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# Impacts of Victims' Lifestyle and Routine Activities on the Risks of Victimization: A Case of Insurgent Attacks on the Security Officers in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces

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## **Abstract**

### **Keywords:**

*Insurgency,  
Attack, Risk of  
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*Several security officers had been targeted and attacked by the insurgents in Thailand's southern border provinces for decades. These casualties had raised the questions about how these security officers were victimized. This research aimed to analyze the factors related to the victims' lifestyle and routine activities that affect the risks of insurgent victimization among security officers in Thailand's southern border provinces. The theoretical framework of this study was developed by integrating the Lifestyle-Routine Activities Theory (L-RAT), Lifestyle-Exposure Theory (LST), and Routine Activities Theory (RAT). The typologies of 225 insurgent attacks on security officers in Pattani between 2013 and 2019 were analyzed using content analysis and statistical analysis. The research findings indicated that the risks of insurgent victimization were influenced by the security officers' lifestyle and routine activities as a result of exposure to insurgent attacks, proximity to insurgent attacks, target attractiveness, guardianship, victims' demographic characteristics, types of attacks, and spatial-temporal factors. Increased exposure to insurgent attacks, proximity to insurgent attacks, and target attractiveness heightened the risks, while a higher level of guardianship had the potential to reduce the risks. Therefore, to mitigate the risks of victimization, this study recommended certain practices and policies to not only individuals but also the security forces. These included adapting the security officers' lifestyle and routine activities and implementing policies based on risk assessment.*

## **Introduction**

From victimology perspectives, victim's lifestyle and routine activities are identified as key factors which affect the risks of criminal victimization. Different personal lifestyles cause varying exposure and affect the opportunities for individual to be in situations prone to the risk of victimization. Direct-predatory crime can occur when motivated offenders, suitable targets, and an absence of capable guardians all converge in a particular place and time. These perspectives have been applied in several previous studies on violence victimization, such as homicides and terrorist attacks. It is assumed that these perspectives can also explain the victimization of insurgent attack, which can be perceived as a form of direct-contact predatory crime. This study focuses on the risks faced by security officers from insurgent attacks in Thailand's southern border provinces (SBP).

Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and four districts of Songkhla, located in the southernmost of Thailand, were territories of the former Patani State. The local people in these areas have long experienced maltreatment and inequality due to their distinct demographic and cultural characteristics. As a result, a separatist ideology emerged, leading to covert participation of some locals in the clandestine insurgent movements and violent resistance against the Thai government (Liow & Pathan, 2010). The insurgency intensified in 2004, causing over twenty thousand casualties in the past two decades.

While the SBP insurgency has been studied by several scholars, the majority of previous studies have focused on understanding the situation and root causes of the conflict, as well as proposing solutions. Only a few studies have examined the patterns of victimization in the SBP. This study aims to explore the factors that affect the risks of insurgent attacks and the patterns of insurgent victimization, which can contribute to further violence prevention efforts.

Thailand's security forces have been the primary opponents of the insurgent movements in SBP, as is common in similar conflicts. Security officers were frequently attacked by the insurgents, with approximately 36% of the total casualties from 2004 to 2016 being security officers (Jitpiromsri, 2019). While the majority of insurgent attacks on security officers occurred during their on-duty time, some incidents also occurred during their leisure periods. The fatal casualties of security officers not only had a profound impact on their families but also undermined public confidence in the government. While the reasons why security officers are attacked may seem apparent, there has been limited research on how victimized security officers are selected as targets.

This study focuses on the lifestyle and routine activities of security officers as the primary factors, which have not been previously explored in the context of the SBP insurgency. The goal is to examine the factors related to security officers' lifestyle and routine activities that affect the risks of insurgent victimization in SBP. Criminological theories, including the Lifestyle-Exposure Theory (LST), Routine Activities Theory (RAT), and Lifestyle-Routine Activities Theory (L-RAT), are applied in this study. These theories emphasize the influence of the victim's routine activities on crime and are relevant to the study's objectives. This study begins with a definition of insurgent attack and a brief background on the insurgency in SBP. The aforementioned theories are then examined to identify key factors and establish the conceptual framework. The typologies of insurgent attacks are analyzed using research methods to obtain results, which are subsequently discussed and concluded in the final section.

## Literature Review

### Insurgent Attacks

An insurgent attack refers to the illegal use of violence by insurgents with the intention of achieving their objectives. This attack can cause harm to the lives, property, and freedom of the victims, making it a form of direct-contact predatory crimes (Lum & Koper, 2011). Previous studies suggested that both insurgent and terrorist attacks are not totally random acts without specific targets. Instead, these attacks generally exhibit patterns and conditions of target selection. Various targets are intentionally chosen based on personal identities, demographic characteristics representing a target group, or the location where a target group is present (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007; Canetti-Nisim, Mesch, & Pedahzur, 2006; Parkin, Freilich, & Chermak, 2015).

