LESSONS FROM P/CVE RESEARCH

INNOVATIVE METHODS, CHALLENGES, AND GOOD PRACTICES

FARANGIZ ATAMURADOVA, STUART MACDONALD & RICHARD BURCHILL | EDITORS

LESSONS FROM P/CVE RESEARCH

INNOVATIVE METHODS, CHALLENGES, AND GOOD PRACTICES

FARANGIZ ATAMURADOVA, STUART MACDONALD & RICHARD BURCHILL
EDITORS

Cover design and publication layout by Iman Badwan.
Cover image © Hedayah stock photos.

ABOUT HEDAYAH

Hedayah was created in response to the growing desire from members of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and the wider international community for the establishment of an independent, multilateral center devoted to dialogue and communications, capacity building programs, research and analysis to counter violent extremism in all of its forms and manifestations. During the ministerial-level launch of the GCTF in New York in September 2011, the U.A.E. offered to serve as the host of the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism. In December 2012 Hedayah was inaugurated with its headquarters in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. Hedayah aims to be the premier international center for expertise and experience to counter violent extremism by promoting understanding and sharing of good practice to effectively serve as the true global center to counter violent extremism.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Farangiz Atamuradova is a Research Associate at the Department of Research and Analysis, Hedayah. Farangiz joined Hedayah in February 2018. At Hedayah, Farangiz co-manages MASAR, an App for Monitoring, Measurement, and Evaluation for P/CVE projects, the Counter Extremism Hub, and the Radical Right Counter Narrative Collection, which is led by the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right. Prior to Hedayah, Farangiz worked at Delma Institute as a political analyst covering various regional issues. Her internship experiences include the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Royal United Services Institute. Farangiz holds a Master of Letters in Terrorism Studies from the University of St. Andrews and a Bachelor of Arts in Politics with International Studies from the University of Warwick.

Stuart Macdonald is Professor of Law at Swansea University. He completed his BA at the University of Cambridge (2000) and his PhD at the University of Southampton (2005). His research interests lie in criminal law and counterterrorism, particularly cyberterrorism and terrorists' use of the internet. He is Co-Director of Swansea University's EPSRC-funded £7.6m CHERISH Digital Economy Centre and Director of the University's multidisciplinary cyberterrorism research project. To date the Cyberterrorism Project has conducted a survey of the global research community, compiled a database of definitions of cyberterrorism, conducted a study of online terrorist magazines, compiled a database of news stories on cyberterrorism, hosted numerous events including a NATO Advanced Research Workshop and an international conference on terrorism and social media, and published four edited collections, six policy reports and numerous journal articles and book chapters (see further www.cyberterrorism-project.org). In 2016/17 he was the holder of a Fulbright Cyber Security Award.

Richard Burchill is the Director of Research and Engagement for TRENDS Research & Advisory, Abu Dhabi, UAE. Previously he was Director of the McCoubrey Centre for International Law at the University of Hull, UK. He has advised, researched and taught on a wide range of issues in global governance and security.

CONTENTS

Introduction 8
Farangiz Atamuradova & Stuart Macdonald

1 A Linkage Based Approach to Combating Islamist Propaganda 20
Joe Whittaker & Lilah Elsayed

2 East Africa: Narratives of Extremism or Histories of Conflict?" 43
Peter Bofin & William Walwa

3 Mapping the Landscape of Right-Wing Extremism in Australia 63
Sofia Patel

4 How Gender Matters in Violent Extremism & Efforts to Counter It 95
Elizabeth Pearson

5 Searching for Answers: Understanding the Role of Search in Providing Access to Extremist Content 117
Mubaraz Ahmed

6 Ethical Dilemmas for Research in Extremism and Radicalisation Using Internet-Generated Data 135
Jessie Hronesova

7 Through Redistribution, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation in Education System Towards Building Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Republic of North Macedonia 151
Marija Risteska

8 In Pursuit of a Degree; Being Pursued by Terrorists: Undergraduate Radicalization in Selected Countries in Southeast Asia 183
Thomas Samuel

9 Creating "Safe" Spaces for Dialogue and Discussion: The Impact of a Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education (PVE-E) Intervention in Uganda 207
Sara Zeiger

INTRODUCTION

Farangiz Atamuradova & Stuart Macdonald

Violent extremism is a transnational threat that has affected in one form or another every society and nation around the world. Its adaptive nature allows it to alter ways it manifests itself and adjust and employ effective and innovative techniques of recruitment and attacks. Despite the territorial defeat of Daesh in Syria and Iraq, the issue of violent extremism - in its many forms and ideological manifestation- has proved to be resilient to solely military actions. To this end, governments, security actors, and other key community members require evidence-based and up-to-date research to respond to the ever-evolving threat and take informed decisions on countering violent extremism.

It is therefore key to provide a neutral platform that allows researchers, policy makers, and practitioners to discuss shared challenges, good practices, and lessons learned and to approach the topic with an interdisciplinary lens. In response to the above challenges and needs, Hedayah, University of Swansea, TRENDS Research & Advisory, UN Women, and M&C Saatchi hosted the fifth "**International Countering Violent Extremism Research Conference**" in Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom from 29th August to 31st August, 2018. The conference was sponsored by the Government of Spain, Government of Turkey, and the European Union - STRIVE Global Program (Hedayah). Strategic partners included Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Aktis Strategy, BRICS, Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding (CCCPA), the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR), RESOLVE Network, and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

The fifth annual International Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Research Conference[1] aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Enhance and broaden the existing network of P/CVE researchers and policy-makers and encourage them to share their most current research and best practices;
- Identify and present narratives and counter-narratives of violent extremist groups, as well as assess ways these narratives are being disseminated;
- Provide researchers and practitioners a neutral platform to exchange ideas, jointly identify trends and needs for on-the-ground implementation, prepare the ground for further research, and collaborate with each other on emerging areas of work;
- Explore ways to turn theoretical knowledge and evidence-based research on P/CVE into coherent and practical implementation systems and policies;
- Convene an international audience of a diverse disciplinary background.

The essays contained in this edited volume reflect the presentations given by speakers of the International CVE Research Conference 2018. The Conference covered a number of other topics, presenting findings from a variety of geographical contexts, and giving practical recommendations for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers. However, the essays contributed to this volume do not cover all the findings presented at the conference and do not represent the terminology and views held by the editors or the hosting organizations.

Trends in CVE Research

Since the previous CVE Conference, there have been a number of trends and topics of significance that were chosen to be highlighted by the presentations and subsequent essays. First, one of the main tools employed by violent extremist groups are narratives that are tailored to increase support in their causes, whether ideological or physical. The messages that extremists pass on through their narratives combine local grievances with political, ideological, social or logical arguments (named "existing arguments" in the context of this Conference) that ultimately attract individuals to follow these groups. The

[1] The three-day event had two main deliverables, the edited volume and a brief of all policy, research and programming recommendations. The latter is attached as an annex to this volume.

"existing arguments" can refer to distorted interpretation of religious scripture and texts or incidents that help extremists establish their legitimacy in the eyes of their followers. As a counter action, governments and other CVE actors are actively seeking to develop counter-narratives, alternative narratives, or messages that would weaken violent extremists' activities. Similarly to violent extremism groups, CVE actors tailor their narratives and messages to ensure that it reaches the 'right' audience, often through choosing the most appropriate messengers. The hope is that if these narratives are successful in delivering the message, then the population that is also being targeted by violent extremist messages will grow resilient against these groups, because they will be aware of the implications of joining violent extremist groups and their intentions. Efforts to measure the effectiveness and impact of narratives continues to be part of a wider debate among CVE actors. (Rosand & Winterbotham, 2019)

Careful analysis of networks and tactics of violent extremist groups have also demonstrated that different strategies for recruitment are applied based on gender. Similarly, men and women are often assigned different roles within these groups.(Fink, Zeiger, & Bhulai, 2016) Exploring gender dynamics and highlighting the importance of masculinity and femininity within the day-to-day operations of violent extremist groups has the potential of aiding CVE practitioners to better tailor efforts to counter radicalization and recruitment. In response, a number of UN resolution were adopted, researches conducted and papers published on the role women could play in the various CVE efforts-often emphasizing on their role as mothers. Critics of past work on gender and CVE have questioned underlying assumptions that reinforce stereotypical constructs of gender roles.(Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017) For example, in some of the earlier conceptions of the role of women in violent extremism and terrorism, women were seen as passive actors or victims. Moreover, in CVE programs and policies, there was an emphasis on using women's empowerment programs to help them become more active and informed members of their societies, and therefore active in CVE efforts. However, later conceptualizations of the role of women in both VE and CVE have become more nuanced—and these nuanced roles were explored in detail during the Conference and the essays in this volume. However, there remain to be a number of questions on the topic of gender and violent extremism that practitioners, policy makers, and researchers continue to explore.

As mentioned earlier, violent extremist groups have proved to be highly adaptable; they leverage new technologies and innovative methods of communication for their own benefit, whether it is for a more effective outreach, recruitment or communications with existing supporters. From posting content on websites and social media platforms to utilizing encrypted messaging platforms, violent extremist groups have infested new media and technology with their presence. As a response, CVE actors have called for relevant organizations and companies to counter the violent extremists activities on their platforms. The Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism was formed by Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube "to curb the spread of terrorist content online."("Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism," n.d.) Through such initiatives, existing and new technology companies seek to develop required mechanisms to prevent violent extremist groups from "exploiting [these] platforms." (Ibid) On the other hand, CVE actors also carefully analyze groups' tactics in their use of these platforms, contributing to their overall study and understanding of their operation. With an ever-changing scene in the field of innovative technologies, violent extremist groups and CVE actors are in a race to secure their presence.

Finally, one of the identified ways to build a resilient community, raise awareness, and mitigate development of grievances related to violent extremism is through formal and informal education. Access to quality education may potentially serve the over-arching goal of preventing violent extremism—but alone it is not enough. Education that builds resilience is one that equips teachers, parents, and pupils with necessary skills to identify drivers of violent extremism and take required action to prevent it from spreading. A number of worldwide initiatives have been take to this end. For instance, one of UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education (GCED) themes is "preventing violent extremism through education" which seeks to "[strengthen] the capacities of national education systems... to appropriately and effectively contribute to national prevention efforts."("Preventing violent extremism through education," n.d.) A well structured, informed, and all-inclusive framework and strategies will allow education sector to build a strong foundation for more targeted CVE initiatives. As the role of education in preventing violent extremism gains momentum, there is a need for practitioners, policy makers, and researchers share lessons learned and challenges across in the practice of PVE and education. (*Education for Preventing Violent Extremism (EPVE)*, n.d.)

Essays

Following the trends in CVE research, the essays in this volume are presented in the same logical order and grouped by the following themes: narratives and counter-narratives; role of women and gender; use to technology and Internet; and role of education.

Narratives and Counter-narratives

Joe Whittaker and Lilah Elsayed focused their essay on Ingram's work "A Linkage Based Approach to Combating Islamist Propaganda" (2016), unpacking the framework and drawing applicable and practical examples for developers of campaigns and counter narratives. Drawing on Ingram's "Linkage-Base Approach", the authors pin point the recommendation Ingram makes for campaigners on clearly identifying the target audience, strategically finding a balance between creating an offensive and defensive campaign, and ensuring that campaigns are followed by promised action, otherwise they lose value. Finally, Whittaker and Elsayed applied Ingram's framework to analyze P/CVE strategic communications using a selection of counter narrative campaigns from Hedayah's Counter Narrative Library. Their findings produced interesting insights that can be notes for any future campaign development of evaluation.

In the essay "East Africa: Narratives of Extremism or Histories of Conflict?" Peter Bofin and William Walwa argue that to analyze the emergence of violent extremism and the narratives used in one country or region, one needs to assess and contextualize it politically, historically, and socially. The case the authors use in their essay is Tanzania. Through their study, they attempted to assess and analyze the threat violent extremism poses in Tanzania and how people perceive it. One of the points highlighted in the essay is how Tanzanians' see Somalia as an epicentre of violent extremist threat to the country and to the region as a whole. The authors then go on to argue that to understand this perception, one has to look at the issue through an interdisciplinary lens and draw back to the colonial times and dynamics in the region, whether between states, people, or with religion. Such analysis in return also helps understand how certain CVE programs are developed for the region and what implications it may have if context is not taken into consideration.

The essay by Sofia Patel focuses on groups and individuals across the Australian extreme right. It explains that, as in Europe and North America, there has been a rise in right wing extremism in Australia in recent years. The essay identifies some of the principal features of Australia's extreme right, including racism, nationalism, anti-immigration and, more specifically, a strong focus on the perceived threat posed by Muslims and the influence of Islamic culture on Australian society. At the same time, the essay emphasizes the important differences between, and nuances of, different extreme right groups. One manifestation of these differences is their varied communication strategies. Whilst some groups employ overtly fascist rhetoric, others adopt more toned-down messages in order to penetrate mainstream audiences. The essay utilizes two case studies to illustrate these points.

Role of Women and Gender

In her essay, Elizabeth Pearson draws on upon how the subject of gender has been lately internalized and leveraged by number of larger CVE programs, drawing on the assumption that women, with their motherly nature, are also more likely to identify early signs of radicalization within their families (especially children) and act as positive agents of change. Furthermore, it has been more often Muslim women who are targeted by these programs. One way CVE actors attempt to involve these women is through empowerment, which in return securitizes it. What is often overlooked, Pearson argues, is the active and/or passive (yet important) role women play in violent extremism and in the process of radicalization.

Use of Technology and Internet

In essay "Searching for Answers: Understanding the Role of Search in Providing Access to Extremist Content", Mubaraz Ahmed of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change presents findings from a study of the role played by search engines in facilitating access to extremist online content. Drawing on his finding that it is search engine results, not social media, that are responsible for the majority of traffic to many of the most prominent Islamic websites, Ahmed explains that this is an important, yet relatively under-researched, area. He discusses the results of three Google searches – for 'Islam and apostasy', 'Khilafah' and 'Anwar al-Awlaki' – and highlights the prominence and ready availability of extremist materials, including the way in which Google's suggested search function can lead users towards extremist content. The essay also highlights how Google trends analysis can be used to identify the concerns and challenges individual users are experiencing, suggesting that these insights should be utilized by researchers, policymakers, and civil society organizations.

The essay by Jessie Hronesova focuses on the ethics of internet-mediated terrorism research. Recent events such as the Cambridge Analytica data scandal and the coming into force of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation have generated significant interest in the collection and use of online data. Hronesova's chapter accordingly examines three sets of issues. First, she discusses the fundamental ethical imperative do no harm, identifying a number of potential harms to both research participants/subjects (including wrongly stigmatizing them) and researchers themselves (who leave a digital footprint and so could be targeted). Second, she examines privacy concerns and the extent to which these are addressed by the anonymisation of data. Third, she considers how the concept of informed consent applies in the online space and evaluates more covert practices such as 'lurking'. The essay concludes by calling for further discussion of these ethical issues in order to develop clearer research guidelines.

Role of Education

Marija Risteska's essay on North Macedonia's 2018 CVE strategy which highlighting the role of education as a tool to counter and prevent violent extremism. This essay uses the sustainable approach to peacebuilding through education systems and programs that were developed by Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith (2017) to assesses North Macedonia's education system preparedness to act promptly in countering radicalization that may lead to violent extremism. Using primary and secondary sources data, the essay explores how the education system of North Macedonia delivers the four interconnected dimensions: redistribution, recognition, representation, and reconciliation, in order to prevent radicalization and provides practical recommendations for policy makers, front-line education workers and municipal officials to consider.

The focus of Thomas Samuel's essay "In Pursuit of a Degree; Being Pursued by Terrorists: Undergraduate Radicalization in Selected Countries in Southeast Asia" looks at the perception of violent extremism and CVE efforts in universities in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. More specifically, the essay explores what sources of information undergraduates used to research the subject of terrorism and counter terrorism, what sort of dynamics were present in their use of media and internet for this purpose, and what views they held in regards to alternatives for violent extremism. Among his numerous recommendations, Samuel calls for inclusion of undergraduate students as actors and partners in CVE efforts, rather than simply consumers of it. Not only will they be able to actively prevent violent extremist recruitment within universities, but also give a voice and add a perspective to global CVE initiatives.

Sara Zeiger's essay is based on a selective evaluation of a capacity-building program that was conducted in Uganda in 2018 by Hedayah and UNESCO's International Institute for Capcity-Building in Africa (IICBA). As part of the program, teacher-trainers (tutors) were invited to attend a workshop where participants were trained on how to prevent violent extremism through education in their local context. To best achieve the aim of the program, the workshop provided teacher-trainers a number of approaches that could be used for the purpose of PVE. One of the approaches Zeiger evaluated in her essay is "Creating safe spaces for classroom dialogue about challenging topics, including violent extremism." The evaluation was based on the pre- and post-test, testimonies, personal experience, and anecdotal evidence implementers of the program gathered during the workshop.

REFERENCES

Chowdhury Fink, N., Zeiger, S., & Bhulai, R. (Eds.). (2016). *A Man's World: Exploring the Roles of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.* Retrieved from https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/AMansWorld_FULL.pdf

Education for Preventing Violent Extremism (EPVE). (n.d.). Club de Madrid.

Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism. (n.d.). Retrieved August 1, 2019, from https://www.gifct.org/

Ingram, H. (2016a). "A "Linkage- Based" Approach to Combating Militant Islamist Propaganda: A Two-Tiered Framework for Practitioners," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, (November). doi: 10.19165/2016.2.06.

Novelli, M., Lopez Cardozo, M. T., & Smith, A. (2017). "The 4RS Framework: Analyzing Education's Contribution to Sustainable Peacebuilding with Social Justice in Conflict-Affected Contexts." *Journal on Education in Emergencies, 3*(1), 14-43.

Pearson, E., & Winterbotham, E. (2017). "Women, Gender and Daesh Radicalisation: A Milieu Approach." *The RUSI Journal, 162*(3), 60–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2017.1353251

Preventing violent extremism through education. (n.d.). Retrieved August 6, 2019, from UNESCO website: https://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism/education

Rosand, E., & Winterbotham, E. (2019, March 20). "Do counter-narratives actually reduce violent extremism?:" *Brookings.* Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/03/20/do-counter-narratives-actually-reduce-violent-extremism/

"Findings suggest there is to be a noteworthy relationship between the intended audience and whether the message employed positive or negative tactics. The sample is heavily weighted towards the "less extreme" end of the spectrum, with 100% of messages being aimed at antis , 85.8% aimed at curious, 46.7% aimed at engaged, 12.2% at tacit supporters, and 0.5% at active supporters."

1 A LINKAGE-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR P/CVE

Joe Whittaker & Lilah Elsayed

Introduction

In the last decade, strategic communications have become a pervasive part of the battle to prevent and counter violent extremism (CVE). They were designated as a vital part of CVE in UN Security Council Resolution 2354, which includes a framework for member states to "counter" terrorists' narratives (UN, 2017). Despite being at the forefront of policymaking, there is a sizable knowledge gap regarding the effectiveness of strategic communication (Briggs & Feve, 2013; Ferguson, 2016; Hemmingsen & Castro, 2017). This research makes a contribution to the nascent field of CVE strategic communications by adapting the framework offered by Ingram in *A Linkage Based Approach to Combatting Militant Islamist Propaganda* (2016a) into a number of coding variables, which are tested using quantitative measures against a corpus of messages. The research also offers a number of interpretations for these results. Finally, it suggests ways in which these variables can be of use to campaign creators as part of monitoring, measurement, and evaluation to test the effectiveness of future campaigns.

Ingram's Linkage-Based Approach to C/PVE

Competitive System of Meaning

Ingram's linkage-based approach is drawn from what he calls the "competitive system of meaning" that is perpetuated in violent extremist propaganda. The system creates or exacerbates existing in-group and out-group dynamics, em-

phasising an identity crisis that is created within the former and which is caused by the latter. In turn, only the violent extremist organisation can solve this crisis (Ingram, 2016b). One contemporary example of this is the Islamist narrative, perpetuated by violent extremist groups such as Daesh and al-Qaeda, is that the West is at war with the *Ummah*, creating an obligation for "true" Muslims to fight. This exacerbates the uncertainty that is often prevalent in the target audience, for which there is a growing base of literature linking to extremism (Pruyt & Kwakkel, 2014; Esses et al., 2013; Hogg et al., 2013; Hogg & Adelman, 2013; Federico et al., 2013; Mcgregor et al., 2013). This, in turn, is intensified by the extremist narrative which provides certainty to the constructed in-group identity (Ingram, 2016d). These factors form a vicious cycle:

> The more that dichotomised in- and out-group dynamics are respectively imbued with positive and negative values so perceptions of crisis will become increasingly acute and the urgency of implementing solutions more desperate. In turn, as increased perceptions of Other-induced crises fuel the need for in-group generated solutions, the bi-polarity between in- and out-groups becomes starker (ibid, p.14).

This cycle strengthens the system of meaning, as can be seen in Figure 1. The three important types of violent extremist narrative that cause this are: value-, dichotomy- and crisis-reinforcing (Ingram, 2016b). The in-group are viewed as morally superior, and a zero-sum game is propagated, and those who do not support the in-group's worldview are condemned as traitors; an example of this is the use of *takfirism* within militant Islamism (Ingram, 2017).

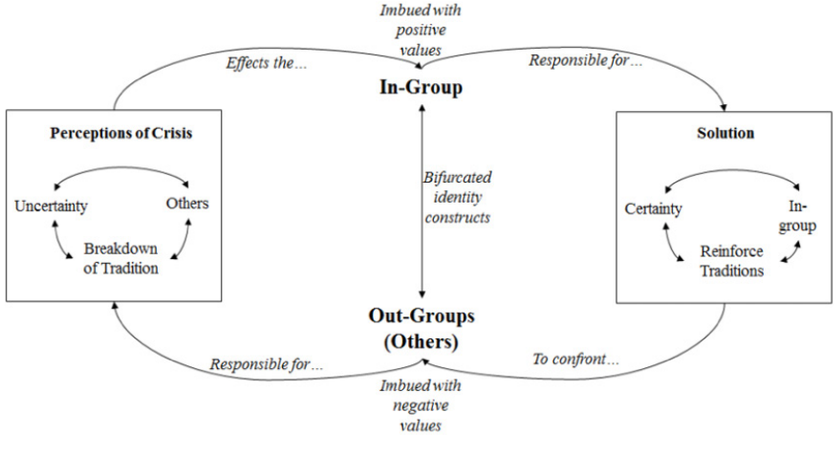


FIGURE 1: The cyclically reinforcing violent extremist "system of meaning".

Linkage-Based Approach

Ingram argues that the linkages perpetuating this cycle in the system of meaning should be tackled using a two-tiered strategy. The first tier, targeted primarily at those who have yet to adopt a violent extremist system of meaning, uses a combination of negative messages, which attack the linkages between violent extremists and their proposed solutions, as well as positive messages, which emphasise possible solutions to crises beyond violent extremists. The second tier is aimed at those already within the cycle and uses negative messaging as a disengagement strategy as well as network disruption strategies (Ingram, 2016a).

First and foremost, messages must be tailored towards an appropriate target audience. He offers five categories of target audiences:

1. **Antis:** Those against violent extremists and can help disseminate effective messaging.
2. **Curious:** Those who consume violent extremist propaganda.
3. **Engaged**: Those who adhere to a violent extremist system of meaning and may be engaged in such networks.
4. **Tacit Supporters:** those who express support for violent extremist groups, disseminate their messaging, and regularly engage in their networks
5. **Active Supporters:** those who have, or are planning to, engage in violence, or to support or facilitate such actions (ibid).

All five of the audiences should be targeted, but this must be doing appropriately, as shown in Figure 2. Note that these are primary targets; it may be useful in some circumstances for Tier 1 to tailor messages to Tacit and Active supporters, just as it may be fruitful to disseminate negative messages to Antis for further dissemination. Ingram notes that 'the two tiers are complementary. As Tier 2 efforts disrupt violent extremist networks, this slows the dissemination and even production of their propaganda this creating opportunities for Tier 1 efforts to fill the void' (ibid, p.9).

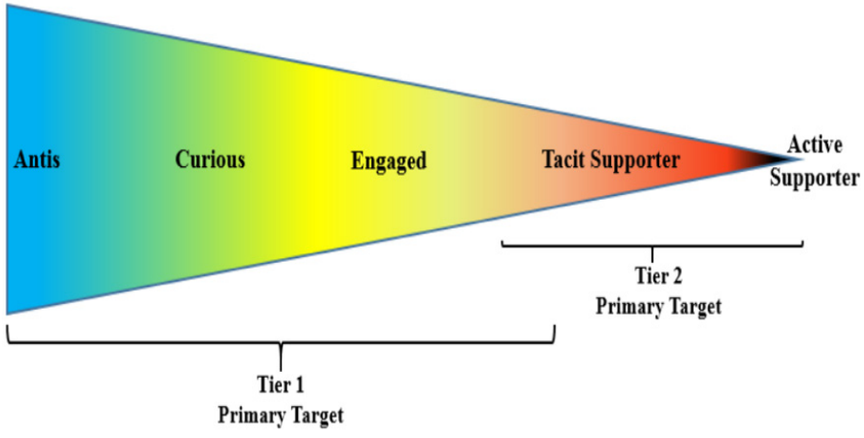


FIGURE 2: Audiences with appropriate tier targeting

A key consideration when designing messaging is deciding whether to implement a rational- and identity-choice within its target audience. This is based, in part, on the research from the field of psychology and behavioural economics that highlights the different ways in which the human mind processes information, described most famously be Daniel Kahneman as "automatic" and "deliberative" thinking. The former operates instinctively and makes effortless judgment, while the latter is slower and more logical (Kahneman, 2012). Ingram notes that:

> Militant Islamist propaganda seems to be largely geared towards corralling automatic thinking in its audiences by manipulating mental models, driving, cyclical processes of cognitive reinforcement, increasing perceptions of crisis and fuelling cognitive biases. This then primes its audiences for engagement with material that is largely geared towards more deliberative thinking – e.g. *fatwas* that lay out a jurisprudential case (2016b, p.8).

To challenge this two-pronged threat, Ingram suggests that messages ought to be divided into two key categories. The first is messages that instill an identity-choice within the audience, for example, messages that highlight the importance of local communities. The second category is messages that instill a rational-choice which highlight a tangible cost/benefit analysis for the audience. An example of rational-choice messaging is highlighting money invested by government actors as a response to the perceived crisis at the heart of the system of meaning (Ingram, 2016a, p. 12).

Campaign designers must also consider whether messages are offensive or defensive. A message that deconstructs violent extremist narratives, for example, by using scripture to refute the group's claims, is defensive in nature. Conversely, a message which bypasses violent extremist narratives and sets its own agenda is offensive. An example of this is positive stories within a community that show people of different faiths and backgrounds living together in harmony. This is similar, but not the same, as the distinction made by many CVE scholars and practitioners between counter and alternative narratives (Elsayed et al., 2017; Briggs & Feve, 2013; Rothenberger et al., 2016; Baaken & Schlegel, 2017; Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018). Both distinctions rely on who controls the narrative; although it is sometimes stated that alternative narratives ought to be positive in nature (Briggs & Feve, 2013), which is not the case in Ingram's framework.[1] It is important to reiterate that this refers to control of a narrative, not actions. Reed (2017) highlights this point in his example of the 1979 UK General election "Labour isn't working," a British Conservative Party poster, and the ensuing series of responses from the Labour Party. The Conservative Party responded to the perceived actions (or inactions) of the Labour Party, but set the battleground for the debate (ibid). Similarly, messages that highlight the atrocities of violent extremists are offensive unless they contain a response to a specific narrative.

Messages in campaigns should be both offensive *and* defensive, but broadly speaking, the former should outweigh the latter: "While defensive messaging is important to counter violent extremist propaganda, an important indicator of success in the 'information battle' is reflected in who is producing more offensive messaging and eliciting the most defensive messaging from their adversary" (Ingram, 2016a, p. 16). This is congruous with many other scholars within the field of P/CVE strategic communications who warn against the danger of giving too much oxygen to extremist narratives and therefore allowing violent extremists to control the debate (Briggs & Feve, 2013; Reed, 2017; Reed et al., 2017).

Ingram expands on the positive/negative message dichotomoy outlined above by offering five categories of both positive and negative messaging. The themes

[1] Furthermore, the phrase "counter narrative" is conceptually ambiguous. Sometimes it is meant as a catch-all for anything which tackles a violent extremist narrative (i.e. offensive or defensive), and sometimes it is specifically responding to a violent extremist narrative (i.e. defensive). For examples of this confusion, see Briggs & Feve (2013), who include the catch-all "counter narratives" in the title of their report, as well as a breakdown of the distinction between "counter narratives" and "alternative narratives."

of positive messaging are known as the 5As: Absorb, Advise, Activate, Anchor, and Assure and the themes of negative messaging are the 5Ds: Divided, Disabused, Disillusioned, Directionless, and Discouraged (Ingram, 2016a). Each of the ten themes offer different tactics to persuade the audience (further description can be found in Figure 3 below). Both the 5As and the 5Ds can be used to instill pragmatic- and identity-choices in their intended audience, and ought to be deployed both offensively and defensively. Importantly, if the 5As and 5Ds are "deployed effectively and across a coherent campaign plan, [they] may have a self-reinforcing effect that can deliver beneficial returns" (Ingram, 2016a, p. 13). A simple example of this could be a number of negative messages which highlight the atrocities of Daesh (Disabused – Pragmatic), which are augmented by positive stories highlighting community resilience to these atrocities (Absorb – Identity).

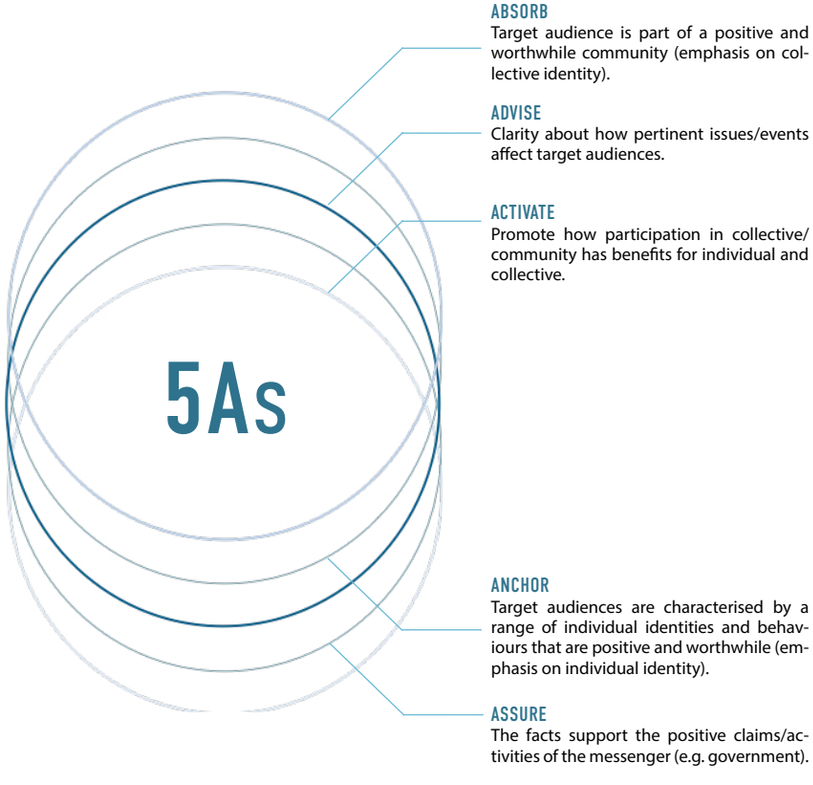


FIGURE 3.A: The 5As and 5Ds of Positive and Negative Messaging

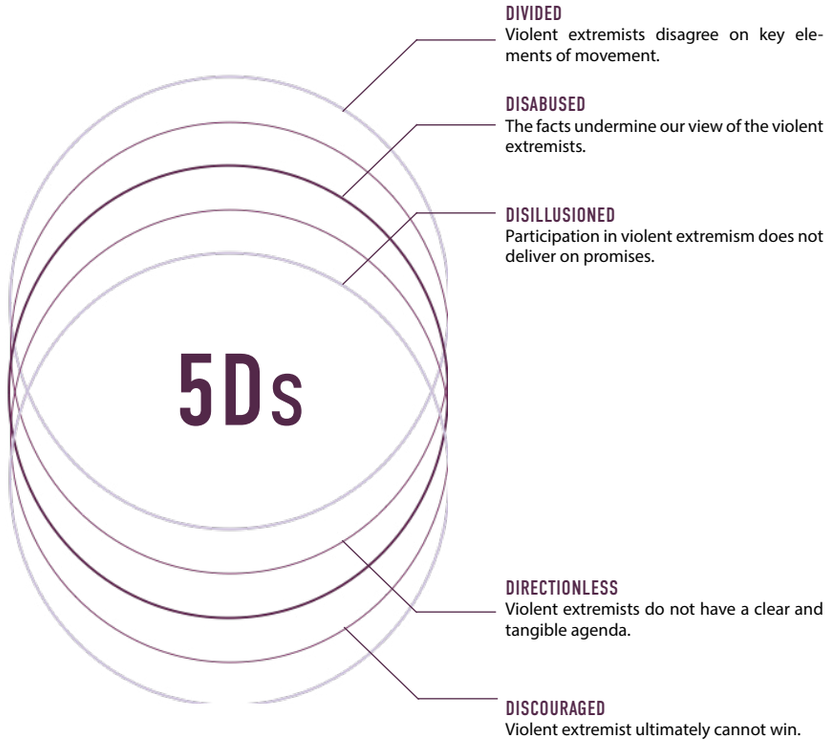


FIGURE 3.B: The 5As and 5Ds of Positive and Negative Messaging

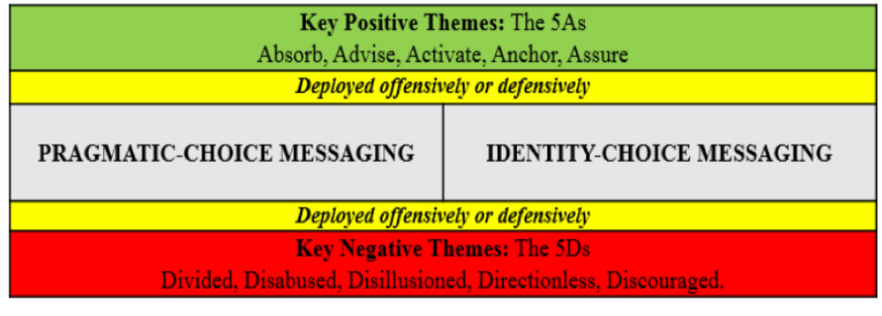


FIGURE 4: Message categories, subcategories and themes.

