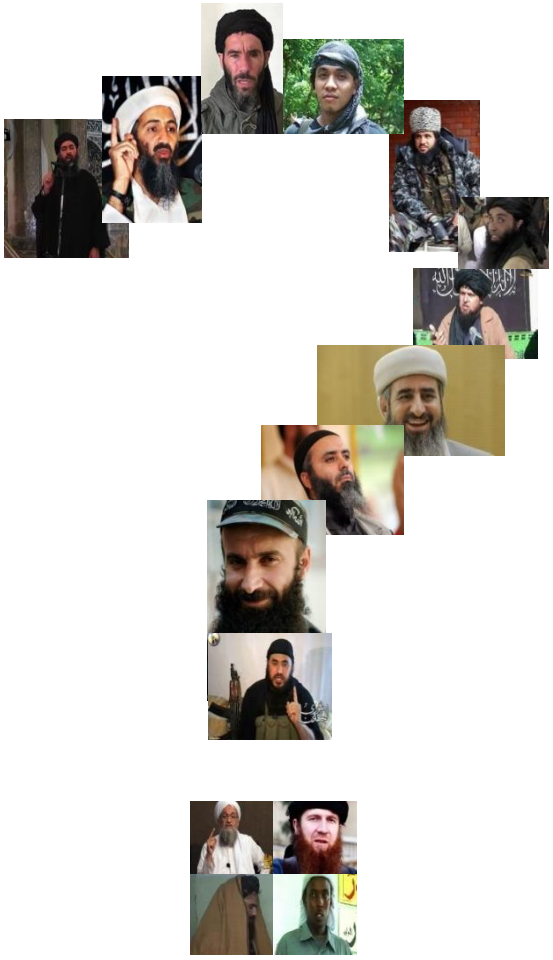
WHAT DEFINES A JIHADIST TERRORIST LEADER?

An Exploratory Quantitative Approach To The Characteristics Of Jihadist Terrorist Leaders And The Differences With Their Followers



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An Exploratory Quantitative Approach To The Characteristics Of Jihadist Terrorist Leaders And The Differences With Their Followers

Master Thesis

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Abstract

Jihadist terrorist leaders around the globe have been subject of many public and scientific debates. Often being the symbol of their organisation, these individuals take important positions in their groups. Counter-terrorism strategies can therefore be rightfully focussed on (the removal of) the leadership. However, the publicly available knowledge does not include an understanding of who these leaders are and what sets them apart from the members of the jihadist terrorist organisations. This exploratory study takes a first step in order to fill this gap. Inspired by Bakker's (2006) study, it has centralised the fragmented information on 66 jihadist terrorist leaders in a new dataset. With this quantitative approach, this study suggests a set of common characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders, including charisma and battlefield experience. Furthermore, when comparing leaders and followers, this study argues a difference in, among others, faith as youth, criminal records and social affiliation when joining a jihadist (terrorist) group. However, similarities are also found. Characteristics such as geographical origins, socioeconomic status and education are suggested to be the same for both populations. Despite these findings, it is too early to argue a certain profile of a jihadist terrorist leader. Future research should build on this study in order to continue this quest.

Acknowledgements

Where the willingness is great, the difficulties cannot be great

- Niccolò Machiavelli

This quote out of the book The Prince from Niccolò Machiavelli is a returning theme in my time as a student. I used it in my bachelor's thesis and it seems only right to use it again at the end of my master's course. Writing theses is never an easy undertaking. Many obstacles lay before you at the beginning and all have to be dealt with to reach the finish line. However, if the motivation is great enough the goal will be achieved, according to Machiavelli.

Although the willingness to graduate and to perform a good and usable study was present, the obstacles in this thesis process could not have been taken without the help of others. First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisor Daan Weggemans for his critical feedback. He has directed me to the right path when I was struggling and his views helped to improve the quality of this piece. This is also true for my second reader, whom I did not meet in this process, yet. Nevertheless, Jelle van Buuren did provide an important reflection on my research proposal. His critiques helped to narrow down the scope of this thesis.

Apart from these two teachers I would like to thank my girlfriend, who had to put up with my fulltime thesis mindset and my corny jokes, and my parents who also provided a great amount of mental support.

Finishing this thesis is both the end of almost 20 years of formal education and the beginning of a whole new life as a crisis and security professional. In the past 20 years I had the opportunity to learn and to specialise and now it will be time to put my knowledge and skills to the test in the real world.

- Lennart van Leeuwen

Content

1. Introduction

In 2011 an American special forces team operated in Pakistan with the mission to capture or kill the then highest ranking Al-Qaeda official: Osama bin Laden. Following this successful operation, numerous books have been written on this story (e.g. Hersh, 2016; Owen & Maurer, 2012) and even a few films have been created ("Zero Dark Thirty" directed by Kathryn Bigelow and "Seal Team Six: The Raid on Osama Bin Laden" directed by John Stockwell). While much attention was drawn to this case of targeted killing, it does not stand alone. The two successive Obama administrations of the United States (from 2009-2017) have carried out ten times more covert drone strikes than the preceding Bush administration (2001-2009). During the Obama administrations, the US government executed 563 strikes, in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia alone (Purkiss & Serle, 2017). These two forms of targeted killing are part of the counter terrorism strategy of decapitation. The underlying assumption of this strategy is that the leader has a significant effect on the endurance of the terrorist organisation. By removing the leadership (i.e. decapitation), the organisation should collapse.

Thus, not only laymen in the (Western) society are fascinated by terrorist leaders, but governments as well. It would therefore make sense to assume that there is enough basic understanding on who these terrorist leaders actually are, just like there is plenty of knowledge on who the (jihadist) terrorists are. By knowing who become leaders, strategic choices can be made, even before decapitation is an option, in order to prevent the rise of terrorist organisations. Nevertheless, very little information is publicly available on the fundamental question who these leaders are. For the furtherance of counter-terrorism strategies it is essential to know with whom the world has to deal with.

1.1 Why should we study jihadist terrorist leaders?

There is a wide spread (academic) debate on whether the decapitation strategy is effective (e.g. Johnston, 2012; Cronin, 2006; Carvin, 2012; Jordan, 2009). Removing the leadership of the organisation has had different results in different cases. Searching for the criteria that may influence the effectiveness of decapitation (see for example Cronin, 2006; Jordan, 2009), the focus of this counter terrorism strategy on the leadership of terrorist organisations is interesting. After the 9/11 attacks in New York, the decapitation attempts rose quickly (Johnston, 2012). The 'popularity' of this strategy shows that leaders are seen as important players in a terrorist organisation. Other fields of study also consider leaders to be crucial in

an organisation. Rainey (2014: 335-336) argues that, from an organisational studies perspective, the leadership of an organisation has an important role to play in the organisation with regard to its "direction and success". Counter terrorism strategies that focus on the leadership are thus, at least in theory, not wrongly directed.

Because of the importance of the leadership and the focus of counter terrorism strategies on these persons, it may be assumed that we know who these terrorist leaders are (i.e. what their background is, how they radicalised and became members of these organisations). However, this is not the case. Little to no (public) research has been done on the characteristics of these figures. LoCicero & Sinclair (2008) developed a theoretical model that could be used to categorise terrorist leaders, but this model is not build up from empirical data and does not contribute fully to the basic question who these leaders are. Nevertheless, data on individual leaders can be plentiful (e.g. the biographies on Osama bin Laden). However, this information remains anecdotal and only provides a picture of one individual instead of the whole population. Weinberg & Eubank (1989: 156) argued decades ago that too little is known about terrorist leaders. Information on social backgrounds and the psychological make-up of terrorist leaders has been "fragmented" and "sparse". They plead for a better understanding of what makes a terrorist leader different from its followers.

While research on the profiles of terrorist leaders lacks, research on the characteristics of the (jihadist) terrorist has been plentiful (e.g. Sageman, 2004; Bakker, 2006; Van Dongen, 2014; Leiken, 2005; Sendagorta, 2005; Nesser, 2006; Jenkins, 2011). In their influential works, Sageman (2004) and Bakker (2006) have applied a quantitative approach in order to search for a profile or shared characteristics of jihadist terrorists. Focussing on 'social background', 'psychological make-up' and 'circumstances of joining the jihad', both authors have not found specific identities of these people. Being the general conclusion of all of the above mentioned studies, efforts of understanding terrorism shifted towards the pathways of terrorists: What motivated them to join terrorist organisations and how did they enter those groups? Nevertheless, the new questions are deeply rooted in the quest to find a terrorist profile (Horgan, 2008).

As Horgan (2008: 82) argues, "it is still the case that extremely few people engage in terrorism altogether. It may thus seem warranted to consider actual terrorists as different or special [from the general population] in some way". A search for what sets them apart from others is thus not odd. Since counter terrorism strategies often have their focus on the

leadership of terrorist organisations and since leaders are important actors within those organisations (as described previously), it makes sense to start a side branch in the quest for a terrorist profile. Who are the terrorist leaders and to what extent do they differ from those who follow them?

1.2 Research question & goal

This research will engage the fundamental knowledge gap that is discussed in the previous paragraph. Building on the research of Bakker (2006), and therefore also on Sageman's (2004), the research question is therefore as follows:

To what extent do the characteristics of the leaders from jihadist terrorist organisations, who were or have been active during the period of September 2001- October 2017 and whose organisations are labelled as terrorist organisations by the United Nations, differ from the characteristics of jihadist terrorists in general?

This research question encompasses the twofold aim of this study. First, it will provide an overview of the characteristics of jihadist leaders. This contributes to the answering of the question of 'who are the jihadist leaders?'. Second, this study aims to find out whether leaders are different from followers, whom are described by researchers such as Bakker (2006).

1.3 Research approach

In order to provide the research with a clear focus, this paragraph will highlight and discuss the key concepts of the study briefly. Furthermore, some general remarks concerning the methodology will be made.

1.3.1 Key concepts

In order to explain the intended scope of this study, some key concepts of the research will be elaborated in this section. Others will be highlighted in the forthcoming chapters.

'L*eaders*' are those individuals that are considered to be the heads of the organisations. In other words, there is no other person that is higher in the hierarchy. They contrast the non-leaders of the terrorist organisations. These are referred to as 'members', 'followers' or 'jihadist terrorists' in this study[1].

[1] As will be made clear in this thesis, jihadist terrorist groups may not have a strict hierarchical or leader-follower structure. Networks with a more horizontal structure are most common. However, for the purpose of demarcating leaders and non-leaders in this study, these notions will be used.

'*Jihadist terrorist organisations*' are less easily defined. It consists of three separate concepts, of which 'jihadism' and 'terrorism' are more clearly elaborated upon in the following chapters. Nevertheless, in order to indicate the focus of the research, the definitions of the concepts will be explained shortly in this section. '*Jihadism*' refers to an ideology within the Islamic faith. A distinction can be made between the '*greater jihad*' and the '*lesser jihad*'. The former reflects the ideas of an individual, psychological struggle. It is concerned with living a good and faithful life. The latter has made a significant entry in the modern world by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb and reflects the ideas of a violent struggle of spreading the Islamic faith. This violent approach of jihad can be further delineated into defensive and offensive jihad. A defensive jihad is focussed on defending the Muslim community (e.g. defending Afghanistan when it was invaded and occupied by the Soviet Union). An offensive jihad, however, is concerned with expanding the current 'land of the Islam' (i.e. 'dar al-Islam') (Sageman, 2004: 1-14).

The concept of '*terrorism*' can be referred to as an 'essentially contested concept' (see Gallie, 1955). This is depicted by the efforts of the United Nations (UN) to establish a consensual definition, which has not been accomplished yet (United Nations, n.d.). However, a widely used conceptualisation is that of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino & Caluya, 2011). This definition reads: "Terrorism includes the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives" (Legal Information Institute, n.d.). While the focus of this research is on the organisations that the UN has labelled as 'terrorist', the definition of the FBI provides solid background information on what a conceptualisation of the concept may look like. However, as is the case with essentially contested concepts, an unambiguous definition will never be reached.

Lastly, '*organisations*' are considered to be "a group of people who work together to pursue a goal" (Rainey, 2014: 13). Since the purpose of this research does not benefit from the academic discussion on what the precise definition of an organisation is (according to Rainey (2014:12) no consensus has been reached on this matter), no further remarks will be made on this definition.

1.3.2 Methodological remarks

In order to answer the research question and achieve the main goals of this study, a quantitative approach will be used. For the first aim, getting to know who the leaders are, a dataset will be established. This includes 66 individuals that were or have been active as the leader of a jihadist terrorist organisation between September 2001 and October 2017. Inspired by the works of Sageman (2004) and Bakker (2006), many indicators of characteristics have been derived from their studies. These include indicators on the 'social background' (such as geographical origins and socioeconomic status) and on the 'circumstances of joining the jihad' (such as age, place of recruitment and employment). However, while some indicators are not used (such as mental illness), several new indicators are included (such as combat experience and charisma). These then cannot be used in the comparison with the conclusions of Bakker (2006), concerning the second aim of this research.

With regard to the data-gathering process, it is important to note that reliability of sources may be an issue. While the indicators are mostly factual, data may be influenced by the believe systems of the individuals or organisations behind the sources. Furthermore, information on commonly known leaders may be more easily found than leaders of smaller locally known groups. This latter category of leaders may lead the research to sources of lesser quality. Although this cannot be prevented, vital information can be found in, for example, local newspapers or online forums. In order to enhance the reliability of the research, multiple sources are used for indicators, when possible.

1.4 Reader's guide

This introduction has given a preview of the focus and contents of this paper. It provided the position in which this study aims to put itself in the public and scientific debate. In the following chapter, the research by Bakker (2006) and others will be used in order to provide a picture of who the jihadist terrorists are. This will be the fundament for this study. Following, in Chapter 3, the focus shifts towards the organisations these jihadist terrorist belong to. On the one hand this chapter will elaborate on the characteristics of these organisations and on the other hand it will explain the position of the leaders in and the effects of the leaders on the organisations. Next, the methodological chapter, Chapter 4, will discuss all the details of the process of the research. This includes notions on the sample, the research design, the operationalisation of the key concepts, and the quality of this study.

Chapter 5, the first results chapter, will provide the analysis of the data on the jihadist terrorist leaders. It is the aim of this chapter to give an overview of who these leaders are and what there common characteristics are. This is the basis for Chapter 6, in which these findings are compared to the characteristics of the followers (as discussed in Chapter 2). After this chapter, this thesis will end with a general conclusion in which the research question will be answered, the practical implications of this study will be elaborated, and a discussion of this research will be provided.

2. Profiling Terrorists

To begin this thesis on the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders, an overview on the alleged characteristics of the jihadist terrorist will be provided in this chapter. Furthermore, the possibility of a terrorist profile will be discussed. While the search for a profile has not been successful yet, multiple scholars did find some basic shared characteristics. It is on these studies that this thesis is built on and therefore gives an important insight in the current state-of-affairs in the profiling field. However, before the characteristics can be discussed, it is important to give a short overview on the different concepts that are related with the research topic. In the first section, the concepts of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism will be explained, including their interrelations. These will provide the conceptual background for this thesis. This is followed by the evaluation of the characteristics of terrorists in the second paragraph. The chapter ends with a short conclusion.

2.1 Definitions and interrelations

Defining radicalisation, extremism and terrorism is not an easy objective. Many scholars have tried to grasp their essence, but no consensus has been reached on their definitions (see Schmid, 2013; Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011; Veldhuis & Staun, 2009). However, in order to further this proposed researched, some notions on these concepts will be made.

Often definitions of radicalisation are too vague (Schmid, 2013: 18; Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011: 13). Not being tied to a certain religion or other believe systems, Schmid (2013: 18) defines radicalisation as: “an individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarisation, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favour of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict-waging”. Important to note here is that Schmid (2013) sees radicalisation as a process that can materialise on two levels: the individual level and the collective level. Furthermore, he argues that a more black-and-white-thinking is developed and less confrontational instruments are laid aside. Moreover, the “confrontational tactics of conflict-waging” are, according to Schmid (2013: 18), pressure and coercion, non-terrorist political violence, and “acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes”. Also interesting in Schmid’s (2013: 18) definition is the mentioning of violent and non-violent means. This distinction is made by other authors too (e.g. Veldhuis & Staun, 2009; Bartlett & Miller, 2011).

Neumann (2013: 873) argues that the difficulty of defining radicalisation lays with the notions of cognitive radicalisation and behavioural radicalisation. The former refers to the process that occurs in the mind, while the latter refers to the observable actions of the subject (see also Della Porta & LaFree, 2012: 7). Considering Schmid's (2013: 18) definition, it can be concluded that this falls within the behavioural radicalisation category. However, these conceptual lines should not be taken too strictly.

The difficulties in defining radicalisation are mostly caused by the definition of extremism, according to Neumann (2013: 874). In basic terms, extremism is considered to be the end-stage of the process of radicalisation (Borum, 2011; McGilloway, Ghosh & Bhui, 2015; Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011; Neumann, 2013). Just like Neumann (2013: 873) distinguishes between cognitive and behavioural radicalisation, Richards (2015) separates extremism of thought and extremism of method. This is also reflected in the conceptualisation of extremism by Nasser-Eddine et al. (2011: 9): "a willingness to use or support the use of violence to further particular beliefs, including those of a political, social or ideological nature. This may include acts of terrorism". Thus, not only the willingness of the use of violence, but also the support of this is considered extremism. Furthermore, according to Nasser-Eddine et al. (2011: 9), the actions are related to the spreading of a certain believe system. However, Nasser-Eddine et al. (2011: 9) also acknowledge that many definitions are too imprecise.

Lake (2002: 17-18) follows this argument by defining two attributes that make an extremist: (1) their ideas are not widely shared in society and (2) "extremists currently lack the means or power to obtain their goals". This leads, so he argues, to a continuum with on the one hand those who have unclear political goals and on the other hand those with at the moment unrealisable goals with little support. In the middle are the moderates with a broader popular support and well-defined aims. However, Lake (2002) equals extremists to terrorists, which is not the case. Terrorists are extremists, but an extremist does not have to be a terrorist. As Nasser-Eddine et al. (2011: 9) include in their definition of extremism and Schmid (2013: 19) in his definition of radicalisation, terrorism is a tactic. It is only one way of trying to achieve the extremist believes.

Defining terrorism is, however, perhaps an even harder objective than the previous concepts (see for example Schmid, 2013: 15; Nasser-Eddine et al., 2013: 5). A widely used definition is that of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Nasser-Eddine et al., 2013: 7). This definition is as follows: "Terrorism includes the unlawful use of force and violence

against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives" (Legal Information Institute, n.d.). It provides a legal context ("unlawful use of force and violence"), targets and an intention. However, subjectivity will always be part of the definition of terrorism, for the term 'terrorist' has a negative connotation (Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011: 5).

