Fights for Rights

A CASE STUDY OF TWO VIGILANTE WOMEN’S MOVEMENTS:
THE SUFFRAGETTES AND THE GULABI GANG

Author: Sara Jändel
Supervised by: Sandra Håkansson
**ABSTRACT**

This thesis is a comparative case study of the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang, two women’s movements using violence as a political strategy to fight patriarchal structures. Studying vigilante women’s movements is important as the current literature on the relationship between women and violence is deficient, focusing on women as victims of violence but neglecting the idea of women as contributors to violence. This study therefore aims to challenge the idea of female pacifism and to acknowledge women as rational, and sometimes violent, actors. This will be done by comparing the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang, two most-different cases of vigilante women’s movements, with the purpose to find the motivations behind their strategic choice of violence. The study is of an explorative kind, aiming to contribute to the existing theories of vigilantism with why some women’s groups have felt compelled to step outside of traditional stereotypes and norms attributed to women to achieve their goals. The result shows that the existing theories explaining the motivations to vigilante actions coincide with the Suffragettes and the Gulabi Gang. They are however also proven to not adequately explain why some women’s movements use violence. This study therefore contributes, to the existing theories, with the conclusion that women’s movements use violence, generally seen as a masculine strategy, to shock and surprise the people and the decision-makers. The use of violence, in other words, creates a disturbance in the societal structures as a result of women generally being unexpected to use such strategies. It furthermore creates opportunities for the groups to increase the attention devoted to them in ways that would not have been possible if the groups would use more feminine strategies.

**KEYWORDS**

Vigilantism, women’s movements, strategic choice, the Gulabi Gang, the Suffragettes.

**WORDCOUNT**

11957

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to give a special thanks to Sandra Håkansson for the guidance and support along the process of writing my thesis.
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1. INTRODUCTION

It is well-established in research that we live, and always have lived, in a patriarchal society. In other words, it is well acknowledged that societies around the world are built upon a gender-based hierarchy where women are inferior to men, both in the public and private sphere. Despite the fact that societies have evolved, patriarchal structures have remained, more strongly in some societies than others (Majstorovic & Lassen, 2011:1-2). It is however important to acknowledge that the patriarchal structures are not something that are specific to less developed countries, but exist all over the world, even in the most gender equal societies (Brown, McLean & McMillan, 2018). Consequently women around the world are not only victims of gender based violence, they also have limited access to economic resources, political power and much more (Majstorovic & Lassen, 2011:1-2).

Over the past few decades, women have increasingly mobilized, both globally and locally, against these structures to fight for gender equality. Women’s movements are however not a new phenomenon, but have existed throughout history. These movements have been expressed in a large variety of forms of activism and with the use of different strategies, some non-violent and some more vigilante (Basu, 2010:1-4).

One of the most famous women’s movements is the Suffragette movement, mobilized in England in the first decade of the 20th century. The Suffragette movement organized as a response to the failure of the earlier English feminist movement in regards to attempts to obtain the right to vote. In difference to earlier feminist movements the Suffragettes’ actions and strategies were more organized, active and violent, leading to the success of women’s suffrage in 1918 (Basu, 2010:11).

Another interesting movement is the Gulabi Gang, currently an active group of women in Uttar Pradesh (a state in Northern India) that has decided to mobilize against patriarchal structures and is fighting for women’s rights on a grassroot level. Their work is related to the outspread corruption in their society and is a counter-reaction to the experienced violence against women, the existence of for example child marriage and women’s lack of space in the political sphere (Desai, 2014).
What makes the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragettes two interesting social movements is the strategies used by these women to increase their political agency and to gain respect. Traditionally, women have been portrayed as pacifists, nurturing, disapproving of violence and hence striving for peace. This becomes even more clear when put in relation to men, that often are portrayed as violent and aggressive (York, 1999). In contradiction to this does the vigilante Suffragettes and the Gulabi Gang show signs of taking the power in their own hands and using violent means as a political strategy. They have both, in other words, appropriated what is seen as masculine and aggressive behaviour to fight patriarchal structures and empower themselves, and have at the same time gained respect by doing so (Desai, 2014).

2. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION

When looking through previous research on the subject of women and violence, one will quickly realize that there has been a lot of research done on the subject of women as victims of violence, but not as much on women as contributors to violence. This study will therefore focus on the puzzling question of why the Gulabi Gang is using and the Suffragettes did use violence to fight for gender equality. Moreover, it will also focus on why the groups have felt compelled to step outside of traditional stereotypes and norms attributed to women to achieve their goals. More specifically the study will focus on what the motivations that contributes to the groups’ strategic choices are.

The research question in this paper is: What motivates women’s movements to proceed to violence as a strategy to counter patriarchal structures and address gender inequality?

This thesis is of an explorative kind and attempts to contribute to an important aspect found absent in the field of vigilantism, which is why groups of women use violence as a political strategy. It aims to examine the existing theories presented by earlier scholars on vigilantism and determine whether they are sufficient to explain the strategic choices of women’s only movements. I hypothesize that these theories are, in fact, lacking important aspects that are specific to women’s movements and that these theories are not sufficient to explain the
women’s, sometimes, violent strategic choices. This could be a result of the theories lacking a gendered analysis of vigilantism and that there has been a shortcoming of research on women’s only groups. This study therefore aims to make a contribution to the field on female vigilantism as well as challenging the idea of women as emotional pacifists and instead acknowledging them as rational political agents. This will be done through the introduction of the concept of the surprise factor, explaining why women’s movements in particular use violence as a political strategy.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Vigilantism

Scholars have for years had different opinions on the definition of vigilantism. Some argue that it should be considered a social movement whereas others argue that it is rather a sort of social reaction (Miller, 2013:82-83). Furthermore the scholars also disagree on if vigilante actions are regarded as directed only towards crime or if it rather is a subcategory to political violence (White & Rastogi, 2009:315).