## Insurgency in SBP

Local insurgent movements were key players in the internal insurgency in SBP. These movements had distinct objectives, characteristics, mobilizations, and organizational structures that remained largely unidentified (Liow & Pathan, 2010). The dominant movement, Barisan Revolusi Nasional Coordinate (BRN-C), transitioned from a centralized organization to a decentralized network consisting of multiple insurgent cells with neither explicit hierarchy nor leader. The secrecy surrounding this movement was rigorously maintained, with insurgents unaware of the identities of other members outside their own cell (Abuza, 2011; Liow & Pathan, 2010).

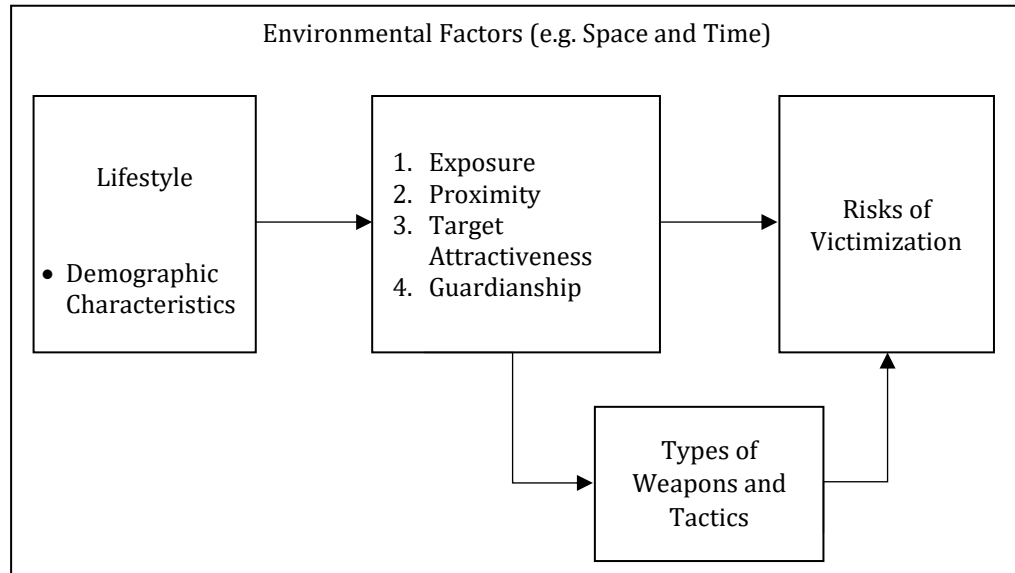
Insurgent attacks and violent incidents were typically carried out by small cells of perpetrators working in teams with assigned duties. Insurgent supporters assisted in the execution of attacks and escape plans. These operations were deliberately planned, and targets were intentionally selected. The perpetrators utilized various tactics, primarily involving firearms or improvised explosive devices (IEDs), or a combination of both. The distinguish feature of these attacks was their element of surprise and their relatively short engagement duration (Abuza, 2011; Liow & Pathan, 2010).

Previous studies on the insurgency in SBP primarily focused on explaining the background of the insurgency and the patterns of insurgent attacks that occurred regularly. However, these studies did not extensively explore the patterns of insurgent victimization. Engvall & Andersson (2014) identified violence hotspots in SBP using geographic data on violent incidents, revealing a relationship between such incidents and the socio-economic dimensions of the area. Nevertheless, no previous studies have specifically examined the routine activities of victims in SBP. This study aims to uncover new insights into insurgent victimization in SBP, including the effects of factors related to victims' lifestyles and routine activities, as well as the patterns of victimization. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of insurgent victimization and provide recommendations for practices and policies aimed at protecting security officers.

## Theoretical Framework

The literature review reveals a pattern of victimization in insurgent attacks against security officers in SBP. Therefore, the analysis of insurgent attack risks can be approached using criminological theories. In this study, the conceptual framework incorporates the L-RAT as the principal theory, integrating the concepts of LST and RAT (Figure 1). Based on the L-RAT, an individual's lifestyle and routine activities contribute to variations in criminal opportunities, increasing the likelihood of being involved in situations where crimes occur (McNeeley, 2015). The L-RAT also highlights four key elements of victimization: exposure to crime, proximity to crime, target attractiveness, and guardianship (Meier & Miethe, 1993). These risk factors vary based on the definitional properties of specific crimes, which constrain the actions of offenders (Cohen, Kluegel, & Land, 1981). According to the LST, victims' lifestyle can be influenced by their demographic characteristics (Hindelang, R., & Garofalo, 1978). In

addition, the environmental factors of space and time, as highlighted in the RAT, also play a role in determining the risks of victimization. Specifically, when there is insufficient guardianship in certain places and times, the risk of victimization tends to increase (Cohen et al., 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993). All of these factors will be comprehensively discussed below.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework.

### 1) Exposure to Insurgent Attacks

Exposure to crime is determined by the physical visibility and accessibility resulting from victims' routine activities (Meier & Miethe, 1993). This exposure is influenced not only by identifiable identities but also by behaviors, such as engaging in outdoor activities in public spaces (Hindelang et al., 1978). In the case of ideological homicide, victims are often attacked in public spaces rather than in their accommodations or workplaces (Mandala & Freilich, 2018; Parkin et al., 2015). Previous studies have employed various attributes to assess exposure, including activity characteristics, the publicness of an area, the average time spent in an area, the frequency of activities at specific places and times, and interaction with others (Cohen et al., 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993).