Although the relationships between the concepts of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism are depicted here as clear and almost linear, it should be taken into account that these are simplifications of immensely complex connections. For example radicalisation may lead to extremism, but some radicals are not extremists. Furthermore, extremist can be non-violent, violent extremist may not be terrorists and some terrorists are not radicals. These connections should be studied more in order to understand the factors that make a 'normal' individual into a terrorist (Schmid, 2013: 16-17). While this study will not focus on this debate, the general definitions as described in this section provide a contextual background.

2.2 Who are the jihadist terrorists?

Now that the context of the concept of terrorism has been set, the focus can now be drawn to who these terrorists are. Since this research is mainly built on the study of Bakker (2006), and therefore to some extent on that of Sageman (2004), this section is divided into the three categories of those studies. First, the 'social background' of the terrorists will be discussed. Second, the 'psychological make-up' is assessed and the discourse on the 'circumstances of joining the jihad' will be examined last. Table 1 displays the three categories and the variables that are connected to them according to Bakker (2006) and Sageman (2004).

Social Background	**Psychological make-up**	**Circumstances of joining the jihad**
Geographical origins	Mental illness	Age
Socioeconomic status	Terrorist personality	Place of recruitment
Education		Faith
Faith as youth		Employment
Occupation		Relative deprivation
Family status		Friendship
		Kinship
		Discipleship
		Worship

Table 1 Variables for the profiles of jihadist terrorists (Sageman, 2004 as cited by Bakker, 2006)

2.2.1 'Social background'

Under the term 'social background' six variables are indicated in Table 1 and one is added by Bakker (2006): criminal record. These seven variables will be elaborated upon in this section. Beginning with the geographical origins of terrorists, Leiken (2005), who focusses on jihadists in Europe, argues that there are two types of jihadist terrorists. On the one hand are the "outsiders", which are the first generation immigrants or refugees. On the other hand there are, what Leiken calls, "insiders". These second and third generations are born and raised in Europe. Their unemployed youth from suburbs of large cities are the most dangerous according to Leiken (2005: 127). Bakker (2006: 36) supports this statement in his research. He found that jihadist terrorist in Europe are often raised in Europe but have their family origins outside the continent. Furthermore, Bakker (2006: 37) argues that these terrorists have very different roots, but the places of residence are far less diverse. 26 countries of family origin were found, while the countries of residence were only 13. Jenkins (2011) did some similar research into jihadist terrorists in the United States. He also found that most geographical origins lay in North Africa, the Middle-East, South Asia or the Balkan region. Moreover, Jenkins (2011: 9) argues that "immigrant communities with links to war zones are most vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment". While these findings concern the jihadist terrorists in Europe and the United States, it can be argued that the jihadist terrorists in general most often have their origins in non-western countries.

Concerning the socioeconomic status of jihadist terrorists, Bakker (2006: 38) found that only a few had an upper class background. Possibly a reflection of the socioeconomic status of Muslim immigrants in Europe, most subjects are in the lower class of Europe's society. Leiken (2005) also sees this and uses it to explain the hierarchy within terrorist organisations. The higher class will be the breeding ground for the leaders, while the lower classes are used to recruit the common members of the group. The 9/11 attacks are an example of this he states. Sendagorta (2005) argues that these perpetrators were mostly middle and upper class, while the Casablanca bombers in 2003 mostly came from the lower societal classes of Morocco. In the results chapters of this research it will become clear whether the leaders are indeed from the higher levels of society than the followers.

Closely related to the socioeconomic status, is the level of education. Nesser (2006: 327) argues that although some jihadist terrorists in Europe were "criminals, drug addicts or socially misplaced", most of them were gifted and educated. Bakker (2006: 38) found evidence for this claim, although little information could be found. While most had finished

secondary school, many have had a university education. Hudson (1999: 48) also subscribes to this claim. He states that "[t]errorists in general have more than average education", which is also reflected by Jenkins (2011). This is somewhat contradicting the claims of Leiken (2005) who argues that this is mostly applicable to the leadership of jihadist terrorist organisations.

Bakker (2006: 39) also found that only a small percentage had an Islamic religious upbringing (22% of the 50 persons found). Nesser (2006: 327) argues as well that, before terrorists join an organisation, these people have not been very religiously active. Krueger (2008: 293), however, found that Islamic terrorists in the United States were "slightly less likely to be converts to Islam" than the overall Muslim population in the United States. Nevertheless, as Schuurman, Grol & Flower (2016: 1) state, "converts are considerably overrepresented" in Islamist extremism and terrorism[2].

A general terrorist profile, Hudson (1999: 48) argues, includes a wide variety of professions. Interestingly, a large proportion of terrorists are recruited during their time as students. While Sendagorta (2005: 70) argues that unemployment is in itself not a very decisive factor in joining terrorist groups, it can be in combination with other negative circumstances such as "unhealthy slum districts". Bakker (2006: 39) found that 15% of his sample was unemployed and roughly 17% was a student. With this data he supports to some extent the findings of Hudson (1999). The share of students in the sample is too low, however.

Furthermore, criminal records seem to be significantly present in the sample of Bakker (2006: 40). Almost 25% of the individuals was convicted for crimes. Nesser (2006: 327) argues that this variable is only relevant for some terrorists. Most of them do not have a criminal record.

As a last indicator of 'social background', Bakker (2006: 40) looked into the family status of jihadist terrorists in Europe. In his sample, 39 of the 66 subjects that information on this topic could be found, were married or engaged. Hudson (1999: 51) gives a historical view by arguing that "[i]n the past, most terrorists have been unmarried". A change in profile with regard to this variable may thus have been taken place.

In sum, the social background of a jihadist terrorist can be very diverse. Generally speaking, they have their roots in non-Western countries, come from all societal classes (leaders mostly

[2] Schuurman, Grol & Flower (2016) conclude this from their literature review as well as their own empirical data.

from the upper class), are well educated, have not had a tough religious background, are of different professions and no overwhelming unemployment, and may or may not be married. In other words, a profile of a jihadist terrorist on the basis of social background cannot be established. It varies too much.

2.2.2 'Psychological make-up'

Bakker (2006: 40) displays that 5% of his sample suffers from mental illnesses. Although he states that this is substantially higher than the world average (1%), other scholars have found no causal relationship between mental illness and terrorism. It is Sageman (2004: 83) who argues that, concerning mental health, terrorists are very normal (others who concluded this are for example Weatherston & Moran, 2003 and Horgan, 2005). Silke (1998) has also found that terrorists in general do not suffer from psychopathological disorders. Nevertheless, he argues that terrorists seem to show signs of traits of the personalities such as narcissism and paranoia, but do not have the disorder. Following this argument, Weenink (2015) argues that the strong consensus on the idea that terrorist do not have mental disorders might be challenged. In his argument he names several empirical studies, including Bakker's (2006). While the consensus is still intact, some cracks in this theory are observed.

2.2.3 'Circumstances of joining the jihad'

What Bakker (2006: 41) sees in his sample of jihadist terrorists in Europe, is that their age at the point of their arrest was largely ranged. With a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 59, the average was 27,3. More statistical information on the distribution of the ages is not given. Jenkins (2011) found an average of 32 and a median of 27. This means that most subjects were below the average. Hudson (1999) states that terrorists (in general) were averagely in their early twenties. Although his data is relatively old, it reflects the findings of Bakker (2006) and Jenkins (2011) that terrorists are rather young.

Concerning the places of recruitment, Bakker (2006) does not explicitly cross-check this variable with the places of residence. He argues that within Europe the United Kingdom is a dominant place of recruitment. The second and third most dominant places of recruitment are Spain and the Netherlands. This data, in combination with the data on places of residence, may indicate a link between the place of residence and the place of recruitment. Nesser (2006: 326) also states that Western Europe is the place where most recruitments take place. Moreover, he also mentions North Africa and Pakistan. Pakistan is also reflected by Bakker (2006: 41).

Faith has been an important aspect in the joining of a jihadist terrorist group. Of 61 subjects, 58 have been identified as having increased their faith in the months prior to their entrance (Bakker, 2006: 41). As Nesser (2006: 326) states: "A typical pattern is that young alienated immigrants to European countries have become 'newborn Muslims' and taken active steps find out more about jihad".

On employment (i.e. fulltime/part-time) and relative deprivation, Bakker (2006: 42) did not find enough data in order to provide solid results. On friendship and kinship, he found that in 35% of the cases social affiliation has played an important role in the enrolled in a jihadist terrorist organisation. Hegghammer (2006: 47) also acknowledges the potential importance of acquaintances in the target organisation.

Thus, the context in which a person joins a jihadist terrorist group does not fit a specific profile. Data from multiple authors point towards the importance of some indicators, but there is not enough similarity between the individual biographies to be able to distil a certain profile. Sometimes explicitly mentioned, leaders may have a different set of characteristics than their followers (see for example Leiken, 2005: 127; Hudson, 1999).

2.3 Conclusion

While the debate on what terrorism is still is active, the research on who terrorists are has had much input. Looking at their social background, their psychological make-up and their circumstances of joining the jihad, a multitude of scholars have found a variety of characteristics. Some consensus exists on these variables, but there are no clear characteristics that separate terrorists from the common population. Thus, a profile of the jihadist terrorist is very hard to determine, if not impossible. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in the next chapter, the quest for a profile of jihadist terrorist leaders might be more optimistic.

3. Leaders in Jihadist Terrorist Organisations

In the previous chapter a number of the concepts related the term terrorism is defined and their interrelations are described. Furthermore, the efforts of several scholars to profile (jihadist) terrorists are discussed. This chapter will zoom-out from this level of analysis and will look into the organisations the jihadist terrorists belong to. The aim of this chapter is two-fold. First, it provides an overview of what jihadist terrorist organisations are, what their history is and how they are diminished. Second, it assesses on this basis to what extent a profile of a jihadist terrorist leader can be established.

In order to provide a general setting, a short review on the definition of a jihadist terrorist organisation will be provided first. Second, the ideological framework these organisations adhere to will be described. Third, the rise and fall of jihadist terrorist organisations is elaborated upon. Fourth, the focus will be put on the position of leaders within these organisations. Finally, a conclusion will be provided with regard to the two aims of this chapter.

3.1 What is a jihadist terrorist organisation?

As was discussed in paragraph 2.1, defining terrorism in a consensual way has not been accomplished yet. Although the definition of the FBI has been used frequently (Nasser-Eddine, 2013: 7), this conceptualisation has not gained overall support. Looking at the United Nations, it becomes clear that there will be no legal definition is the near future, due to political differences (United Nations, n.d.). Although the United Nations do not have a clear legal definition of terrorism or terrorist organisations, they do label individuals and organisations as terrorist. In the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List, persons and entities that are involved in terrorism or in the financing of terrorism, among others, are listed (United Nations Security Council, 2017). Organisations that are included in this list are for example different branches of Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al Shabaab, and Jabhat al-Nusra (currently known as Jabhat Fateh al-Sham). Although further elaborated upon in the methodological chapter of this paper, this list will be used in order to identify relevant organisations and leaders for this study.

Although many studies have been undertaken into the functioning of specific jihadist terrorist organisations and jihadist terrorist organisations in general, there are no clear definitions found on what such an organisation is. Combining the insights of Rainey (2014: 13) on organisations and of the FBI on terrorism (Legal Institute, n.d.), the following definition will

be used in this thesis: *a group of people* (Rainey, 2014: 13) *who unlawfully use force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof* (Legal Institute, n.d.) *in order to achieve their jihadist aims*. Thus, in an organisation in general and specifically in jihadist terrorist organisations, the goals and the structure are fundamental aspects of the organisation. In the following paragraphs, the framework of the jihadist terrorist organisations will be elaborated upon.

3.2 Ideology

While there is a multiplicity of terrorist organisations in the world that are not directly connected to a specific religious doctrine (e.g. the 'Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia' [FARC] and the 'Rote Armee Fraktion' [RAF]), jihadist terrorist organisations are, rather obviously, deeply rooted in a religious ideology. Clarke (2006: 844) argues that there are roughly two branches of religiously inspired terrorist organisations. Firstly, some organisations tend to have a more nationalistic view in which they direct their attention to other religious communities. This is also called communalism. Secondly, fundamentalists are conservative groups who target "secularists or enemies within the faith tradition". It is organisations such as Al-Qaeda that can be found in this last category, Clarke (2006: 844) argues.

Clarke (2006: 844) also elaborates shortly on the ultimate goal of fundamentalist terrorist organisations. He states that they want to establish a "pan-national caliphate" that will be led by one leader and unites the global Muslim population. An ideal world, or utopia, is strived for, but there are also apocalyptic visions. Gunaratna (2002: 93) extents this view, by stating that Islamic terrorist organisation are either involved in utopian or apocalyptic ideas. The former want to overthrow the status quo in order to establish a new one. This ranges from the local to the global level. The apocalyptic organisations are also involved in collective violence but do not make strict distinctions between targets. They are, according to Gunaratna, "indiscriminate". The presented dichotomy is not as strict as it might seem though. Gunaratna (2002: 93-94) argues that there are two stages within the utopian view. In the first stage, the organisation targets only state officials in order to overthrow the political order. In the second stage, its motives begin to reach the social, economic and cultural order at which it starts to show signs of indiscriminate violent behaviour.

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the concept of jihad has many faces. On the one hand it can refer to an internal struggle to live a good and faithful life and on the other

hand it may be applied to a holy war (Bakker, 2006: 1; Bonner, 1992: 8). The former being referred to as the 'greater jihad' and the latter as the 'lesser jihad'. The physical war conception of jihad then falls apart into two other terms: the defensive Jihad and the offensive Jihad. In the defensive Jihad, Muslims have to defend the ummah (the worldwide Muslim community) against invaders. The offensive Jihad is more focussed on the expansion of the 'land of the Islam' (i.e. 'dar al-Islam'). Salafists have adopted these notions on jihadism and are seen as a revivalist movement within the Islam. Their ideology is based on the roots of the Islam, namely the prophet Mohammed, his disciples and the Quran. In their views, the contemporary world has lost track of the true Islamic faith and it is their duty to bring society back to the origins of Islam. Multiple strategies can be used in order to fulfil this goal. First, in a non-violent strategy, they try to persuade other Muslims to go back to the roots of the Quran by preaching (*dawa*, which means 'call to Islam'; Kepel, 2006: 72). A second non-violent approach is the participation in peaceful political activism. By influencing state institutions they advocate change. Some, however, do not believe in the power of these two non-violent strategies (Sageman, 2004: 1-14).

The jihad that is nowadays advocated by actors such as Islamic State and Al Qaeda, can be traced back to the persons of Sayyib Qutb and Abdullah Azzam (the latter will be discussed in following paragraph). It is the former who first advocated the rise of offensive jihad. He argued that the global society had deteriorated into a state of '*jahiliyyahh*' (i.e. a barbarian society with no respect for the laws, norms and values given by Allah) and that the '*ummah*' (i.e. the global Muslim community) should have a vanguard in order to provide the rightful path. His book 'Milestones' was to be this vanguard (Qutb, 2006: 27-28). Qutb (2006: 58) stated that in the revolt against the jahili society, righteous Muslims must come together in an organisation. When joined into a movement, the ummah must counter the jahili society with the same means as they use to counter Islam. Violence is thereby permitted (Qutb, 2006: 65). Reinstating Allah's rule over the earth including implementing Shariah law, cannot be achieved solely by dawa, Qutb argues. A combination of preaching and tackling "material obstacles" must open the path for the spread of Islam (Qutb, 2006: 69). With his statements in his book Milestones, Qutb also opened the door for violent actions against Muslims with other believe systems, such as the Shia population (Sageman, 2004; Stahl, 2011). Azzam took these ideas further and developed the views on jihadism of today. These will be elaborated in the following paragraph.

3.3 The rise and fall of jihadist terrorist organisations

Now that the ideological framework of jihadist terrorist organisations is set, the focus can now be drawn to the evolution of these groups. Why did they emerge and develop, how are they structured, and to what do they owe their endurance? This paragraph will answer these questions respectively.

3.3.1 The origins of the modern jihadist movement

Mohamedou (2011) provides four arguments of how jihadist organisations were able to arise starting from the 1950's. First, the independence struggles from the Western empires were important windows of opportunity for many groups to try to seize power. The winning parties (i.e. those that succeeded the colonial rule) competed successfully with the religious parties. Conflict for rightful power remained because of the multiple factions. Secondly, the new governments oppressed the opposition like their predecessors of the Western powers did. This led to more discontent in the fundamental Islamic community. It is in this context that Qutb published his book Milestones (Mohamedou, 2011: 14).

Thirdly, the poor governance of the state by the new rulers on the political and socioeconomic level "pushed many segments within these societies into the open arms of the Islamists". These groups could offer what the official governments could not and therefore gained great support from the Muslim communities. Finally, the new regimes often had close ties with the United States government. For the United States has supported Israel in the Palestine occupation, the new regimes of the former colonies were displayed as corrupt and criminal (Mohamedou, 2011: 14).

Following the national, state-centred conflicts, the pan-Islamic ideology began to get a foothold around the time of the Afghan occupation by the Soviet Union. In this time, Abdullah Azzam (a Palestinian born, Saudi Arabian citizen) played an important role in the mobilisation of foreign fighters in aid of Afghanistan. In 1982 and 1984 Azzam wrote two books in which he described the individual duty of all Muslims to fight against the Soviet occupation. This defensive jihad should be applied to all occupied Islamic countries. With the financial support of Osama Bin Laden, Azzam was able to make the recruitment of fighters more efficient and effective. Attracting more mujahideen, Bin Laden established training camps in order to provide military training for the recruits. At the end of the Afghan occupation the volunteers left Afghanistan little by little and went home. This war had created the militant activism of the 1990's and also established significant social bonds between

important jihadists who moved their scope towards, for example, the Balkan (Hegghammer, 2010: 38-48).

3.3.2 Structures of jihadist terrorist organisations

The Afghan war has laid the foundations for the current jihadist scene. Hegghammer (2010: 38) goes as far as saying that it is the "cradle of the jihadist movement". Now, decades later, the jihadist movement still has a dominant impact on the global security situation. The individuals that have gained experience in Afghanistan have organised themselves in multitudes of organisations and those organisations have sparked new groups (often splinter groups). The Consolidated Sanctions List of the UN (2017) still has 43 organisations included which can be categorised as jihadist terrorist.

