397 Charles 77557277
Dissertation Title	Death as a Strategic Tool: Analyzing the Effectiveness of Targeted Killings in the War in Afghanistan

Word Count: 22099		

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

Final Agreed Mark : A4 [19]

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>	Very 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>	Excellent
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Very Good
• <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>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The dissertation "Death as a Strategic Tool: Analyzing the Effectiveness of Targeted Killings in the War in Afghanistan" critically examines the efficacy of targeted killings during the Afghan conflict. The research employs a robust methodology, combining quantitative correlation analysis with qualitative case studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The study is grounded in a thorough literature review and a theoretical framework, offering a detailed overview of the War in Afghanistan to contextualize the analysis. The findings from this research contribute to the broader discourse on security, intelligence, and strategic studies, particularly in the context of modern warfare tactics.

The dissertation provides a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of targeted killings in the War in Afghanistan. It combines both quantitative and qualitative methods, including correlation analysis and case studies, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The author employs a robust methodology to gather and analyze data for the research. This approach enhances the reliability and validity of the findings.

While the dissertation provides a comprehensive analysis of targeted killings in the War in Afghanistan, there are several areas that could be improved. The literature review, while extensive, could benefit from more concise summaries of individual works, focusing on their arguments about the efficacy of targeted killings. This would allow for a broader range of literature to be covered while maintaining focus. Additionally, the review could delve deeper into the dialogues among authors, analyzing how they respond to each other's arguments and ideas, demonstrating a more profound understanding of the field. The section on 'gaps in the academic literature' is somewhat brief and could be elaborated upon for a more comprehensive overview.

Furthermore, I believe the theoretical framework, while present, could be better synthesized and linked to the empirical analysis, as it currently appears somewhat detached from the analysis and conclusions. The necessity of Chapter 3, which provides background on the Afghan war, could be reconsidered to maintain focus on the main research question. Lastly, the methodology section could provide more specific details about the case studies selected and the rationale behind their selection, enhancing the transparency and rigor of the research process. However, the dissertation's minor shortcomings do not detract from its overall excellence and its valuable contribution to the field of security, intelligence, and strategic studies.

In conclusion, the dissertation stands as an excellent piece of academic work. Its strengths lie in its comprehensive analysis, robust methodology, effective use of data visualization, careful handling of outliers, and rigorous significance testing. These elements contribute to a well-rounded and insightful exploration of the effectiveness of targeted killings in the War in Afghanistan. While there are areas for improvement, such as refining the literature review, elaborating on the gaps in academic literature, reconsidering the necessity of the background chapter, and enhancing the connection between the theoretical framework and empirical analysis, these are minor in the context of the overall quality of the work.

Reviewer 2

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This is an ambitious, thoughtful piece of research that makes a contribution to the literature. It benefits, immediately, from a clear structure and writing style that makes the dissertation impactful and easy to follow. The mixed methods approach to the methodology shows maturity and the adpt touch in this regard must be commended. The literature review could be used as a primer for other reserachers entering this area of research: it is very substantial; though it could have better described how, precisely, it contributes to an already-mature area of scholarship. The quantitative data is beautifully presented. The theoretical framework is a little sparse and the conclusion might have focused more so on policy-relevant outcomes, but overall, this is a very solid piece of work.