A further consideration of message designers is being aware of the "say-do" gap; a fundamental part of strategic communications in which one "exacerbate[s] the disparity between an enemy's words and actions whilst showing the close alignment of one's own words and action" (Ingram, 2016a, p. 7). Simply put, if the messenger's actions do not match their words, the message is unlikely to resonate. Ingram notes that "Western government-led … efforts that focus on reconstructing Muslim identities and even Islamic ideology are more likely to be counter-productive… [But] it is important for Muslim practitioners to attack the jurisprudential credibility of violent extremists" (2016a, p.15). This is in line with many academics and practitioners who advise, when designing campaigns, to choose a credible messenger (Elsayed et al., 2017; Silverman et al., 2016; Reed et al., 2017; Zeiger, 2016; Tuck & Silverman, 2016).

Finally, Ingram suggests this the linkage-based framework and its campaign fundamentals can be operationally useful for the purposes of monitoring, measurement, and evaluation (MM&E). He advises that the message categories described above are appropriate for the collection of data and can be subdivided inter-thematically to assess the amount in which categories are produced within an individual campaign (e.g. divided/pragmatic or disabused-identity) (2016a). Dichotomising message data in "a framework of interlocking elements facilitates metric collection across message categories and themes help[s] improve decision making" (Ingram, 2017, p. 7). That is to say, it offers a possibility to define metrics for success and to make comparative assessments to guide campaigns and message design strategies. As outlined below, much of the literature in this field offers practical advice on the creation of strategic communications, but few offer as much depth as Ingram's framework, meaning that using the campaign tactics as variables in MME may offer a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of strategic communications in CVE.

Methodology

The object of this study is to explore and analyse a selection of CVE strategic communications campaigns using Ingram's strategic framework as variables. The findings will offer a number of insights into the ways in which campaigns are crafted and the techniques which are used. To do this, we collect a corpus of CVE strategic communication campaigns from the Hedayah Center's "Counter Narratives Library," focusing specifically on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Daesh Defector collections. A report on the MENA collected by Elsayed, Faris, and Zeiger (2016) was also consulted for further information about the data. In total, data for ten campaigns are collected; a total of 197 unique messages or 219 messages including English/Arabic duplicates.

NAME	MESSENGER	DATE	FORMATS	LANGUAGE	PLATFORM	NUMBER OF MESSAGES
LIFE WITHOUT EXTREMISM	ETIDAL (Government)	15/06/2017 – 24/06/2017	Video, Text, Infographic, Picture	English	Twitter, YouTube	15
IRAQ STABILISATION	Global Coalition Against Daesh (Government)	21/04/2017 – 27/04/2017	Video, Text, Infographic, Picture	English	Twitter	20
DAESH FRAUD	Sawab Center (Government)	10/07/2017 – 13/07/2017	Video, Text, Infographic, Picture	English, Arabic	Twitter	34
WHAT BRITISH MUSLIMS REALLY DO	Imams Online (Civil Society)	23/03/2017 – 14/06/2017	Video	English	YouTube	9
THE ABDULLAH X SHOW	Abdullah X (Civil Society)	23/02/2014 – 12/10/2016	Video	English	YouTube	20
MOSUL LIBERATION	Global Coalition Against Daesh (Government)	03/07/2017 – 29/07/2017	Text, Infographic, Picture, External Link	English	Twitter	38
NOT ANOTHER BROTHER	Qulliam Foundation (Civil Society)	22/07/2015 – 12/08/2015	Video, Text, Infographic, External Link	English	YouTube, Twitter	14
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?	Taadudiya (Civil Society)	Summer 2017 – Jan 2018	Video, Text	Arabic	Facebook, YouTube, Twitter	6
IMAMS AGAINST ISIS	Imams Online (Civil Society)	11/07/2014 – 22/02/2015	Video	English	YouTube	8
YOUR FAMILY IS YOUR LIFE	Sawab Center (Government)	25/10/2016 – 28/10/2016	Text, Video, Picture, Infographic	English, Arabic	Twitter, YouTube	35

TABLE 1: Campaigns utilised in this dataset

This research developed variables for the codebook from the campaign strategies offered in Ingram's "Linkage-based" approach, as outlined in Table 2 below. In order to effectively code the data, there must be an explicit evidence to code a variable. For example, to code for 'Absorb', the message must mention a community specifically and mention a positive aspect. There is an acknowledged natural limitation to this – messages are often effective because they are subtle. However, it was decided that this is the only way to circumvent coder bias.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	IF YES
AUDIENCE	1. Antis 2. Curious 3. Engaged 4. Tacit Supporters 5. Active Supporters	
POSITIVE	Y/N	a) Absorb b) Advise c) Activate d) Anchor e) Assure
NEGATIVE	Y/N	a) Divided b) Disabused c) Disillusioned d) Directionless e) Discouraged
PRAGMATIC	Y/N	
IDENTITY	Y/N	
OFFENSIVE	Y/N	
DEFENSIVE	Y/N	

TABLE 2: Codebook example

After collecting and coding the data, a number of descriptive and bivariate statistical tests were conducted, such as the frequencies with which each of the variables occur to discern whether they are highly or lowly prevalent within the sample. Additionally, Pearson's chi-squared and Fisher's exact test (where appropriate) of variables' independence were conducted to discern unidentified relationships between the categories.

Findings

With regards to descriptive statistics, positive and negative messages were evenly distributed, with 67% of the sample (132 messages) in each category. There is also noteworthy difference between the 5As of positive messaging and the 5Ds of negative messaging. The former is relatively evenly distributed,

with all five being present between 21.8% of messages (Absorb) and 34.5% of messages (Advise). Conversely, the 5D variables were heavily skewered towards Disabused, present in 51.8% of messages, with the other four all less than 15%. Although it seems intuitive to highlight the atrocities of extremist organisations, especially given the unprecedented violent extremist threat in the MENA region, the current period given the rise of Daesh, this may have counterproductive consequences. At the heart of this point is Jenkins' seminal "terrorism as theatre" argument, in which he asserts that rather than mindless violence, such acts are "carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press…Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not the actual victims" (Jenkins, 1974). Although well-meaning, it possible that highlighting such evils are facilitating the media aims of terror organisations.

Within this corpus of messages, there is also a high prevalence towards offensive over defensive messages, with the former forming 85.8% of the sample and the latter 14.2%. As noted above, many academics and practitioners have warned that there is a danger of relying too heavily on defensive messages ("counter-narratives") because it gives too much oxygen to extremist narratives and allows them to control the debate (Briggs and Feve, 2013; Braddock and Horgan, 2016; Ingram and Reed, 2016; Reed, Ingram and Whittaker, 2017). Despite this academic consensus, it suggests that lessons may have been learned from the past, in which defensive messages were poorly utilised. An example of this is the US State Department's "Think Again, Turn Away" campaign, which, in 2013, openly debated Daesh and al-Qaeda supporters on Twitter, giving them a very large platform and answering questions on topics such as the events that took place in Abu Ghraib prison (Katz, 2014), which is undoubtedly not a strong topic for a campaign that is trying to dissuade those vulnerable to such groups' system of meaning. It is, therefore, promising that the data in question in this sample does not seem to mistake similar mistakes. The US State Department, via the Global Engagement Centre, now acts as a facilitating partner for local groups, such as the Sawab Center, to deliver messages which are likely to be seen as more credible.

An important bivariate finding is the relationship between the language of the messenger and whether it intends to instil a pragmatic or identity-choice in its audience. In a sample, in which Muslims are a large part of the intended audience, messages in Arabic were significantly more likely be identity ($p=.005$, odds ratio 2.37) and significantly less likely to be pragmatic ($p=.009$, odds ratio

0.37). Conversely, English-language messages had the opposite relationship; they were significantly less likely to be identity (p=.017, odds ratio 0.33) and significantly more likely to be pragmatic (p=.000, odds ratio 5.39). We believe that this is likely related to the long-established consensus in P/CVE strategic communications relating to the importance of a credible messenger (Elsayed et al., 2017; Tuck & Silverman, 2016; Briggs & Feve, 2013; Ferguson, 2016; Comerford & Bryson, 2017). Clearly, language is not a messenger, but rather a tool that is related to identity at the most fundamental level. Furthermore, English language can easily be perceived as symbolic of unpopular foreign interventions of both America and Britain, both recently and historically. We therefore tentatively see these results as encouraging as messages that are laden with appeals to identity appear to be being delivered in a more appropriate language.

Findings suggest there is to be a noteworthy relationship between the intended audience and whether the message employed positive or negative tactics. The sample is heavily weighted towards the "less extreme" end of the spectrum, with 100% of messages being aimed at antis[2], 85.8% aimed at curious, 46.7% aimed at engaged, 12.2% at tacit supporters, and 0.5% at active supporters. This speaks to the fact that social media is likely not to be an effective place to dissuade those who are actively participating in violent extremism; they are likely better suited by one-on-one interventions (Ingram, 2016a). The further one goes down the target audience spectrum; it is significantly more likely that the messages are negative in nature. This is also in line with Ingram's normative framework, who suggests that Tier 1, which primarily targets the antis, curious, and engaged, should use a mix of positive and negative messages, while Tier 2 should "use disengagement narratives via negative messaging targeting tactic and active supporters or violent extremism to trigger behavioural changes away from support" (Ingram, 2016a, p. 9).

Case Study

The following section summarises the analysis of one of the campaigns covered within this analysis and titled "What's your story?" (*Shu Ostak*), a series of online videos produced by Taadudiya (see Figure 5). This multi-video campaign that aims to highlight stories from the Arab world which promote young people and document and share the initiatives that reinforces the values of diversity, tolerance and acceptance of the other; ordinary heroes and heroines

[2] The reason for this is that Ingram suggests that antis can useful in further disseminating messages to a wider audience (2016a).

who are capable of making a change in their communities on multiple social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. With a huge viewership, this campaign has proved with no doubt that there is an urgent need of narratives to be drawn from ordinary people and targeting ordinary people. "Shu Ostak" campaign gives the opportunity to young people to be heroes and use their stories to go against the tide and challenge the mainstream narrative. The campaign began with three videos in 2017 and continued with a further 3 in 2018 that will be covered in details in the following sections.

In 2017, the campaign published three videos. The first video from Lebanon was posted to Facebook on 7th April 2017. It is based on a story about a young female Lebanese Shitte female who has extended an invitation to a Sunni female to pray together in each others' mosques despite the sectarian tensions during the given period, such as incidents of terrorism by Islamist violent extremists movements. This video emphasises that any simple story or initiative can make a difference especially when it is widely shared with people particularly produced by youth on social media. The purpose of this story is to take the initiative in other words to act and not to wait for the reaction even when you are surrounded by extremists or living in hotbeds and/or challenging situations. On Facebook, the first video had a reach of 2,885,414, over two million views, an engagement of 23,159, and 20.451 reactions.

The second video of this campaign was posted on 14 April 2017 and was made available on YouTube in Arabic and with English subtitles to ensure it has a broader reach than the MENA region. It is telling a true story about a Syrian refugee from one of the refugee camps in the north of Lebanon. The main messenger is a religious leader who teaches the children and youth in the camp about religious diversity and promotes human values amongst them. In this video, the messenger recounts the challenges he faced with young people who wanted to join violent extremist groups Daesh that inspired him to receive training at Beirut-based "Institute of Diversity Management" on deradicalization and CVE to protect those young people at the camps from joining violent extremist groups. In addition, this religious leader sought to encourage and nurture talents and capabilities of those young people. In the video, the messenger helped Syrian youth in camps to express themselves using rap and arts challenging the social pressures as a religious figure. The message of this video reflects the change of perceptions in the Lebanese context by ordinary people through instilling the values of peace and co-existence. The second video per-

formed similarly to the first one on Facebook, with a reach of 2,803,801, views of 2,108,414, an engagement of 22,159, and 22, 227 reactions.

The third video from Iraq was posted on 29 July 2017. It tells a story of an Iraqi doctor from Najaf city, who took the initiative to celebrate Christmas in a Shitte-Muslim majority community. This was a first "Najafi Christmas Celebration" setting a historical precedent, according to the video, as initially there was opposition from the community to go for the celebration. This initiative also involved other activities to include getting the students of Najaf University to write the longest "Letter of Peace" to Al Anbar University students and all of Al Anbar city residents in support of an incident of sectarian tension during that period prior to the launch of this video. This letter signifies Najaf University extending their hands in order to achieve peace. This initiative received well-support and inspired significant community engagement particularly from youth to take a leading role within their communites. The philosophy behind this particular story is to take the initiative and act rather than react specifically when you are surrounded by extremists or living in an environment where you have to face risks. For the third video's performance on Facebook, a reach of 1,580,712 was a achieved, leading to views of over 1 million, engagement of 410, and 310 reactions. For the analytics on social media for the first three videos targeting Facebook as main social media platform reached a total of 7,269,927 users, generated 5,211,246 views, an engagement of 54,323 and 49,461 reactions. While on Twitter, the three videos made 45,157 impressions, an engagement of 5314, as well as having 149 retweets, 170 likes, and 10 replies.

"What's your story?" (*Shu Ostak*) continued in 2018 with new series from Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt, and Oman. The first one was reflection on a joint initiative between a Muslim woman and a Chrisitan man (Hanna and Sameh) who have worked together on educating children belonging to different religions on co-existance and engagement. The second video is about a woman from Upper Egypt (Sai'eed) who plays basketball in a community that can be described as "conservative" where she encountered a challenge of customs and traditions that might go sometimes against the interest of women in such rural areas. These videos from Egypt aimed at promoting the critical thinking skills particularly in children for controversial issues like accepting the other, tolerance, and gender equality.

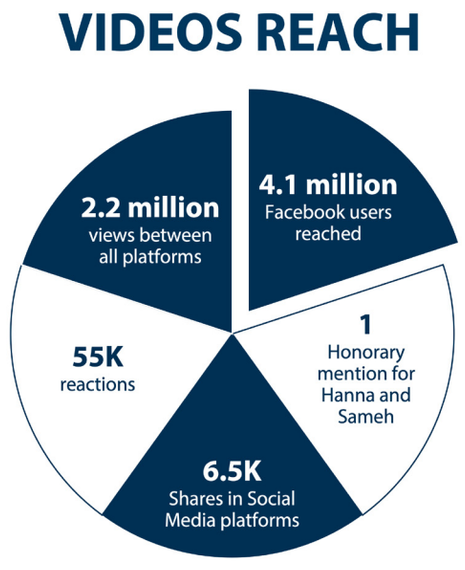


FIGURE 5: Videos Reach between January and March, 2018

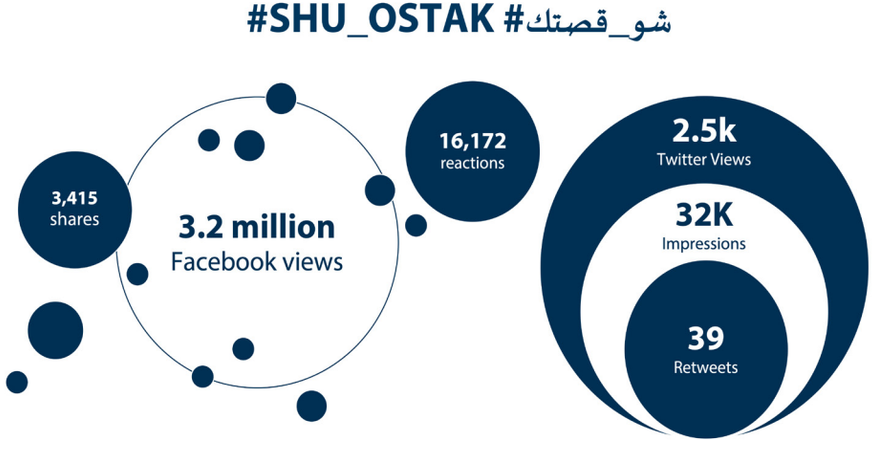


FIGURE 6: Shu Ostak Video Reach in Facebook and Twitter.