As was discussed in paragraph 3.1, a jihadist terrorist organisation has roughly two fundaments: the purpose or goal (which is described in paragraph 3.2) and the structure. Concerning the structure of these organisations, Mishal & Rosenthal (2005) have developed a typology (see Table 2). Five different organisational structures are identified along the lines of five variables: (1) the timeframe of the planning of attacks, (2) the internal communication structure, (3) the command and control structure, (4) the level of specialisation and division of labour, and (5) the geographical focus of the organisation or 'rationale'. One might get the impression from the focus of this thesis that most jihadist terrorist organisations are hierarchical, since the importance of leaders might be associated with strict command and control structures. However, looking at the typology of Mishal & Rosenthal and the vocabulary and findings of many other scholars (e.g. Qin, Xu, Hu, Sageman & Chen, 2005; Sageman, 2004; Bakker, 2006; Gunaratna, 2002), networks are the most dominant structures with regard to jihadist terrorist organisations. Mayntz (2004) furthermore argues that hierarchical and network structures can be both applied in one terrorist organisation.

Looking at the typology of Mishal & Rosenthal (2005) and the dominance of networks also found by other authors, there might be some implications for the ability to find a profile of the jihadist terrorist leader. While certain leaders are very effective in a certain context, others may not be effective in the same context (Rainey, 2014: 337-346). This would suggest that different organisational structures may have need for different types of leaders. Therefore it would be logical to assume that, when all other contextual variables are controlled (such as the internal and external political environment and the size of the organisation), a typology of jihadist terrorist leaders on the basis of organisational structure is possible. However, since

this laboratorial setting cannot be achieved in this study, such a typology will not be able to be realised.

	Organisational elements of behaviour				
Organisational structure	*Time*	*Communication*	*Command and control*	*Specialisation and division of labour*	*Rationale*
Hierarchy	Specific	Vertical	Strict	Strict	Local
Network hub	Specific	Center-periphery	Strict	Flexible (leadership strict)	Local/global
Network chain	Specific	Sequential	Flexible	Flexible	Local/global
Network multichannel	Specific	Random	Flexible	Flexible	Local/global
Dune	Interval	Chaotic	Minimal	None	Global

Table 2 Typology of Islamic terrorist organisations (Mishal & Rosenthal, 2005)

3.3.3 Endurance

While the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders may not be significantly different on the basis of the organisational structure, these individuals can have a great influence on the endurance of a terrorist organisation. In their counterterrorism strategies, state actors may apply targeted killing of the leadership. The decapitation of the organisation, as is the motivation, might lead to its collapse. However, Jordan (2009) argues that this strategy is only effective in some specific cases. She identifies variables such as organisational type and size as being important in the vulnerability to decapitation. Nevertheless, she does agree that leadership is a substantial part of the organisations. However, no research has been done into who these leaders actually are.

Cronin (2006, as cited in Young & Dugan, 2014), also argues that decapitation can be a factor in the ending of a terrorist organisation. He also identifies, among others, internal organisational issues as a causal factor to the collapse of terrorist organisations. Young & Dugan (2014) established a set of independent variables to their ending. One of their findings is that organisational capabilities (i.e. the ability to perform widespread attacks) influence the length of an organisation's endurance positively. Since leadership can influence

organisational capabilities (Yukl, 2008; Hitt & Duane, 2002), it can be assumed that it also has an indirect influence on the length of an organisation's endurance.

Furthermore, Demant, Slootman, Buijs & Tillie (2008) argue that supply and demand variables are important in the attractiveness of terrorist organisations. Three supply criteria have to be met in order to provide a solid foundation for success: (1) The formulation of an appealing ideology, (2) the development of organisational capacities, and (3) the selection of good leaders. The third criterion can concern charismatic leaders which will have a positive influence on the coherence of the group. At the same time, however, a charismatic leadership makes the group vulnerable to collapse when the leadership is replaced. Demant et al. (2008) state that their research has provided evidence that members of terrorist organisations have left the organisation as a result of lacking charismatic leadership.

The demand variables are individually different. Although often youngsters are vulnerable to joining a terrorist organisation (Demant et al., 2008), many variables can affect the motivation of becoming a member of such groups (see Veldhuis & Staun, 2009).

3.4 The position of leaders within jihadist terrorist organisations

Previously, the debate on targeted killing was mentioned. There is a variety of scholars that disagree on to what extent this counter terrorism strategy is effective. Cronin (2009: 14) argues that six variables affect the success of decapitation: (1) the structure of the organisation, (2) the degree of a cult of personality, (3) the availability of a successor, (4) the ideology, (5) political context, and (6) whether the leader was captured or killed. Of these six, the first, second and fourth have a direct link with the active leader. They display the position of the leader within the organisation. These indicators will be discussed respectively in this paragraph in order to get an understanding of what the function of the leader is within a jihadist terrorist organisation.

The structures of jihadist terrorist organisations have been elaborated upon in paragraph 3.3. However, the position of the leadership within these structures have not been discussed. Distilled from the section on the structures, networks are dominant structures for the jihadist terrorist organisations. Having three different types (hub, chain, and multichannel), Qin et al. (2005) have found that global jihadist terrorist organisations are interconnected and that they are linked by their top-leadership. These then act as hubs between the groups. Furthermore, within these networks, leaders often have a high number of direct links with other 'nodes' and/or a high level of 'betweenness' (i.e. "the extent to which a particular node lies between

other nodes in a network"; Qin et al., 2005: 289). Farely (2003) has also found this centrality of leaders within the networks and argues that this may also be a vulnerability. Removing key players out of the network, the network may collapse. In their central position, leaders can thus exert great influence on the rest of the organisation.

While Mishal & Rosenthal (2005) argue that Al-Qaeda's leadership is less concerned with cooperating operations and more with inspiring individuals (see also Stern, 2003), hierarchical organisation structures focus on a stricter leadership influence. The command and control structure is strict and the communication flow is vertical (Mishal & Rosenthal, 2005: 285). In such organisations, leaders can have a more direct effect on the operations of the organisation. As Brams, Mutlu & Ramirez (2006: 716) argue, in a hierarchy it is not the direct links with other members of the organisation that make a leader, but rather his/hers qualities and personality.

Cronin (2009: 14) sees personality apart from the structure of the organisation, in his argument that having a 'cult of personality' around a leader may create a vulnerability for the group. Jordan (2009: 727) slightly follows this argument. She states that "[o]rganizations in which the leader provides both key operational and inspirational roles are most likely to fall apart after decapitation". Nevertheless, a charismatic leader (closely related to the concept of 'cult of personality') does not jeopardise the endurance of the organisation per se. If charisma is passed on to the next leader and becomes institutionalised, decapitation may not have an effect (see also Price, 2012: 22). Moreover, "[r]eligious organizations are seen as more likely to have charismatic leaders who are essential to setting and maintaining organizational goals". However, referencing the organisational theory discipline, Jordan (2009: 728) argues that organisations can also achieve their goals without the influence of operational and spiritual leaders. This is contrary to the statement of Cronin on the cult of personality.

Miller (2006: 262) argues that two main personalities arise among religious terrorist leaders. On the one hand there are the narcissists. They reflect the charisma as described above and are "able to ensnare impressionable devotees with their unshakable certitude, conviction of infallibility, and infectious zeal for the cause". On the other hand there is the paranoid personality, which is, as Miller argues, more dangerous. Every action is perceived as conspiratorial and the belief system is often very absolute and violent. A combination of the two personalities is possible. Loza (2007: 146) also argues that terrorist leaders are highly charismatic and command respect along their followers. Furthermore, an air of courage,

fearlessness and eagerness to die for the cause surrounds these leaders. Thus, the personality of leaders and the perception thereof by others has an important effect on the position of the leader within the organisation.

From the ideological perspective on the position of the leaders within the terrorist organisations, Loza (2007: 149) states that terrorists behold the leaders of the groups as their commanders and do as they are told. This 'displacement of responsibility' enables the individual to perceive the victims of their violent acts as the rightful enemy. Consequently, this leads to the perception of being a freedom fighter against the oppressors instead of a terrorist. Pittel & Rübbelke (2006: 314) argue that the framing that leaders and the organisations use, are of great importance for the sense of 'belongingness'. When a member of an extremist organisation, the framing of the leaders lets one think that the outside world is a hostile environment. It is the leader's task to censure information in order to provide an unchallenged story of reality. In order to spread the extremist ideology, isolation of members is therefore key.

Price (2012: 21-22) furthermore argues that the first generation leaders of a terrorist organisation have the most complex and dominant ideology than succeeding leaders. In order to maintain the ideological belief system even when the head of the organisation is removed, it is the leader's task to formulate clear and concrete goals. Thus, the head of the terrorist organisation is a main actor in facilitating an appealing ideology that legitimises the (indiscriminate) violent behaviour of the members of the organisation and attracts new recruits in order to ensure organisational survival.

In sum, leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations fulfil an important position in their groups. They provide the cohesive substance for the effective functioning and survival of the organisation. Their organisational centrality, personalities and ideological belief systems enable them to exert great influence on the goings of the organisation. For these characteristics are similar for jihadist terrorist leaders, this leads to the proposition that a profile of a jihadist terrorist leader would be possible on the basis of these characteristics.

3.5 Conclusion

Contemporary jihadist terrorist organisations are rooted in the ideological doctrines of Sayyid Qutb and Abdullah Azzam. Their believes in combination with the Afghan occupation by the Soviet Union has sparked the rise of the jihadist terrorist scene of today. In the present-day jihadist terrorist groups, hierarchical structures are no longer dominant. Networks, may it be a

chain, hub or all-channel, are the most common structures now. This has also put the leadership in a different position. They can be seen as the cohesive substance instead of the operational power behind the group. Nevertheless, their position in the organisation is still of vital importance.

Concerning the ability to establish a profile of the jihadist terrorist leaders, the prospects are positive. Since the ideology and position of the leaders in the organisations is rather similar and the structures of the organisations do not differ greatly, it is likely that a similar set of characteristics will be found. Nevertheless, since the contexts of jihadist terrorist organisations may differ greatly, it may still be hard to determine a common profile or multiple profiles. In Chapter 4 the methodology to find common characteristics in this study will be provided. This will be the first step towards a profile of jihadist terrorist leaders.

4. Methodology

After laying down the theoretical foundation in the previous chapters, this chapter will now focus on the methodology of this study. In this elaboration on the research itself, the population and sample, the research design, and the data-gathering methods will be discussed. Furthermore, at the end of this chapter, some caveats on the quality of this research will be mentioned in the discussion. Thus, all paragraphs will elaborate on the 'what' and 'how' of the main research question: *To what extent do the characteristics of the leaders from jihadist terrorist organisations, who were or have been active during the period of September 2001-October 2017 and whose organisations are labelled as terrorist organisations by the United Nations, differ from the characteristics of jihadist terrorists in general?*

4.1 Population and sample

In the world there is a multitude of extremist and terrorist groups and organisations. In order to perform a good and feasible research, a specific sample has to be taken. As was made clear by the research question and the theoretical framework, the sample consists of jihadist terrorist organisations. This has several implications. Firstly, it is focussed on a religious population. Terrorist organisations with right-wing, left-wing, nationalistic or other ideologies are thus excluded from the sample. Secondly, the term jihadism relates to the ideology as preached by individuals such as Qutb and Azzam and refers to the violent struggle to unite the Muslim community. The organisations under research must therefore show signs of this ideology.

Thirdly, the focus of this research is on terrorist organisations. This, thus, goes further than extremist organisations. As discussed in paragraph 2.1, terrorism is a tactic of trying to achieve certain political or societal goals and is always related to extremism. Extremism, on the other hand, does not have to result in terrorism. However, the definition of what is considered to be a terrorist or terrorist organisation still has some major subjective connotations. The interpretations of the multiplicity of definitions can have significant impact on who and what are labelled as 'terrorist'. Therefore, another inclusion criteria for this study is that the organisation has to be listed on the current (time of writing October 2017) Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List (see United Nations Security Council, 2017). Appendix A displays the list of all included organisations.

However, within these organisations another inclusion criterion must be applied in order to find the right cases to study. The research question mentions the focus on the leaders of the

organisations. These are the persons who are at the top of their organisation and thus do not have anyone directly above them in the hierarchy of the organisation. Furthermore, not only the current leaders of organisations are taken into account. Those who have been a leader in the time period September 2001-October 2017 will be included in the sample (excluding those who died or became inactive between September 2001 and December 2001). This may lead to several leaders per organisation. These inclusion criteria lead to a dataset of 66 leaders found in 38 different organisations. Hamada Ould Mohamed el-Khairy was identified by the United Nations Consolidated Sanctions List (2017: 70) as the leader of the 'Mouvement pour l'Unification et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest'. However, other sources argue differently and it is not known in which organisation he operates currently. Therefore he is listed as having an 'unknown current organisation'.

4.2 Research design

Now that it is clear who are included in the sample, an explanation on the research design will be provided. In this paragraph it will be elaborated how the sample will be studied. First, an overview of the research design will be provided. This includes the three phases of the study (see Figure 1). Second, an operationalisation is given. More information on the data-gathering methods can be found in the third paragraph of this chapter.

4.2.1 Overview of the phases

The general idea of this research is to look for the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders using a quantitative approach. These leaders are identified using the inclusion criteria as mentioned in the previous paragraph. Together with the identification of variables and indicators, this will be the first phase of the research (see Figure 1). The variables and indicators are found in the literature on terrorist profiles (mainly derived from Bakker (2006) and thus to a large extent from Sageman (2004)) and the literature as discussed in Chapter 3 on leaders in (jihadist) terrorist organisations. In the following section the operationalisation of these variables is given. The leaders and the variables combined will provide the framework of the dataset which will be established in this research. This is done in the first phase of the research.

In the second phase of this research, the data was gathered (see Figure 1). Using the variables that have been identified in the first phase, this is a rather straightforward process. However, in order to have a representative sample and to be able to use a quantitative approach, the number of cases has to be substantial. Although the variables are relatively simple to fill in

(see the following section on the operationalisation), the vastness of the sample has demanded a substantial time effort. Furthermore, in order to provide reliable results, there has to be a large saturation of the variables. In other words, large sets of missing data within a variable can diminish the reliability of the research. Paragraph 4.4 will discuss this caveat more in-depth.

Following, in the third phase, the analysis of the gathered data has taken place (see Figure 1). The analysis is divided into two parts. First, common characteristics have been looked for using descriptive analyses. Every variable has been analysed individually using descriptive analyses and some have been connected with other variables in order to see whether or not these are connected. Second, the results on the characteristics of the leaders are compared to the general characteristics of the jihadist terrorist, as described in Chapter 2. Although the focus of this research is a little different from the focus of many scholars who have tried to profile (jihadist) terrorists (many have looked into the jihadist terrorists in Europe, while this research does not limit itself to a geographical area) and therefore a comparison might not be sufficiently valid, it will give important first insights in the difference between leaders and 'followers' in the jihadist terrorist scene.

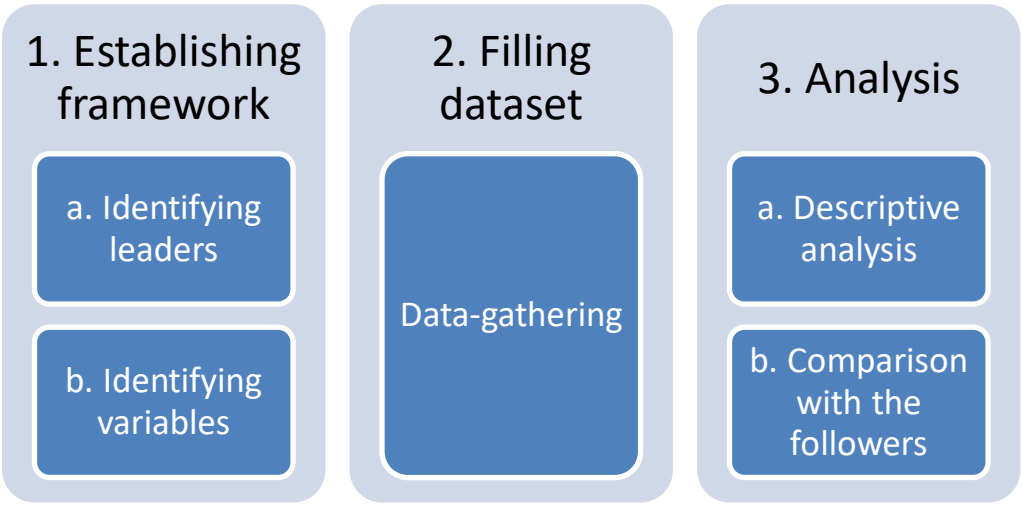

Figure 1 Phases of the proposed research

4.2.2 Operationalisation

In this study, the characteristics of the leaders are under research. This section will elaborate on which characteristics are examined. Appendix B includes the operationalisation schemes in which main concepts are taken apart to the level of indicators. In the accompanying codebook of this research the full operationalisation is displayed as well. Furthermore, in the codebook

the values for the categorical indicators are provided. In total there are 4 main concepts (social background, career in jihadist terrorist career, personality, combat experience), which are translated into 17 other concepts. All variables are directly derived from the theoretical framework established in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The following will elaborate on the operationalisation of each of the concepts.Within the main concept of 'social background', many indicators have been used following Bakker's (2006), and thus Sageman's (2004), study. Nevertheless, for the structuring of this research, the operationalisation of what this study calls 'social background' is slightly different than Bakker's (2006) and Sageman's (2004). This study has put six different concepts under this banner. First, general information looks into gender, the current/last[3] organisation, the position within the current/last organisation (not all leaders are currently leaders), status, age, and family status. These will provide the context of the leaders. Second, the geographical background is focussed on the place of raising, family origin, nationality, and the (last) place of residence. This is followed by two indicators on education: the highest level of education and the location of education. The fourth concept within 'social background' is faith, in which the faith as youth, the current/last faith, and the development in faith (i.e. has the Islamic faith increased in this person?) are scrutinised.

Next is the concept of socioeconomics. This consists of the socioeconomic status and occupation. The former relating to the societal class in which the leader has his origins and the latter referring to the profession of the leader prior to or in between joining jihadist terrorist organisations. Last in the main concept of 'social background' is the criminal record. This falls apart into the total incarcerated time of the individual and the criminal offenses the subject has been sentenced for (incarceration for a crime is not always necessary, since some leaders have been sentenced in absentia).