According to Rosenbaum & Sederberg (1974), the commonly used definition of vigilantism as “taking the law into one’s own hands” (p.542) is an oversimplification of the concept. Instead they argue that vigilantism should be seen as something that “consists of acts or threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of an established sociopolitical order” (p.542). Furthermore they add that the violators need to defend that same order from a subversion of some sort (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974:542). In the New Oxford Companion to Law, Cane & Conaghan (2008) similarly argue that vigilantism refers to “the rejection of state authority or competence for providing security by members of the public who coordinate to provide protection for themselves and others”. In other words, the vigilante strategies are motivated by the result of the loss in faith in the police, the state and other authorities that lead to the organization of self-help measures (Cane & Conaghan, 2008).
Despite the fact that the two definitions presented by Rosenbaum & Sederberg (1974) and Cane & Conaghan (2008) are useful, they can appear to be a bit vague. In line with the work of Munck & Verkuilen (2002) could it be argued that these definitions are minimalist, meaning that the definitions are so broad that they have the advantage of making it easy to find cases that can be applied. The minimalist definitions however have the disadvantage of being so inclusive that the concept can lose its explanatory power (p.9).

As a result, the sociologist Les Johnston’s conceptualization of vigilantism could be useful as a supplement to the other definitions. It is also this definition that this study will build upon. In his article “What is Vigilantism?” Les Johnston (1996) provides six necessary features for a group in order to be called vigilante. Firstly he argues that, for an action to be defined as vigilant, there must be some sort of planning or preparatory activity to it. Hence can vigilant activities not occur completely spontaneously. Secondly, the engagement of the members must be voluntary, meaning that it can not happen on demand of others than by the person in question himself. Thirdly, the members need to be autonomous citizens and hence not be in collaboration with or supported by state authority. Fourthly, the group either uses or threatens to use force. Fifthly, the vigilante actions arise when the social order is under threat of the transgression or the attributed institutionalized norms. Lastly, it aims to control social infractions by bringing guarantees of security to the participants and others (Johnston, 1996:220-230).

This definition is a maximalist definition, meaning that it includes many attributes making the concept more narrowed down and specific (Munck & Verkuilen, 2002:9). This definition is chosen for this study since it involves the group of cases studied in this paper, violent women’s movements, at the same time as it naturally sifts out a number of cases that are not relevant. Firstly does it rule out groups that act spontaneously such as attacks or violent outbreaks without a deeper political cause or that only occurred once. It also rules out any sort of violent activity that is supported or initiated by the state such as state military activities. Instead it focuses solely on groups that are independent, with voluntary members, that prepare acts of violence or the threat of violence for a political cause. Furthermore is this maximalist definition chosen as it naturally increases the validity of the study. In other words, that it ensures that we are measuring what we intend to measure (Esaiasson et al, 2012:57).
This would not necessarily have been the case if we used one of the minimalist definitions presented in the beginning as they would include groups of vigilantism that this study is not interested in.

3.2. Motivations to Vigilante Actions
Based on the work of a group of scholars of social movements and vigilantism such as Sidney Tarrow (2011), Earl Conteh-Morgan (2004), Paul Hoffman (2012), Manfred Schmitt (2010), Jon Rosenbaum & Peter Sederberg (1974), it can be argued that there are two main motivations to vigilante actions. Firstly, that vigilante activity is motivated by the group’s experience of the state not being efficient and/or not living up to its purpose, and secondly, that the participants of the group in question experience some sort of relative deprivation motivating them to resort to violence as a strategy. In the social movement theories, these two motivations are put forward as two factors that interact with each other, even if some scholars decides to focus more on one or the other. In other words, it is unlikely that a group that experience relative deprivation will use violence as a strategy if they have high faith in their state. In the same way is it also unlikely that a group that has low faith in their state will use violence if they do not experience high levels of relative deprivation. It is however important to acknowledge that this study only looks at the motivations and experiences of the groups in question. It is therefore not interesting whether the state statistically can be proven to be corrupt, but whether the groups experience that the state is corrupt.

In his work, Douglas Dion (1998) explains the difference between sufficient and necessary factors for a specific outcome. Sufficient factors mean that if we have X, Y will happen, whereas necessary factors mean that if we have X, Y will be able to happen. In other words do sufficient factors doubtlessly lead to the outcome of Y, whereas necessary factors are crucial for the possibility of Y to happen, but does not necessarily lead to Y (p.127-128). The two factors; experience of state inefficiency and relative deprivation, could in these terms be categorized, according to the research studied in this paper, as necessary factors, but not sufficient factors. Hence, the experience of state inefficiency and relative deprivation do not definitely lead to groups necessarily using violence as a strategy. This is proven by the fact that the majority of activist groups do in fact not use violence as a strategy. It could however be argued that these factors are necessary, meaning that activist groups will not use violence
as a group if they do not experience a strong relative deprivation and that their needs are not being looked after and efficiently handled by the state.

3.2.1. State Inefficiency and/or Corruption

Hoffman (2012) is one of many scholars that argues that the main basic duties of a state are both to protect the country from foreign aggression as well as to protect the citizens from crime and to maintain a public order. If the citizens perceive that the state in question is in fact not fulfilling its duty, it is likely that they will lose faith in the state. In other words, if the system of law is inefficient or corrupt and that marginalized people do not feel that their issues or concerns are being taken seriously, the state will lose its legitimacy. Research has also shown that vigilantism thrives in societies where groups experience that the state does not put enough resources to the administration of criminal justice and institutions such as courts of law and the police. This enhances people's fear for their lives and general safety as the rate of crime is high but the conviction of the responsibles is low. As a result self-helping vigilante groups will gain in popularity in these types of societies, as they are seen as an alternative to the malfunctioning state apparatus (Hoffman, 2012).

Furthermore, Rosenbaum & Sederberg (1974) argue that the discontent for the government does not necessarily have to do with a lack of funds being invested in the welfare, but that the resources are used inefficiently or that the organization is corrupt (p.545). Additionally they support Hoffman’s idea that when groups perceive the state as being weak or inefficient, it is more likely that they will use vigilante actions to violate the rules and regulations. In other words, they argue that “…the potential for vigilantism varies positively with the intensity and scope of belief that a regime is ineffective in dealing with challenges to the prevailing socio-political order.” (p.545).