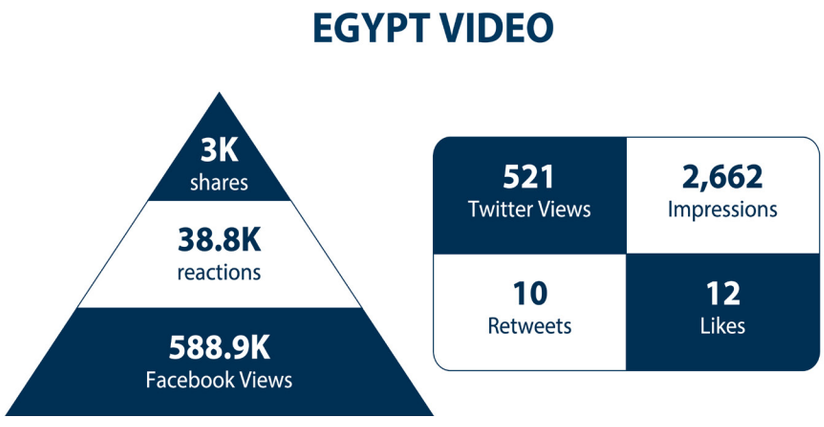


FIGURE 7: Egypt Video Reach in Facebook and Twitter

There were two videos from Tunisia and Oman were omitted from the above as there were not sufficient data to include them for the purpose of this analysis, however, the messages of these two videos are worth-mentioning. The one from Tunisia was about a story of a teacher of civic education in a school in Al Qasireen area trying to protect her students from the threats of violent extremism. She is also educating parents on promoting their self-confidence and other values of diversity and accepting the other. The last video for this year was from Oman and was told by a child, Shiekh, a young girl who started her series of comics and cartoons to post about her life from a child to other children.

As well as being used on a larger corpus of messages from a number of campaigns, Ingram's framework can be useful in categorising messages from a single campaign for the purposes of monitoring, measurement, and evaluation (MM&E). Figure 8 shows that the campaign which was entirely in Arabic, focused heavily on positive and identity-choice themes. It also heavily relied on the positive subcategories of absorb, active, and anchor, while not utilising any negative themes. When conducting MM&E, such as focus groups or surveys, being able to further demarcate into Ingram's subgroups offers a greater degree of insight with regards to what has worked and what has not.

Conclusion

The above research has sought to create a lens to view strategic communications within C/PVE by utilising Ingram's "Linkage-based" framework. A number of coding variables were created, including intended target audience, positive and negative messaging tactics, instilling pragmatic or identity-choice, and whether the message is offensive or defensive. Then, data were collected from ten multi-message campaigns, containing over 200 messages. The results offer interesting insights. First, the corpus of messages trends heavily towards messages that highlight violent extremist groups' atrocities. Second, there is a high prevalence towards offensive, rather than defensive messages. Third, that Arabic-language messages are significantly more likely to instil a pragmatic, rather than an identity-choice, and vice versa for English-language messages, and fourth, that messages trend to become more negative further down the target audience spectrum that one aims. Then, by way of a case study of Shu Ostak ("What's your story?"), this research showed how the framework can be utilised as part of an individual campaign's MM&E to monitor the effectiveness of different campaign strategies and tactics.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY – *SHU OSTAK?*	
Messages	6
Dates	07.04.17 – 14.03.18
Format	6 Text (100%); 6 Video (100%)
Language	6 AR (100%)
Audience	6 Antis (100%); 6 Curious (100%); 1 Engaged (16.7%)
Positive	6 (100%)
5As	Absorb: 6 (100%) Advise: 0 Activate: 6 (100%) Anchor: 6 (100%) Assure: 1 (16.7%)
Negative	
5Ds	Negative: 0 Divided: 0 Disabused: 0 Disillusioned: 0 Directionless: 0 Discouraged: 0
Pragmatic	0
Identity	6 (100%)
Offensive	6 (100%)
Defensive	0

FIGURE 8: Analysis Summary of "Shu Ostak" Campaign

REFERENCES

Baaken, T. and Schlegel, L. (2017). 'Fishermen or Swarm Dynamics? Should we Understand Jihadist Online-Radicalization as a Top-Down or Bottom-Up Process ?', *Journal for Deradicalization*, (13), (pp. 178–212).

Braddock, K. and Horgan, J. (2016). 'Towards a Guide for Constructing and Disseminating Counternarratives to Reduce Support for Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. Taylor & Francis, 39(5), (pp. 381–404). doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2015.1116277.

Briggs, R. and Feve, S. (2013) 'Review of programs to counter narratives of violent extremism: What works and what are the implications for goverment?', *Institute of Strategic Dialogue*. Available at: https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/444/review-of-programs-to-counter-narratives-of-violent-extremism-what-works-and-what-are-the-implications-for-government.

Comerford, M. and Bryson, R. (2017). 'Struggle Over Scripture', *Tony Blair Institute for Global Change*. London.

Elsayed, L., Faris, T. and Zeiger, S. (2017). 'Undermining violent extremist narratives in the Middle East and North Africa: A how-to-guide', *Hedayah Center*.

Esses, V. M., Medianu, S. and Lawson, A. S. (2013). 'Uncertainty, Threat, and the Role of the Media in Promoting the Dehumanization of Immigrants and Refugees', *Journal of Social Issues, 69*(3), (pp. 518–536). doi: 10.1111/josi.12027.

Federico, C. M., Hunt, C. V. and Fisher, E. L. (2013). 'Uncertainty and Status-Based Asymmetries in the Distinction Between the "Good" Us and the "Bad" Them: Evidence That Group Status Strengthens the Relationship Between the Need for Cognitive Closure and Extremity in Intergroup Differentiation', *Journal of Social Issues, 69*(3), (pp. 473–494). doi: 10.1111/josi.12025.

Ferguson, K. (2016). 'Countering violent extremism through media and communication strategies: A review of the evidence', *Partnership for Conflict, Crime & Security Research*, (March). Available at: http://www.paccsresearch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Countering-Violent-Extremism-Through-Media-and-Communication-Strategies-.pdf.

Hemmingsen, A.-S. and Castro, K. I. (2017). 'The Trouble With Counter-Narratives', *Danish Institute for International Studies*.

Hogg, M. A. and Adelman, J. (2013). 'Uncertainty-Identity Theory: Extreme Groups, Radical Behavior, and Authoritarian Leadership', *Journal of Social Issues, 69*(3), (pp. 436–454). doi: 10.1111/josi.12023.

Hogg, M. A., Kruglanski, A. and van den Bos, K. (2013). 'Uncertainty and the Roots of Extremism', *Journal of Social Issues, 69*(3), (pp. 407–418). doi: 10.1111/josi.12021.

Ingram, H. (2016a). 'A "Linkage- Based" Approach to Combating Militant Islamist Propaganda: A Two-Tiered Framework for Practitioners', *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, (November). doi: 10.19165/2016.2.06.

Ingram, H. (2016b). 'Deciphering the Siren Call of Militant Islamist Propaganda: Meaning, Credibility & Behavioural Change', *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, (September 2016). doi: 10.19165/2016.1.12.

Ingram, H. (2017). 'The Strategic Logic of the "Linkage-Based" Approach to Combating Militant Islamist Propaganda: Conceptual and Empirical Foundations', *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, (April 2017). doi: 10.19165/2017.1.06.

Ingram, H. and Reed, A. (2016). 'Lessons from History for Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communications', *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies*, (June). doi: 10.19165/2016.2.04.

Jenkins, B. M. (1974). 'International terrorism: A new kind of warfare', *RAND Paper Series*. doi: 10.1080/03071848708522842.

Kahneman, D. (2012). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. London: Penguin.

Mcgregor, I., Prentice, M. and Nash, K. (2013). 'Anxious Uncertainty and Reactive Approach Motivation (RAM) for Religious, Idealistic, and Lifestyle Extremes', *Journal of Social Issues, 69*(3), (pp. 537–563). doi: 10.1111/josi.12028.

Pruyt, E. and Kwakkel, J. (2014). 'Radicalization under deep uncertainty: a multi- model exploration of activism, extremism, and terrorism', *Supporting Dynamics Review, 30*(1), pp. 1–28. doi: 10.1002/sdr.

Radicalisation Awareness Network (2018). *Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Approach and Practices*.

Reed, A. (2017). 'Counter-Terrorism Strategic Communications: Back to the Future: Lessons from Past and Present', in Conway, M. et al. (eds) *Terrorists' Use of the Internet*. Amsterdam: IOS Press, (pp. 269–278).

Reed, A., Ingram, H. and Whittaker, J. (2017). 'Countering Terrorist Narratives', *European Parliament*.

Rothenberger, L., Müller, K. and Elmezeny, A. (2016). 'The discursive construction of terrorist group identity', *Terrorism and Political Violence, 6553*(June), (pp. 1–26). doi:

10.1080/09546553.2016.1180288.

Silverman, T. et al. (2016). 'The Impact of Counter-Narratives: Insights from a year-long cross-platform pilot study of counter-narrative curation, targeting, evaluation and impact', *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*. London. Available at: https://www.strategicdialogue.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Impact-of-Counter-Narratives_ONLINE.pdf.

Tuck, H. and Silverman, T. (2016). 'The counter-narrative handbook', *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*.

Zeiger, S. (2016). 'Undermining Violent Extremist Narratives in South East Asia: A How-To Guide', *Hedayah Center*.

"As the Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre (AMYC) has moderated, the emergence of new Salafi groups that operate without a formal structure and that do not articulate grievances or demands publicly, makes identifying and countering narratives at the local level a challenge."

2 EAST AFRICA: NARRATIVES OF EXTREMISM OR HISTORIES OF CONFLICT?[1]

Bofin & Walwa

Introduction

Analysis of the threat of Violent Extremism (VE) in Tanzania has been ahistorical in nature, primarily focusing on the threat of Al Shabaab and directing analysis to vectors of recruitment, financing, and ideology that centre on Somalia. This essay argues that analysis of VE narratives and messaging requires a perspective that better understands the political context in which VE is emerging, its relationship to historical grievances, and the strength of the institutions through which it is expressed.

We first consider how analysis of the VE threat in Tanzania has seen Somalia as the epicentre of VE in East Africa in general, and Tanzania in particular. We illustrate how this has had implications for how the issue is defined and discussed, and how programmes to prevent or counter VE are designed.

This is then contrasted with literature from history, sociology, and politics that examines the interface between Islam and politics in a less purposive way that does not seek to counter a particular threat. This leads us to argue that VE in Tanzania needs to be understood in the context of political issues that stretch back to the colonial period. These issues have shaped the impact in Tanzania of the global religious revival of the 1980s and 1990s, in particular the expansion of Salafist Islam in the country. This centres primarily on the concept of *Mfumo Kristo*, or 'Christian system' perceived to perpetuate colonial power structures that alienate the Muslim community.

[1] This essay is based on three research projects, via the BRICS programme, funded by the UK's Conflict Stability and Security Fund, the United States State Department, and the government of the Netherlands.

This essay then explores how these developments were reflected in the acute expressions of violent extremism in Tanzania in recent years in Tanga, Pwani, and Mwanza Regions. Each of these regions has witnessed violent extremism associated with religious leaders and institutions linked with Salafist interpretations of Islam. Its expression in each region has been quite distinct, reflecting the relative influence of historical grievances, and more recent transnational influences. For Tanga Region, the role of formal institutions such as the Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre is noted. For the Pwani Region, we firstly highlight how messaging has focused on concerns about *Mfumo Kristo*, as well as economic grievances as a key driver. In Mwanza, an apparently less successful attempt to undermine the position and legitimacy of traditional religious institutions is highlighted. In each case, an emphasis is made on the varying international relationships that underpin the spread of radical theology, and the sometimes-related development of armed groups.

The three research sites were chosen as each has been the location of considerable VE activity in recent years. It should be noted that the work was conducted as three separate research projects, with separate funders, and different research management procedures in each case. Mwanza was visited in March 2017, nearly one year after the case study presented. Research was undertaken in Tanga in October 2017, one year after the most recent incident, and one year later in November 2018. In Pwani Region, research focused on Kibiti District and Rufiji District. The area was visited between August and October 2017 during a security operation undertaken in response to killings that had taken place over the previous two years. All research projects were under the auspices of the University of Dar es Salaam.

Methodology

In each case, field researchers used a combination of Key Informant Interviews, and Focus Group Discussions. These involved government leaders, religious leaders, law enforcers, victims, and community members. Initial respondents were purposefully selected on the basis of the information they possessed. The snowballing sampling technique was used to compliment purposeful sampling in identifying people "who knew" about the problem and its dynamics. A total of 346 people were interviewed in all sites. Of these, just 26 percent were female. Age records were only kept in Tanga where most of the interviews took place, just 2.5 percent of interviewees were under 25.

Several limitations for this research can be noted. Firstly, the sensitive security context necessitated entering communities through local government and security structures. This restricted the range of informants that researchers could confidently seek out and engage with. While it may have also contributed to the low number of young people involved, we could have made greater efforts to reach out to youth, both male and female. The low number of women involved in the research can be attributed to the low number of women involved in the field research. Nonetheless, in the region where one female field researcher was present (Tanga), the largest proportion of female respondents was recorded.

Somalia as Epicentre?

The P/CVE community's understanding of drivers of VE in East Africa rarely goes further back than the global religious revival that began in the 1980s or the political changes that followed in the 1990s. This, combined with the development of Al Shabaab as the region's most effective non-state armed group, has implications for how conflict in the region is understood and addressed. In East Africa, the relationship between Muslim communities and post-colonial states has always been politically contested and rooted in tangible grievances (Haynes, 2006; Heilman, 2002; Bakari, 2012). This is seen in the changing relationship of Muslim leadership with both their communities and the post-colonial state. Chande (2008) describes how national Muslim organisations across East Africa were initially co-opted by authoritarian, one party states, and later themselves challenged by new political parties and civic organisations that emerged in Muslim communities following political liberalisation in the 1990s.

The officially recognised national Muslim organisation in Tanzania is the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (known by its Swahili acronym, Bakwata). It emerged in 1968 and was closely aligned to the then ruling party Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). It replaced the regional East African Muslim Welfare Society, a body regarded as pro-capitalist with the ability to organize Muslims across East Africa and seen by the government as a political threat (Chande, 2008). The religious revival that accompanied political liberalisation saw influential non-aligned bodies emerge in the 1990s. Foremost is the *Baraza Kuu ya Jumuiya ya Taasisi za Kiislam* (known as *Baraza Kuu*) and Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre (AMYC) in Tanga, the latter being dismissive of both Bakwata and *Baraza Kuu* (Bofin, personal communication, October, 2017), and

alleged by the United Nations to have been associated with Al Shabaab (United Nations Security Council, 2012).

Central to the political agenda of these new Muslim leaders was the perception of favouritism shown to Christianity by the Tanzanian state. This analysis shows education systems, employment, and influence as being rooted in Tanzania's colonial past, and sustained by post-colonial administrations, which led to a *Mfumo Kristo* – a system leaning to Christian interests, and that excludes Muslims (Becker, 2006; Said, 2016). This persists widely today and is a core theme of extremist rhetoric. "Muslims are behind in education, particularly in secular education. This stretches back to the time of the British. They only educated Christians… so Muslims are in difficulty", one Ansaar community leader told our research team (Bofin, personal communication, October, 2017).

There has been a wide range of strategies to address the issue of *Mfumo Kristo*. Some Baraza Kuu leaders, such as Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda, were willing to take an aggressive stance towards the state. This was clearly demonstrated in his alleged leadership of the Mwembechai riots of 1998, and the Kariakoo riots of 2013 (Ndaluka et al., 2014). AMYC addressed it firmly within transnational extremist networks, with likely connections to regional armed groups, at least in the past, before taking a more mainstream direction built on addressing inequalities through social service provision (BRICS, 2018). Our field research, detailed below, indicates how an agenda of marginalisation focused on *Mfumo Kristo* has driven the recent surge in violent extremism in the country.

Yet the issue of political violence that arises from these deep seated conflicts is viewed through a prism that sees Tanzania as a "spill over country" (UNDP, 2015), suffering secondary effects from the conflict in Somalia and Kenya, or as a site for the expansion of Al Shabaab beyond Somalia, with little or no reference to the underlying fault lines and how VE associated leaders and Non-State Armed Groups have responded to them. This has implications for how the issue of Islamist-related conflict is addressed in Tanzania. Firstly, it affects funding of initiatives that seek to counter or prevent violent extremism. Secondly, it affects the language used to discuss the issue, where the international language of "violent extremism" does not sit well with formulations more familiar in the Tanzania context that arise from ideas of inter-religious relations, conflict, terrorism, and criminality. In return, this can lead to misunderstandings and misuse of terms such as "Islamist" labelling acts of political violence driven by domestic issues.

This can be observed in two ways. Firstly, political violence driven by domestic grievances and with wholly domestic objectives can be mislabelled as "Islamist." Lesage (2014) presented an influential analysis of "Islamist associated attacks" in Tanzania between 2011 and 2014. The analysis concluded that in light of documented activity of Al Shabaab associates in Tanzania Mainland, and the history of the development of affiliated groups in Kenya, Tanzania was on the way to becoming a new frontier in violent extremism in East Africa.