The main concept of 'career in jihadist terrorist organisations' does only include some of the variables used by Bakker (2006). This is a category that is most likely more relevant to the leaders than the members of terrorist groups in Western Europe, since for the former being a terrorist leader can be argued to be a profession. Five concepts are falling under this main concept. First, the age concept is referring to the age at which the subject has entered his first jihadist terrorist organisation and to the age at which the subject has entered his current/last

[3] If the leader is still active in a jihadist terrorist organisation then the current organisation is used. If the leader is no longer active in an organisation (e.g. deceased or incarcerated), then the last organisation in which the leader was active in is used.

organisation. This is then followed by the recruitment concept, which looks into the place of recruitment when first joining a jihadist terrorist organisation and the importance of family and friends in this process (i.e. social affiliation). Following the path of the leader through different jihadist terrorist organisations, the third concept describes the amount of memberships of jihadist terrorist organisations prior to the current/last organisation. Consequently, the speed of the career is assessed (i.e. the time between entering the current/last organisation and becoming its leader) and the role of the subject in the formation of the organisation is discussed (i.e. is the leader the founder of the organisation?).

The third main concept, 'personality', is divided into four other concepts. First, charisma is being discussed by finding out whether or not the subject is perceived as charismatic. Second, authoritarianism refers to the childhood of the subject. It concerns the question whether or not the subject has received a punitive, authoritarian upbringing. Framing is the third concept that refers to 'personality'. While rhetoric could be explained as a reflection of one's own thoughts, this study sees this concept more in the light of the leadership task to provide a clear course for the organisation. The related question therefore is 'to what extent does the subject delineate the in- (i.e. allies) and out-group (i.e. enemies)?' Relative deprivation is the last variable within this main concept. It refers to a by the subject perceived inability to obtain what is perceived as rightfully his.

Finally, the fourth main concept in this study is 'combat experience'. It is both first-hand frontline battlefield experience and militant/terrorist training that are related to this category. In both concepts it is first discussed if it is applicable (i.e. has the subject battlefield experience or has the subject had militant/terrorist training?) and then the location(s) of these experiences is looked for.

While not all concepts and variables are directly borrowed from the study of Bakker (2006), this study builds heavily on his operationalisation (see appendix B for which variables used in this research can be found in Bakker's (2006) study). Nevertheless, many variables have been added in order to meet potential leader-specific characteristics (e.g. charisma and being a founder of the organisation or not). The indicators as discussed in this paragraph are opening the door to enhance and centralise the knowledge on the jihadist terrorist leaders across the globe.

4.3 Data-gathering

As was previously mentioned, the data-gathering phase has been the most time consuming part of the research. The until now fragmented pieces of information on jihadist terrorist leaders must be put together and this had to be done for 66 leaders in total for every variable mentioned in the previous paragraph. This paragraph will elaborate more on how this process of data-gathering has materialised.

Essential in the data-gathering phase is the filling in of the indicators established in the previous phase of the research. In order to streamline this process, the possible values of the indicators are mostly predetermined. The codebook is home to these values. They are sometimes distilled from Bakker's (2006) research in order to make a comparable dataset (see Appendix B for which variables are directly derived from Bakker's (2006) research). The values of the other categorical variables have not been explicitly found in other research.

This research is based on open sources. Via desktop research, the internet has been searched for relevant information on the leaders central in this study. Searching for the right information, three online search machines have been used: the Leiden University Library Catalogue (LULC), Google Scholar and Google. Often have the results of one given input for the other. While the LULC and Google Scholar often provide links to reliable (scientific) information, this is not always the case with Google. However, many small pieces of information can be found in online news articles, governmental reports, etc. This has therefore been an important search machine (especially for the less famous/infamous leaders).

The pieces of information on the leaders are found in (auto-) biographies, (inter-) governmental reports, newspapers, scholarly articles, think-tank reports, webpages such as the 'Mapping Militant Organizations' section of Stanford University and the Counter Extremism Project, and speeches of and interviews with the concerned leader. Furthermore, less than half a dozen of online forums are used as sources (since they can provide translations of Arabic texts which are published by the media outlets of jihadist terrorist organisations). While most of these sources can be considered to provide reliable factual information, online forums and news articles may stray from this position. Their interest may exceed the desire to provide correct information. News articles, for example, report all the news they can gather, sometimes without crosschecking with other sources. This may for instance lead to false death reporting. Online forums and autobiographies may want to inflate certain situations in order to

create an aura of heroism around the leader. Therefore multiple sources are used to crosscheck the found data, when possible.

4.4 Discussion

The overall adequacy of the research design to answer the research question is good. By including only those leaders who are at the top of jihadist terrorist organisations, it can be stated that the sample is representative to the population of jihadist terrorist leaders. The external validity towards leaders of other terrorist organisations is not clear. A terrorist organisation with a specific religious ideology may have different leaders than a secular left-wing terrorist organisation. Further research is needed in order to assess this external validity fully.

The internal validity of this proposed research can be considered as sufficient for two reasons. First, the main concepts are often operationalised according to the findings of previous research. The variables have thus already been used and tested. Second, in the multitude of variables have made it possible to control certain outcomes for different causes. However, missing data often led to more caution in generalisation of the data. It also caused a lack of control groups (when indicating relations between variables). Therefore, these results are clearly indicated in the following chapters as being potentially less valid and thus having less power.

On the reliability of this research some other notions can be made. First, the reliability is ensured by using variables that are in no need for grave interpretations. Factual information on for example age or status does not have to be interpreted. However, as a second notion, the reliability of sources is therefore very important. As was made clear in the previous paragraph, the data-gathering phase has included a wide variety of sources. While some can be considered very reliable (e.g. a leaked Guantanomo Bay detainee report), others can be questioned (e.g. jihadist supporting online forums). In order to enhance the reliability, multiple sources have been used for the same information when possible. This triangulation enhances the reliability.

5. Who are the jihadist terrorist leaders?

After setting up the framework for the dataset by identifying leaders and variables (established by the theoretical framework, which can be found in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3), the data was gathered to fill in the metaphorical pieces of the puzzle (see Chapter 4 for methodology). This process has led to a dataset of 66 jihadist terrorist leaders over the time period of September 2001 until October 2017. Finding the data on these individuals varied in difficulty and the sources varied in reliability. Plenty of reliable information could be found on leaders such as Osama bin Laden (Al-Qaeda) and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Islamic State), but the less known leaders, such as Abu Talha al-Andalusi (Harakat Sham al-Islam) and Bashit Othman al-Assimi (Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria), were harder to assess. Furthermore, while information on some variables was generally easy to find, it was not possible to find enough data on others.

In this chapter, the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders will be elaborated upon. Using the variables established in the theoretical framework, these characteristics are the direct results of the dataset created in this study. First, general information on the sample is provided. This includes variables such as the different organisations in the sample, the positions of the subject within those organisations and the age of the leaders. The other paragraphs will focus on the main concepts that are elaborated upon in Chapter 5 and Appendix B. Furthermore, multiple variables will be combined in order to find potential interrelations. However, two variables which were included in this study will not be presented in the following analysis. On authoritarianism (i.e. whether or not the subject received an authoritarian or punitive upbringing) and relative deprivation (i.e. whether or not the subject perceived an inability to obtain what is perceived as rightfully theirs) too little information was found to be able to provide quality findings (respectively n=5 and n=4).

While this chapter solely focusses on the results of the new dataset, Chapter 6 will provide a general comparison with the characteristics of the members of jihadist terrorist organisations, as described in Chapter 2. This will provide a preliminary answer to the question to what extent jihadist terrorist leaders differ from the members of jihadist terrorist organisations.

5.1 General information

In the all-male sample (n=66), 38 different organisations have been identified. Nevertheless, the organisation of one leader, Hamada Ould Mohamed el-Khairy (a.k.a. Abou QumQum), could not be identified. Different sources could not provide a solid image of his current group.

Table 3 presents all the organisations with their corresponding number of leaders in the dataset. Of the 65 individuals on which the sources do provide information on the current/last[4] organisations, 27.7% (n=18) are still active, 10.8% (n=7) are currently incarcerated, almost half of them are deceased (n=32) and four are inactive in other forms (e.g. in hiding without operational capabilities or de-radicalised). While of only one case no evidence could be found on his current status (again Abou QumQum), four are categorised as having contrary reporting on their status. This includes leaders on which sources are not agreeing on whether the person is active, arrested, deceased or inactive.

Names of organisations (number of cases in the dataset)		
Abdallah Azzam Brigades (n=2)	Emarat Kavkaz (n=2)	Jemmah Anshorut Tauhid (n=1)
Abu Sayyaf Group (n=2)	Haqqani Network (n=1)	Jund al Aqsa (n=2)
Al-Qaeda (n=2)	Harakat Sham al-Islam (n=3)	Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria (n=2)
Al-Qaeda in Iraq (n=2)	Harakat-ul-Muhahedeen (n=1)	Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (n=1)
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (n=2)	Islamic Army of Aden (n=1)	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (n=1)
Al-Murabitoun (n=2)	Islamic International Brigade (n=3)	Muhammad Jamal Network (n=1)
Al-Shabaab (n=3)	Islamic Jihad Union (n=1)	Mujahidin Indonesion Timur (n=1)
Ansar al-Islam (n=3)	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (n=3)	Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs (n=2)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (n=1)	Islamic State (n=2)	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (n=2)
Ansar Eddine (n=1)	Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (n=1)	Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (n=2)
Ansarul Mislimina fi Biladis Sudan (n=1)	Jaish-e-Mohammad (n=1)	Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (n=3)
Armed Islamic Group (n=2)	Boko Haram (n=2)	The Organisation of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (n=1)
Asbat al-Ansar (n=1)	Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (n=1)	

Table 3 Overview of organisations in dataset

Although this research focusses on jihadist terrorist leaders between September 2001 and October 2017, this does not mean that these individuals are currently also holding the leader's position in the organisation. It is possible that someone used to be the leader of an organisation, changed groups and now is not the leader anymore. This happened in three cases: Ahmed el Tilemsi (deceased, last organisation: al-Murabitoun), Abu Muhammad al-Golani (active, current organisation: Jabhat Fateh al-Sham), and Omar Shishani[5] (deceased, last organisation: Islamic State). Nevertheless, still 61 cases are categorised as being the

[4] If the leader is still active, the current jihadist terrorist organisation has been used. If the leaders is inactive (e.g. deceased or arrested), the most recent jihadist terrorist organisation has been used.
[5] These are the nom de guerres of the leaders, since they are better known by these names.

leader of their organisation and in 2 cases no data on this variable was found. 50% of the valid cases in which one is the leader of the organisation entered their current position between 2001 (Q1) and 2012 (Q3)[6].

Concerning the age of the leaders, the years of birth of the leaders are divided over a range of 48 years with a minimum of 1938 and a maximum of 1986 (n=53). 1938 (birth year of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, leader of Jemmah Anshorut Tauhid) can be seen as an outlier since the closest year of birth is 1950. The median is 1970 which indicates that 50% of all cases have a year of birth equal to or lower than 1970. Furthermore, 50% of all cases is between 1965 (Q1) and 1975 (Q3) (see Figure 2). At point of death, the deceased leaders had an average age of 38 (n=28). Moreover, 50% was younger than 37. Of the living, the average age is 48 and the median is 46. The current leaders are thus older than the leaders that have perished in the time period of September 2001-October 2017.

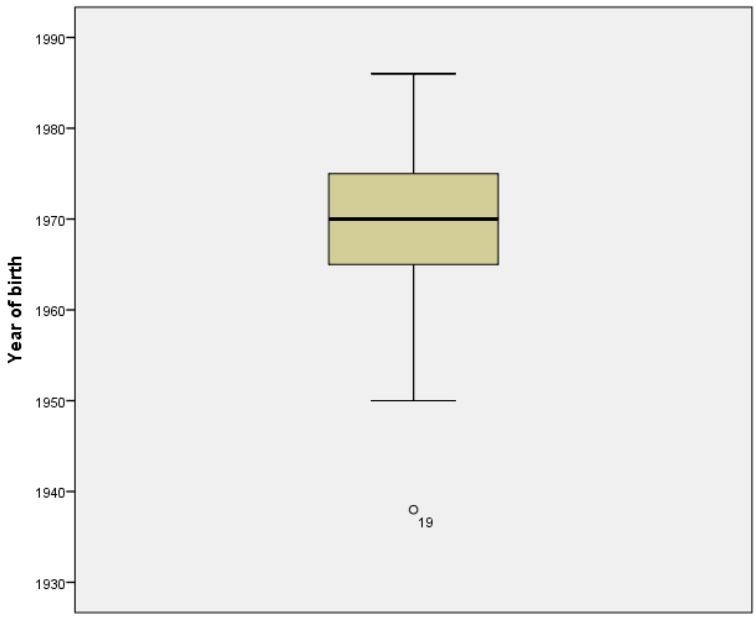

Figure 2 Distribution of years of birth

The last general variables are related to their family status. All valid cases (n=26) are categorised as married. In this case missing data might suggest that the subject is not married, but no evidence can support this assumption. Nevertheless, of the total of 66 cases, it can be concluded that at least 39.6% is married. Furthermore, on average the leaders have 4.3

[6] Q1 refers to the first quartile (i.e. 25% of all cases are beneath this point) and Q3 to the third quartile (i.e. 75% of all cases are beneath this point).

children. However, this is highly influenced by outliers, since the n is only 19. One of those outliers is Osama bin Laden, who has reportedly 23 children. Therefore, the mode and median are better indicators. These are respectively 1 and 3. This means that most leaders have 1 child and 50% have 3 children or less. Leaders are thus not only often married, but also often have a few children.

The image that arises from this data is that the jihadist terrorist leaders are married men with own children and are older than their predecessors who most often died between 2001 and 2012.

5.2 Geographical background

This second paragraph will step away from the general description of the leaders and will discuss in-depth their geographical background. In order to provide an overall picture of this, three themes are central. First it will be discussed where the leaders come from. Variables such as the countries the leaders are raised in, their family origin and their nationality will be elaborated upon. Second, the locations of the highest levels of education are discussed and compared to the countries the leaders grew up in. Finally, the extent to which leaders have been abroad to spread or act on their jihadist believes will be assessed. This is done by using the country the subject is raised in as a starting point and comparing this with the countries of education, current/last residence, the location of frontline battlefield experience and the location of militant or terrorist training.

5.2.1 Where do they come from?

In the sample, most leaders were raised in Algeria (n=7), followed by Pakistan and Russia (n=6 for both). 21 different countries are identified in this category. Looking at the family origin of the leaders, only 18 different countries are found and Pakistan has the highest leader-count (n=4). Saudi Arabia, Russia and Uzbekistan share the second place (n= 3). The nationalities do not differ greatly from the countries raised in. The highest ranking country is Algeria (12.1% of 58), followed by Saudi Arabia (10.3%) and Pakistan and Russia (8.6%). These data are also displayed in Table 4.

Although the geographical origins of these leaders are quite diverse, some common ground can be seen. The countries listed in Table 4 are mostly Muslim dominated countries or countries with a large Muslim community. It is therefore not strange that the jihadist terrorist leaders across the world originate from these countries.

Country raised in (valid percentage) *N= 60*	**Country of family origin (valid percentage)** *N= 31*	**Nationality (valid percentage)** *N= 58*	**Country of education (valid percentage)** *N= 22*
Algeria (11.7%)	Afghanistan (3.2%)	Afghanistan (1.7%)	Algeria (4.5%)
Egypt (5%)	Algeria (6.5%)	Algeria (12.1%)	Chad (4.5%)
Georgia (1.7%)	Egypt (3.2%)	Egypt (5.2%)	Egypt (4.5%)
Indonesia (3.3%)	Georgia (3.2%)	Georgia (1.7%)	India (9.1%)
Iraq (8.3%)	India (3.2%)	Indonesia (3.4%)	Indonesia (4.5%)
Jordan (3.3%)	Indonesia (6.5%)	Iraq (6.9%)	Iraq (4.5%)
Libya (1.7%)	Iraq (3.2%)	Jordan (5.2%)	Jordan (4.5%)
Mali (3.3%)	Jordan (3.2%)	Mali (3.4%)	Libya (4.5%)
Mauritania (1.7%)	Mali (3.2%)	Mauritania (1.7%)	Nigeria (4.5%)
Morocco (3.3%)	Pakistan (12.9%)	Morocco (1.7%)	Pakistan (9.1%)
Nigeria (5%)	Palestine (6.5%)	Nigeria (5.2%)	Philippines (4.5%)
Pakistan (10%)	Philippines (6.5%)	Pakistan (8.6%)	Russia (4.5%)
Palestine (1.7%)	Russia (9.7%)	Palestine (1.7%)	Saudi Arabia (22.7%)
Philippines (3.3%)	Saudi Arabia (9.7%)	Philippines (3.4%)	Sudan (4.5%)
Russia (10%)	Somalia (6.5%)	Russia (8.6%)	Yemen (4.5%)
Saudi Arabia (8.3%)	Turkey (3.2%)	Saudi Arabia (10.3%)	
Somalia (5%)	Uzbekistan (9.7%)	Somalia (5.2%)	
Syria (1.7%)	Yemen (3.2%)	Syria (1.7%)	
Tunisia (1.7%)		Tunisia (1.7%)	
Uzbekistan (5%)		Uzbekistan (3.4%)	
Yemen (5%)		Yemen (5.2%)	

Table 4 Geographical background of the jihadist terrorist leaders

5.2.2 Educational geographical background

With the assumption that different countries are home to different (radical) Islamic doctrines (e.g. Saudi Arabia predominantly Wahhabism and India a Deobandi branch), it could be interesting to look into the locations of the highest level of education of the leaders.[7] Table 4 includes these locations as well. It becomes clear that Saudi Arabia (22.7%) is the most used location for education. Pakistan and India (both 9.1%) follow at some distance.

Too little data is available in order to perform a Chi-square test to test whether or not the countries the leaders are raised in differ significantly from the countries of education. On one-third of the total sample information is found on both the countries of raising and countries of education. Of these valid cases, 14 (63.6%) cases have studied in their home country and 8 (36.4%) cases have left their home country to be educated elsewhere. Figure 3 displays the countries of education and the countries in which the leaders were raised in. The country that has the most appeal for education for those who left is Saudi Arabia (n=3), followed by India (n=2). Of the leaders that have enjoyed education abroad, most came from Pakistan (n=3). Overall, there is a distinction between those who enjoyed studies abroad and those who did not. Most leaders have been educated in their home country. A positive connection between the country one is raised in and the country of education is therefore likely.