3.2.2. Relative Deprivation

Research proves that potential for violence and relative deprivation are fundamentally linked (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974:544-545). In his book, Earl Conteh-Morgan (2004), explains that it is likely that collective violence will occur when certain groups experience that they are denied specific political or societal opportunities. He explains this as a “want-get gap” where people’s desires are not fulfilled in practice, hence creating a gap between what
they want and what they get. These wants could be anything from the desire to participate politically, to get better access to education and health care or to generally be treated equally to other groups of society. Furthermore does the magnitude of the political violence depend on the scope, intensity and duration of the deprivation perceived by the group in question (p.72-73). Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974) phrase this similarly to Conteh-Morgan, but use the concept of value expectations instead of wants and value capabilities instead of gets. Therefore does collective violence occur when the value expectations exceed the value capabilities (p.544-545).

Relative deprivation is, however, a broad concept which makes it necessary to narrow it down. Principally, it is important to distinguish between the difference of egoistic and fraternal relative deprivation. Egoistic relative deprivation is, according to Manfred Schmitt (2010), “sensed when individuals feel unfairly deprived in comparison to other individuals” (p.123) whereas fraternal relative deprivation is “felt by members of a social category when they believe that their group as a whole is denied a deserved outcome” (p.123). This study will focus solely on the fraternal relative deprivation and hence only the unfair behaviour experienced by groups of women fighting patriarchal structures with violence. In other words, not individual women fighting for gender equality on their own. It is furthermore found that fraternal relative deprivation is more closely related to protest, whereas the egoistic version rather is related to a person’s level of well-being. Additionally fraternal relative deprivation is showed to create collective anger, something that is closely linked to collective action with the purpose to (re)establish justice (Schmitt, 2010:123).

Furthermore the fraternal relative deprivation, explained in this section, is important for the strategies used by vigilante social movements in regards to resources. This is due to the fact that groups that, in relation to others, feel deprived of opportunities and resources are more likely to use violence as a political strategy (Tarrow, 2011:99). As argued by Tarrow in his book Power in Movement violence as a strategy is the easiest method to use for small groups with very few resources. In other words, it can be used by groups that do not have a lot of other choices than to use violence to achieve their political goals (Tarrow, 2011:99). This is relevant to the relative deprivation theory as it is linked to a group’s opportunities in relation to others. Thus, if a group perceives itself to be marginalized in a specific society and does
not have the same resources as others, violence can be used as a more or less efficient strategy (Tarrow, 2011:99).

3.3. The Two Cases of Vigilante Women’s Movements

In this section will the two groups of vigilante women’s movements, the Suffragettes and the Gulabi Gang, that are a part of this case study be presented.

3.3.1. The Suffragette Movement

The Suffragette movement was a mobilization of women in the early 20th century in Great Britain fighting for women’s rights, but most importantly for women’s suffrage. The organization of the movement that came to be militant and vigilante had its roots in a peaceful feminist movement that existed for about 40 years in the country before the mobilization of the Suffragettes (Billington, 1982:664).

The Suffragette movement was created by women, for women and was completely free from influences of any type of male-centred political party or organization (Purvis, 1995:91). The grounds for their mobilization was to fight against the miserable status of women in their society. Women at this time were, as argued by themselves, slaves and had a low status. Especially, there was a clear gender hierarchy, not in favor for women (Winsor, 1914:135-136).

The Suffragette movement is well known for having used militant strategies such as breaking windows, putting fire to empty buildings, pouring black fluid in mail boxes to ruin letters and burning down golf courses with acid. It is however important to point out that the group had no intention of hurting humans, but focused on damaging property (Purvis, 1995:93). The group’s use of violence is well shown in their famous slogan “Deeds, not words”, meaning that the group’s strategy was rather to use action instead of nonviolent means to pursue their goals (Purvis, 1995:99).
3.3.2. The Gulabi Gang

The Gulabi Gang is a group of women that have mobilized to fight against the patriarchal and caste-related oppressions, inequalities and gendered violence existing in their society. The gang is primarily recognized, in India and around the world, by two main characteristics - firstly, their pink saris and wooden sticks that attracts attention and, secondly, their use of physical confrontation when necessary. The group calls itself a “group for justice” and fights for gender equality in the rural villages in the state Uttar Pradesh in Northern India (Richards, 2016:558).

It all started with Sampat Pal Devi, the woman who later became the leader of the gang, witnessing a man beating his wife. Despite the fact that Sampat Pal pleaded for the man to stop, he did not, but did instead beat her up as well. The next day, Sampat Pal returned to the man’s house, but this time with five other women armed with bamboo sticks and beat him up to make him learn his lesson (Gulabi Gang, 2016). After the six women’s first joined action against the man beating his wife, it took over a decade to mobilize the gang. This was done by travelling through villages singing their protest songs and hence gaining the attention from future members (White and Rastogi, 2009:313-314). They started out with small projects to fight male abusers and gained recognition for their efforts by other women in their village. Furthermore they started to practice techniques of counter-aggression and self-defense to gain legitimacy (Sen, 2012).

Even though other techniques have been used, the Gulabi Gang is most famous for their use of bamboo sticks to either create a sense of fear or to threat or harm the perpetrator, no matter if it is towards an abusive husband, a politician or others. The main issues that the group is focusing on and fighting against is abuse, discrimination and sexual violence (Sen, 2012).
4. METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. Case Selection

In this chapter the research design of this study will be clarified. This includes the use of a case study design and a Most Different Systems Design as well as the selection of cases. Furthermore it will also look at the possibilities to generalize to the bigger population of women’s movements who rationally decide to use violence as a strategy.

4.1.1. Case Study Design

According to Gerring (2006), a case study is an approach to research that “is most usefully defined as an intensive study of a single unit or a small number of units (the cases), for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units (a population of cases)” (p.37). Furthermore, he argues that the case study focuses on one phenomenon, but can be observed over time or at one single occasion, as well as with both qualitative and quantitative methods (p.19-20). Similarly to what Gerring presents, the purpose of this paper is to study a small unit of cases, the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang, to be able to understand a bigger population, which is vigilante women’s movements. The study will look at the strategies of the movements and determine the motivations behind their use of violence to be able to explain why other women’s movements use violence.