The L-RAT posits that a higher level of exposure to crime increases the risks of victimization (Cohen et al., 1981). Consequently, the number of victimized security officers whose lifestyle and routine activities were highly exposed to insurgent attacks tends to be higher than those with low exposure.

### 2) Proximity to Insurgent Attacks

Proximity to crime is defined as the physical distance between the target and risk areas (Meier & Miethe, 1993). The likelihood of contact between targets and motivated offenders increases when victims routinely conduct activities in certain areas, for instance, locations with several motivated offenders (Meier & Miethe, 1993), terrorist homebases (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007), and high-risk places frequently targeted by terrorists

(Feniger & Yuchtman-Yaar, 2010). The closer the distance between the locations where potential victims and motivated offenders regularly appear, the higher the risks of victimization (Cohen et al., 1981; Mandala & Freilich, 2018). Consequently, the number of victimized security officers who frequently conducted activities at risk areas tends to be higher than the security officers who rarely conducted activities in such areas.

### 3) Target Attractiveness

Target attractiveness refers to the desirability of targets, whether they are individuals or objects, which influences potential offenders (Cohen et al., 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993). The elements of target attractiveness vary depending on the type of crime and criminal motives (Cohen et al., 1981). Clarke & Newman (2006) identified characteristics of attractive terrorist targets, including being exposed, vital, iconic, legitimate, destructible, occupied, near, and easy. Previous studies have highlighted certain practices that intensify target attractiveness, such as being alone or in a small group (Parkin et al., 2015), engaging in victim provocation (Parkin & Freilich, 2015), lacking protection and immunity against small arms (Boba, 2009), and traveling in motor vehicles without installed security measures (Mandala & Freilich, 2018).

According to Cohen et al. (1981), an increase in target attractiveness heightens the risks of victimization. Therefore, it is likely that the number of victimized security officers, whose lifestyle and routine activities were highly attractive to the insurgents, tends to be higher compared to security officers with less attractive activities.

### 4) Guardianship

Guardianship, as explained in the L-RAT, refers to the capacity of nearby individuals to prevent harm to others, acting as a deterrent to potential offenders by increasing perceived costs and risks associated with committing crime, while also reducing opportunities for criminal activity (Cohen et al., 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993). The guardianship consists of three core elements: availability, capability to monitor, and willingness to intervene, which together determine four stages of guardianship: invisible, available, capable, and intervening (Reynald, 2009).

In the case of ideological attacks, the presence of a guardian alone may be insufficient to prevent such attacks, as ideological perpetrators often possess strong motivation and the capacity to attack. An unarmed guardian would not be capable of effective attack prevention either. On the other hand, multiple guardians responding by taking actions, such as shooting back during an attack, can reduce the likelihood of successful assassinations (Mandala & Freilich, 2018). The capabilities of guardians to detect and respond to ideological attacks are crucial factors in mitigating the risks posed by well-trained perpetrators. Consequently, the number of victimized security officers whose lifestyle and routine activities reflected a high level of guardianship tends to be lower compared to security officers with a low level of guardianship.

## 5) Demographic Characteristics

Various demographic characteristics have been extensively examined in several studies, including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, occupation, marital status, social status, socioeconomic status, residence areas, workplace areas, and personal background (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2006; Feniger & Yuchtman-Yaar, 2010; Parkin & Freilich, 2015; Parkin et al., 2015). These characteristics are indicative of key components related to victimization risks. To illustrate, the area of residence or workplace can indicate proximity to crime, whereas age, gender, and marital status can reflect the victim vulnerability (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2006). Additionally, ethnicity, occupation, and community status can affect exposure to crime (Parkin et al., 2015). Thereupon, this study proposes that the demographic characteristics of security officers may influence the risks of victimization.

## 6) Types of Attacks

The definitional properties of specific crimes are observed as the characteristics of crime influencing the actions of potential offenders. Each type of crime has distinct conditions and requires different capabilities from offenders; thereby affecting criminal opportunities and decision-making (Cohen et al., 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993). The limitations and constraints inherent in each specific crime type have partial impacts of exposure, proximity, target attractiveness, and guardianship on the risks of criminal victimization (Cohen et al., 1981; McNeeley, 2015). Furthermore, the effects of demographic characteristics may vary depending on the types and characteristics of specific crimes (Parkin, 2017). Therefore, the variation in crime types affects the risks of victimization (Parkin, 2017; Parkin et al., 2015).

In the context of insurgent attacks, the definitional properties can be interpreted as the types of attacks. Different types of weapons and tactics are used across victim groups in ideologically motivated homicides (Parkin et al., 2015). The types of weapons provide varying capabilities and opportunities to attack targets. Terrorists generally prioritize attributes such as familiarity, convenience, and simplicity when selecting weapons. If weapons with these attributes are easily accessible, attacks require less effort to execute and offer greater rewards. Firearms are more aligned with these attributes compared to explosive devices (Clarke & Newman, 2006). Similarly, Mandala & Freilich (2018) found that firearms had a higher success rate in terrorist assassinations compared to explosive devices. Correspondingly, it can be inferred that the types of attacks, differentiated by the weapons and tactics employed, have an impact on the risks of insurgent victimization.