Figure 3 Map of locations of education (red pins) and countries raised in (blue pins)

[7] Although not always clear how certain education relates to the formal educational levels, such as primary and secondary education, the locations of such schoolings are known. This is why in some cases the level of education (as will be described in paragraph 5.3) is missing but the location of education is known.

These data thus show that although countries with a history of providing jihadist terrorist leaders, such as Algeria, Russia, Pakistan, do not have a strong appeal on those who do not originate from those countries. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia seems to attract foreigners to be educated there. This could be explained by the high profile leaders that originate from this country, such as Osama bin Laden and Thamir Saleh Abdullah (a.k.a. Ibn al-Khattab).

5.2.3 Worldly leaders

In order to asses to what extent jihadist terrorist leaders have had substantial experience outside their country they were raised in, this country is compared to the current/last country of residence, the country of education (already described in the previous section), the location of frontline battlefield experience, and the location of militant/terrorist training. To what extent the leaders gained such training and battlefield experience is discussed in paragraph 5.8.

In the comparison of the countries the leaders are raised in and their current/last countries of residence, it becomes clear that these are similar in 58.1% of the valid cases. 41.9% are currently living in a different country than they were raised in or have died in a different country. This shows that leaders often choose to emigrate, but most leaders choose to remain in their country of origin.

Of those who fought in wars or other violent conflicts (see paragraph 5.8 for further details on this variable) and of which the country of raising is known (n=34), 24 (36.4% of total sample) fought abroad and 11 (16.7% of total sample) fought in their home country (there is one duplicate, since Abdelmalek Droukdel has fought both in his own country Algeria and abroad in Afghanistan). Furthermore, of the 19 cases on which information on both the country of raising and the country of military/terrorist training has been found, 16 (84,2%) have had training abroad and 4 (21,1%) received training in their home country (one duplicate since Abu Wardah, a.k.a. Santoso, has received training at home in Indonesia as well as abroad in Afghanistan).

These three comparisons and the comparison between the country of raising and country of education (see previous section) show that leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations are not shy of having substantial experiences abroad. Although only some travel abroad for their education, many go and live, fight and/or train in a foreign country.

5.3 Education and faith

As was already mentioned in the previous paragraph, the locations where the jihadist terrorist leaders received their education are very diverse, yet mostly contained to predominantly Muslim states. In this paragraph the education will be further scrutinised by looking into the levels of education. Secondly, the topic of faith is to be discussed. What are their religious backgrounds and is an increase in faith detected since their youth? These two variables indicate the ranges of thought of the leaders. In order to provide a more in-depth picture on this, these two will be combined in the third section of this paragraph.

5.3.1 Level of education

25 of the total of 66 cases are valid in the variable of level of education. The data suggests that the leaders are most often highly educated (see Figure 4). 52% (n=13) received schooling at the university level and of those, 12 graduated and 1 did not. This sole leader is Tahir Yuldashev, the co-founder and from 2001 until 2010 the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. On the opposite side of the level of education scale, having received no formal education, is Baitullah Mehsud. He is the founder of the umbrella organisation of the Taliban in Pakistan: Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. Moreover, six cases ended their education after secondary school. Interestingly, 25% (n=5) have ended their education prematurely (i.e. without graduating). A hypothetical explanation for this is the age at which the to-be-leaders enter their first jihadist terrorist organisation. However, due to a lack of data when combining the level of education and the age of entering the first jihadist terrorist organisation (n=4) no evidence for this could be found. Thus, a difference can be seen in the levels of education. 48% has graduated from university, while 25% did not graduate from secondary school. Although a wide variety of levels of education, most leaders are highly educated.

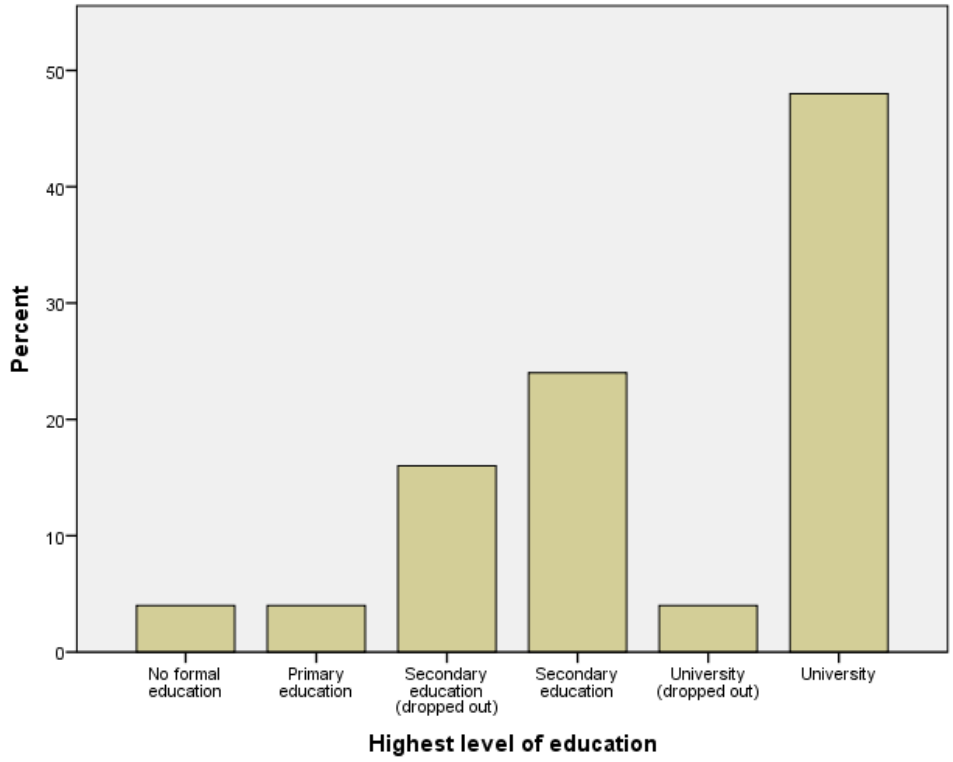

Figure 4 Visual representation of the levels of education

5.3.2 Faith

Looking at the youths of the leaders it becomes clear that most of them had a religious upbringing to at least some extent. Of the 20 valid cases, only three had no particular religious background. Furthermore, there is one leader who converted from Christianity to Islam. Tarkan Tayumurazovich Batirashvili (a.k.a. Omar Shishani) is a Georgian and raised in the Pankisi Gorge, known as the birthplace of many Chechen fighters. His father was a Christian and his mother a Muslim. Batirashvili was raised as Christian. Furthermore, of the leaders who received an Islamic upbringing, a wide variety of doctrines can be seen. Deobandi, Salafi, Wahabi, Sufi, etc. Interestingly, Sheikh Abu Hashim Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman al Ibr (arrested leader of Ansar al-Islam) changed his doctrine radically. He swore off the Shi'I doctrine and became a Sunni. This may also be considered a way of conversion. Thus, while only represented to some extent (n=5), converts who become jihadist terrorist leaders are a reality.

It is clear that these five accounts of converts can be categorised as having increased their (Islamic) faith since their youth. Nevertheless, there are 14 other leaders who have been perceived as having increased their faith. Thus, of the valid cases (n=20) there are 19 leaders

(almost 30% of the total sample) who showed an increase and one who did not.[8] [9] For being mostly raised in Islamic countries, the leaders show a relatively high number of increases in faith.

5.3.3 Education and developments in faith

Combining the increase in faith variable and the variable if the subject has received education abroad, there are only 11 valid cases. Of those who have increased their faith (n=10), 8 have been educated in their home country and 2 abroad. In general, approximately one-third of the leaders has been educated abroad (see paragraph 5.2). The distribution among those who increased their faith is thus quite the same as the general distribution. Also because of the low number of valid cases, no clear evidence is therefore provided for the statement that being educated abroad has an impact on the developments in faith.

The countries of education also do not seem to have influenced the development in faith greatly. Combining these two variables, the valid number of cases is 11 as well. All countries of education, except for Libya, have produced solely subjects who experience an increase in faith. The one case that is educated in Libya and of which information on the faith development has been found, experienced no increase in faith (see the short description of Abdelhakim Belhadj in footnote 6).

Furthermore, within the levels of education no evidence can be found on the effect on the development in faith. Due to a lack of data on persons who did not have an increase in faith, there is no control group. Moreover, the frequencies of cases that have experienced an increase in faith do not differ greatly between the levels of education.

Thus, the location of education (both the exact location and whether or not an education abroad) and the level of education do not seem to have influenced the development in faith of the leaders. However, due to a lack of data no statistical tests can be done in order to provide solid evidence.

5.4 Socioeconomics

Following the general, educational and faith backgrounds of the jihadist terrorist leaders, this paragraph will focus on the socioeconomics. In the first section, the societal class of which

[8] The high share of persons who increased their faith in the valid sample can be explained by a methodological issue. Reports only focus on changes in one's lifetime and continuities do not seem to be worth writing on.
[9] Abdelhakim Belhadj (former leader of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group) has reportedly sworn off the violent jihad after his release from a Libyan prison in 2011. Although on the one hand now a Libyan politician, some reports claim that he is working with IS in Libya.

these leaders originate will be discussed. This is followed by an inventory of their occupations.

5.4.1 Class

Figure 5 displays the distribution of cases according to their socioeconomic status (n=18). The data suggests that leaders are predominantly from the middle classes of society (66.7%). The lower and upper class are equally represented in the sample (n=3, 16.7%). This is contrary to what the literature on terrorist profiles suggests. According to Leiken (2005) and Sendagorta (2005), leaders are recruited from the upper classes, while this data argues that this not the case. Some caution in the generalisation of this conclusion must be taken into account, however, since the n is relatively low.

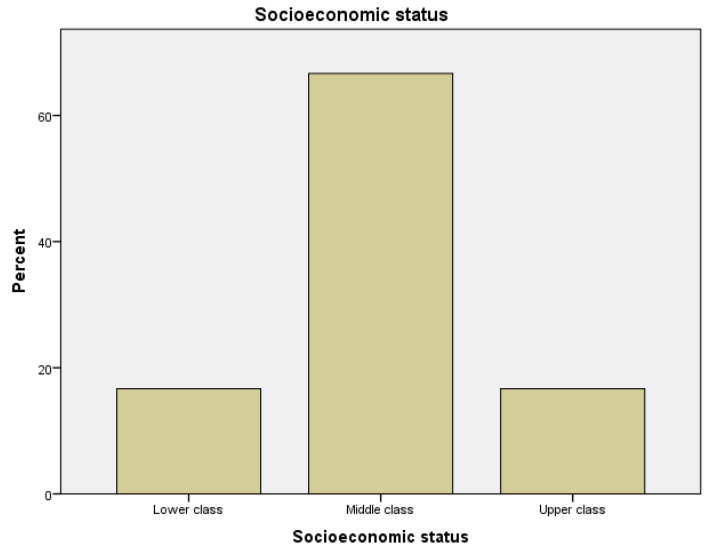

Figure 5 Distribution of cases according to their socioeconomic status

5.4.2 Occupation

Of the 66 cases in total, 28 cases were available for analysis since these are the cases data was found on the occupational situation prior to or in between membership of jihadist terrorist organisations. While on the one hand a very diverse set of occupations, two categories spring to the foreground. First, occupations in which the leader takes on a teaching role (i.e. teachers, n=6, and preachers, n=2) are more common than the other occupations in the sample. 8 cases (25.0%) have been identified as having had a teaching occupation. Second, almost a third (32.1%, n=9) have had no profession. Although an explanation for this phenomenon might be the age at which these subjects enter their first jihadist terrorist organisation (they often join their first jihadist terrorist organisation in their early twenties, see Figure 6, and may therefore

have not had the opportunity to be employed), no statistical evidence has been found for this in this sample. A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there is no significant difference between the categories of occupation and the age of joining the first jihadist terrorist organisation ($\chi^2(2)=2{,}401$, $p=0{,}301$, with a mean rank score of 9.43 for no profession, 15.25 for teacher/preacher, and 11.85 for other professions). This therefore suggests that the occupation has no influence on the age of entering the first jihadist terrorist organisation.

In the 'other' category, a wide variety of professions can be seen. There is one account of a consular official (Iyad ag Ghali, leader of Ansar Eddine), one surgeon (Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda), one ski lift operator (Fazal Hayat, a.k.a. Maulana Fazlullah, a.k.a. Mullah Radio, leader of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan) and many other professions. The professions also range from low to high on the societal ladder (i.e. from employee of municipal maintenance services to surgeon).

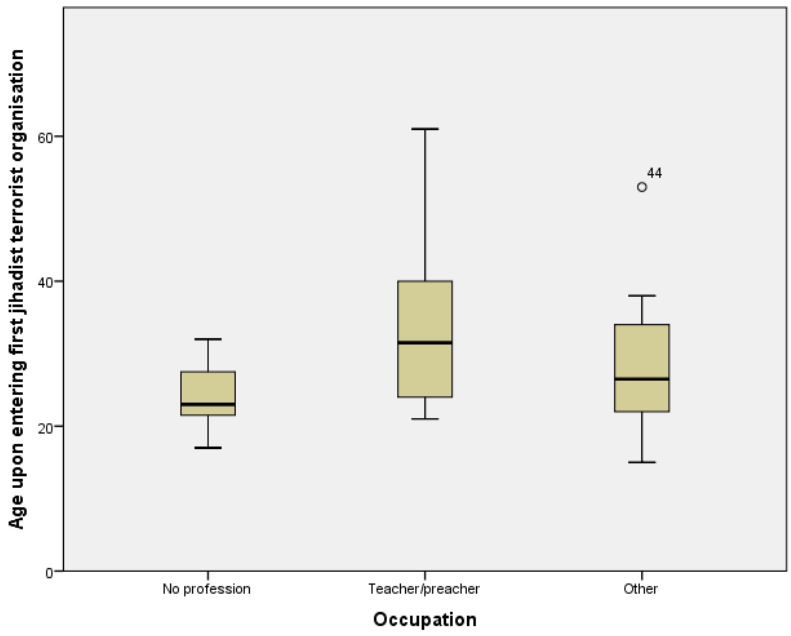

Figure 6 Boxplots of ages upon entering first jihadist terrorist organisations for three categories of occupation

5.5 Criminal record

As a last category that relates to the social background of the jihadist terrorist leaders, their criminal records will be discussed. This paragraph will describe to what extent these subjects have been incarcerated and in the second section the variety of criminal offenses will be discussed.

5.5.1 Incarcerated time

Of the 28 valid cases in the sample, 22 leaders have been incarcerated in the past. On the total sample, this is exactly one-third. The average time in prison (including the cases who had not been incarcerated) is 2.71 years, but most (n=9) have spent a total of one year behind bars. 8 persons were incarcerated for 5 years or more (see Figure 7). Ibrahim Bin Shakaran has been imprisoned the longest with a total of 9 years and was sentenced due to terrorist activities. Overall, leaders tend to have been incarcerated to some extent in their past. Of only 6 (9.1% of the total sample) it could be determined that they had spent no time in prison.

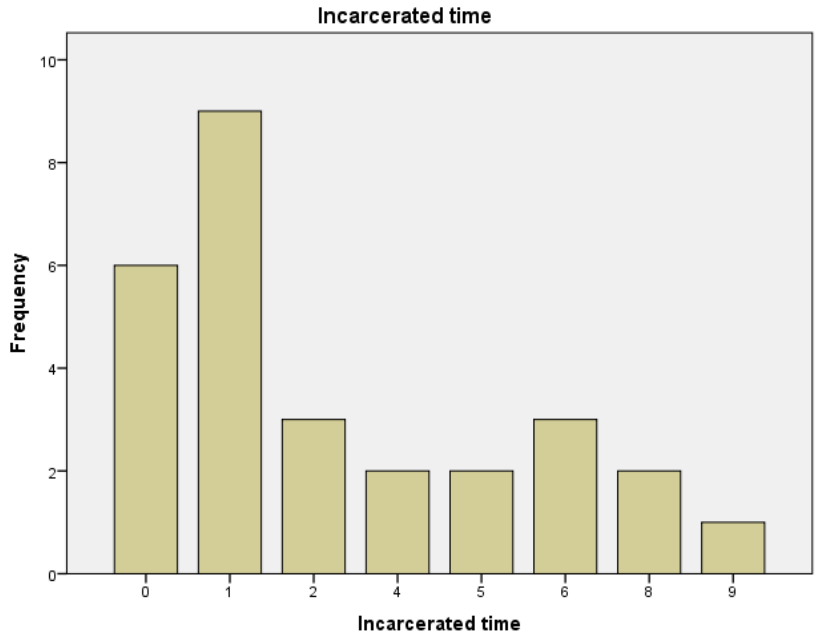

Figure 7 Visual representation of frequencies of the total incarcerated time of jihadist terrorist leaders

5.5.2 Criminal offenses

Most leaders who have been found guilty in court (n=28)[10] have faced terrorist activity charges or membership of terrorist organisations (n=22). Furthermore, there are two accounts of kidnapping (both leaders of Abu Sayyaf Group: Khadafi Abubakar Janjalani and Radulon Sahiron), four accounts of illegal weapon possession, three charges of murder or murder threats, three cases of robbery and petty theft (Mokhtar Belmokhtar, Abu Wardah and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi), one was tried and found guilty of participating in a student protest (Saifallah Ben Hassine, leader of Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia), and there was one account of

[10] Some leaders have been sentenced in absentia, which results in a criminal offense without having spent time in prison for this crime.

undermining the contemporary government by promoting the establishment of an Islamic state (Abu Bakar Ba'asyir). While the charges are thus very diverse, most leaders are incarcerated or sentenced due to their terrorist activities.

5.6 Career in jihadist terrorist organisations

Now that the social background variables have been discussed, this analysis can turn to the variables that describe the jihadist terrorist career of the leaders. The career is operationalised into severable variables and these are discussed in the four sections of this paragraph. Included in the fourth section is a discussion on the relation between the speed of the leaders' careers in their current/last organisation and the amount of memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations.

5.6.1 Age

The leaders are on average 28.36 years of age when joining their first jihadist terrorist organisation (n=33). The median score is 26.0 and there are two modes: 21 and 22. The boxplot below (Figure 8) shows that all leaders have entered their first jihadist terrorist organisation between the ages of 15 and 61. However, two outliers are identified: 61 (Abu Bakar Ba'asyir) and 53 (Iyad ag Ghali). The range of the boxplot therefore is 25 (between 15 and 40 years. These are respectively Ayman al-Zawahiri and Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, leader of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba). It can be concluded that 50% of the cases is or is 26 or younger when joining their first jihadist terrorist organisation. 15 cases (45.5%) fall in the age categories up to 25. The leaders are thus quite young when joining their first jihadist terrorist organisation.