Despite the fact that case studies have an advantage in relation to other types of research with an explanatory purpose (Gerring, 2006:39), it has undergone some criticism. The main critic of case studies is that they may have some issues with validity as they, in difference to cross-case studies or larger studies of a quantitative character, only present a small number of cases. It is hence argued that it might be hard to generalize a study that only looks at a very few cases to a bigger population (Gerring, 2006:43). However, the fact that this study only presents two cases, the Suffragettes and Gulabi Gang, is crucial, as it makes it possible to go in depth and find answers that would not be visible in more quantitative studies. The case study is detail oriented and allows us to look at a few samples of cases from different angles to find answers that can be possible to generalize to a larger population (Thomas, 2016:3-4).
Similarly do George & Bennett (2004) argue that with the help of case studies one can use detailed consideration of contextual factors with high explanatory power and assess very complex relationships and interactions that would not have been feasible in more statistical research (p.19-22). In other words, in this study of vigilante women’s movements, the in depth case study of the Suffragettes and the Gulabi Gang will allow us to find the motivations that further can be generalized to other women’s movements’ choices to use violence as a strategy. The use of few cases is hence in this study a strength that is allowing us to find answers overlooked in earlier studies.

4.1.2. Most Different Systems Design

The Most Different Systems Design is a type of case-selective method of comparative character (Gerring, 2006:139-147). The logic behind this method is to look at two or more cases where the dependent variable is the same, but where they differ in regards to other plausible factors. In other words, it is a system of comparison of two cases that are different in all other aspects than the dependent variable (see figure 1). By comparing these two very different cases with each other, one isolates for the main independent variable proving it be the answer to the question of why both of the cases happened to have the same outcome. This further makes it possible to generalize to a wider range of similar cases (ibid). It is however important that the cases are in fact as different as possible, as the research design otherwise loses its explanatory power. Furthermore, the system builds upon falsification rather than verification, something that according to many scholars, including Popper (1959), is crucial for the progress of science (Anckar, 2008:390-391).

*Figure 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable 1</th>
<th>Case 1</th>
<th>Case 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent variable 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent variable 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main independent variable</strong></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most-different logic is useful when the purpose of the study is to either weaken existing theories or to strengthen one’s own theory. In other words, when one wants to highlight what has been missing in previous theory and/or what should be added or changed to increase its explanatory power (Esaiasson et al, 2012:104). This is highly relevant for this paper, as the hypothesis of the study is that the main theories of vigilantism lack aspects important to prove why women’s movements use violence. It is also relevant as the study aims to find what is missing in the theories.

However, the research design has been criticized in previous studies as the research potentially could lose its explanatory power of the phenomenon in question if the outcome does not match the study’s hypothesis (Esaiasson et al, 2012:105-106). This issue will in this study be solved by selecting two cases that are without doubt very different from each other in all regards, but as explained above, have the same outcome of violence. If one does in fact chose two cases that are significantly different, and happen to find the main independent variable as wished, the study will, as argued by Teorell & Svensson (2007), have strong arguments for generalization (p.232).

4.1.3. Definition of the Cases

The two cases that have been selected for this study is the Suffragette movement, active in the early 20th century, and the Gulabi Gang, a group of women that is currently active in the Northern parts of India. There are multiple reasons for why these two groups have been selected. Firstly, because they are cases of vigilante women’s activist groups with the aim to fight patriarchal structures, which is the population this study aims to generalize to. The groups are also selected because they do both fit into the description of vigilante groups written by Johnston (1996), and used along this study. As presented in the description of the cases, the groups are independent from the state, the members of the groups are volunteers, there is some sort of preparatory activity, the groups use or threaten to use violence and they have a clear political goal.

Secondly, the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang are strategically chosen as they match the Most Different Systems Design. In other words, the two cases are as different as
possible, except for the dependent variable, which is the outcome that is both of the groups’ use of violence. The task of this essay is to exploratively search for a shared independent variable that might explain the shared outcome. As shown in figure 2 below, three relevant independent variables that could explain the shared outcome have been tested for. It is however proven that these two cases differ in regards to all three of the tested variables. Further this proves that none of these factors are sufficient enough to explain the outcome of why the groups use violence.

FIGURE 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Suffragettes</th>
<th>The Gulabi Gang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal status of women’s suffrage at the particular time</strong></td>
<td>Not legally equal to men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State involvement in war during the time of the escalation of the strategies</strong></td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographical area of the mobilization of the group</strong></td>
<td>20th century England. Urban areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main independent variable</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent variable</strong></td>
<td>Use of violence as a strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly the legal situation of women in regards to political participation is something that could have affected the groups’ use of vigilante strategies. This could be a reasonable expectation as when a person is not recognized as equal to other people in the same society by the law, the person in question might not feel as obligated to follow other rules and regulations. However, it is here proven that the women’s legal status differs between England and India at the time when the violent strategies commenced. In England, the women’s right to vote was not granted until in 1918, as a result of the Suffragette movement. The right to political participation was something that triggered the movement and at the same time was the end goal of it (Mayhall, 2003:14). However the women did not only not have the right to the political participation obtained by men, they were also by the law characterized as the property of men. Furthermore, all laws regarding marriage, divorce and children were in
favor of men (Winsor, 1914:135-136). In India on the other hand, women were already granted suffrage from the day of the country’s independence in 1947. Thus were women equal to men, by law, when the vigilante group, the Gulabi Gang, was created (Biswas, 2018). In other words it is proven that the legal status of women can not sufficiently explain why the women’s movement decided to use violence.

Secondly, the potential state involvement in war could be something that affects whether an activist group decides to use violence themselves. One could argue that this could be due to the fact that conflicts create an increased uncertainty, a lack of faith in the state or that a state that uses violence will have citizens that are more prone to violence. In other words could one argue that a violent state might normalize the use of violence and hence make activist groups more likely to use the same kind of strategies. However, the Indian state has been involved in an interstate conflict with Pakistan over the status of Kashmir since its independence and still is today (Gelb & Lief Palley, 2009:380-381). England, on the other hand, was not involved in an interstate conflict at the time of the mobilization of the militant Suffragettes. Instead did the Second Boer War end in 1902 and the First World War did not begin until 1914 (BBC, 2014). Therefore can state involvement in war not be seen as the main independent variable as the situation differs between the two cases.