## 7) Spatial-Temporal Factors

The risks of victimization vary based on spatial and temporal factors. Certain spaces and times, known as risk spaces and periods, are associated with higher risks. Risk spaces exhibit specific attributes, populations, and conditions that contribute to heightened risks. Examples of risk spaces include communities with a high concentration of motivated offenders, areas where targets collectively conducted routine activities, public transportation systems, and

strategic locations (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007; Feniger & Yuchtman-Yaar, 2010). Meanwhile, risk periods correspond to specific times when attacks are more likely to occur, for example, anniversaries of key dates with political, religious, social or symbolic significance (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007).

This study hypothesizes that spatial and temporal factors play a role in the risks of insurgent attacks in SBP. In other words, there are specific risk spaces and periods where insurgent attacks are more likely to occur. Consequently, a higher number of victimized security officers can be found in four groups: those whose lifestyle and routine activities were highly exposed to insurgent attacks, those who frequently conducted activities in risk areas, those whose lifestyle and routine activities were highly attractive to the insurgents, and those whose lifestyle and routine activities reflected a low level of guardianship. The risks of insurgent victimization are influenced by the demographic characteristics of security officers, the types of attacks differentiated by weapons and tactics, and spatial-temporal factors.

### Research Methodology

The content analysis and statistical analysis were employed as research methods in this study. These approaches have been previously used to identify the typology and pattern of crime (Jenkins, Willis, & Han, 2013; Samantha Maitland Irwin, Raymond Choo, & Liu, 2011). The typologies included data on insurgent attacks retrieved from the incident report database collected by the Royal Thai Police, the national police department. These primary database records were officially and mutually verified by three Thai government authorities: the armed forces, the police department, and the local administration. The scope of the typologies in this study encompassed any insurgent attacks in Pattani between 2013 and 2019, where at least one security officer, either a police officer or a military officer, was attacked by at least one insurgent. Pattani was the province that had the highest rate of insurgent attacks on security officers. This time period was selected based on the occurrence of significant changes, with a notable increase in the number of victimized security officers observed in 2013. Furthermore, 2019 was the year preceding the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted people's lifestyles, including the locals in SBP.

The incident reports provided descriptive information about the security officers' identities and activities during the attacks, demographic characteristics of the officers, the perpetrators' behaviors, attack methods, details of the surrounding areas, attack dates and times, and attack locations. To conduct the content analysis, these contents were systematically coded to identify variables reflecting the attributes of insurgent attacks relevant to the conceptual framework. The variables were classified into seven categories, as described earlier. For example, possession of weapons, body armor, and armored vehicles fell under the category of target hardening, which indicated target attractiveness. Weapon robbery illustrated the value of the target and represented the negative consequence of weapon possession. Additionally, spatial-temporal factors such as risk spaces and periods were identified. In the case of key dates, three days before and after those dates, excluding the Ramadan period, were considered within the investigated period, following the

findings of Medina, Siebeneck, & Hepner (2011). This adjustment was made due to the insurgents being less likely to carry out attacks on exact key dates, considering the heightened security measures in place.

The relevant data was coded and grouped into categorial variables. For instance, if a security officer was attacked while present in a public site such as a public road or a local market, this attribute would be coded as “present in a public site” under the category of “presence in accessible areas”. However, if the incident reports did not contain specific data, it was coded as “data not available”. Only data relevant to specific attributes: activities leading to predictable presence, shooting attacks, bombing attacks, and public sites, were further classified into sub-categories to specify the types of attributes.

Finally, the data was subjected to statistical analysis to determine the tendencies of the risks of insurgent victimization. The total number of typologies was determined as 225, representing the sum of all insurgent attacks classified by categorial variables. The relevant attributes present in the insurgent attacks were counted, and the percentage of each attribute was then calculated. Hypothetically, attributes with higher rates indicated routine activities of security officers that carried higher risks of insurgent attacks. Nonetheless, the analysis of certain key dates differed slightly. To calculate the average time intervals between each attack, the number of days for each key date (e.g., Ramadan period = 30, Krue Se Mosque incident = 7) was multiplied by the number of study years, which was seven (2013-2019), and then divided by the total number of insurgent attacks occurring during those days throughout the entire period (e.g., attacks during the Ramadan periods = 29). A shorter time interval indicated a higher-risk period due to the higher frequency of attacks.

## Results

According to Table 1, a total of 225 insurgent attacks on security officers were recorded in Pattani between 2013 and 2019. The attacks predominantly took two forms: bombing attacks and shooting attacks. The percentage of insurgent attacks on on-duty security officers was approximately four times higher than that on the security officers during their leisure time. Attacks often targeted not only single victims but also multiple victims. The majority of the victims were attacked when they closely gathered as a cluster, such as when traveling together in a single vehicle. Nearly one-third of the security officers were victimized while dispersed in the same areas, often during walk patrols or while traveling in a security convoy.