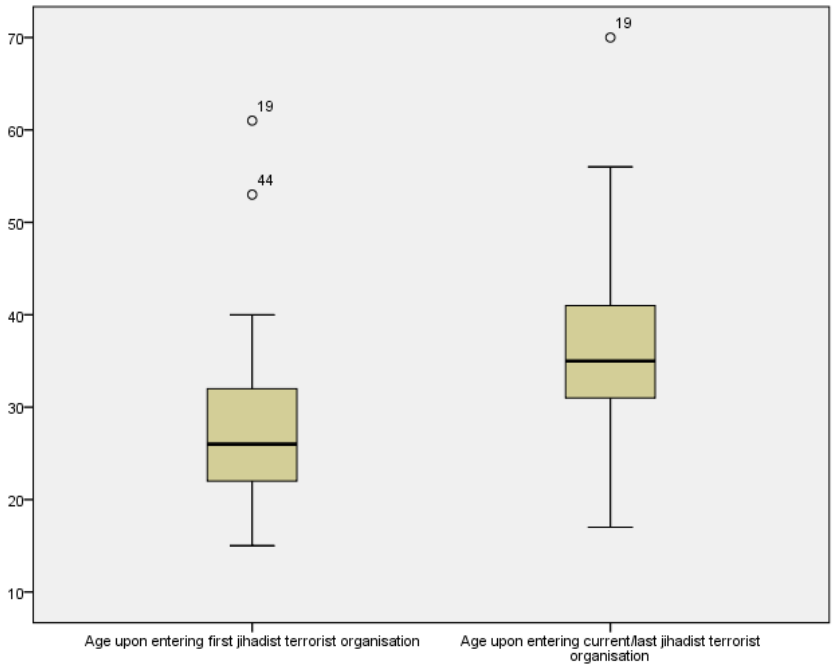

Figure 8 Distribution of ages upon entering a first jihadist terrorist organisation and the current organisation

Figure 8 does also show the distribution of ages upon entering the current/last organisation of the leaders. It can be seen that the range of ages is higher than the range in the other displayed variable. With the valid number of cases being 45, the average age in this variable is 35.62. While most leaders are 29 or 33 when they enter their current organisation (n=5 for both), 50% of all leaders is 33 or older. Also, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir (case number 19) is again an outlier with his age. Being the eldest case in the sample with a birth date in 1938, he also exemplifies the phenomenon that leaders often tend to break away from their first jihadist terrorist organisation (his age at entry in his first organisation is lower than his age at entering his last organisation) This will be more clearly explained in the fourth section in this paragraph.

5.6.2 Recruitment

The recruitment variable is related to joining the first jihadist terrorist organisation. This falls apart into two separate variables: the location of recruitment and the effect of relatives, friends and other close acquaintances on the joining of such organisations (i.e. social affiliation). On the location of recruitment it can be said that Afghanistan has played a very important part. Of the 43 valid cases, 13 can be directly linked to Afghanistan in their recruitment. Predominantly because of the Soviet occupation of that state in the previous century. This study does not include the liberation movement in Afghanistan as a terrorist organisation, since it does not meet the definition established in Chapter 2, but the location has been vital to the starting of jihadist terrorist careers of these 13 leaders. Other places of recruitment have been as diverse as the other countries mentioned in paragraph 5.2.

Bakker (2006) found that social affiliation played an important role in the entering of a jihadist terrorist organisation in Europe. This study, however, could only find data on 11 leaders. Of these, 10 are indicated as having had significant influence from friends and family in the joining of the jihad and only 1 case (Abu Wardah) had clearly had no social affiliation influences. A conclusion that social affiliation is also important with jihadist terrorist leaders may seem reliable on the basis of this distribution. However, it is most likely that these relative proportions are not correct. Just like mentioned earlier, sources might only report cases in which family and friends have clearly played an important role. This leads to almost no hard data on the category 'no social affiliation'. One must therefore be very cautious when

extracting a conclusion from this data. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the current distribution is interesting and is in need for more research.

5.6.3 Membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations

As mentioned in the section on the ages of entering their first and current jihadist terrorist organisation, the leaders in the sample often break away from their first organisation. Of the 42 cases information was found on, 39 have been a member of at least one other jihadist terrorist organisation than their current/last organisation. Nevertheless, the higher the number of other memberships, the less common it becomes (see Table 5). Most leaders have been part of one other organisation (n=23, which is 34.8% of the total sample) while only one leader (Ahmed el Tilemsi) was part of four other jihadist terrorist organisations (also the maximum number of other organisations in this sample).

	Number of memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations	Frequency	Percentage of total sample	Percentage of total valid cases
	0	3	4.5%	7.1%
	1	23	34.8%	54.8%
	2	13	19.7%	31.0%
	3	2	3.0%	4.8%
	4	1	1.5%	2.4%
Valid total		42	63.6%	100%
Missing cases		24	36.4%	
Total		66	100%	

Table 5 Membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations

5.6.4 Speed of their careers

The speed of a leader's career is being defined as the amount of time it took the subject to become the leader of his current/last organisation, measured from the point of entry in that organisation. In order to be able to provide information on this variable two things must therefore be known: the point of entry in the current/last organisation and the point of

becoming its leader. The definition automatically leads to the exclusion of those who are currently not in the leader's position or have not been at the point of becoming inactive.

46 cases have satisfied these criteria. Between the date of entry in the current organisation and the date of entering in the leadership position is an average of 2.11 years, with a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 15. Radulon Sahiron holds this maximum. He joined the organisation, Abu Sayyaf Group, in 1991 and became its leader in 2006 after the death of his predecessor Khadafi Abubakar Janjalani. The minimum of 0 years is not that exclusive, however. 27 leaders have become the leader of their current/last terrorist organisation practically immediately. This and the low average of years suggest that the leaders do not enter their current/last at the bottom of the organisation.

Although this research has not included the entry position of the leaders, this statement can be argued by combining the career speed variable with the membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations variable. Resulting in a valid case number of 36, 15 of those who immediately became the leader of their current/last organisation have been a member of one other organisation and 7 of two other organisations. Only Iyad ag Ghali had no prior experiences in jihadist terrorist organisations. In 2011 he created his own jihadist terrorist organisation, Ansar Eddine, and became its leader. Although not having been a member of other jihadist terrorist organisations, he had been in close contact with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in a negotiators role between this group and the Malian government. Thus, as this anecdote also suggests, being the founder of the organisation has important implications for the speed of one's career in his current/last organisation. The next paragraph will discuss this relation more in-depth and will also look into the effects of charisma on the speed of the career.

5.7 Personality

This paragraph will provide a closer look into the personality variables that were included in this study: Charisma and framing. Concerning the former, it will be argued to what extent jihadist terrorist leaders are charismatic, to what extent charisma is related to the amount of memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations, and to what extent charisma has an effect on the speed of one's jihadist terrorist career (as explained in the previous section). The latter, framing, will provide an indirect image of the thoughts of the leaders. It will be argued to what extent the leaders are perceiving the world in strict dichotomies. Furthermore, a discussion on the relation between framing and charisma will be provided.

5.7.1 Charisma

Of the 29 cases that have been identified on the charisma variable, 22 (75.9%) have been categorised as charismatic and 7 (24.1%) as non-charismatic. With roughly half of the sample included in this variable, a conclusion can be that jihadist terrorist leaders are often charismatic. Nevertheless being cautious of overgeneralisation. In this section two potential relationships with charisma are discussed: Charisma and the amount of memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations and charisma and the speed of one's jihadist terrorist career. A third connection with the concept of charisma, the relation with battle experience, will be elaborated upon in the next paragraph.

First, of those on which data on both the charisma variable and the membership of other jihadist terrorist organisation variable is found (n=26), the modus of charismatic leaders lays with 1 membership of another jihadist terrorist organisation (n=12, 60.0%), followed by 2 other memberships (n=6, 30.0%). Of the non-charismatic leaders (n=6), 4 (66.7%) were members of 2 other jihadist terrorist organisations (see Table 6). While a statistical significant difference cannot be established due to a lack of data, the data does suggest a slight difference between those who are and are not charismatic. Charismatic leaders tend to have less organisational switches.

			Memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations			**Total**
			0	*1*	*2*	
Perceived as charismatic?	*Yes*	Frequency	2	12	6	20
		% within 'perceived as charismatic'	10,0%	60,0%	30,0%	100,0%
		% within 'membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations	66,7%	92,3%	60,0%	76,9%
		% of total	7,7%	46,2%	23,1%	76,9%
	No	Frequency	1	1	4	6
		% within 'perceived as charismatic'	16,7%	16,7%	66,7%	100,0%
		% within 'membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations	33,3%	7,7%	40,0%	23,1%
		% of total	3,8%	3,8%	15,4%	23,1%
Total		Frequency	3	13	10	26

Table 6 Charisma and the amount of memberships of other jihadist terrorist organisations

Second, the data suggests a relation between charisma and the speed of one's career in his current/last organisation. In Figure 9 the number of years it took an individual to become the leader of the current or last organisation is categorised by whether or not the individual is perceived as charismatic. The chart suggests that a charismatic person is in 80% of the cases directly the group's leader and further down the X-axis the 'charismatic' bars are declining. The non-charismatic cases tend to be more evenly distributed along the X-axis. This suggests that being non-charismatic has little effect on the years it takes one to climb the hierarchical ladder. Being charismatic, however, seems to increase the speed. Most likely influenced by starting a splinter group. The data show that of those who are charismatic, 77.3% (n=17) are founders of their current/last organisation. Of those who are not charismatic, only Ayman al-Zawahiri can be argued to be a founder of his organisation. Thus, charismatic leaders start their own organisation more often than non-charismatic leaders, which explains the high number of cases that are becoming the leader of their current/last organisation almost immediately.

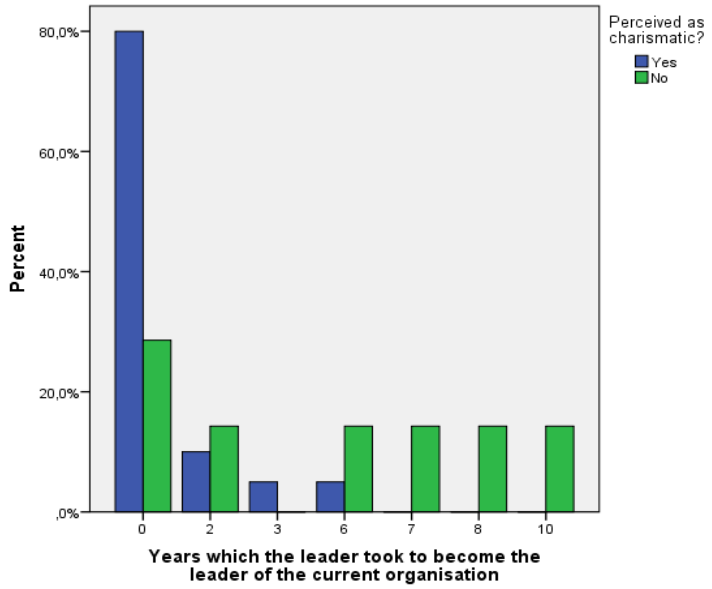

Figure 9 The connection between charisma and the speed of becoming the leader

Concluding, charisma is connected to two important aspects in the jihadist terrorist career of the leader. Firstly, those who are charismatic have most often been a member of 1 other organisation, which differs slightly from those who are not charismatic (modus=2). Secondly, this is also connected to the fact that charismatic leaders are often the founders of their current/last organisation. Having had only one membership of a jihadist terrorist organisation prior to the current/last organisation in combination with the finding that charismatic leaders often are the founders of their organisations leads to the proposition that, in most cases,

leaders climb the hierarchical ladder in their first jihadist terrorist organisation and later on break away and establish an organisation of their own. Future research has to point out to what extent this proposition is correct. In any way, charisma seems to be an important factor among jihadist terrorist leaders, just as the literature suggests (see for example Jordan, 2009 or Cronin, 2009)

5.7.2 Framing

As indicated previously, the variable of framing can have two interpretations. Firstly, the variable can be seen as a motivational and management tool in order to provide a course for the organisation. By strictly delineating who belongs to the in-group (i.e. friends and allies) and who to the out-group (i.e. enemies), followers and supporters of the organisation know how to act on which party. Secondly, framing could be interpreted as a representation of one's own mind-set. However, this interpretation does not fit the research design of this study and is therefore not taken into account. The data will be discussed in light of the former interpretation, since the task of the leader is to give direction to the organisation (see Chapter 3 for further information on leaders in jihadist terrorist organisations). First a description of the extent of framing will be given, followed by a comparison with the charisma variable.

19 of the 24 valid cases show signs of strong framing of the in- and out-group. These leaders strongly state who the enemy is and who may not be attacked. On the other hand, 5 cases (20.8%) only weakly frame these groups. Leaders thus use strong language to spread their believes. This is coherent with the task of a leader to provide a course for its organisation.

Charisma and framing seem to be positively related. When one is charismatic it would be logical that the message the leader spreads is strongly and unambiguously worded. Nevertheless, there are no clear signs of a connection between the two variables, since there is too little data on non-charismatic leaders. There are only 3 leaders that are non-charismatic and have an indication on their framing style. Within the charismatic leaders it is interesting to see, however, that 80% (n=12) of its valid cases (n=15) show signs of strong framing. This is a first indication that charisma and framing are connected. Further research must show to what extent this relation is correct and how it functions.

5.8 Battle experience

The last category under research is that of battle experience. This paragraph will focus on the following questions: (1) To what extent did the leaders participate in wars or other violent conflicts?, (2) where did the leaders participate in battle?, (3) to what extent are the leaders

trained in militant/terrorist camps, (4) where were the leaders trained?, and (5) to what extent does battle experience relate to being charismatic or not? These questions will be discussed and answered respectively.

5.8.1 Participation in wars or other violent conflicts

Leaders who participated in wars or other violent conflicts are clearly represented in the sample. Of the 38 valid cases, 35 have positive outcomes in this variable. It is not only a relatively high number within the valid cases, also within the total sample it is a substantial amount. With 28 accounts of missing data, it can be stated that at least 53% of the total sample has had frontline battle experiences to at least some extent. While some leaders have fought almost heroically in many countries (e.g. Abd Al-Aziz Bin Ali Bin Said Al Said Al-Ghamdi, a.k.a. Abu Al-Walid, leader of the Islamic International Brigade. He fought in four different locations: Afghanistan, Bosnia, Tajikistan, and Chechnya), others gained only little real battle experience at the front (e.g. Osama bin Laden who for a long time had spent his time and energy in a facilitating role in the Afghan war against the Soviet Union). Nevertheless, 35 leaders have been at the front and truly participated in the fight. Among the leaders there are thus predominantly veterans of war.

The locations of the wars and violent conflicts the leaders participated in are on the one hand diverse, but on the other hand a pattern can be seen. There are fourteen locations in which the leaders of the sample have fought. These stretch from Algeria to Indonesia and are predominantly Muslim countries. Two main hot spots can be pointed out looking at the number of leaders who participated in these locations. First, conflicts in the Caucasus have attracted 8 leaders. One of those, Omar Shishani, did not participate in these conflicts as a mujahedeen. At the time of the Russian invasion in Georgia he was a soldier in the Georgian army and that is where he gained his battle experience. The other 7 did participate in the violent conflicts in Chechnya (n=6) and Abkhazia (n=1).

The second hot spot is Afghanistan. As was indicated in paragraph 5.6 many leaders have recruitment links with Afghanistan. 21 out of the 66 leaders in total (31.8%) have fought in the Afghan war against the Soviet Union and/or later against the United States. A substantial amount of the total leaders is thus connected to Afghanistan with first hand battle experience.

5.8.2 Militant/terrorist training

Although less information is available on the two variables of militant/terrorist training (i.e. did the leader receive militant/terrorist training, n=18, and where did he receive this training,

n=19), some remarks can be made. Of the valid sample, 88.9% (n=16) have had a militant/terrorist training. In this variable the same methodological remark must be made as with for example the faith variable and recruitment variable. Sources might only mention the training if there has been any. If the leader has received none, this is most likely not reported and therefore a dark number arises. Furthermore, three cases of the reported 16 have received their training not in a terrorist-run training facility, but in institutionalised armies. Shamil Basayev, Iyad ag Ghali, and Omar Shishani have respectively received their training from the armies of the Soviet Union, Libya and Georgia. Therefore, with these statements in mind, it does not seem to be that many leaders have received a militant/terrorist training.

The locations of training do reflect the locations of battlefront experience to some extent, however. While less divers, the location with the highest number of leaders is Afghanistan (n=14). If a leader is trained, it is therefore most likely that he is trained in this country by the militants/terrorists.

5.8.3 Connecting charisma and battlefield experience

When connecting charisma with battlefield experience, 23 cases are available for analysis in the dataset. The data shows that of those who participated in wars or violent conflicts, 17 are perceived as charismatic and 4 as non-charismatic. However, there is little data on charisma of those who did not participate in wars or violent conflicts (n=2). This leads to the inability to conclude a link between the two variables. Since the overall number of cases of those who did not participate in wars or violent conflicts is 3, a hypothetical explanation for the lack of data that the participation in wars enhances the perception of charisma and therefore leads to little data on those who did not participate cannot be argued. Nevertheless, the relatively high number of leaders who are both charismatic and have had battlefield experience is worth further research.

5.9 Summary and conclusion

The previous paragraphs in this chapter have indicated a wide variety of characteristics that belong to the leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations. Although some variables display a wide distribution of leaders (i.e. the frequencies of certain characteristics do not show a clear and outstanding profile), there is a multitude of variables that do show important characteristics of the majority of the leaders. First of all, the sample only consists of men of which many are married and have children. Interesting to see is that current leaders are older than those leaders in the sample who died. Second, the jihadist terrorist leaders are most often

raised in a predominantly Muslim country, with the exception of some Chechen born. Although not always being part of the global jihad, most leaders have had substantial jihadist experiences abroad. While often being educated in their home country, many leaders have lived, fought and/or trained abroad. They are thus not contained to one state.

Third, the leaders are often highly educated. A substantial amount of leaders have received a university-level education, while only a few had received no formal or only primary education. Furthermore, although the increases in faith could not be correlated with the location or level of education and almost every leader had some Islamic religious background in their youth, it is interesting to see that almost a third of the sample have been perceived as having increased their faith since their youth. Also, even converts are shown to have been able to climb the hierarchical ladder in the jihadist terrorist organisations to the top.