Lastly, the independent variable that explains what kind of area the mobilization of the movement took place in could be crucial for why a movement uses certain strategies. It is firstly important to acknowledge the difference between the two groups geographically. The Suffragettes were active in England and the Gulabi Gang in India, countries that are situated on different continents with populations that are part of different cultures and religions. The mobilization of the two movements did also take place in different epochs, the Suffragettes in the early 20th century, and the Gulabi Gang in the early 21st century and is still active today. Furthermore did the mobilization of the Suffragettes take place in urban areas. It all started in Manchester, but other big cities such as London were crucial for the spread of the movement. It was in fact in big urban factories that women got the chance to exchange thoughts with other women (Collette, 2013:13). In the case of the Gulabi Gang on the other hand, mobilization took place in the rural villages without much contact with bigger cities or decision makers (Richards, 2016:558). Hence does also the geographical factor largely differ
between the two cases, leading to it not being sufficient in explaining why women’s groups decide to use violence.

4.2. Qualitative Text Analysis

The method that will be used in this study is a qualitative text analysis. This method consists of reading and analyzing a range of texts with the purpose of gaining understanding for a specific phenomenon. More precisely does the author formulate critical questions that will be posed to the material as a way to find an answer to the research question (Widén, 2015:177). Different types of material can be used in a text analysis, both texts in printed and electronic form, written by one or many persons and with different purposes (ibid:181).

As explained in the theoretical framework there are two main factors that can motivate activist groups to use violence as a strategy: 1) that the group experiences that the state is inefficient and/or corrupt and 2) that they experience fraternal relative deprivation. In this study these two factors will be operationalized to match what was presented in the theory section. These operationalizations will then be used as the critical questions that will be posed to the chosen material on the two cases; the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang, to analyze whether they have any explanatory power. If the theories fall short on explaining why the women’s groups use violence, as hypothesized, a section will be added with a contribution to the theories. Hence a section explaining what is needed to be added to better explain why women’s group will use violence to fight patriarchal structures.

The material that will be used in this study is mainly research articles and books focusing specifically on the two groups, in other words scientific research papers with either the Suffragette movement or the Gulabi Gang as the main subject. These sources are helpful as they provide a great amount of information on the groups and are made by scholars who have devoted a lot of time to comprehending the complex structures of the two movements. Other sources such as news articles as well as the groups’ own statements and published texts will also be used to the extent they are accessible. The use of this type of material is important for this study as it helps to comprehend the motivations articulated by the groups in question, which is what this study aims to focus on. In the case of the Gulabi Gang is it easy to access
their own website, speeches performed by group members and news article regarding current events. This is due to the fact that they are still active today, in a world where the global flow of information is a fact. Regarding the Suffragettes however it is harder to access these types of sources as they were active around one hundred years ago when the media landscape was significantly different. Therefore the material used to analyze the Suffragettes will solely be second hand sources. On the other hand there is a greater amount of research done on the Suffragettes than on the Gulabi Gang, which is both a cause and a result of the fact that their movement is more globally recognized. To sum up will the parts of the Gulabi Gang be based on both research done on the group as well as more first hand sources, whilst the parts about the Suffragettes will solely be based on printed research material such as articles and books.

4.3. Analytical Framework

This analytical framework is based on the chapter 3.2, *Motivations to Vigilante Actions*. Its’ aim is to explain due to what motivations it is likely that vigilante groups use violence.

*Figure 3.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the group experience high levels of fraternal relative deprivation?</th>
<th>Does the group experience that the state is inefficient and/or corrupt?</th>
<th>Yes:</th>
<th>No:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>Use of violence is likely</td>
<td>Use of violence is <strong>not likely</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No:</td>
<td>Use of violence is <strong>not likely</strong></td>
<td>Use of violence is <strong>not likely</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is therefore expected that activist groups will be motivated to use violence when they experience that the state, of the country in which they are operating, is corrupt and/or inefficient and when they are experiencing high levels of fraternal relative deprivation. It is similarly unlikely that the group will decide to use violence if only one or none of these motivational factors are existent.
4.3.1. Operationalizations

An operationalization is a process that aims to make theoretical concepts measurable. In other words it defines what we mean by a concept and how we aim to measure it in practice (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:39). In this thesis, it is crucial to operationalize the concepts of state inefficiency and/or corruption and fraternal relative deprivation. These operationalizations will then be the critical questions that are posed to the material of this study.

**State Inefficiency and/or Corruption:**
- Were/Are the women able to put forward propositions of change to the government?
- Were/Are women’s issues seen as important issues to work for?
- Was/Is the criminal justice system efficient?

**Low levels of fraternal relative deprivation:**
- Did/Does the group have a reference group to whom they were/are considered to have less opportunities to social and political participation?
- Did/Does the group have a reference group to whom they were/are considered to have less resources?
- Was/Is the particular group protected by the state?

These operationalizations have been made in regards to what is actually being studied here, which is violent women’s movements. Consequently we are only interested in whether the state is efficient in regards to women and gender equality. However it is obvious that the state has more obligations than to work for gender equality, but these are not relevant for this study and will hence not be brought forward. Likewise we are only interested in how relative deprivation may or may not have motivated for violence on a group level, hence a group’s experiences in relation to other groups.
5. ANALYSIS

5.1. State Inefficiency and/or State Corruption

In this section, the main goal is to analyze, with the help of relevant literature, whether state inefficiency and/or corruption can be seen as a motivation for the violent strategies used by firstly the Suffragettes and secondly the Gulabi Gang. The purpose of this, and the next section (5.2), is to see whether the theoretical arguments presented in the theory section hold up to explain why the two women’s movements have used violent strategies.

5.1.1. The Suffragette Movement

The British state and its actions were during the time of the mobilization of the Suffragette movement, and long before it, completely influenced by patriarchal structures existing in the rest of the society. Throughout the work of the Parliament women were often fully excluded. There was usually a specific classification made between those who were empowered to participate in politics and the decision-making process, which were white men, and those who weren’t, which were all women but also all black men. The explicit exclusion of women in the political sphere created a cause and motivation for the feminists to fight harder for gender equality and rights to suffrage (Mayhall, 2003:34). The political elite did however largely fear and reject the idea of letting anyone outside of the elite vote (Mayhall, 2003:31).