**Table 1.** Demography of the Typologies.

Typologies		N	Percent
		225	100
Types of Attacks	Shooting Attacks	74	32.89
	Bombing Attacks	151	67.11
Attack Periods	On-duty Time	182	80.89
	Leisure Time	43	19.11
Types of Targets	Individual	46	20.44
	Cluster	108	48
	Distributed	71	31.56

The results of the data analysis on the 225 insurgent attacks are presented in [Table 2](#). Regarding exposure to insurgent attacks, the majority of attacks occurred when security officers were either wearing a uniform (76.44%), conducting activities that signaled their presence (99.56%), or present in a public place (97.78%). However, there was a slight difference in the number of victims who were being transported by an official vehicle compared to those transported by a private or undercover vehicle. This suggests that the type of vehicle slightly impacted the risks of insurgent attacks. Moreover, the analysis of proximity to risk areas revealed that nearly 60% of insurgent attacks occurred when security officers frequently conducted activities in areas influenced by local insurgent movements.

In terms of target attractiveness, the insurgent attacks on security officers who were armed (82.67%), equipped with body armor (75.56%), or performing security duties (62.22%) were distinctly higher compared to attacks on security officers with other attributes. Approximately 6% of the insurgent attacks were followed by weapon robbery. Furthermore, only 4% of the security officers were attacked while being transported by armored vehicles. Nearly 97 % of the security officers did not counter the attacks, mainly due to the short engagement duration (97.78%) and invisibility of the perpetrators (75.11%).

The findings on guardianship indicated that over 60% of the insurgent attacks involved other individuals in the nearby areas. It was also observed that at least one security officer was present in the nearby areas during half of the attacks. There were, however, only five incidents where a nearby security officer was available and either the perpetrator was visible or there was prolonged engagement. Interestingly, when at least one nearby security officer was present, there were neither further attacks nor cases of weapon robbery.

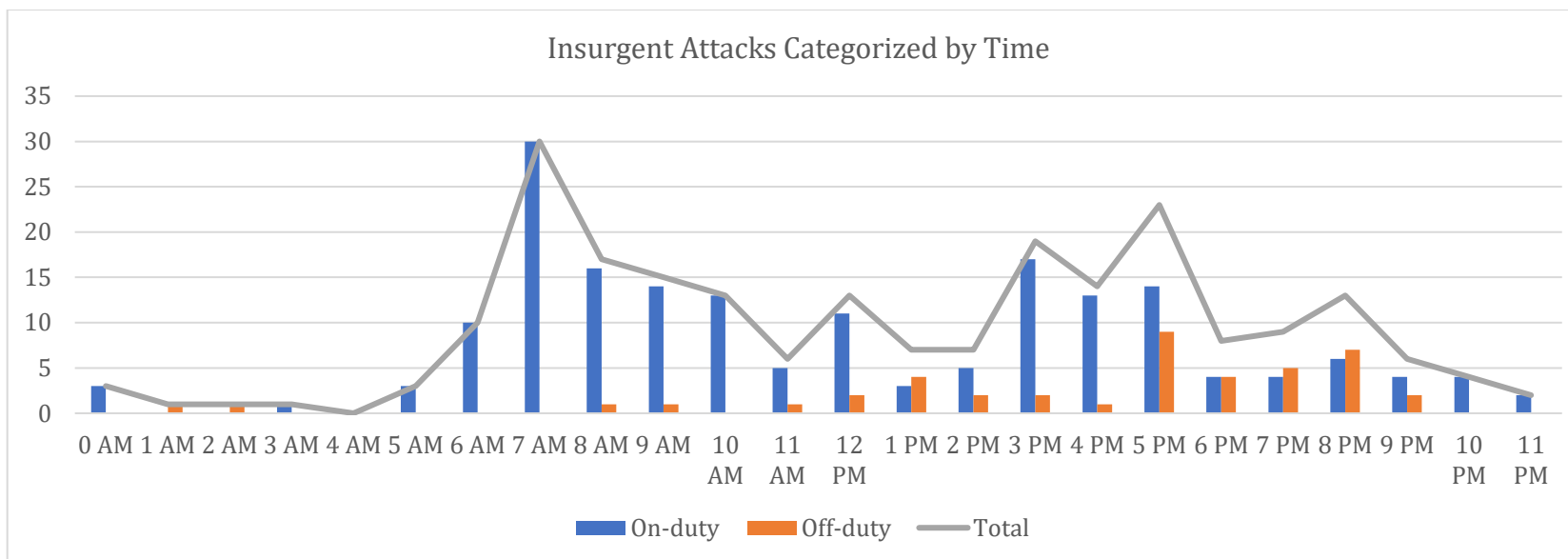
Regarding demographic characteristics, the majority of victimized security officers were Buddhist (82.67%), officers responsible for security duties (79.56%), operational officers (100%), or non-native (61.33%). Furthermore, the analysis of weapons and tactics revealed that 67.11 % of the insurgent attacks were bombing attacks, while 32.89 % were shooting attacks. The primary tactic for shooting attacks on security officers was drive-by shooting (12%), while 64% of the insurgent attacks involved the use of IEDs triggered by the perpetrators.