Fifth, while the literature indicates that leaders are often recruited from the upper class of society, this empirical study argues that this is not the case. The socioeconomic background of the leaders is in most cases middle class and only a few are from the lower or upper classes.

Sixth, being often at adolescent age when joining their first jihadist terrorist organisation, the leaders have the tendency to break away from this group. It is striking that only a few leaders have stayed with their first organisation. These splits are the cause of a fast speed of their careers in their current organisations. It is most often the charismatic leader (charisma being also very much present in the sample) who breaks off of an organisation to start his own terrorist group. Although further research must show the true strength of this relation, the data of this dataset strongly indicates a connection between the two variables.

Lastly, the variables of battlefield experience have provided among others the most valuable results in this characteristics section. It has become clear that a high number of leaders have had participated in fighting wars or other violent conflicts. Being mostly veterans of the wars in Afghanistan or the Caucasus conflicts, it seems that these experiences bring along stature and perhaps a relation to charisma is also present. However, further research must show to what extent this is correct. The battle experiences may have implications for the future, though. This research makes clear that leaders are ‘made’ in violent conflicts, such as in Afghanistan or Chechnya. By extrapolating this finding, it seems obvious that current conflicts such as in Syria and Yemen are the breeding ground for the future generation of leaders.

Although there are thus many variables on which clear information arises (although the missing data is still an important caveat in this research), no characteristics could be found on occupation, criminal records, framing, and training experience. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these data is that there is no common characteristic in these variables; the leaders vary too greatly. Nevertheless, these variables should not be excluded from future research, since adding more data in this dataset could create new insights in these characteristics.

Overall, the image of the jihadist terrorist leader is that he is a highly educated, battle-hardened, traveling, middle class commoner with charisma who is often the founder of his current/last organisation. Apart from being the founder of a jihadist terrorist organisation and other jihadist terrorist leader specific characteristics, the social background characteristics do not seem to differ greatly from a general profile of an average person. Chapter 6 will delve further into this argument by reflecting on the similarities and differences between the leaders and followers of jihadist terrorist organisations.

6. Comparing leaders and followers

Chapter 5 ended with a statement that, although jihadist terrorist leaders possess certain interesting characteristics, they do not seem to differ greatly from an average individual. This chapter will make a first, exploratory, comparison between the leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations and the members of those organisations. In order to be able to do this, the findings on the characteristics of terrorist discussed in Chapter 2 will be used. It is therefore the study of Bakker (2006), and to some extent that of Sageman (2004), that is leading in the structure and comparison in this chapter. Because Bakker (2006) has focussed on jihadist terrorists in Europe, not all findings can be directly compared. Therefore, the general conclusions on the different variables of Chapter 2 will be used. Not only Bakker's (2006) findings are thus used, but also the findings of other studies and scholars. This will make the characteristics more applicable for comparison. Nevertheless, it should be taken into account that this is only a first empirical comparison and the dataset on the leaders displays many missing values, as is also the case in Bakker's (2006) study. Furthermore, the terrorists in Europe and other Western countries, on which many studies have focussed on, are referring to organisations of the global jihad. In the sample of the jihadist terrorist leaders, both global jihadist organisations as organisations who have a more regional/national focus with their jihad are included. Caution is thus necessary in the interpretation of these findings. This is discussed in Chapter 4 and will be discussed also in the conclusion of this thesis.

In this chapter two paragraphs will be dedicated to the comparison of leaders and the followers. First, the social backgrounds (as operationalised by Bakker, 2006) will be compared. Following is the comparison of the 'circumstances of joining the jihad'. Both paragraphs are structured according to the operationalisation of Bakker (2006) and Sageman (2004). However, as was mentioned in Chapter 5, too little data was found in this study in order to provide information on relative deprivation and authoritarianism. These two characteristics will therefore not be taken into account in this comparison.

6.1 Social Background

The operationalisation of the concept of social background by Bakker (2006) has resulted into seven variables: geographical background, socioeconomic status, education, faith as youth, occupation, criminal record, and family status. In this paragraph the comparisons are focussed on these variables respectively.

6.1.1 Geographical background

Both focussing on jihadist terrorists in Europe, Bakker (2006) and Leiken (2005) argue that there are two types of terrorist with regard to their geographical origins. On the one hand is the first generation of immigrants who were raised in a non-Western country and on the other hand the 'insider' who was raised in Europe but has a non-Western family origin. The connotation of insiders and outsiders are less applicable to the jihadist terrorist leaders across the globe. While Bakker (2006) argues that most jihadist terrorists in Europe are raised there and have different family backgrounds, the leaders in this dataset are predominantly raised in the country they are residing in. Furthermore, the family origins are all in Muslim, non-Western countries.

Nevertheless, the locations of family background do seem to be related. As Jenkins (2011) argues, family origins of the jihadist terrorists in the United States often lay in North Africa, the Middle-East, South Asia and the Balkan region. This is also reflected by the findings of Bakker (2006). Although not surprising, North Africa, the Middle-East and South Asia are also the countries that are most represented in the sample of jihadist terrorist leaders. These countries often display strict Islamic doctrines and it is therefore not surprising that these states are linked to the jihadist terrorist organisations with their extremist views on the teachings of the Islam.

6.1.2 Socioeconomic status

Several scholars have found that the (jihadist) terrorist comes from the lower or middle classes of society (e.g. Bakker, 2006; Leiken, 2005; Sendagorta, 2005). Bakker (2006) nevertheless has also found some in the upper classes in Western Europe. While the statement that the leaders are recruited from the upper classes of society has been enfeebled in the previous chapter, the current comparison between followers and leaders can even go as far as concluding that there is no great difference between them when it comes to socioeconomic status. This research has found that only a few leaders are from the lower or upper classes of society (16.7% on both sides of the socioeconomic spectrum). Bakker (2006: 38) has found that although the lower class is the best represented in his sample (n=39), the middle class is close with a frequency of 30. While members of jihadist terrorist organisations may be originating from the lower class more often, the middle class seems to be almost just as relevant. The difference with leaders is therefore not substantial.

6.1.3 Education

Nesser (2006: 327), Bakker (2006: 38), Hudson (1999: 48), and Jenkins (2011) have all argued that followers are often highly educated. Leiken (2005) had argued however, that this is mostly true for the leaders. This research has indeed found that leaders are highly educated. Over 48% has received a university-level education. However, in contrast to what Leiken (2005) argues, this is not only a characteristic of leaders, according to the other four mentioned authors. Furthermore, as Bakker (2006) clarifies on his sample, the jihadist terrorist in Western Europe is sometimes not categorised on his level of education, since he dropped out of school in order to pursue his jihadist views. The sample of leaders also displays this phenomenon. 5 leaders in the sample have left their school prior to graduating. The members of jihadist terrorist organisations and jihadist terrorist leaders thus seem to have much in common with regard to their level of education.

6.1.4 Faith as youth

Bakker (2006: 39), Nesser (2006: 327) and Schuurman et al. (2016: 1) argue that, in general, the jihadist terrorist has not been very religious in his youth, only some had received an Islamic upbringing and converts are strongly present in the population. Leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations, however, do not match this description. It is rather the opposite. Only a small percentage did not receive an Islamic upbringing and the number of converts is quite low. This contrast may be the result of the different focus areas of the studies. The secular or Christian Europe in which the terrorist of the mentioned studies grew up in has provided a totally different ideological context than the predominantly Islamic countries in which the leaders were raised. Since the differences are apparent between the two populations, overgeneralisation must be warned for due to the mentioned contextual difference.

6.1.5 Occupation

Terrorists often have a wide variety of occupations, according to Hudson (1999: 48) and Bakker (2006). Although unemployment is present among them, its rate is not significantly different from their peers in society. The leaders also have displayed a wide variety of occupations (see Chapter 5) and unemployment does not seem to have been a common characteristic. Besides this similarity with the jihadist terrorists in Western Europe, the leaders also seem to be recruited to some extent in their student years as well. An outstanding outcome of this research is that there is a substantial portion of leaders who have had a teaching background and/or were religious preachers. While they two mentioned scholars do not elaborate on the exact professions of the members of jihadist terrorist organisations, it

could be hypothesised here that this is a true characteristic of the leaders (keeping the comparison in the previous section in mind as well).

6.1.6 Criminal record

While Nesser (2006: 327) argues that only a few terrorists have a criminal record, it is Bakker (2006: 40) who argues that 25% of his sample has been sentenced for criminal offenses. The leaders show a higher relative number of criminal records. One-third of the sample has been incarcerated and 42% have been found guilty in court. While it is not clear what the criminal charges of the members of jihadist terrorist organisations generally are, it can be argued that the leaders of the current sample have a criminal record more often.[11]

6.1.7 Family status

Bakker (2006: 40) has found that in his sample more than half of the terrorists were married or engaged to be married. Of the leaders in the current sample at least 39.6% was married. Keeping in mind the lack of data here, causing a larger error margin, the family status of followers and leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations do not seem to be substantially different.

6.2 Circumstance joining jihad

In this second paragraph, the focus will shift from the variables that Bakker (2006) has included in his 'social background' category to the 'circumstances of joining the jihad'. This is operationalised by Bakker (2006) and Sageman (2004) in age, place of recruitment, faith, employment, relative deprivation, and social affiliation. These will be discussed respectively in this paragraph. However, since Bakker (2006) did not find enough evidence on employment and relative deprivation (as did this study), these two variables will be excluded from the analysis.

6.2.1 Age

Bakker (2006), Hudson (1999), and Jenkins (2011) all found that (jihadist) terrorists are relatively young. Although a wide statistical range is observed (Bakker, 2006: 41), they are mostly found to be in their (early) twenties. The leaders show the same signs. Their ages upon entering their first jihadist terrorist organisation is ranged between 15 and 61 and the highest density of leaders is around the age of 25. Nevertheless, the current age of the leaders is much

[11] The data has not been corrected for the criminal record during the 'reign' of the subject. Future research must show whether the criminal records of the leaders were established during their time as the leader of the jihadist terrorist organisation or prior to this.

higher. Of those who are still active, the average age is 49.64 and 50% is 46.5 years old or older. However, those who are deceased died at an average age of 38.04 and 50% was 37 or younger. This higher age is consistent with the idea that leaders in general are more experienced and thus older. The data thus shows that although the distribution of ages varies greatly in both the jihadist terrorist population as the jihadist terrorist leaders population and the ages upon entering the jihadist scene are mostly 20 to 30, the leaders of worldwide jihadist terrorist organisations are substantially older than the jihadist terrorists in the West.

6.2.2 Place recruitment

The places of recruitment can only be compared to the literature as mentioned in Chapter 2 to a certain extent. Since Bakker's (2006) sample only includes jihadist terrorists in Western Europe, his findings automatically differ greatly from the places of recruitment found in the sample in this research. Nevertheless, both Bakker (2006: 41) and Nesser (2006: 326) argue that Pakistan is an important place of recruitment. This is a country that is also reflected in the sample of the leaders, but is not indicated as a breeding place. Only three leaders are reportedly recruited there. It is Afghanistan that has the greatest recruitment appeal for them. Still, no direct conclusions may be derived from this comparison, due to the different foci of the studies.

6.2.3 Faith

The variable 'faith' is operationalised as whether or not the subjects have experienced an increase in faith since their youth. Bakker (2006: 41) and Nesser (2006: 326) have both found that jihadist terrorists in Europe show signs that they indeed have experienced a development of being more involved in the Islamic faith. Nesser (2006: 326) even goes as far as saying it is a "typical pattern". While it has been difficult to find solid information on the developments in the religious lives of the jihadist terrorist leaders, at least 30% in the sample have shown explicit signs of a greater involvement in the Islamic faith. Although this cannot be concluded as being a typical pattern, it is interesting to see that also the leaders can be converts or can come from non-radical backgrounds and radicalise over time. Thus, the leaders and followers do share this finding to some extent.

6.2.4 Social affiliation

Friendship and kinship are in Bakker's (2006) sample in a little more than a third of the cases important aspects in the joining of a jihadist terrorist organisation. Also Hegghammer (2006: 47) has stated that social affiliation could be of potential significance. While on only 11

leaders information was found concerning this variable, it can be concluded that in 15% of the total sample social affiliation has played an important role in the joining of a jihadist terrorist organisation. It is very hard to conclude anything from these data, due to the lack of information. The data, however, indicates that only to a small extent social affiliation affects the leaders' decision to join a jihadist terrorist organisation, in contrast to the other members. Further in-depth research must show to what extent the social affiliation variable differs between the two populations.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has compared the findings of this research on jihadist terrorist leaders with the results of multiple studies on the characteristics of jihadist terrorists. With Bakker's (2006) research as the basis of the comparison, eleven variables have been discussed. On five variables (family origin, socioeconomic status, level of education, family status, and faith) the outcomes of the different populations can be considered to be similar to some extent. For the other six variables (faith as youth, occupation, criminal record, age, place of recruitment, and social affiliation), a difference has been observed (see Table 7). However, due to some methodological circumstances (e.g. the lack of data and the different foci of the studies) the differences (and to some extent also the similarities) cannot be concluded unambiguously.

The picture that arises in this chapter is that leaders and followers have both similar and differing characteristics. The data of this research do not support dichotomous conclusions such as "leaders are very different/similar from/to the other members of jihadist terrorist organisations". A nuanced image on the differences and similarities is what the results of this study provide. The leaders do not differ substantially from the followers, but they are also not completely the same.

	Difference/similarity
Geographical origins	+
Socioeconomic status	+
Education	++
Faith as youth	--
Occupation	-
Criminal record	-
Family status	+
Age	-
Place of recruitment	-
Faith	+
Social affiliation	--

Legend	
--	Very different
-	Different
+	Similar
++	Very similar

Table 7 Summary of comparison

Conclusion

Leaders of jihadist terrorist organisations are the front-persons of their organisations. Leaders such as Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi are the faces of their organisations and these can therefore almost be personified. This then leads to public debates on how to counter such leaders and organisations. Many governments have implemented counter-terrorism strategies such as decapitation (i.e. the removal of the leadership by means of arrest or killing). Although frequently used, there is a wide scientific debate on whether or not this strategy is effective. However, both the public and scientific debates have not been focussed on who the leaders actually are. While plenty of scholars have studied the characteristics of jihadist terrorist and sought for a common profile, no research has been established on the specific population of jihadist terrorist leaders. The former branch of studies having led to the conclusion that there is no common profile of a jihadist terrorist, the latter may be different for its specific ideology, position in the organisation, and personality. More in-depth knowledge of who the jihadist terrorist leaders are will lead to a better understanding of the effectiveness of counter-terrorism studies. This research took the first, exploratory steps in order to fill this gap of knowledge on jihadist terrorist leaders, heeding to some extent to the call made decades ago by Weinberg & Eubank (1989: 156) for more (centralised) information on terrorist leaders.

With an underlying aim of this research to centralise the information on jihadist terrorist leaders, the main goals were as follows. First, this study tried to provide an overview on the characteristics of the jihadist terrorist leaders. Second, a preliminary step has been taken in the empirical comparison of jihadist terrorist leaders and the followers. These goals come together in the main research question of this study: *To what extent do the characteristics of the leaders from jihadist terrorist organisations, who were or have been active during the period of September 2001- October 2017 and whose organisations are labelled as terrorist organisations by the United Nations, differ from the characteristics of jihadist terrorists in general?*

In the quantitative approach, inspired by Bakker's (2006) study, a wide variety of potential characteristics has been scrutinised. The effort of centralising the knowledge on jihadist terrorist leaders has again endorsed the statement of Weinberg & Eubank (1989: 156) that there is a need for more information. The dataset established in this study has a substantial amount of missing data, which, when filled in, may lead to important insights in the

characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders. Nevertheless, the current data does provide some important findings.

Looking at the social background, this research shows that the jihadist terrorist leaders in this study are mostly common individuals. They are not of high or low class and they do not have spent significant time in prison. Still, most often they are highly educated, charismatic, and have frontline battlefield experience. Furthermore, a link between charisma and being the founder of a jihadist terrorist organisation seems to be apparent. Thus, while on the one hand they are not differing much from a regular person with regard to their social background, there are some leads that may indicate that they do differ on other grounds.

It is also in the comparison with the followers that the leaders do not substantially stand out. Although having had (1) a more religious upbringing, (2) different occupational backgrounds, (3) a greater criminal record, (4) a slightly higher age, (5) different places of recruitment, and (6) less social connections in their first jihadist terrorist organisation, the leaders are quite similar to the followers. Geographical origins, socioeconomic status, education, family status, and the developments in faith are all relatively the same for both populations. This research has thus shown that there are both similarities and differences between leaders and followers. It is therefore a promising preliminary conclusion on which future research can be build on.

Practical implications

The conclusions of this study may have an important implication for policy. This research has shown that many jihadist terrorist leaders have fought in wars and/or other violent conflicts. Their participation has drawn them deeper into the jihadist world and these are found to be important places to build a network. The war in Afghanistan for example, dubbed by this research as the most important location when it comes to battlefield experience, has been a facilitator in connecting individuals with, for example, Osama bin Laden. The parallel with the contemporary jihadist ‘hot-zones’ is made easily. Countries in war/violent conflict such as Syria and Iraq, in which foreign fighters play or have played an important part (as was the case in the Afghan war during the Soviet occupation), may be found to be the breeding ground of the next generation of jihadist terrorist leaders. In order to contain the jihadist terrorist problem, these hot-zones should be closely monitored and rising stars in the ranks of jihadist organisations should be identified. This pro-active approach can provide a next step in diminishing the (global) jihadist movement.

Discussion and future research

As mentioned earlier in this concluding chapter, this research is a first, exploratory, empirical study in the comparison of jihadist terrorist leaders and the followers of the jihadist terrorist organisations. Being a first step, some disclaimers have to be made with regard to the quality of this research. As was indicated in the above, this study has had two objectives. First it tried to find the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders. Secondly, leaders and followers were to be compared on this basis. Discussing the former, it is important to note that the established dataset is missing substantial data. By centralising a great set of open source information, it has become a visual representation of the lacking knowledge on jihadist terrorist leaders. This consequently affects the quality of this study. Because of the missing data, one must beware of overgeneralisation. Although many jihadist terrorist leaders have been included in the sample, the dataset must encounter substantial growth (with regard to the saturation of the variables) in order to provide a fully solid picture of the jihadist terrorist leaders.