The Suffragette movement was initially a branch of the earlier feminist movement that had a history of patiently working for women’s rights, but without any great success. The feminists did however not give up hope and continued their work for a changed legislation, despite the lack of progress (Collette, 2013:9). They performed various attempts to put forward suffrage bills to the Parliament, but none of them ever went through. Their other non-violent petitions, educational work, protests and marches never got a breakthrough either. Hence did the Suffragette movement branch out and became more focused, organized and militant (Collette, 2013:11).
The Suffragette movement did, just like the earlier feminist movement, up until the day when the suffrage was granted to women, numerous attempts to put forward bills with propositions to change the law to the benefit of women. The first suffrage bill that was concerned with women’s parliamentary enfranchisement was introduced to the House of Commons in 1870 by the early feminists and called the Women’s Disabilities Bill. This particular one, along with all others, was however never taken seriously by the Parliament (Mayhall, 2003:36). Nonetheless, in 1910, when the militancy of the Suffragette movement had already commenced, something was finally starting to happen when it comes to an attitude change in the Parliament regarding the question of female suffrage (Collette, 2013:11-14). Women’s suffrage was granted in 1918, however not to every single woman until in 1928 (Mayhall, 2003:14).

One could argue that the state was in fact quite efficient in regards to the possibility for all citizens to put through bills with propositions of change. These bills were scrutinized carefully (Colette, 2013:11). However can the state be argued to have been corrupt, as it was only looking to protect certain groups of society, where women were generally excluded. The Parliament members were mainly focusing on the needs of themselves and other men, excluding the needs of women (Mayhall, 2003:34).

Another way in which the state was corrupt was through its juridical and police system. Around 1000 Suffragettes were, during their time as activists, imprisoned as a result of their vigilante strategies. Those who were imprisoned before the suffrage was granted continued their fight in prison and ended up creating valuable networks with other prisoners. What is problematic however is that the violence that the Suffragettes got to encounter by policemen and others was not punished, proving the system to once again be corrupt (Purvis, 1995:91).

To conclude, the main issue with the British state, during the time when the Suffragettes were active, was not necessarily its inefficiency, but the fact that it was biased towards certain groups in societies whereas other groups, such as women, were excluded. This exclusion is something that came to motivate an increased mobilization and radicalization of the marginalized women in the fight for gender equality.
5.1.2. The Gulabi Gang

The Gulabi Gang focuses primarily on bringing justices to women who are victims of abusive men (Sen, 2012). Furthermore, the gang has carried out acts of shaming officials or beating them up with whatever weapon that is available such as sticks, axes and cricket bats. They have also forced police officers to register domestic violence issues by slapping them and forcing those accountable to build new roads by physically dragging them to the dust track in question (White & Rastogi, 2009:313). Even if the gang started out by fighting local concerns of dowry demands, marital violence and abusive in-laws on a grass-root level, the gang has with its growth in members started to address issues such as land disputes and helping women to gain access to education (Sen, 2012).

The issues that the gang is focusing on are primarily those that are neglected by the police and local decision-makers, usually due to their great controversy, such as abuse and discrimination of women or sexual violence. Despite the fact that the women put forward suggestions to make a difference for women, the politicians are nonchalant to the fact that these issues are worth focusing on (Sen, 2012). Even if the women often do put forward complains to the police, they are generally not taken seriously (Miller, 2013:65).

The fact that the decision-makers do not take the Gulabi Gang’s demands seriously has most certainly affected what strategies they have decided to use. The gang will use democratic strategies to reach their goals as much as possible, but have acknowledged that this would not get them far enough. According to Chamania, one of the gang’s members: “First we go to the police and beg them to do something. But the administration won’t listen to poor people, so we end up taking matters into our own hands.” (Sen, 2012).

In other words, the work of the Gulabi Gang is related to the outspread corruption in their society and is a counter reaction to the experienced neglect of women’s issues on the political agenda. Uttar Pradesh, where the group is active, is not only argued to be the most unsafe state in India for women (Desai, 2014), it is also the most populated and impoverished (Arora, 2017:2351-2354). It is hence possible to conclude that the Gulabi Gang does not
think that the state is carrying through with its promise to protect it citizens and therefore take it in their own hands to change that.

It is further argued that the criminal judicial system in Uttar Pradesh is corrupt, leading to an increased distrust by the members of the Gulabi Gang. The leader of the gang and up to 40 other members have all been charged with offences such as “unlawful assembly, disturbing the peace by inciting a crowd to commit a crime, causing a riot, deliberately causing hurt, assaulting with a weapon, defamation, insulting and deterring a public servant from discharging his duty” (Miller, 2013:39). Paradoxically, are men who are guilty of committing acts of violence against women rarely punished (ibid).

5.2. Fraternal Relative Deprivation

Applying the same structure as the previous section, this part will analyze whether the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang experience(d) fraternal relative deprivation, something that according to the theoretical framework could explain an activists group’s strategic choice of violence tactics.

5.2.1. The Suffragette Movement

The British women have throughout time, and not differently in the times of the emergence of the militant Suffragette movement, been marginalized by British men. However in the early 19th century, Great Britain saw, as a result of the emergence of women demanding equality, a further increase in its masculine institutions to keep women aspiring more equal rights in their place (Holton & Purvis, 1999:37-38). It was widely recognized that women were less intellectual and rational than men, something that was the main argument for the denial of female suffrage. Men were certain that women were not capable of entering the public sphere of politics, as they were naturally made for taking care of the domestic sphere (ibid:34-35).

It is very easy to argue that the men in the society that the Suffragettes lived in were seen as superior to the women and that the women experienced a fraternal relative deprivation as a result of this. The right to vote, that the Suffragettes worked hard to get, was obtained by
white men. The Suffragettes felt as if they were citizens that contributed to the country, even more so after increasingly entering the workforce, equal to men, but were still deprived from a basic human right, which was the right to vote. When the discussion on whether also black men, another marginalized group in relation to white men, should be granted the vote, was brought up, the Suffragettes saw it as a great timing to increase their actions. Furthermore did the Suffragettes recognize that the denial of the vote was due to a group discrimination of women as a whole and not individual failures (Worell, 2001:821). In other words the women were victims, held back by rules and laws created by men, for men, with no regards to women's needs or demands. This explains that the state did not see women as a group that was to be taken seriously, but did however paradoxically fear what would happen if the women would in fact obtain the vote and the political enlightenment that it could bring with it (Holton & Purvis, 1999:37).