Secondly, where there has been documented activity in Tanzania of groups affiliated to Al Shabaab, the "Somalia factor" has been presented as the primary driver of events. This approach emerged from the work of the United Nations Monitoring Group on Eritrea and Somalia. Its 2012 report presented compelling evidence linking Al Shabaab, the Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre in Tanga, and criminal networks involved in human trafficking, illegal immigration, and drug trafficking (United Nations Security Council, 2012). Work by the Sahan Foundation presented similar evidence. Its director, Matt Bryden (2015), describes Tanzania as being "the most fertile new ground in Al Shabaab's regional jihad," a place of refuge for fighters, and a "staging ground for attacks elsewhere in the region" (p. 10). The analysis also cites alleged Al Shabaab attacks in Tanzania as evidence of a shift towards a regional approach following military setbacks faced by Al Shabaab in Somalia. Sahan Foundation's study for IGAD (2016) again stresses links between Al Shabaab, its Kenyan affiliate Al Hijra, and criminal networks within Tanzania. The report characterises Al Shabaab's relationship with Tanzania as being more transactional than ideological. More recently, the International Crisis Group (2018) has linked violent activity in Tanzania's Kibiti District and around Cabo Delgado in Northern Mozambique to Al Shabaab.

Yet, as outlined in the next section, there is significant evidence that the wave of revivalist Islam witnessed in Tanzania today is flexible in spiritual function, political objectives, and activities. More granular reports suggest that the Somalia connection is just one of a complex set of vectors driving extremism in Tanzania.

Literature Review

The planting of radical religious ideas inevitably confronts local East African *Sufi*-oriented practice but must also contend existing political conditions, historical grievances, and institutional landscape (Bakari, 2012; Haynes, 2016;

Turner, 2008). These vary between Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar. Likewise, Tanzania Mainland presents differences itself.

Becker (2006) describes a relatively early 2003 conflict over the control of a mosque between a junior *Ansaar al Sun* group, and more traditional *Sufi* mosque leadership. The mosque was in Ruangwa in Lindi Region, a part of the East African coast now facing a significant threat from violent extremist organisations. Becker describes an isolated rural town experiencing a generational struggle. The mosque was not invaded, as some mosques were at the time (Ndaluka et al., 2014), rather its ownership was disputed in the courts. Ansaar youth in Ruangwa adopted a scripture-based approach to critique Islamic practice. Though they did not present an overt political agenda, the Ansaar youth challenged the traditional leadership which was close to the state. The group was animated by a relatively wealthy local businessman, who reportedly adopted a Salafist approach to Islam following *Hajj*. In this sense, the influence of exposure to such ideas in Arab states mirrored that seen across East Africa. While this particular issue was about ownership of a mosque, the fault lines were between an increasingly youthful population denied access to productive assets, and positions of leadership, whether in the mosque, or in the ruling party, Chama cha Mapinduzi, (CCM). Ansaar was challenging an older generation seen as having been co-opted by *Mfumo Kristo*.

This contrasts with the more aggressive approach taken particularly in the 1990s and 2000s by groups associated with *Baraza*, the leading organisation for Muslim societies, mosques, and Islamic preachers not aligned with the state. One of its most high-profile leaders is Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda, whose career embraced most elements of the Muslim political revival. In 1998 and 2013, he was associated with significant riots in the Magomeni, and Kariakoo areas of Dar es Salaam, as well as resistance to the census of 2012 (Ndaluka, 2014). That same year he was arrested for invading a plot of land in Dar es Salaam which was designated in the 1960s as the site of a Muslim university to be developed by the then East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS). The project was blocked and the EAMWS banned in 1968. The National Muslim Council of Tanzania (known by its Swahili acronym, Bakwata), a state-backed entity, inherited EAMWS's substantial assets and the role of a legitimate community representative. By seeking to reclaim the assets of a regional, mainstream, if long defunct Muslim representative body, Ponda highlighted a key political rift in the Muslim community in Tanzania over the legitimacy of Bakwata, and its unwillingness to challenge perceived Christian dominance of the public sphere.

Research in Zanzibar similarly points us to an understanding of new forms of politicised Islam and political violence, rather than "Islamism" *per se*, despite strong international aspects. Concerns about Zanzibar's relationship with Tanzania Mainland, religious identity, and political organisation gave rise to political violence, especially between 2012 and 2015 which has often been mistakenly categorised as Islamist. Turner (2008) describes a rich religious life in Zanzibar which arose from the global revival in Islam. Local forms of belief and practice were challenged by the youth returning from study not just in the Arab states but also from Pakistan, Kenya, and Uganda. According to Turner, the new forms were not necessarily violent or politically radical. Indeed, he even identified the language of "good governance" and rights in the language of Uamsho.[2] Though identified as "Islamist" (Lesage, 2014), Bakari's description of it as "anti-establishment" is probably closer to the point (Bakari, 2012). Finally, Turner (2008) has described Zanzibar as a hub for the radical Tabligh Jamaat movement, sending poorly trained itinerant preachers across East Africa to Tanzania Mainland, Uganda, Malawi, and Zambia. Turner rightly stresses the movement's spiritual focus. Nevertheless, in Uganda, Tabligh Jamaat is closely associated to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), based in Democratic Republic of Congo, but with its origins in Uganda. It is also noteworthy that in 2015, ADF founder, Jamil Mukulu, was arrested in Dar es Salaam. Ugandan authorities report that ADF receives funding from real estate and second hand car businesses in Tanzania (Government of Uganda, 2018).

Brents and Mshigeni (2004), in their study of youth involvement in political party militias, similarly argue that domestic political issues are the main drivers of political violence and terrorism in Zanzibar. In terms of identity and ideology, political militia members described a mixture of drivers that include Muslim identity, in opposition to Christian influence, and secular political aspirations expressed in the language of rights.

Contemporary Expression in Tanga, Mwanza, and Pwani Regions

Field work by the authors over the past two years in Pwani, Tanga, and Mwanza regions reveal considerable variation in processes of radicalisation and the development of armed groups. This is reflected in the political and ideological positioning of radical leaders, links with supporters and collaborators overseas, and the *modus operandi* of armed groups themselves. We argue this calls

[2] The *Jumuiya ya Uamsho na Mihadhara ya Kiislam*, or the Association for Muslim Mobilisation and Propagation is popularly known as Uamsho ('awakening' or 'mobilisation').

for responses that reflect local conditions as well as variations in messaging and in transnational facets in the different cases. It is the local conditions that determine how conflict is displayed in the different locations, making attention upon the local conditions necessary.

Tanga region is central to the story of the development of extremist thought and armed action in Tanzania. It has seen some of the most intense activity by armed groups, most notably close to Tanga city at Amboni Caves, and in the mountainous Lushoto District on the border with Kenya. Three factors have made the city a conducive environment for the growth of radical religious sects, and related armed groups. First, as a site of Islamic learning of regional importance, it has long teemed with religious institutions. In the 1980s and 1990s this was perhaps the most suitable environment in Tanzania to receive *Wahabi*-inspired teachings of teachers returning from study in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, or Sudan. Disaffection with the official institutional representation of Bakwata added to this receptive atmosphere. Second, its location on the border with Kenya, and on the poorly policed coast facilitated connections with extremist leaders and institutions in Kenya, and possibly Somalia. Finally, both of the preceding factors facilitate funding of institutions, and armed groups through institutional support from Arab states and trade in contraband.

The Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre (AMYC), based in the city since the late 1980s, was identified as regional extremist hub in 2012 by the United Nations Somalia Monitoring Group (Security Council, 2012). Its founder and director, Sheikh Salim Barahiyani, was accused of funding Al Shabaab through the drugs trade and of sheltering Al Shabaab fighters (Security Council, 2012). Since the 1980s Sheikh Barahiyani developed AMYC into one of the city's most significant institutions, running a hospital, secular and religious schools, and a children's home. Funding in the past came from Arab states, including through the Al Haramayn Foundation, based in Saudi Arabia and now proscribed by the Tanzanian authorities for alleged links with Al Qaeda. AMYC now claims to be self-sufficient (BRICS, 2018).

Arguably, AMYC has been on a journey towards respectability, leaving a gap for younger self-described *Salafi* to occupy the more radical ground, including engagement in armed struggle, inspired by Sheikh Barahiyani's erstwhile collaborator, Mombasa's Sheikh Aboud Rogo. In its early years, AMYC did not recognise the legitimacy of the state. During the 2000 election campaign, Sheikh Barahiyani called on Muslims not to vote, warning that to do so would

legitimise a *kafir* state (An-Nuur, 1999). By 2012, he was allegedly collaborating with Sheikh Rogo, and facilitating funding for Al Shabaab (Security Council, 2012). By 2016, connections to Tanga continued, but the relationship with AMYC was becoming less clear (IGAD, 2016). This is maybe not surprising. By that stage, AMYC's transition from challenging a *kafir* state to running state-approved schools was well underway. Research by the authors in the Tanga Region in 2017 triangulated this trend, identifying newly emerging *Salafi* groups in Pangani town on the coast and at least one breakaway group in Tanga city itself. This has been corroborated to us by interviewees from AMYC itself, one breakaway group, and a Bakwata leader in Tanga (Bofin, personal communication, October, 2017; Walwa, Bofin, & Ibrahim, personal communication, November, 2018).

New radical mosques have been sustained by continuing connections to institutions across the border, and new sources of funding from organisations in Arab states, and private Muslim charities in the west (BRICS, 2018). Naming a Gulf based charity with a *Wahabi* background operating across the continent and with operations in Tanga, one Bakwata affiliated religious leader noted that the organization in question "would only fund its Ansaar fellows" (Walwa, Bofin, & Ibrahim, personal, November, 2018).

Breakaway groups, variously described as *Ansaar* or *Salafi*, take a much more of a hard line approach than their predecessors in AMYC. Rather than addressing inequalities of the *Mfumo Kristo*, through social service provision, they encourage rejection of the state. They thus promote religious education over secular learning and encourage non-payment of taxes to the state. In terms of religious practice, they also challenge existing rituals of daily prayer, and burial, and practice of inter-generational relationships (Ibrahim, personal communication, October, 2017).

Parallel to the emergence of *Salafist*-oriented groups was the development of at least four armed groups in the Tanga Region from 2010 to 2017. In the minds of local communities, they are associated with *Ansaar*-inspired preachers but have no connection to AMYC. In the mountainous Lushoto Districts, three groups emerged; their operations appear to have been primarily criminal, with no obviously political targets. Armed robbery, and the production and sale of illicit drugs were their hallmarks (Walwa, personal communication, October, 2017).

Though rumoured in Lushoto, the presence of Tanzanian fighters returning from Somalia and the likely presence of Somali and Kenyan fighters has been more firmly established closer to Tanga city at the Amboni Caves. The cave complex was for at least two years a base for an armed group composed of Tanzanians, Somalis, and Kenyans, from where came one of the country's few extremist propaganda videos, showing a group of armed youths, calling on believers across Tanzania to join them in the caves to fight on behalf of their fellows detained by the state (BRICS, 2017). The group was well embedded, supported by a network that included religious leaders identified locally as *Ansaar*, elected government leaders and local business people.

The armed groups in Lushoto and the Amboni Caves were broken up in a series of security led operations over the years 2015-17. Community level perceptions of the group view that they were driven to some extent by *Salafi* influenced clerics. There is evidence that the core fighters in Amboni were religiously driven. For example, purchase of land around the caves was undertaken by a man believed to be an Ansaar religious leader. Moreover, one fighter killed in the security operation was described by his family as having developed extremist views and was known to pray in an Ansaar mosque in Tanga city before his death in combat (Walwa, Bofin, & Ibrahim, personal communication, November, 2018).

Two challenges arose from this. Firstly, there is the problem of identifying contemporary narratives of radicalisation when they are not publicly articulated. In the past AMYC's stance was informed by the *Wahabi* theology, which publicly took an anti-state position. As AMYC has moderated, the emergence of new *Salafi* groups that operate without a formal structure and that do not articulate grievances or demands publicly, makes identifying and countering narratives at the local level a challenge.

Developments in Pwani Region present a contrast to Tanga. Three districts of Pwani – Mkuranga, Kibiti, and Rufiji – saw a series of violent incidents between 2015 and 2017. These primarily involved the assassination of local government officials and elected leaders, as well as officials of the ruling party, CCM. Parallel to this were high profile criminal actions in Dar es Salaam, likely for funding purposes. Approximately forty deaths have been recorded as a result of these and other related activities (Walwa, 2018; Jingu, 2018). In contrast, patterns of armed action and messaging differed significantly from Tanga. Actions clearly targeted the state and the ruling party, which are difficult to distinguish within villages. This was supported by propaganda focusing on locals' rights to natural resources. The institutional and historical environment differed as it lacks a body equivalent to AMYC in Pwani or Lindi and Mtwara. At the same time, those three regions shared historical grievances around natural resources, an ambivalent relationship to the state and have experienced outbreaks of resistance in the recent past.

As noted above, *Wahabi* or *Ansaar* inspired religious leaders have been active on Tanzania's southern coast since the early years of the century (Becker, 2006). In Pwani and regions of the south, this trend picked up in 2011-12. In 2011, the late Sheikh Hassan Ilunga, a Tanzanian preacher associated with *Wahabi* inspired *Ansaar* teachings, addressed a public meeting in Kibiti District:

> There is nowhere you can go in this country and not find the Christian system. The Christians in this country have dominated decision-making positions. In Rufiji and the entire coastal religion is made up of 99 percent by Muslims. But who is an agricultural officer or OCD [Officer Commanding District] here? All the government officials are Christians even though 80% of the population here is made up of Muslims. Head teachers in Rufiji are Christians, all students are Muslims. What is eating Rufiji is the Christian system. (Abd Binm, 2012)

In 2012, the *Masjid ya* Mabanzi was constructed in Kibiti District, identified later as the planning centre for radicalisation, recruitment, and armed action in the area (Jingu, 2018). Messaging since then has been consistent, based on widespread antipathy to the *Mfumo Kristo*, and grievances concerning natural resources management.

These issues still resonate. According to local people and local government leaders, the ultimate goals of this group were to get rid of *Mfumo Kristu* and create a new religious governance system – a *dola ya kiislam*, or Islamic state – that would be responsive to their beliefs (Walwa, personal communication, October, 2017). Similar to Tanga, members of a group in Kibiti mobilized their followers to denounce formal education and medication, which they deemed "*kafiri* authorities" and refused to pay government tax and any levy. One resident told us:

> In general, these incidents are happening because of those followers with extremist ideology wanting to introduce their own administrative

> system to replace the current administration, which they say is *kafiri*. They were not ready to pay tax on natural resource produce and other services because (they said) natural resources come from God, so for the government to collect levy is to steal from the citizen. (Walwa, personal communication, August, 2018)

In rejecting the state, long-standing political grievances were given attention. Local communities we spoke with accused the police of cooperating with natural resources officers and local government officials to impound or impose high fees on natural resources products, especially charcoal. The same are also accused of abusing the rights of local people who are involved in business related to natural resources production. The clearest statement of motive came in February 2017 when a natural resources inspection post was attacked and three were killed. Leaflets left at the scene stated that "We are announcing to the people that we have killed these because they are abusing people through their work, and any one that will work here we will follow him even if it is at his home" (Mwananchi, 2017). It should be noted that these grievances are not without foundation. There is considerable evidence connecting government officials from village to ministry level in the illegal timber trade (Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, 2007).

The overlay of *Salafi/Ansaar* daawa on an area with deep seated grievances extends across Tanzania's southern regions of Pwani, Lindi and Mtwara. Mtwara and Lindi regions have a troubled history of relationships between the ruler and the ruled. These regions are the site of Tanzania's most significant outbreaks of civil unrest, the Maji Maji rebellion of 1905-07, and of what has been described as the Mtwara Uprising of 2012/13. The Maji Maji rebellion was in immediate response to imposition of taxes, and top down agricultural development. The Mtwara Uprising of 2012/13 was sparked by widespread concerns over plans for the exploitation of natural gas finds (Powell, 2017). Within Muslim communities locally, and nationally, this was seen as the inevitable consequence of *Mfumo Kristo* (Jamii Forums, 2013).

The emergence of a close connection between the conflict in Pwani and the insurgency ongoing in northern Mozambique since late 2017, compels us to look at the transnational aspect of radicalisation. As in Tanzania, the emergence of armed groups has been intimately connected with the spread of *Salafist* influenced *Ansaar* teachings – specifically to the teachings of Sheikh Aboud Rogo, which reinforced the local grievances of marginalization (Habibe et al., 2017).

Yet regional identity may be just as strong for mobilising individuals. There is compelling evidence of separatist tendencies shared by communities that straddle the Tanzania/Mozambique border (Ahearne, 2018; Powell, 2017), or by communities within Tanzania (BRICS, forthcoming). Somali influence has been documented (MOZ news ref 2018; International Crisis Group, 2018) but leadership, funding, and messaging appear to be mostly local.