Finally, the examination of risk spaces and periods demonstrated that nearly 98% of the insurgent attacks occurred at public sites, including public roads (84.44%) and areas influenced by local insurgent movements (73.33%). The insurgents rarely targeted security officers in private or restricted areas, for example, accommodations or workplaces (2.22%).

**Table 2.** Data Analysis.

Factors	Variables	Typologies		N	Percent
		Attributes			
Exposure to Insurgent Attacks	Outfits	Uniforms		172	76.44
		Casual clothes		53	23.56
	Vehicles	Official vehicles		73	32.44
		Private vehicles or undercover vehicles		64	28.44
		No vehicles		88	39.11
	Predictable presence	Predictable activities		224	99.56
		- Conducting a routine activity		178	79.11
		- Traveling a non-flexible route		28	12.44
		- Attending a scheduled activity		24	10.67
		- Being deceived to a trap		19	8.44
		Unpredictable activities		1	0.44
		Presence in accessible areas	Presenting in a public site		220
	Presenting in a private or restricted area		5	2.22	
	Proximity to Insurgent Attacks	Proximity to risk areas	Routine activities in an area influenced by insurgents		134
No routine activities in an area influenced by insurgents			91	40.44	
Target Attractiveness	Weapon possession	Armed security officer		186	82.67
		Unarmed security officer		21	9.33
		Unidentified		18	8
	Weapon robbery	Weapons are robbed		13	5.78
		Weapons are not robbed		212	94.22
	Body armor	Equipped with body armor		170	75.56
		Not equipped with body armor		55	22.44
	Armored vehicles	Ordinary vehicle		128	56.88
		Armored vehicle		9	4
		No vehicles		88	39.11
	Types of activity	Being attacked while performing a security duty		140	62.22
		Being attacked while performing a general activity		85	37.78
	Counterattack	Did not counterattack		218	96.89
		Counterattacked		7	3.11
	Presence of perpetrator	Cannot recognize perpetrators		169	75.11
		Can recognize perpetrators		56	24.89
Engagement Duration	Short		220	97.78	
	Long		5	2.23	

<b>Guardianship</b>	Availability of nearby individual	Available	144	64
		Not available	81	36
	Availability of nearby security officer	Available	109	48.44
		Not Available	116	51.56
	Nearby security officer's capability and opportunity to counter an attack	Available when perpetrators were not visible and there was short engagement	104	46.22
		Available when either perpetrators were visible or there was prolonged engagement	5	2.22
		Not available	116	51.56
	Nearby security officer's capability and opportunity to prevent subsequent situations	No subsequent situations	109	48.44
		Subsequent situation occurred	0	0
		Nearby security officer not available	116	51.56
<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>	Religion	Buddhist	186	82.67
		Muslim	76	33.78
		Data not available	7	3.11
	Roles	Security duties	179	79.56
		Other duties	38	16.88
		Data not available	8	3.56
	Ranks and positions	Executive level	2	0.89
		Operational level	225	100
	Hometown	Native	96	42.67
		Non-native	138	61.33
Data not available		47	20.89	
<b>Types of Attacks</b>	Types of Attacks	Shooting attacks	74	32.89
		- Drive-by shooting	27	12
		- Ambush	23	10.22
		- Close-contact shooting	15	6.67
		- Shooting rampage	9	4
		Bombing attacks	151	67.11
		- IEDs triggered by a perpetrator	144	64
		- Other tactics	7	3.11
<b>Spatial-Temporal Factors</b>	Characteristics of attack sites	Public sites	220	97.78
		- Public roads	190	84.44
		- Areas influenced by insurgents	165	73.33
		- Deserted public sites	61	27.11
		- Crowded public sites	52	23.11
		Private or restricted areas	5	2.22



**Figure 2.** Insurgent Attacks Categorized by Time.

**Table 3.** Risk Periods.

Risk Periods	NO. of Days (7 Years)	NO. of Attacks	Average Time Intervals between Each Attack
Total insurgent attacks on security officers	2,558	225	11.4
1. Ramadan periods	210	29	7.2
- Last 10 days of each Ramadan period	70	21	3.3
2. Key occasions of the local insurgent movements	245	19	12.9
2.1 Violent incident anniversaries	147	12	12.5
- Krue Se Mosque incident in Pattani	49	9	5.4
- Raid on the Pileng military camp in Narathiwat	49	2	24.5
- Tak Bai incident in Yala	49	1	49
2.2 Symbolic dates (e.g., the founding days of the PULO and the BRN)	98	7	14
3. Thai significant dates (e.g., Songkran festival)	63	4	15.8
4. Buddhist holidays (e.g., Vesak day)	154	2	77

The analysis of risk periods is presented in Figure 2. Attacks on on-duty security officers were significantly higher during the following time periods: 06:00-10:00, 12:00, and 13:00-15:00 ( $n \geq 10$ ). On the other hand, attacks on off-duty security officers were most frequently observed in the late evening between 17:00-20:00 ( $n \geq 5$ ). According to [Table 3](#), based on the 225 insurgent attacks on security officers between 2013 and 2019, attacks occurred on average approximately every 11.4 days throughout the entire period. However, during the Ramadan period, the frequency of attacks was higher, with an attack occurring approximately every 7.2 days. The frequency further intensified during the last 10-day period of Ramadan, with an average of approximately one attack every 3.3 days. The average time intervals between attacks on key historical anniversaries and symbolic dates were less frequent, approximately every 12.5 days and every 14 days, respectively. Interestingly, among the key occasions, the frequency was highest on the anniversary of the Krue Se Mosque incident, with an attack occurring on average every 5.6 days. Lastly, only a small number of attacks were found to occur on Thai significant dates ( $n = 4$ ) and Buddhist holidays ( $n = 2$ ).