The women were also deprived in relation to men regarding what resources they had. Women had a major disadvantage when it came to for example literacy and economic opportunities, making it harder for them to mobilize against these patriarchal structures. Men were the once in power, making it hard for the Suffragettes to influence the politics through democratic means. Neither were they taken seriously, nor had the economic opportunities to mobilize in other ways. This was despite the fact that women had started to enter the workforce, as they were still seen as primarily mothers or wives and hence not players on the political arena (Holton & Purvis, 1999:37-38).

5.2.2. The Gulabi Gang

According to Shrivastava & Tanchangya (2015) women have always had an inferior status to men, in India and around the world. No matter at what stage a women is in her life, she will always have a man superior to her no matter if it is her father, husband or son. Women have historically been deprived from basic rights such as education, appropriate nourishment, health care, political participation and to own property (p.182). Furthermore women are oppressed due to patriarchal structures in the Indian society such as a deeply rooted son preference and hence killings of newborn girls, girls being married away at a young age against their will, killings of wives to make it possible for husbands to remarry and collect a
new dowry as well as women being victims of domestic and sexual violence (Myers, 2012:2-3; Sen, 2012). The subordination of women and the gender inequality in the Indian society is still today one of the biggest social issues (Drèze & Sen, 2010:38-39).

It can be concluded from the above-mentioned facts that there is a wide gap between men and women in the context where Gulabi Gang is active. The men in Uttar Pradesh can therefore be viewed as the reference group to whom the Gulabi Gang compare themselves with and at the same time are marginalized to. In difference to men in their society, they lack the opportunity to social and political participation, something that leads them to experience a fraternal relative deprivation.

Furthermore, it is clear that the members of the Gulabi Gang have limited resources and in general is a group of economically poor women. In difference to other groups in their society, they have more limited opportunities to organize and mobilize under more democratic forms that demand more from the members. This is usually due to their low levels of literacy and political experience. Violence is one of the simplest methods and something that is available for all, as well as for the Gulabi Gang that is marginalized in relation to other groups in society (Miller, 2013:92-93).

It is also clear that women’s issues are not a state priority. As explained above, women are less likely to obtain state resources such as appropriate health care, education etc. This is another aspect proving the fraternal relative deprivation experienced by the Gulabi Gang, leading them to use violence as their strategic choice. In other words, the state does not look out for the group of women equally to men. This leads to their increased feeling of marginalization in relation to the other, less marginalized, group.

5.3. Evaluation of the Explanatory Power of the Theory

It can be concluded from the above that both state inefficiency and/or corruption and fraternal relative deprivation are two motivations that could explain why the Suffragette movement and the Gulabi Gang decided to use violence as a strategy to fight patriarchal structures. This in line with the theoretical framework presented earlier in this study. These two work as
necessary factors, in line with Douglas Dion’s work (1998), meaning that they, X, are necessary factors for the outcome of violence as a strategy, Y, to happen. In other words, the vigilante actions of the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragettes would probably not have happened if the British and the Indian state would not have been, according to the groups, corrupt or/and inefficient and if the groups were not relatively deprived. However, it does not mean that activist groups that have low faith in their state and experience fraternal relative deprivation will doubtlessly use violence as a strategy.

As hypothesized, these two factors are however not enough to explain the motivations to why women’s movements use violence as a strategy. This is due to the fact that the majority of women’s groups fighting for gender equality are not in fact using violence as a strategy, despite the fact that these two motivations, state inefficiency and/or corruption as well as the experience of fraternal relative deprivation, are present. Furthermore, this study will argue that the theories fails to acknowledge very important aspects and motivations specific to women’s movements that could increase one’s understanding of the groups’ strategic choice. The theories of vigilantism are very general and lack a gendered analysis. In other words do they fail to recognize how the patriarchal structures in our society can change the motivations for why women uses violence.

5.4. What is being missed?

Both historically and in today’s society there are clear gendered norms explaining how women and men should behave (York, 1999). Women are generally expected to be pacifists and caring, hence opponents to violence. Men, on the other hand, are often seen as the opposite, as aggressive and advocates of violence. In line with these ideas is it clear that the female characteristics do not coincide with what is expected to correspond with social change, but particularly not with the use of violent strategies to achieve social change (Billington, 1982:670).

In the case of the Suffragettes, one can see that more nonviolent, pacifist and feminine strategies were used by the feminist movements prior to the more radical Suffragette movement. However did these strategies not lead to any breakthrough in the fight for
women’s suffrage. Therefore the Suffragettes saw no other way but to adapt more aggressive forms of militancy to achieve their goals (Purvis, 1995:93). Similarly in the case of the Gulabi Gang the women were sick of the fact that their priority issues were not being put on the political agenda and that no one took them seriously. Just like the case of the Suffragettes this lead them to organize as a vigilante activist group with what is considered as more masculine strategies (Miller, 2013:90-91).

Accordingly to Richards (2016) violence can have “the potential to open new spaces for political engagement, create new vocabularies and disrupt institutions and norms that silence marginalized populations.” (p.571-572). Furthermore, violence have the capacity to both maintain and reposition gender relations. Hence violence against women is something that can persist the marginalization of women. On the other hand can the use of violence also challenge the gender norms (Richards, 2016:271-272). This is something that Richards specifically has applied to the case of the Gulabi Gang. Further has this study shown that these arguments also can be applied to the Suffragettes. This explanation demonstrates that the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragettes motivated their use of violent strategies by the fact that they were only to be taken seriously when using what is generally seen as masculine strategies. As women that use violence are in fact transgressing the gendered norms attributed to women, the groups use of violence can be seen as a shock in society. As argued by Jasper (2002), one very important moment is “when strategic players manage to break with expectations and make another choice, taking their opponents by surprise. This is how structures change, after all.” (p.7).