North Western Tanzania provides a counterpoint to both Tanga and Pwani. Compared to those other regions, extremist activity has been low key, if still consistent. Armed groups have been active in recent years, involved in both explicit violent extremism and criminality. The former has been directed at the local Muslim community, most notably in the beheading of three worshipers at evening prayers in May 2016 by a group identified as ISIS but connected to an overseas educated *Ansaar*-oriented religious leader, believed to be funding his activities through armed gangs of youths (Walwa, personal communication, March, 2017). Our research found no evidence of grievances particular to the area but pointed to the returned preacher's strategy of turning younger people against an older leadership loyal to Bakwata, a common pattern across the country. This was achieved by challenging existing theology and practice, undermining recognition of the state, and actively training young fighters.

In terms of theology and practice, the preacher opposed *sala ya jamaa* (community prayer) – arguing that it cannot be allowed to take place in Tanzania. He instead postulated that *sala ya jamaa* would only be allowed when Tanzania is revolutionized to become an Islamic state. He also proclaimed that properties of *kafiri* (infidels) are "*ngawir*" (free) – therefore, Muslims should take them away. He also challenged the practice of house rent between Muslims, proclaiming that properties owned by Muslims belong to other Muslims too and so it is wrong to pay house rent to a fellow Muslim.

The next stage for this preacher was to develop his own institution. In this case, a mosque built on land inherited by a young follower. Construction of the Mosque was believed to be funded from the proceeds of crime (Walwa, personal communication, March, 2017). This became a centre for radical preaching, and for martial training for youths staying at an attached hostel. The May 2016 attack was allegedly in revenge for members of the neighbouring Bakwata-affiliated mosque informing the authorities of the training (Walwa, personal communication, March, 2017).

Mwanza has emerged as a strategically important point for VE networks. Its position on Lake Victoria's coast makes it a critical hub between Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As a result of this strategic location, the region has not escaped violence. For example, Tanzania police killed suspected Pwani ringleaders in Mwanza in 2017 (Nyange, 2017) and also claimed that fighters on the run from security operations in Pwani made their way to Eastern DRC, as well as to Mozambique (Mtanzania Digital, 2017). In northern Mozambique, the number of foreign fighters engaged is significant. Trials indicate that the greatest number are from Tanzania (52), with Ugandans (3) and Somalis (1) also engaged (O Pais, n.d.). The emerging regional role of the Allied Democratic Forces underlines the city's importance. Like Al Shabaab, it has a significant number of Tanzania recruits (Congo Research Group, 2018; Bryden, 2015).

The radical preacher of our case study in some way encapsulates that. According to local religious leaders, he was born in Mwanza and he used to be Christian, but he disappeared for several years. Returning in 2012, he claimed to have converted to Islam and presented himself as a Sheikh. He informed Muslim leaders that he studied Islamic religion in Uganda, something that leaders of BAKWATA doubt, suspecting he had been in Somalia, but also hearing he had been in Arusha, Tanzania (Walwa, personal communication, March, 2017). Certainly, there was no assumption that his actions were driven from Somalia, though that was considered a possibility.

Conclusion

As an emerging site for preventing violent extremism, Tanzania presents particular challenges for security services, civil society and international actors, at the community, regional and national levels. The problem is clearly regional in nature, and not emanating solely from Somalia. Our evidence pushes back against the notion that VE in Tanzania is either a "spill over" from Somalia and Kenya, or part of an expansion strategy by Al Shabaab. VE in Tanzania highlights emerging cross-border vectors of ideas and people that drive VE. This highlights the need for effective collaboration between security services, but also between local administrations in border districts. This is emerging between Tanzania, and Mozambique and Kenya respectively, and needs to be supported. International actors supporting P/CVE and/or security initiatives need to ensure that programmes are designed with a regional perspective.

We have argued that understanding the narratives that drive involvement in VE must be based on an appreciation of local circumstance, and how history and contemporary politics interact with transnational VE narratives. If counter narrative work is identified as a solution, it is unlikely that a one-size-fits-all approach would be effective in Tanzania. For government and civil society, this will require an understanding of long run issues that underlie VE in Tanzania, how they are present in communities as well as in politics.

Our research also highlights a number of challenges for the research community in Tanzania. So far, research has been driven by short term funding requirements, making it difficult to develop long term research strategies and to develop institutional capacity in this regard. Work in Tanga and Mwanza was undertaken as part of broader PVE projects with short term funding. The Pwani research stood alone, but again was short term in nature. Likewise, researchers need to work harder to open spaces to ensure a more gender-sensitive approach to research in this youth-packed field. This requires developing trust with government authorities and the community. But it also requires us to look closely at our own research methods to better include women and youth.

REFERENCES

An-Nuur. (1999). "Sheikh wa Ansaar adai kupiga kura ni ukafir" in *An Nuur, Na. 208: Rabiiul Awwal 1420, Julai* 2-8. Retrieved from: http://www.islamtanzania.org/an-nuur2/208/208-4.htm.

Bakari M. A. (2012). "Religion, Secularism, and Political Discourse in Tanzania: Competing Perspectives by Religious Organizations."*Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion. 8*(1).

Becker F. (2006). "Rural Islamism during the 'War on Terror': A Tanzanian Case Study". *African Affairs. 105*(421) p. 583-603.

Brents, B. & Mshigeni D. (2004). "Terrorism in Context: Race, Religion, Party, and Violent Conflict in Zanzibar."*The American Sociologist. 35* (2).

BRICS. (2017). *The Threat of Violent Extremism in Zanzibar*. BRICS. Nairobi.

BRICS. (2018). *An Overview of Violent Extremism in Tanzania Mainland & Tanga.* BRICS. Nairobi

Bryden, M. (2015). *The Decline And Fall Of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, Sahan*. Retrieved from: http://sahan-eu.stackstaging.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Bryden-Decline-and-Fall-of-Al-Shabaab.pdf

Chande, A. (2008). "Muslim-State Relations In East Africa Under Conditions Of Military And Civilian Or One-party Dictatorships."*Historia Actual Online.* Num. 17 . p. 97-111. Retrieved from: https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/3065917.pdf.

Congo Research Group. (2018). *Inside the ADF Rebellion: A Glimpse into the Life and Operations of a Secretive Jihadi Armed Group.* New York University, Centre on International Cooperation. Retrieved from: https://insidetheadf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Inside-the-ADF-Rebellion-14Nov18.pdf.

Habibe, S., Forquilha, S., & Pereira, J. (2018). "Radicalização Islâmica No Norte De Moçambique: O Caso Da Mocímboa Da Praia," presentation slides.

Heilman, B. &Kaiser, P. (2002) "Religion, identity and politics in Tanzania."*Third World Quarterly. 23*(4), p. 691-709.

Government of Uganda. (2018). *National Risk Assessment Government of Uganda, Kampala.* Retrieved from: https://www.fia.go.ug/sites/default/files/publications/UGANDA%20NRA%20REPORT.pdf.

IGAD. (2016). *Al-Shabaab as a Transnational Security Threat.* Retrieved from: https://igadssp.org/index.php/documentation/4-igad-report-al-shabaab-as-a-transnational-security-threat/file.

Haynes, J. (2006). "Islam and democracy in East Africa."*Democratization, 13*(3), p. 490-507.

International Crisis Group. (2018). *Al-Shabaab Five Years after Westgate: Still a Menace in East Africa.* (265). Retrieved from: https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/kenya/265-al-shabaab-five-years-after-westgate-still-menace-east-africa

LeSage, A. (2014). "The Rising Terrorist Threat in Tanzania: Domestic Islamist Militancy and Regional Threats."*INSS Strategic Forum.* Retrieved from: https://ndupress.ndu.edu/portals/68/documents/stratforum/sf-288.pdf.

Milledge, S. A. H., Gelvas, I. K., & Ahrends, A. (2007). *Forestry, Governance And National Development: Lessons Learned From A Logging Boom In Southern Tanzania.* Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dar es Salaam. Retrieved from: https://www.trafficj.org/publication/07_Forestry_Governance_and_national.pdf.

Mtanzania Digital. (2018). "Wauaji Kibiti Wadhibitiwa Msumbiji." Retrieved from: http://mtanzania.co.tz/wauaji-kibiti-wadhibitiwa-msumbiji/.

Ndaluka, T. J., Nyanto, S., & Wijsen, F. J. S. (2014). "Things are getting out of control: an analysis of Muslim Revivalism Discourses in Tanzania" in Ndaluka, T. J., Nyanto, S., & Wijsen, F. J. S. (ed.) *Religion and State Revisited: Reflections from 50 Years of Independence,* Lit Verlag: Berlin.

Nyange, J. (2017). "Polisi waua sita wanaodaiwa kuua Kibiti," Mtanzania, 9 July. Retrieved from https://www.pressreader.com/tanzania/mtanzania/20170709/281509341220135.

O Pais, (n.d). "Homens armados entregamse as autoridades em mocimboa da praia." Retrieved from: http://opais.sapo.mz/homens-armados-entregamse-as-autoridades-em-mocimboa-da-praia.

United Nations Security Council. (2012) *Report on Somalia of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.* Retrieved from: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Somalia%20S%202012%20545.pdf

Turner, S. (2008). "These Young Men Show No Respect For Local Customs: Globalisation, Youth and Islamic Revival in Zanzibar." *DIIS Working Paper no 2008/4,* Retrieved from: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/48331/WP08-4.pdf.

UNDP. (2015). *Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism In Africa: a Development Approach.* Retrieved from: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Local%20Governance/UNDP_RBA_Preventing_and_Responding_to_Violent_Extremism_2016-19.pdf.

"Given the elementary nature of search engine results and how prevalent it is in the lives of Internet users, publicly available data from Google about search activity may also provide vital insights to help direct and inform countering violent extremism efforts, whether online or offline."

3 MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM IN AUSTRALIA

Sofia Patel

Introduction

In 2016, Phillip Galea became the first man to be arrested and prosecuted under terrorism legislation in Australia for far-right-motivated violence. Galea was charged with 'making preparations for terrorist attacks on the Melbourne Anarchist Club and Melbourne Resistance Centre' in late 2015 and early 2016 (The Age, 2018). He was linked to the far-right groups, Reclaim Australia, the United Patriots Front (UPF), the Patriots Defence League Australia, and the True Blue Crew and Combat 18 (AAP/The Guardian, 2016). Although right-wing extremism might not yet pose the same perceived and existential threat as militant Islamist terrorism, the last seven annual reports of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) indicate a distinct rise in the activity of extreme right-wing groups and a perceived openness to engage in violence that "could have a bearing on Australia's security environment."

A series of global events have created the conditions for a new wave of far-right extremism to flourish: the threat of international Salafi-jihadi terrorism, the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the international financial crash, the Syrian civil war, Islamic State's self-declared "caliphate," foreign fighters and lone-actor terrorism, and the global migration crisis. Furthermore, a deepening distrust in mainstream politics and governments has created an opportunity for extreme right-wing ideologues to step in and propose solutions to what they see as failed liberal democratic policies, such as globalization and multiculturalism, which they portray as being endorsed by an unrepresentative liberal elite. Although right-wing extremism is not yet matching militant Islamist terrorism in terms

[1] The identitarian movement began in France in 2003. They share common ideas: the need to stop mass immigration, the undesirability of Islam and the corrupt authoritarianism of the EU. The movement is largely rooted in European culture and history, but the values can be translated to different historical contexts. Generation Identity made some waves in Australia but did not achieve the same following as in Europe.

of the scale and lethality of their attacks, there appears to be a growing threat from the extreme right.

Far right extremism in Australia is following a similar trajectory to its counterpart movements in Europe and North America. Although the scale of organisation and mobilisation of far-right extremist groups and individuals appears to be less advanced at present, it is likely that Australia will follow in the footsteps of its European compatriots in the next few years. Moreover, the ideologies and objectives pursued by the far right in Australia are reminiscent of those pursued in the United Kingdom, mainland Europe, and North America; there are clear links with British groups such as the English Defense League and National Action, as well as the Nordic Resistance Movement in Sweden, and the US-based Atomwaffen Division. It is in the interests of the international community to gain a clearer and deeper understanding of the far-right landscape in Australia, the evolution of its proponents, and what lies ahead.

Far-right extremism in Australia and beyond is broad and fractured, with no single definition or ideological commitment. The many ideological stripes of right-wing extremism include: neo-Nazis, white supremacists, identitarians, racists, nationalists, patriots, anti-Semites, anti-Muslims, and xenophobes. Groups emphasise and disown different elements of this ideological package. As asserted by Ramalingam (2014), although they differ in their aims, "there are some defining features: racism, xenophobia, ultra-nationalism and authoritarianism." As with all forms of extremism, right-wing extremism can be violent or non-violent. Furthermore, far-right extremism can be propelled through radical populist political parties, social groups and, at its most extreme, terrorism.

Globally, the extreme right has risen in prominence over the past two years (Davey & Ebner, 2017), which is visible in the number of arrests, referrals to extremism programs, foiled plots, and convictions for terrorism involving extreme-right-motivated violence. It is important to understand this increase in extreme right violence and behaviour against the backdrop of the current socio-political and security environment, which has been dominated by an overwhelming focus from governments and the media on countering and preventing *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism. The rise of right-wing extremism may be viewed as a response to the perceived ideological and physical threats posed by militant Islamist terrorism. Moreover, it can be viewed an example of what Eatwell has described as "cumulative extremism:" the way in which one form of extremism can feed off and magnify other forms (2006).

To date, there has been little research analysing the current state of the extreme right in Australia. With that in mind, this essay provides an overview of Australia's contemporary right-wing extremists, and populists, their ideological and tactical points of convergence, and how their influence relates to the national security environment. This essay will specifically analyse how groups and individuals across the extreme right in Australia have evolved and will delve further into their ideologies, beliefs and grievances, as well as highlight their tactics for communication, recruitment, and mobilisation.

It is important not to overemphasise the threat posed by right-wing extremists, but to identify where the pressure points are, how they have changed, and how the ecosystem could evolve.

Methodology

A range of open source data were collected for the purpose of this essay, including government documents, policy briefings, academic papers, and journal articles from Australian and international sources.

Some primary data gathering was conducted as well. The researcher visited the social media pages (Twitter, Facebook and Gab) of key Australian far right groups and individuals over a three-month period (April -June 2018) in order to monitor the nature of the activity on the platforms. The researcher employed content analysis to the material posted and reposted on social media in order to discern emerging themes prevalent among key Australian far right groups and individuals.

The researcher has qualitatively analysed the data in two ways. Firstly, the body of this essay presents an in-depth analysis of groups' and individuals' beliefs, tactics and strategies using case studies and primary sources (i.e. group websites, social media pages, and chat forums). Secondly, the researcher used this information to create a series of variables from which to categorise these groups in order to visually illustrate the complex spectrum of the far-right landscape in Australia. This can be seen in Appendix 1 at the end of the essay.

Terminology and Definitions

Extremism

There is no universally accepted definition of extremism, or right-wing extremism. According to Schmid (2013, p.9), "extremists strive to create a homogenous society based on rigid, dogmatic ideological tenets; they seek to make society conformist by suppressing all opposition and subjugating minorities. That distinguishes them from mere radicals who accept diversity and believe in the power of reason rather than dogma" (p.9).

Governments, academics and civil society practitioners are constantly wrestling with key conceptual problems related to defining key terms, which poses distinct challenges related to criminalising individuals convicted for crimes in this space.

Far-right or extreme-right?

Additionally, the think tank Demos has applied the analysis by Norris (2005) of the far right acknowledging the many labels attributed to individuals and groups across the spectrum ("far," "extreme," "radical," "new") and has concluded that "these groups are best thought of as a cluster or family of parties rather than a single category" (Gaston, 2017, p. 2). Based on this, for the purpose of this paper, the terms "far right" and "extreme right" are used interchangeably to refer to extremist right-wing social groups operating from and advocating different ideological perspectives.

New Extreme Right

The definition by Cas Mudde, a Dutch political scientist, provides a helpful taxonomy of the "new extreme right" groups that are discussed in this essay. According to him, extreme right-wing movements are characterised as possessing a combination of at least three of the five features: nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy and strong-state advocacy (Mudde, 2004).

Alternative right

The "alternative right" (alt-right) is a community within the "new extreme right," the affiliates and supporters of which range from neo-Nazis to anti-feminists, anti-leftists and freedom of speech campaigners. The label "alt-right" has been flimsily used by mainstream media to explain everything from the ascendency of Donald Trump in the US, the anti-immigrant/Islamophobic rhetoric of European far-right populists, hardcore white supremacists, and even freedom of speech activists; there is no single definition or understanding of the movement. The anti-racist organisation, Hope Not Hate, suggests that "the Alternative Right is a far right, anti-globalist grouping that offers a radical 'alternative' to traditional/establishment conservatism" (2018). There is no single ideological trajectory, but instead a cluster of disparate participants who share a common rejection of "left-wing, liberal democratic, cultural hegemony in Western society, and the rights derived from it" (Hope Not Hate, 2018). The Southern Poverty Law Center suggests that "The alt-right is a set of far-right ideologies, groups and individuals whose core belief is that white identity is under attack by multicultural forces using 'political correctness' and 'social justice' to undermine white people and 'their' civilization" (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.).