Furthermore, the scarcity of information on jihadist terrorist leaders has led to the use of a wide variety of sources in order to fill the gaps in the dataset. Consequently, while most sources can be argued to be reliable (e.g. leaked governmental reports, first-hand interviews, etc.), some information could be found on less reliable platforms, such as online forums of jihad supporters. While these have provided important insights, mostly by their translation of Arabic texts, they cannot be considered to be fully reliable. Nevertheless, the use of such sources has been kept to a minimum and when they are used, triangulation of sources has been aimed for.

With regard to the second aim, or second part, of this study, the comparison between leaders and followers, it should be taken into account that this is an exploratory and preliminary comparison. The evaluation of the differences and similarities between these two populations is dominated by the literature on Western jihadist terrorist. It is therefore that, also in these findings, caution is needed in the interpretation. Further research must show more in-depth comparisons between followers and leaders within the same jihadist terrorist organisations.

Although this research has shown a great variety of variables, it is too early to provide a clear profile of the jihadist terrorist leader. While the data suggests some interesting common characteristics, too much data is missing in order to provide a fully reliable picture. It is therefore that this study recalls the message of Weinberg & Eubank (1989: 156) that there is a need for more (centralised) information on (jihadist) terrorist leaders. Future research must

build on existing studies, just as this thesis has built on Bakker's (2006). Using the same variables, but with different approaches (some are better fitted for qualitative research), more relevant information will become publicly available and this will further our needed understanding of jihadist terrorists in general and specifically the leaders of their organisations.

Furthermore, research on jihadist terrorist leaders could greatly benefit from the findings of other disciplines. For example, the organisational studies theories have been greatly developed and argue what the characteristics of effective leaders are. These variables can be used in order to better understand the jihadist terrorist leaders and eventually it can contribute to the debate on the effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies such as decapitation. Moreover, social movement theories could also have an influence on this debate and the comparison between leaders and followers. In their explanation of how social movements come and go, leaders take essential roles. Leaders can inspire and activate people to work together for a common cause. It can lead to insights what the characteristics of the most effective leaders are and can also shed a light on who the followers are and what they try to find in such movements.

In sum, while this study has provided an interesting take on the characteristics of jihadist terrorist leaders and the differences and similarities with the followers, much work lays ahead. This thesis is a preliminary step and has provided a ground to build on. Now it is time to further our understanding and reviving the quest for the differences and similarities between (jihadist) terrorist leaders and their followers.

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Appendix A: Included leaders and organisations

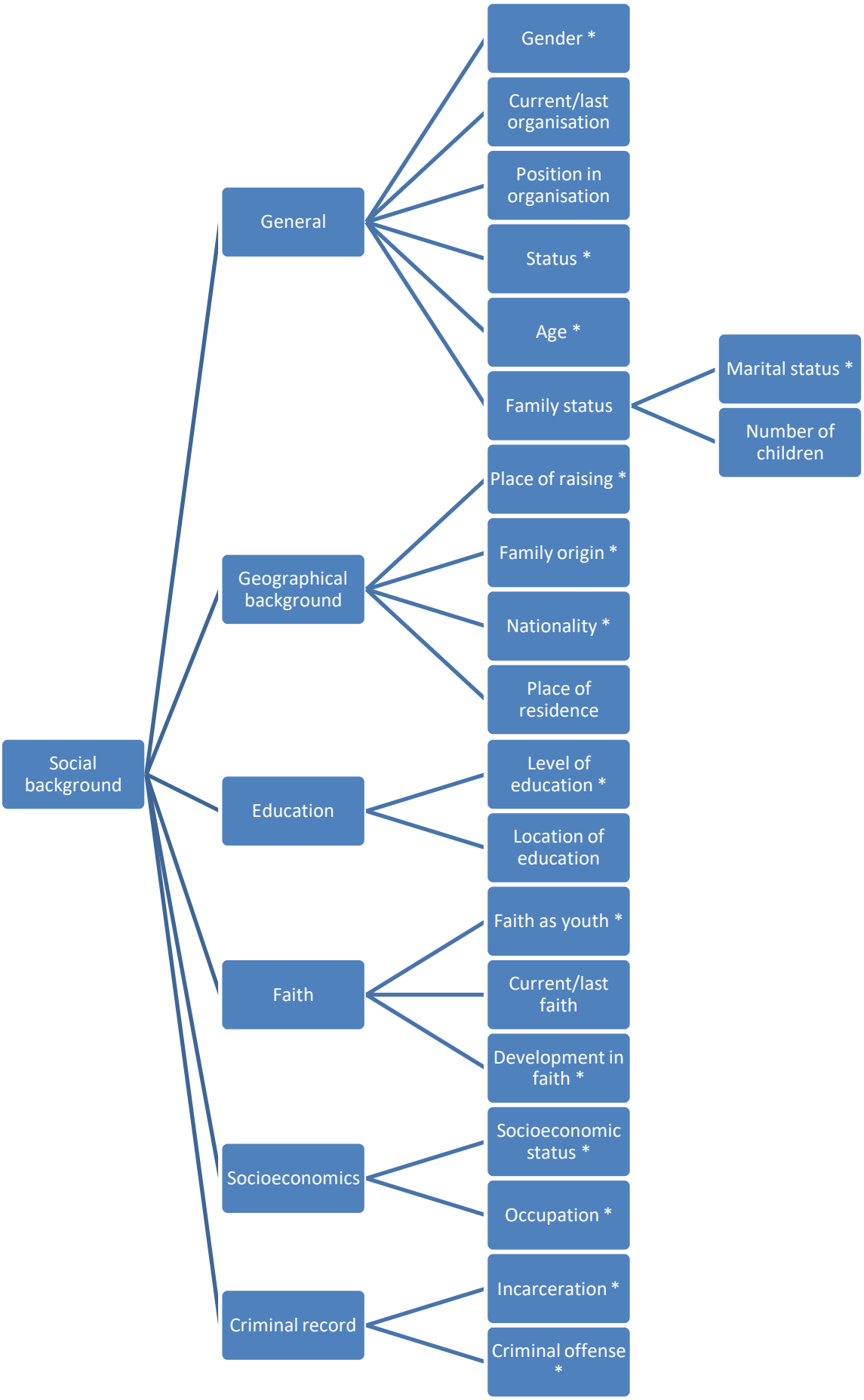
This appendix shows the list of jihadist terrorist leaders in the time period of 2001-2017 that are included in this study, along with the organisations they are found to belong to. In total there are 66 leaders. One subject (Hamada Ould Mohamed el-Khairy) did not have a clearly reported current jihadist terrorist organisation (see last row of the table).

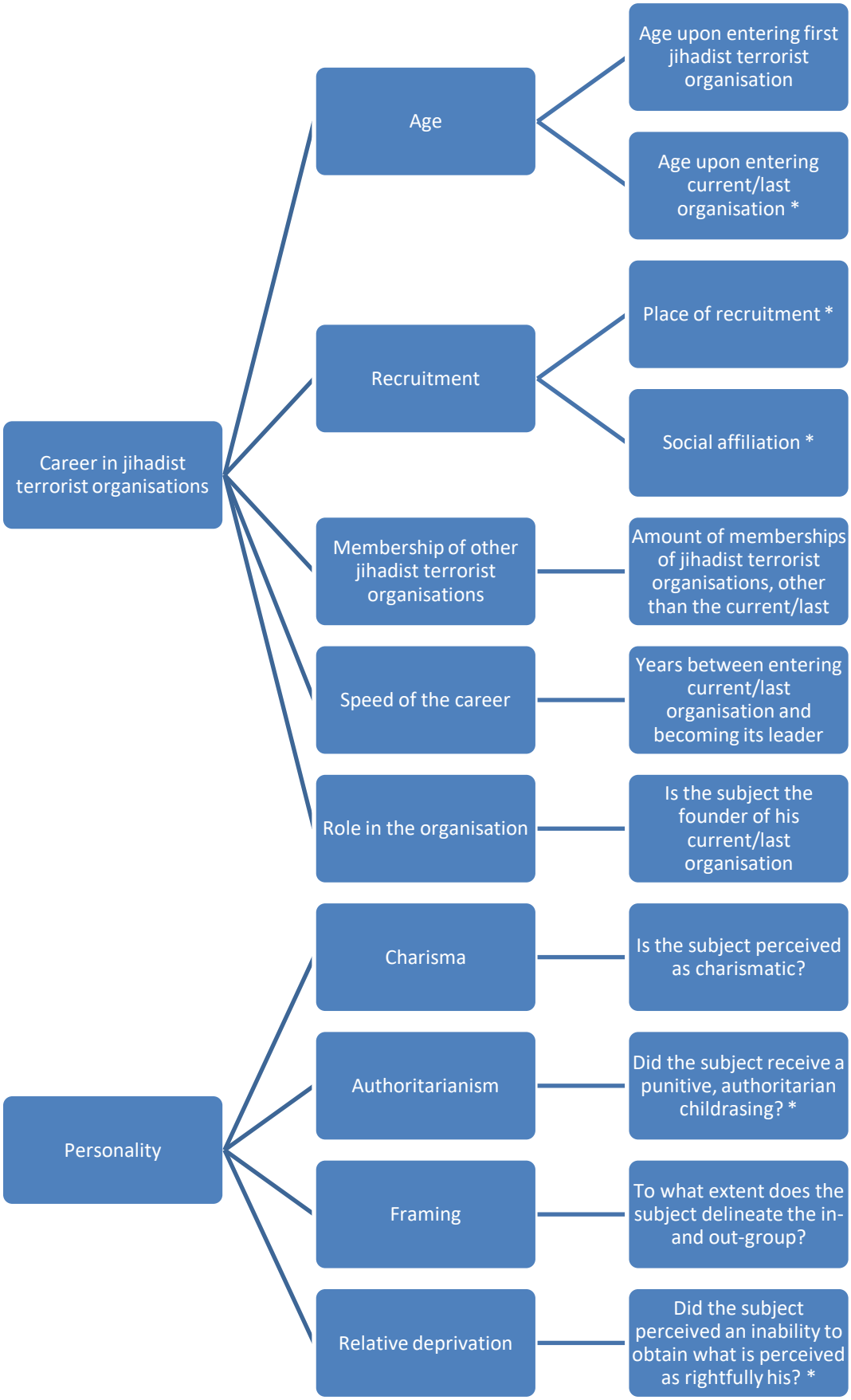
Organisation	UN Permanent reference number	Leader
Abu Sayyaf Group	QDe.001	- Khadafi Abubakar Janjalani - Radulon Sahiron
Al-Qaeda	QDe.004	- Osama bin Laden - Ayman al-Zawahiri
Armed Islamic Group	QDe.006	- Rachid Oukali - Nourredine Boudiafi
Asbat Al-Ansar	QDe.007	- Haytham Abd al-Karim al Sa'di
Harakat Ul-Mujahidin/HUM	QDe.008	- Farooqi Kashmiri
Islamic Army of Aden	QDe.009	- Khalid Bin-Muhammad Bin-Ali Bin Abdulrab al-Nabi
Islamic movement of Uzbekistan	QDe.010	- Tahir Yuldashev - Abu Usman Adil - Usman Ghazi
Libyan Islamic Fighting Group	QDe.011	- Abdelhakim Belhadj
Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat	Listed under AQIM (QDe.014)	- Hassan Hattab - Nabil Sahraoui
The Organisation of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb	QDe.014	- Abdelmalek Droukdel
JAISH-I-MOHAMMED	QDe.019	- Masood Azhar
Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia	QDe.090	- Saifallah Ben Hassine
Jemmah Anshorut Tauhid	QDe.092	- Abu Bakar Ba'asyir
Ansar al-Islam	QDe.098	- Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad - Wirya Salih - Sheikh Abu Hashim Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman al Ibrahim
Islamic International Brigade	QDe.099	- Thamir Saleh Abdullah - Abd Al-Aziz Bin Ali Bin Said Al Said Al-Ghamdi - Farid Yusef Umeira
Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs	QDe.100	- Shamil Basayev - Aslan Avgazarovich Butukayev
Special Purpose Islamic Regiment	QDe.101	- Movsar Suleimanov/Barayev - Khamzat Tazabayev
Al-Qaeda in Iraq	QDe.115	- Ahmad Fadil Nazzal Al-Khalayleh - Abu Hamza al-Muhajir
Islamic State	Listed under AQI (QDe.115)	- Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali Al-Badri Al-Samarrai - Tarkan Tayumurazovich Batirashvili

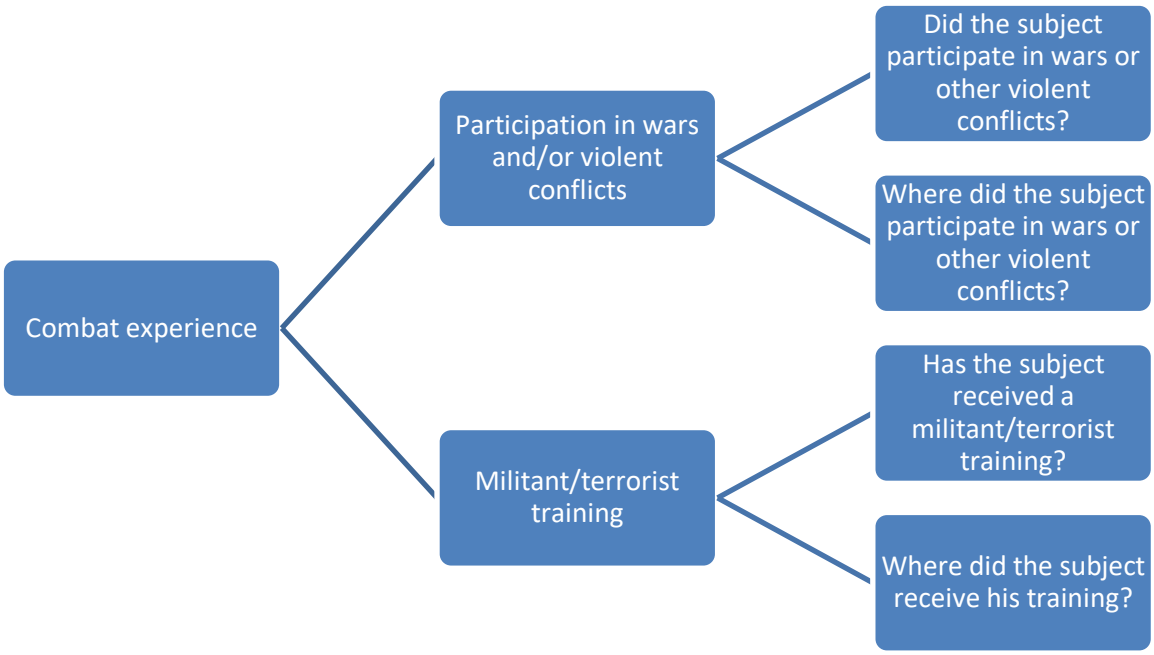
Laskar-e-Tayyiba	QDe.118	- Hafiz Muhammad Saeed
Islamic Jihad Union	QDe.119	- Najmiddin Kamolitdinovich Jalolov
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula	QDe.129	- Nasser al-Wuhayshi - Qasim al-Raymi
Emarat Kavkaz	QDe.131	- Doku Khamatovich Umarov - Aliaskhab Alibulatovich Kebekov
Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan	QDe.132	- Baitullah Mehsud - Jamshed Mehsud - Fazal Hayat
Al-Murabitoun	QDe.141	- Abderrahmane Ould el Amar - Mokhtar Belmokhtar
Ansar Eddine	QDe.135	- Iyad ag Ghali
Muhammad Jamal Network	QDe.136	- Muhammad Jamal abd-al Rahim Ahmad al-Kashif
Jabhat Fateh al-Sham	QDe.137	- Abu Muhammad al-Julani (2012 - present)
Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad	QDe.138	- Mohammad Yusuf - Abubakar Shekau
Ansarul Mislimina fi Biladis Sudan	QDe.142	- Khalid al-Barnawi
Abdallah Azzam Brigades	QDe.144	- Majid bin Muhammad al Majid
Harakat Sham al-Islam	QDe.149	- Ibrahim Bin Shakaran - Abu Talha al Andalusi - Abu Muhammad al Baydawi
Mujahidin Indonesian Timur	QDe.150	- Abu Wardah
Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria	QDe.151	- Gouri Abdelmalek - Bashir Othman al-Assimi
Jamaat-ul-Ahrar	QDe.152	- Maulana Qasim Khorasani
Jund Al Aqsa	QDe.156	- Muhammad Yusuf 'Uthman 'Abd al-Salam - Abu Dhar al-Najdi al-Harethi
Al-Shabaab	SOe.001	- Aden Hashi Ayro - Ahmed Abdi Godane - Ahmad Umar
HAQQANI NETWORK (HQN)	TAe.012	- Sirajuddin Jallaloudine Haqqani
Unknown current organisation		- Hamada Ould Mohamed el-Khairy

Appendix B: Operationalisation Schemes

This appendix is focussed on the operationalisation of the (main) concepts. The included schemes display the breakdown of the main concepts into small, directly measureable indicators. The four main concepts are social background, career in jihadist terrorist organisations, personality, and combat experience. In the schemes some variables are indicated with an *. These are directly derived from Bakker's (2006) study.


Social background
General
Gender *
Current/last organisation
Position in organisation
Status *
Age *
Family status
Marital status *
Number of children
Geographical background
Place of raising *
Family origin *
Nationality *
Place of residence
Education
Level of education *
Location of education
Faith
Faith as youth *
Current/last faith
Development in faith *
Socioeconomics
Socioeconomic status *
Occupation *
Criminal record
Incarceration *
Criminal offense *


Career in jihadist terrorist organisations
Age
Age upon entering first jihadist terrorist organisation
Age upon entering current/last organisation *
Recruitment
Place of recruitment *
Social affiliation *
Membership of other jihadist terrorist organisations
Amount of memberships of jihadist terrorist organisations, other than the current/last
Speed of the career
Years between entering current/last organisation and becoming its leader
Role in the organisation
Is the subject the founder of his current/last organisation
Personality
Charisma
Is the subject perceived as charismatic?
Authoritarianism
Did the subject receive a punitive, authoritarian childrasing? *
Framing
To what extent does the subject delineate the in- and out-group?
Relative deprivation
Did the subject perceived an inability to obtain what is perceived as rightfully his? *


Combat experience
Participation in wars and/or violent conflicts
Did the subject participate in wars or other violent conflicts?
Where did the subject participate in wars or other violent conflicts?
Militant/terrorist training
Has the subject received a militant/terrorist training?
Where did the subject receive his training?