## Discussion

The findings of the study reveal that the lifestyle and routine activities of security officers tend to affect the risks of victimization. The factors related to their activities have key impacts on these risks. Security officers whose lifestyle and routine activities highly exposed them to insurgent attacks were more likely to be victimized compared to those with lower exposure. The physical visibility of the target emerges as one of the key factors influencing the risks of insurgent attacks. Predictable presence, especially through the performance of routine activities, strongly heightens the visibility of the targets. Since security officers routinely conduct certain activities at specific times and places, the insurgents could accurately predict the targets' actions and plan effective attacks. To illustrate, security officers guarding schools during opening and closing times or praying at local mosques in the late evening became predictable targets. Security officers who never or rarely adapt these routine activities are more likely to be victimized by the insurgents.

The physical accessibility of victims can be influenced by the publicness of areas. The insurgents could easily approach security officers present in public sites such as public roads, mosques, and local markets. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that ideological attacks tend to occur in outdoor settings ([Parkin & Freilich, 2015](#)). In contrast, targeting security officers in private or restricted areas presents greater challenges for the insurgents, as these areas are less visible and often implement additional security measures in place. The insurgents would need to take greater risks and exert more efforts to infiltrate and carry out attacks in such areas, as [Mandala & Freilich \(2018\)](#) explained.

Likewise, security officers who frequently conduct routine activities in areas influenced by local insurgent movements face higher risk compared to those who rarely operate in such areas. The regular presence of security officers in these areas signifies a close proximity between potential victims and motivated

perpetrators. Victims in close proximity are more vulnerable to victimization (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007; Canetti-Nisim et al., 2006; Cohen et al., 1981). This proximity provides perpetrators with opportunities, easy access, and lower risks (Berrebi & Lakdawalla, 2007).

Specific lifestyle and routine activities also influence the target attractiveness of security officers from the perspective of the insurgents. The conditions under which officers conduct routine activities are key factors. Simply being cautious and prepared is insufficient to reduce the risks of insurgent attacks. The capability and opportunity to counterattack are essential. In most insurgent attacks, victims initially did not recognize the perpetrators and were engaged with them for only a brief period. These situations limited the victims' opportunities to counterattack. As a result, the capability and opportunity for security officers to counterattack decreased while their vulnerability increased.

Transporting in an armored vehicle has proven to be an effective target-hardening measure for reducing target vulnerability, as Mandala & Freilich (2018) advocated. The insurgents would require greater effort and resources to harm a target inside an armored vehicle, such as using explosives with high destructive power, employing professional bombers, or devising deliberate attack plans. On the other hand, relying solely on being armed and equipped with body armor alone does not effectively prevent insurgent attacks due to the capabilities and adaptability of the insurgents. Nevertheless, being armed and equipped with body armor remains necessary as these possessions are not only associated with the aforementioned capabilities and opportunities for counterattack, but also with mitigating the severity of potential damage (Mandala & Freilich, 2018).

Furthermore, security officers whose lifestyle and routine activities demonstrate high level of guardianship are less likely to be victimized compared to those with lower levels of guardianship. While the availability of guardianship and willingness to intervene in an attack cannot prevent the attack itself, the capability and opportunity of the guardian to counterattack are essential in mitigating the risks of victimization. A perpetrator would hesitate to attack a security officer if another officer with the capability and opportunity to counter the attack is present nearby. These findings align with the suggestion of Mandala and Freilich's (2018) regarding the presence of skilled armed guards. However, in practical situations, a nearby security officer may not be able to quickly respond or counter the attack if the perpetrator is not visible and the attack occurs within seconds. This explains why security officers can still be targeted, particularly in the bombing and ambush scenarios, despite being part of security convoys or having nearby armed security officers who are highly aware of potential attacks. Nevertheless, nearby security officers can still prevent further harm to the victims after an attack has occurred.

Certain demographic characteristics of security officers also influence the risks of insurgent attacks. Operational security officers and those responsible for security duties are obviously at higher risk compared to other officers. These roles increase their exposure and proximity to insurgent attacks.

Although attacking high-ranking security officers would attract public attention and severely undermine morale and confidence, it requires significant effort and deliberate planning to attack such targets. This group of officers also rarely conducts routine activities in high-risk areas and are usually accompanied by guardians. These differences in ranks and responsibilities can be implicitly compared to differences in social status, where higher exposure leads to higher risk (Mandala & Freilich, 2018). Therefore, demographic characteristics can impact routine activities, which, in turn, affect the risks of victimization, as suggested by several previous studies (Feniger & Yuchtman-Yaar, 2010; Parkin et al., 2015).