Populism

This essay refers to mainstream right-wing political parties and "right-wing populists" separately. Populism is another broad term that can mean anything from militarism to libertarianism (The Economist, 2016). Mudde's (2004) interpretation conceives populism as a "thin-centered ideology that focuses on the antagonism between people and elites against the backdrop of popular sovereignty" (Aslanidis, 2015, p. 1). Right-wing populist parties are "defined by their opposition to immigration and multiculturalism, and concern for protecting national [and European/Australian] culture, particularly from immigrants from Muslim majority countries" (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 12). Traditionally, these parties differ from right-of-centre parties, but research has indicated that major political parties are beginning to "adopt the language and policies of far-right movements" either as a tactic to stay relevant or due to shifting boundaries of "what constitutes extreme views," particularly on social policy issues such as immigration (Gaston, 2017, p. 4).

Australia's Far-right Groups: Beliefs, ideologies and strategies

The evolution of the far right progressed slower in Australia than in Europe and the US; indeed, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) 2011–12 annual report acknowledged that the rise in far-right extremism in

Europe was not equally reflected in Australia (2012). The ideological traits and grievances of the extreme right in Australia are simultaneously very localised and reflective of those of the international extreme-right movement. A range of groups were established, dissolved, reestablished, and evolved. According to Geoff Dean, of the Griffith Criminology Institute, the extreme right-wing movement in Australia includes both old- and new-style groups, ranging from conservative anti-immigration anti-Islam groups (new style) to far-right neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, racist, white supremacist groups (old style) "competing for their ideological market share within the Australian community" (Marshall, 2016, par. 12).

Threat landscape

Different events in Australia's political timeline gave rise to different waves of extremism and shifted "public support from one side of the extremist spectrum to another" (James, 2005).

According to the Australian Institute for Criminology, the first Australian right-wing extremist groups, such as the ex-soldiers' fascist movement known as the White Army, appeared in Australia after World War I (Harris-Hogan, 2017). Since then, movements and groups have been established or developed as a response to changes in the socio-political and economic environments. After World War II, the Australian League of Rights was established, along with other neo-Nazi groups[2] that targeted the Jewish population and Aboriginal Australians (Dean, Bell, & Vakhitova, 2016). During the 1980s, Australia experienced a rise in extreme right violence (Harris-Hogan, 2017), which coincided with a national economic recession and the arrival of 120,000 refugees from Southeast Asia. This was the first large wave of ethnic minority immigrants since the dismantling of the White Australia policy. High interest rates and high levels of unemployment combined with widespread discontent over immigrants from ethnic minority backgrounds provided fertile ground for fear politics and hate speech to take root.

In 1984, the Australian Nationalist Movement (ANM) split from National Action because its members considered National Action to be insufficiently explicit in its anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism (Harris-Hogan, 2017). Members of the newly formed group proceeded to launch a campaign of violence that included brutal assaults and fire bombings. As a result of the escalation in far-

[2] Groups included the Australia First Movement (1930s); Nazi National Socialist Party of Australia / National Front of Australia (1960s); Australian National Alliance (1970s); National Action (neo-Nazi) and Blood & Honour (1980s); Australian Nationalist Movement (1990s); and Australia First Party 1996.

right violence during the 1980s, the 1989 annual report of ASIO warned that "the only discernible domestic threat of politically motivated violence comes from the racist right" (Harris-Hogan, 2017). In 2004, Jack van Tongeren (former leader of the ANM) along with four former ANM associates were convicted of planning to torch and vandalising Chinese restaurants in Perth, although as of 2018, the group is inactive. (Harris-Hogan, 2016)

ASIO's seven annual reports since 2010 indicate a distinct rise in the activity of extreme right-wing groups. The more recent reports (2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016) include references to the potential of the extreme right to engage in violence that "could have a bearing on Australia's security environment" (ASIO, 2014). The 2017 annual report provides further detail about the nature of the violence to be expected, as well as making a direct link between right-wing political violence and terrorism for the first time. Furthermore, Duncan Lewis's remarks on the threat of the extreme right to Australia's national security in 2016 suggested that "ASIO's view is that the far-right violent extremist threat isn't large but has recently become larger than it was" (Zammit, 2016). The characteristics, motivations and activities of the far right/right-wing extremists have evolved in three ways since 9/11. First, the relationship between right-wing populists and right-wing extremists has become harder to discern. Second, although anti-Semitism and holocaust denial still play a core role in traditional far-right extremist rhetoric, anti-Muslim bigotry and Islamophobia shifted the focus largely away from the Jews as the dangerous "other." Third, the expansion of social media sites and how they have been employed by extremists of all kinds has greatly affected the way individuals and groups engage. These factors will be discussed in due course.

Australia's New Extreme Right: A shift towards anti-Islam?

A characteristic of the "new extreme right" includes "'a defiant, aggressive defence of national culture and history in the face of a changing world of secularism, democracy and liberty" (Bartlett & Birdwell, 2011), rather than overt racism and biological supremacy that has characterised traditional right-wing extremism.

As a result of the post-9/11 socio-political backdrop, a range of groups emerged whose main focus is on the perceived threat posed by Muslims and migrants from Arab or African countries (Heffernan, 2017) rooted in the perceived 'Islamisation' of national identity and the alleged threat it poses. These

groups managed to intertwine the threat posed by international terrorists with an alleged influence of Islamic cultural values on Australian society. They have a strong focus on disseminating propaganda and conspiracy theories about Islam and Muslims, such as linking halal certification of food to terrorist financing (Australian Liberty Alliance, 2018).

The shifting dynamics of the extreme right towards an anti-Muslim stance was corroborated by the Australian Security Services. In 2010, ASIO's annual report expressed concern about the persistence of racist, nationalist extremists in Australia, and the 2016-2017 annual report suggested that Muslim communities in Australia are very likely to be among the victims of violence perpetrated by the extreme right (ASIO, 2017). For example, in June 2016, a fire bomb exploded outside Thornlie mosque in Perth during prayer time. This followed two attempted arson attacks on Toowoomba mosque in Brisbane in 2015.

Aside from those promoting anti-Islam sentiments, there are a variety of other far-right extremist groups active in Australia with differing ideological bases. Groups, such as Antipodean Resistance, Reclaim Australia, Aryan Nations and Expel the Parasite, fall into the older style of extreme right groups. Their rhetoric is explicitly neo-Nazi, opting for a clear national socialist, white supremacist, anti-Semitic ideology that is overtly articulated on their websites.

Soldiers of Odin is another neo-Nazi group with links to the Patriots Defence League of Australia; it could be compared to Greece's Golden Dawn. It is a street-based movement with racist, nationalist and fascist politics that explicitly targets Muslims (Bennet, 2016). It is a vigilante group that patrols and intimidates individuals on the streets of Melbourne to "tackle" the "issues" of African youth (Fleming, 2017).

The Lads Society is another relatively new group with links to Antipodean Resistance and Soldiers of Odin. Founded by former United Patriots Front (UPF) member Thomas Sewell, the society is an exclusive men's club that focuses on fitness and resourcefulness, and encourage their members to aspire to achieve "alpha male" status (Puddy, 2018).

The Australian Settlers Rebellion, Patriot Blue, Restore Australia, Nationalist Alternative, UPF, True Blue Crew, Q Society, and its political arm, the Australian Liberty Alliance, are some of the most prominent voices amongst new right wing extremism in Australia. Their supporters range from angry youngsters patrolling in street gangs (e.g. Lad's Society and UPF). To middle class and middle- aged suburban residents discussing their grievances over wine at book clubs (e.g. Q Society). These groups have splintered out of each other; and individuals have broken away from core groups to start new ones as a result of individuals have broken away from one group to start a new one due to ideological disagreements or simply as a result of internal spats. For example, Figure 1 shows how Reclaim Australia spawned a range of splinter groups.

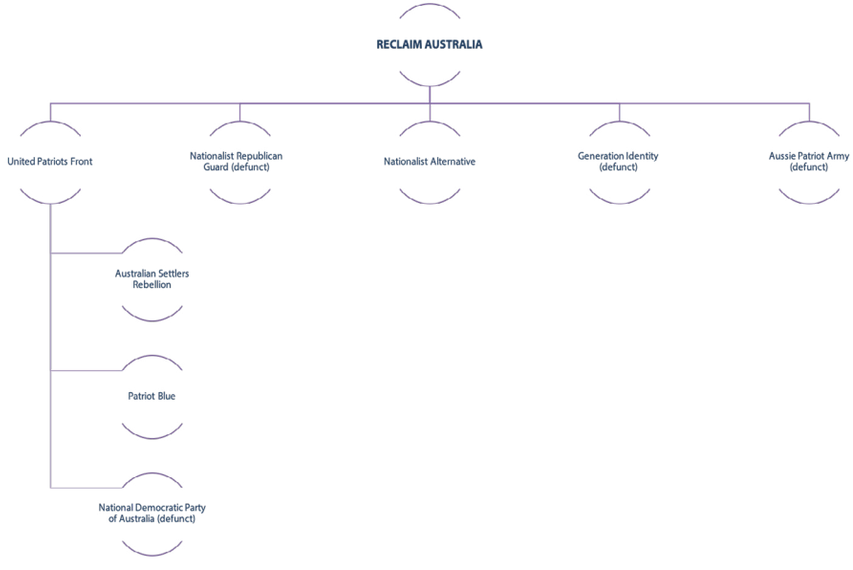


FIGURE 1: Effects of Reclaim Australia

Thus, despite a shared anti-Muslim sentiment, the extreme right spectrum remains both ideologically and organisationally fractured, with little scope for putting aside their differences and consolidating on one unified cause. Right-wing extremism is characterized by a "fragmented, leaderless and multi-dimensional" landscape, which is both highly adaptable and volatile (Davey & Ebner, 2017). For example, even though groups regularly adapt and evolve their strategies and goals according to local socio-political and economic developments, they are often subject to internal tensions and fighting due to ideological clashes or changing beliefs. This feature prevented a single unit of coherent activists evolving and achieving unified strategic goals. Additionally, although a series of charismatic leaders such as Tommy Robinson, Mar-

tin Sellner and Blair Cottrell emerged over time, their influence and impact changes depending on the situation. Individuals emerge temporarily and usually slip back into obscurity. Despite a common anti-Islam stance, there is no specific cohesive ideology that links the groups; ideologically and strategically they are a disparate collection of groups and individuals that are unable to form a united movement. Conflicting views, even within the same group, highlight deep ideological inconsistencies that infuse them. Safran's analysis concludes that the new wave of extreme far-right activists in Australia are "strange people with radical thoughts—from national socialism to apocalyptic Christianity—hitting the streets and playing dress-ups as regular Australians" (2017), emphasising that no single ideological trajectory is pursued and that the movement consists of a hodgepodge of varied views and opinions conflicting and aligning at various points.

International Connections

Some Australian groups established international connections to radical right-wing populists and/or extremists around the globe. The alternative right Q Society and its political wing, the Australian Liberty Alliance, leveraged their members' wealth and outreach to establish connections with international populists such as Geert Wilders (Safran, 2017), who spoke at a handful of their events over the past four years (i.e. Q Society).

As outlined in the case study below, the extreme-right Australian group Antipodean Resistance is known to have connections to the now-banned UK terrorist organisation National Action, Atomwaffen Division in the US, and the Nordic Resistance Movement in Norway, Sweden and Finland (Figure 2). Those connections are worrying due to the trajectory that the international groups adopted: in December 2016, National Action was proscribed as a terrorist organisation and banned for its overtly violent nature (National Action supporters celebrated the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox); in September 2017, five National Action members were arrested for preparing terrorist acts, and a further six members were arrested in January 2018 (BBC, 2018); and in November 2016 and January 2017 Nordic Resistance Movement's Swedish affiliate members were convicted of carrying out three bomb attacks.

FIGURE 2: The IronMarch.org homepage lists groups that are hosted on the site, labelling Antipodean Resistance among "affiliated" fascist groups

Reclaim Australia is strongly inspired and influenced by the British anti-Islam movement, fronted by both the British National Party and the English Defence League (EDL). Shermon Burgess, the architect of Reclaim Australia, was formerly a founding member of the Australian Defence League, which was set up to mirror the goals and tactics of the EDL in the UK (New Matilda, 2014).

In May 2018, proponents of international far-right and alt-right groups - including in Australia - used social media platforms to coordinate rallies, share content and disseminate propaganda to protest the arrest and imprisonment of the former EDL leader, Tommy Robinson (Dearden, 2018). Their online coordination strategy echoes Generation Identity's pan-European Defend Europe campaign from May 2017 to disrupt the flow of migrants crossing into Europe from Libya (Oppenheim, 2017). In both instances (although not in size), both campaigns demonstrate how "groups and individuals are prepared to put aside ideological differences which have previously caused divisions and ruptures in the extreme right ecosystem and instead focus on commonality" (Gaston, 2017).

Communication & Coordination: Offline vs. Online

Right-wing extremist groups are active in cities across Australia, from Brisbane to Bendigo and from Cronulla to Canberra (Safran, 2017). Groups and individual members engage in a range of activities and provocations, using various tools and resources with multifaceted goals of recruiting supporters, cultivating a sense of victimhood, establishing networks, spreading propaganda, and mobilising into action.

However, research has established that group membership of far-right organisations in the traditional sense is at an all-time low, but far-right hate is growing online (Lowles and Atkinson, 2018). Although some organisations do have physical headquarters, much of their engagement, mobilisation, propaganda dissemination and recruitment are done online, via social media platforms, organisations' websites, discussion forums and alternative media sites. In order to understand the reach, influence, and potential of the extreme right to mobilise action, having a solid understanding of online and offline communication and coordination strategies is vital.

Offline: Public protests, rallies, and violent actions

Core offline communication and coordination activities include pub meet-ups and discussion groups, vigilante-style street patrolling, putting up posters and stickers on the streets, rallies, harassment and antisocial behaviour (Tran, 2017).

A proposal to build a mosque in Bendigo, a small city in Victoria, was the catalyst for a series of anti-Muslim provocations, rallies, and protests between February and October 2015—all across Australia. In one instance, three UPF members—Blair Cottrell, Christopher Shortis, and Neil Erikson—filmed themselves carrying out a mock beheading of a toy mannequin outside the Bendigo council offices. Although the trio were found guilty of inciting serious contempt, revulsion or ridicule of Muslims under Victoria's Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (September 2017, each was fined $2,000), they managed to motivate substantial support for their anti-Muslim rallies during 2015. At its height, the UPF mobilised up to 600 protesters (ABC News, 2015), which demonstrated that right-wing extremist anti-Muslim sentiment was capable of being translated from the keyboard into large-scale action on the ground.

The 4 April 2015 Reclaim Australia rallies were the most notorious in terms of numbers and coordination; several thousand supporters attended more than a dozen rallies across the country. Following this momentum, in November 2015, 500 Reclaim Australia supporters rallied in Melton, Victoria, against the influence of Islamic culture in Australia (ABC News, 2015). In February 2016, 350 UPF supporters gathered in Bendigo to protest against the proposed mosque (ABC News, 2016). In another UPF provocation, a former member and the current leader of Patriot Blue, Neil Erikson, shouted abuse at Labor Senator Sam Dastyari in a Melbourne pub, calling him a terrorist and a monkey (Percy, 2018). Reclaim Australia, the Australian Liberty Alliance and Q Society have also carried out a series of well-coordinated and successful rallies—in May and June 2018, these groups were mobilised by an online campaign propelled by the international alt-right movement which called for the release of former EDL leader Tommy Robinson, who had been jailed in the UK (BBC News, 2016). Hundreds of supporters marched across six cities in Australia on the same day that thousands marched in London, The Hague, and other cities worldwide. This was the first time that the mobilisation potential of the international alt-right had demonstrated an impact on the Australian far right.

Aside from rallies and protests, groups —such as Antipodean Resistance and Restore Australia— engage in concerted propaganda distribution campaigns that involve flyers, posters, and stickers being put up in local neighbourhoods. Antipodean Resistance also publishes a monthly action report on its website, documenting its activities. The report archive is a useful resource for examining the trajectory of the group and how its activities have expanded since 2016. For example, in May 2018, activists in South Australia attended a public rally for the first time, possibly indicating an interest in expanding their operations (Antipodean Resistance, 2018).

Online

Almost all extreme right-wing groups have an active online presence. At a basic level, a dedicated website clearly communicates information about their missions, policies, membership requirements, funding opportunities, and activities. To complement this, they use social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, to communicate, recruit, mobilise, and disseminate propaganda. Added to that are alternative discussion sites that act as a type of online vigilante movement, which function as "the new battle front against the progressive

left, social justice warriors and political correctness" (Flitton, 2016). Australian websites include *The Unshackled* (2016) and *XYZ*, which are similar (in style and content, if not in scale and reach) to Steve Bannon's *Breitbart* and Richard Spencer's *Altright.com* (which has since been removed). International sites used by Australian groups include *Stormfront* and the now defunct *IronMarch*.