In line with the above mentioned, this study argues that the strategic choice of violence by the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragettes could have been motivated by the fact that they have stepped outside of their traditional roles to contest them and create change. This is proven by the fact that the Suffragettes constructed a masculine political culture as they understood that this was the only way for them to be recognized and respected (Holton & Purvis, 1999:37). Similarly the Gulabi Gang decided to take policemen, politicians, abusive husbands etc. with surprise with their masculine strategies to obtain agency (Miller, 2013:66-67). This further shows the existence of what this research will call the surprise factor. Hence that unexpected
actions by groups create a shock and will then attract attention by the public as well as the decision-makers.

The two groups have, as a result of their vigilante actions, received a great deal of media attention. Despite the fact that the Gulabi Gang in first hand uses democratic means to achieve their goals, the fact that they are not afraid to use physical confrontation or to publicly shame oppressors is what has given them a lot of attention in the media around the world. This has hence increased the knowledge of and the attention given to women’s situation in India globally (Richards, 2016:559). Similarly the Suffragette movement did get a lot of media attention due to their non-conventional strategies. In difference to the Gulabi Gang however, the group mostly experienced negative comments and critic for their use of tactics. On the other hand, despite the fact that the group was put in a rather bad light by the big newspapers, it increased the attention drawn to the question of suffrage. Further it allowed the Suffragettes themselves to start a newspaper called “Votes for Women” that in addition became a platform to gain attention (Mercer, 2004:189).

6. RESULTS

In this section the analysis made above will be summarized and categorized into a framework to make the result evident.

*Figure 4.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Suffragettes</th>
<th>The Gulabi Gang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Inefficiency and/or Corruption</strong></td>
<td>Yes, they had the opportunity to put forward bills to the Parliament that were reviewed, but were however never taken seriously enough.</td>
<td>No, propositions put forward by the Gulabi Gang are rarely taken into account by the police or decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Were/Are the women able to put forward propositions of change to the government?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Were/Are women’s issues seen as important issues to work for?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women's Suffrage</th>
<th>Women's Issues</th>
<th>Decision-Makers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, women’s suffrage was not seen as an important issue by decision-makers.</td>
<td>No, women’s issues such as discrimination and sexual violence are largely neglected by decision-makers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Was/Is the criminal justice system efficient?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal Justice System</th>
<th>Criminal Justice System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, instead it was rather a corrupt justice system as Suffragettes were imprisoned for fighting for their rights but the violence encountered by the Suffragettes was never punished.</td>
<td>No, instead it was rather a corrupt justice system as the Gulabi Gang members are punished for their actions, but men that commit crimes such as rapes, domestic violence etc. are rarely punished.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fraternal Relative Deprivation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Group</th>
<th>Opportunity to Social and Political Participation</th>
<th>Economic Resources</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, men in their society had the right to vote and more opportunities both politically and socially than women.</td>
<td>Yes, men have better opportunities to social and political participation.</td>
<td>Yes, men had better economic resources, higher levels of literacy etc.</td>
<td>Yes, men have better economic resources, higher levels of literacy etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Did/Does the group have a reference group to whom they were/are considered to have less opportunities to social and political participation?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Group</th>
<th>Opportunity to Social and Political Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, not in the same way as men in their society as they were seen as different legally.</td>
<td>No, women are not looked after by the state in the same way as men are in regards to accessing education, health care etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is shown from this framework that the theory of why the groups use violence actually matches well with the two cases of this study. It is however also found that this theory not sufficiently explains why women’s movements in particular uses violence as a strategy as the majority of movements in fact does not use violence as a strategy even if they experience these two factors as motivations. Instead this study argues that the main and strongest motivation for why the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragettes used/uses violence is something that one could call the “surprise factor”. This means that the few groups of women that use
violence create a disturbance in the societal structures as a result of women generally being unexpected to use such strategies. This further creates a shock for the general public, the media and the decision-makers. This shock can then as a consequence establish opportunities for the group to get attention and support for their cause. This is due to the fact that shock, according to Jasper (2012) creates societal change.

7. CONCLUSION

This thesis had the intention to challenge the way in which the relation between women and violence is presented in the literature. Firstly, to acknowledge the fact that women not only are victims of violence and secondly, to challenge the idea of women solely as pacifists and hence not contributors to violent actions. These ideas are important as they can strengthen the value of female agency and better explain the reality where women not only are passive, but also active players on the political arena.

This study has done just this by analyzing two vigilante women’s movements, the Gulabi Gang and the Suffragette movement, with the purpose to find the main motivation for why these groups have used violence as strategies to reach their goal of female empowerment and gender equality. This has been done to be able to generalize to other violent women’s movements. The main focus has been to test the main exciting theories of vigilantism, explaining that violent actions by social movements will occur when the groups in question experience that their state is inefficient and/or corrupt as well as experiencing fraternal relative deprivation. This study has firstly confirmed that these two factors are in fact necessary for women’s movements to use violence. It has however also proven that these not are sufficient factors. In other words, the existence of these factors will not unconditionally lead to women’s movements using violence.

This study has argued that these two factors however fail to adequately explain why women’s movements use violence. This is due to that we know for a fact that not all women’s movements that experience that they live in a corrupt/inefficient state and experience relative deprivation will use violence. Moreover it has also discussed in what ways the use of
violence differs between women’s groups and men’s groups and hence added a layer of gender analysis to the existing theories. With this in mind this study has contributed with what is argued to be the main independent variable for the motivation of violent strategies for women’s movements. It is important to acknowledge that this factor is, in line with the earlier theoretical contributions, a necessary and not a sufficient factor. The main independent factor is that the primary motivation for women’s movements to use violence is that it is seen as an effective tool to shock, both the decision makers and the greater public, as well as to increase the amount of attention drawn to their case. This is due to the fact that they challenge the idea of female pacifism and appropriate what is seen as male behaviour to obtain the amount of respect usually not obtained by women. In other words, the violent actions by women are motivated by the fact that because violence is so ‘unexpected’, it will be more efficient to draw attention. As this has been proven to be true for both the Suffragettes and the Gulabi Gang, that are two most different cases of this study, it is very likely that it will further also explain other female vigilante group’s strategic choices.

8. REFERENCES