The types of attacks are another factor related to the risks of victimization. A comparison of attack rates was made between on-duty and off-duty security officers. The majority of on-duty security officers were victims of bombing attacks, whereas the majority of off-duty security officers were attacked with firearms. This finding diverges from a previous study conducted by Mandala & Freilich (2018). This discrepancy could be due to differences in the demographic characteristics of the samples and environmental factors. Both shooting and bombing attacks require specific conditions and have their own advantages and disadvantages. Attacks on on-duty security officers require greater effort and carry higher risks compared to attacks on off-duty officers, as on-duty security officers and nearby colleagues are more likely to have the capability and opportunity to counterattack. Therefore, insurgents frequently employ bombing attacks against on-duty security officers, as the insurgents' risks can be neutralized by the advantages of this weapon. Conversely, off-duty security officers are typically targeted with shooting attacks, especially drive-by shootings and close-contact shootings, due to convenience and high precision. Off-duty security officers also appear to be easier targets than on-duty officers (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2006).

Lastly, the risks of insurgent attacks are influenced by certain spatial and temporal factors. These risks could be intensified in specific locations and times. In terms of risk spaces, public roads provide easy access for the insurgents to target security officers. Additionally, areas influenced by insurgent movements are associated with higher exposure, closer proximity, and lower levels of guardianship. Meanwhile, the attractiveness of security officers as targets varies across different periods of time. The frequency of attacks on security officers is significantly higher during the Ramadan period, particularly in the last ten days, due to distorted beliefs that motivated the insurgents. Motivation is also notably heightened on key violent incident anniversaries, especially those involving casualties caused by the actions of security officers. This differs from the situation in Iraq, where terrorists exhibited a decline in attack intensity during Islamic holidays due to religious observances (Medina et al., 2011).

Furthermore, different routine activities of on-duty and off-duty security officers lead to different patterns of risk spaces and periods. Several attacks on security officers responsible for guarding educational personnel and buildings occurred around the opening and closing times of local schools, indicating the targeting of specific locations and times associated with their

duties. On the other hand, the frequency of attacks on off-duty security officers was higher in the late evening, reflecting their personal routine activities such as visiting local mosques or markets. These findings highlight the importance of considering the specific contexts and activities of security officers when assessing their risks of victimization.

## **Conclusion**

Exposure to insurgent attacks, proximity to insurgent attacks, target attractiveness, guardianship, the victim's demographic characteristics, types of attack, and spatial-temporal factors, are all interconnected with the lifestyle and routine activities of the victims, thereby influencing the risks of insurgent victimization. When security officers have a high level of exposure, are in close proximity to potential perpetrators, or are perceived as attractive targets, their risk of being targeted by insurgents increase. However, the presence of capable guardians who can intervene effectively can help mitigate these risks. It is important to note that each attack involves a combination of various variables and attributes that coexist. The specific combination of these factors determines the level of insurgent victimization risks, and this can vary depending on the particular attributes that are present in each situation.

## **Implications and Recommendations**

Certain lifestyle and routine activities can expose security officers to the risks of insurgent attacks. To mitigate these risks, it is recommended that these activities be refrained from or adapted. Security officers should instead conduct their activities in areas where other capable officers who can intervene are present. Furthermore, the risks increase when security officers possess certain demographic characteristics and find themselves in specific circumstances. Security officers should also heighten their awareness and enhance protection during risk periods and when being in high-risk areas.

To mitigate these risks, it is suggested that the military and the police department implement the following practices and policies. First, policies should be issued to facilitate the concealment of official identity, reducing the chances of officers being targeted. Second, measures should be implemented to reduce the risks associated with travel, such as providing officers and their families with adequate accommodations and facilities within their workplace or nearby areas.

Policies and practices related to routine duties should also be transformed to minimize predictability. This can include adopting flexible operations rather than adhering to predictable patterns. Additionally, operational officers should be provided with armored vehicle to enhance their protection. Lastly, it is essential to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of security officers and vehicles for each operation. This not only enables them to fulfill their duties effectively but also promotes mutual safety by allowing officers to guard and support one another. Implementing these practices and policies can help mitigate the risks of insurgent attack and enhance the overall security of security officers.

## Suggestions for Further Study

This study mainly focused on analyzing insurgent attacks against security officers using the statistical analysis. To further enhance our understanding of insurgent victimization, future studies could employ different research methodologies, such as case study methodology, to reexamine the impact of lifestyle and routine activities on insurgent victimization. These studies could also explore different sample groups, for example, off-duty security officers and civilians. Furthermore, it would be valuable to include civilian security units in SBP, as the government plans to increase their involvement in security duties while gradually withdrawing military units from the area.

In addition, the comparative analysis is suggested. It would be valuable to compare different sample groups. This analysis would provide insights into the variations in victimization experiences among these different groups, highlighting the unique challenges and vulnerabilities faced by each group.

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