As a result of social media platforms' clampdowns on hate speech and extremist content online, many Facebook and Twitter pages of extreme right groups have been shut down or suspended. Alternative social media networking sites, such as Gab.ai (registered in the US), have cropped up as a result where extremist content is discussed and shared relatively freely. While there are compelling arguments in favour of censorship of hate speech, sites such Gab indicate that taking down content does not kill the ideology, but instead pushes it underground or away from mainstream sites where it might be easier to monitor.

The internet and the proliferation of social media platforms present us with three key challenges to assessing the threat posed by actors across the far right:

- Due to the anonymity of the internet, one individual can operate under multiple profiles, giving the impression that a group has more followers than it does. This means collecting accurate group membership statistics is challenging.
- Localised group chapters and factions all have different online profiles, making it harder to know which ones are genuine affiliates and which are entities of their own. Additionally, the tendency of groups to rebrand to avoid censorship from authorities means that new group pages or handles might not be immediately followed by existing members. Furthermore, group leaders and members regularly switch allegiance as a result of internal tensions or ideological disagreements, which adds further complexity to an already ideologically fractured movement. For example, before they set up the UPF in 2015, Blair Cottrell, Neil Erikson, and Thomas Sewell were formerly members of Nationalist Alternative. A year later, Erikson and Burgess left the UPF to start the Australian Settlers Rebellion, citing ideological differences.
- The extent to which online interaction and engagement translate to offline action is ambiguous. For example, before its Facebook page was removed in May 2017, the UPF had 120,000 likes, and UPF chairman Blair Cottrell's currently active Twitter profile has more than 20,000 followers, but the UPF's largest rally to date drew 600–1,000 supporters to Bendigo to protest the building of a mosque. This demonstrates that online group membership does not necessarily directly translate to offline action, which makes gauging the size and organisational potential of groups challenging.

Analysing online strategic communications of the extreme right

A study by Norris, Lincoln & Wilson (2005) on online hate in Australia examined more than 200 websites believed to be promoting hate speech. The sites were divided into three categories—"in-your-face," "false information" and "soft sell"—in accordance with Kevin Borgeson and Robin Valeri's proposed categorisations of anti-Semitic websites (Borgeson & Valeri, 2004). The findings of the 2005 study remain relevant to today's incarnations of the new far right. Not only do right-wing extremists employ a communications strategy to disguise exclusivist and racial supremacist beliefs as something more ambiguous and less dangerous, but they also avidly disseminate 'false information' with the intention to manipulate messages to achieve strategic goals.

The soft-sell approach used by some groups uses ambiguous, toned-down messaging; "it may feature the same rhetoric as the in-your-face sites but instead is somewhat more sophisticated and covert in its delivery," making it harder for users to discern and recognise prejudicial material. Norris, Lincoln and Wilson (2005) prophesied that "hate groups therefore may become shrewder in their presentation of this material and deliver it in such a manner that its primary aim is indistinguishable from its intended purpose" (Lincoln, Norris & Wilson, 2005, p. 3). In Australia's case, groups such as the UPF, the Q Society, Love Australia or Leave, and One Nation that use less extreme rhetoric than the overtly fascist Expel the Parasite, Antipodean Resistance and Aryan Nations, may have the potential to be just as toxic and dangerous; it would be prudent to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations behind their causes. Toned-down messages do not necessarily equal toned-down threat; extreme groups aim to penetrate more mainstream audiences by using less extreme voices. Such "radicalisation of the normies" can be just as sinister as those that are more overt in their approach.

For example, the language used by the United Patriots Front and True Blue Crew to communicate their aims and objectives on their (now inactive) websites is rooted in the rhetoric of nation building, and the promotion of Australian values such as community, family and education, which is an example

of the "soft sell approach." However, the sentiments that are espoused malign specific ethnic groups, promote a strong anti-immigration and anti-Islam sentiment. (Crothers, 2016; Koslowski, 2019)

By contrast, Antipodean Resistance's in your face approach is clearly unambiguous. Antipodean Resistance directly compares itself to the Nazi Hitler Youth—they state, "We are the Hitlers you've been waiting for," and their criteria for membership is based on a national socialist ideology that is rooted in biological racism based on white supremacy, anti-Semitism and homophobia. As analysed by Haroro Ingram, Islamic State's "multidimensional, multi-platform approach that simultaneously targets 'friends and foes' to enhance the reach, relevance and resonance of its messaging … to maximise operational and strategic 'effects'" is a form of information warfare that is similar to the strategies employed by the far right (2014, p.1). Far-right groups have cultivated an extraordinary network of online connections that allow the rapid dissemination of content to a widespread, international audience. The internet has facilitated the spread of hateful information and propaganda at considerable speed and scale, allowing anyone to access vitriolic material from anywhere in the world.

The influence and threat of the far right in Australia should not be overstated, but it is important for policymakers, law enforcement and security personnel to have a deeper understanding of how the movement has evolved, its potential to grow and how it seeks to influence others and recruit followers.

Case Study 1: The alt-right's use of the internet to mobilise offline action in Australia

The latest wave of right-wing rallies in Australia took place in May and June 2018, when members of a range of different groups—including the Australian Liberty Alliance, Reclaim Australia, NSW Patriots, and others—gathered in six large cities to protest the arrest of British far-right extremist Tommy Robinson. The former EDL leader was arrested in the UK for "allegedly breaching the peace" outside a trial (Dearden, 2018); he was subsequently jailed for 13 months for "potentially prejudicing a court case" (BBC News, 2018). Protesters gathered in venues including Downing Street and downtown Perth on 28 May. Further demonstrations were planned for 9–10 June 2018 to coincide with scheduled protests in the UK, claiming to be in defence of "freedom of speech."

[3] Australian Liberty Alliance Facebook page, online.

The influence and coordination of the international alt-right online movement mobilised international support via social media and the use of the hashtags #IamTommy and #FreeTommy. The Australian Liberty Alliance drew in local support with the hashtags #FreeSonia and #FreeAustralia. In just 24 hours, 90,000 people signed an online petition calling for Robinson's release (Change.org, 2018).[3]

In Australia, around 250 people are thought to have attended a rally on 28 May organised by the Australian Liberty Alliance and mobilised via the group's now suspended Facebook page (Munro, 2018; Hiscox, 2018). Reclaim Australia and the Australian Liberty Alliance Facebook pages created and shared their own video content, reposted information from like-minded groups and called on members from across the extreme right spectrum to unite. The Alliance's Avi Yemini's latest video asks for individuals to put aside ideological differences in order to coordinate and mobilise a wide group of people in the name of freedom of speech and the anti-Islamisation of Australia: "the time has come to stand up and unite, no matter what side of the political divide you sit on" (Australian Liberty Alliance, 2018).

The alt-right's relatively successful strategic communications campaign has facilitated the growth of online hate and is encouraging more offline action. The #FreeTommy campaign gained traction from the UK to Australia, demonstrating the potential of the international alt-right to leverage common grievances and shared goals to attempt to unite neo-Nazi fascists and right-wing populists. From video footage, the turnout for the rally in Melbourne on 28 May appeared considerable, although exact numbers are unknown (Munro, 2018); the video was viewed more than 400,000 times.[4] The #FreeTommy campaign is a good case study to illustrate the extent of cross-ideological, interstate and international cooperation and mobilisation of the extreme right. Members of groups across the extreme right-wing spectrum repackaged shared grievances, such as the perceived threat of Islam to Australian and European culture and values, with social media hashtags "to appeal to a wide range of audiences and cement a more cohesive ideology" (Gaston, 2017). This example supports the Institute for Strategic Dialogue's rigorous analysis of right-wing extremists' online strategic communications in Europe, which concluded that groups built "bridges across geographic and ideological divisions to leverage their online and offline activities and penetrate new audiences" (Davey & Ebner, 2017). This campaign exemplifies how the internet allowed tech-savvy alt-right activists to conduct a strategic campaign that identified points of convergence

[3] Tommy Robinson Facebook profile, online.

among a discordant set of different organisations and groups to self-identify as facing an identifiable group of common enemies.

Case Study 2: Antipodean Resistance recruitment and propaganda

Antipodean Resistance (AR) began in Melbourne in February 2016 as an online community, posting on the web forum IronMarch, before starting its own website in November of that year. Since then, the group has grown in reach and support; there are regional chapters across Australia from New South Wales and Victoria to Queensland and South Australia. Furthermore, it recently established a women's chapter.

Despite not yet engaging in physical violence to achieve its objectives, and denying any affiliation to terrorists, AR directly compares itself to the Nazi Hitler Youth ('We are the Hitlers you've been waiting for'). Furthermore, its criteria for membership demonstrate it is strongly committed to a national socialist ideology that is rooted in biological racism based on white supremacy, anti-Semitism and homophobia, which distinguishes it from the new right-wing extremist groups such as the UPF or Reclaim Australia.

Julie Nathan's meticulous research (Nathan, 2018) found that AR's propaganda fits into three main categories: anti-Semitic, homophobic/alpha-male and pro-Nazi, with occasional anti-Aboriginal and anti-immigrant propaganda. The group's January action report featured Australia Day propaganda, renamed as Happy Invasion Day (Figure 3) (Antipodean Resistance, 2018).

FIGURE 3: Antipodean Resistance propaganda

AR's main offline activities include putting up posters/stickers, and mural painting to distribute propaganda, as well as outdoors survival and fitness training camps to build up members' physical prowess. It is active in all states and territories, particularly in NSW, Queensland, and South Australia. One of its cannier incidents distributing flyers occurred at the University of Melbourne in 2017. AR activists put up posters at the university written in simple Mandarin, calling on all Chinese students to report to the university office or be deported from Australia (Nathan, 2017). The aim was to make the Chinese students feel unwelcome and to steer them away from the campus.

Online, AR is predominantly active on its website, via the social media platform Gab and on YouTube. Its Twitter account was shut down in December 2017 after only 10 months in operation. Both the website and Gab accounts are regularly updated. Its website offers a comprehensive insight into its ideological basis, aims, objectives, activities and plans for the future. Since December 2016, a monthly action report is published on its website, documenting its activities. For example, the April 2018 report provided updates on new activities, growth in membership numbers and physical training exercises (Antipodean Resistance, 2018). A large portion of the report was dedicated to social events and celebrations for Hitler's birthday on 20 April; neo-Nazis often co-opt the '420' day that is celebrated by marijuana aficionados.[5]

Gab is used to track where stickers and posters were put up in towns across Australia. In April 2018, both the Gab account and the AR's website announced that more than 70 posters were put up in Green Square, Sydney, to celebrate Hitler's birthday. Gab is also used by AR members and critics to engage in discussions about their ideology and grievances, their actions (or lack thereof) and their strategy and to make links and connections. AR also posts videos on *bitchute* and *vidme*.

AR employs a gendered, sexist and racist recruitment strategy that constructs specific roles and images for men and women to aspire to. To join the men's chapter, you are required to be white, straight, young and monogamous. Men are revered for achieving optimal physical prowess in accordance with the alpha male stereotype. Men who are virile, strong, brave and white are elevated, but those who are not (homosexuals, Jews and ethnic minorities) are deprecated (Figure 4). The nuclear family and the obligation to procreate are celebrated as a biological requirement for survival; the rhetoric reads as if this is a sacred and ordained role. The newly established women's wing uses similar propaganda to recruit women to supportive roles within the national socialist community. The status of women is elevated by supporting their male counterparts through domestic activities and by fulfilling circumscribed gen-

[5] 'Australian supremacist @KangarooNationalist, *Gab,* May 2018, online.

der roles that "strive to be the peak of womanhood, the height of femininity and the ideal woman" (Antipodean Resistance, 2018). Interestingly, there are many parallels between the propaganda used by AR to recruit supporters and the propaganda used by Islamist extremist organisations, even sharing a call to arms.

FIGURE 4: Image taken from AR action report, February 2018

AR poses a clear security threat to "the safety and security of Jews, homosexuals and non-white immigrants" (Nathan, 2017). According to its website and reports in mainstream media, its membership may be growing, although that claim was not verified. However, ASIO's 2015 annual report commented on the rise in activity of the far right, including the "extensive and vitriolic" online engagement of those with extremist agendas, indicating that such tensions "increase potential for spontaneous violent activities"(ASIO, 2017). Therefore, it would be in the interests of public safety and security to monitor AR's offline and online activities to ensure that its potential to mobilise violence is visible.

This essay attempted to capture the vast and complex features of the extreme right landscape in Australia and to place the local threat within the broader context of the international threat of the extreme right.

The essay presents two key findings. First, there is an emerging threat in Australia from the extreme right, based on the pattern observed in other countries such as the UK. In many ways, right-wing extremism in Australia reflects trends in Europe and the US, albeit at a slower pace. As in European nations, Australia is experiencing a growing anti-Islam, anti-immigrant sentiment, along with a clear nationalist and white protectionist agenda. The perceived threat of the 'Islamisation' of Australia, combined with a deepening distrust of mainstream politics and governments, has created a set of common goals for both radical right-wing populists and right-wing extremists. A climate of fear and insecurity, rooted in perceived socio-economic injustices, has developed and has created opportunities for extreme right-wing ideologues to step in and propose solutions.

In other ways, right-wing extremism in Australia differs from international trends. As with overseas groups, many of the grievances in Australia are heavily localised and are rooted in political histories that are unique to Australian identity. The tools drawn upon by the extreme right in Australia reflect this sentiment and would therefore not be able to be harnessed at the international level to leverage widespread support for local initiatives (for example, #InvasionDay and #DingoTwitter on Twitter are relevant only to an Australian audience). Furthermore, although anti-Islam sentiment characterises much of the core grievances of the new extreme right, there remains a latent prejudice against the Asian and Indigenous communities. Antipodean Resistance's campaign against Chinese students at the University of Melbourne, as well as anecdotal accounts of concerns in Sydney's Penrith and Hawkesbury areas, indicate that the age-old enemy of Australia's far-right groups has not been totally discarded.

The second key finding suggests that in responding to this emerging threat, it is essential to understand the differences and nuances between the various far right groups, including their communication strategies — both online and offline.

Australia is yet to experience the same levels of coordination and mobilisation

across extreme right-wing groups as in Europe or the US. However, it would be prudent to identify where the fault lines are in order to evaluate the groups' evolution; at this stage an identitarian movement that is similar to those in Europe and the US is growing in Australia. Groups such as the Australian Liberty Alliance, Reclaim Australia and the UPF are at the forefront of this movement, campaigning against the perceived threat of Islamic culture; using a strategy of victimisation and demonisation rooted in eurocentric culture and Australian values, rather than overt white supremacist racism, toxic messages and hateful rhetoric are toned down and penetrate more mainstream audiences. The 2018 wave of activism online, and the subsequent offline protests (#FreeTommy), indicate that online movements do have the potential to mobilise offline. With the right strategic communications strategy, as Martin Sellner suggested, Australia is fertile ground for large-scale activism to take root: "it's just a matter of time until a few people take it up and adapt the strategies to Australia" (Miller, 2018).

Right-wing extremists are a discordant set of different organisations and groupings that nevertheless share a somewhat unifying thread of ideological and practical grievances, and they self-identify as facing a group of common enemies. Right-wing extremism is riven with internal tensions and ideological fractures within groups, meaning that individuals regularly leave one group to join another. This has prevented the cultivation of a coherent and coordinated mobilisation strategy, instead producing different clusters acting either in collaboration or in opposition to each other.

The influence and threat of far-right extremism in Australia should not be overstated, but it remains clear that there exists a real and growing threat. ASIO has acknowledged that the threat of right-wing extremism to Australia's national security has been steadily growing over the past seven years. Indeed, in 2016, Australia saw the first conviction of an individual under terrorism legislation for far-right motivated violence. The trajectory of far-right motivated violence in Australia suggests that this may not be an isolated incident, and security personnel need to be prepared for the possibility of further violence in the future.

Recommendations

1. **Work with Australian grassroots organisations to inform policymaking and practice**
   The Australian Government should establish clear connections and objectives with grassroots organisations, researchers and practitioners working in the field of anti-racism, anti-hate and right-wing extremism, both online and offline in Australia. An initial objective could be to identify gaps in knowledge about the extreme right in Australia and to commission research to inform future policy and practice. A secondary objective would be to work with those groups and to invest in their development of counter-narrative and counter-speech campaigns. Groups such as All Together Now (already working with the NSW Government), Exit Australia, the Online Hate Prevention Institute, and Anti-Fascist Action Sydney are examples of grassroots activist organisations working to address issues of hate and extreme far-right content offline and online.

2. **Build bridges and connections with overseas partners**
   Academics, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners should engage in regular discussions and capacity-building exercises with counterparts overseas. Coordinating with like-minded counterparts in the UK, mainland Europe (Ramalingam, 2014), and the US on how to develop strategic responses to issues such as countering and preventing violent extremism, anti-racism, and anti-hate will enable a more comprehensive approach to tackling the challenges posed by the far right. This would include research and development, practitioner guidelines, and best practice policy responses.

3. **Invest in future research on emerging actors of political violence**
   While counterterrorism focused on Islamist extremism is a continuing priority, and countering foreign interference is a rising priority, government agencies need to also invest in understanding emerging far-right groups and, in particular, understanding which groups might shift to a more violent agenda. As acknowledged in ASIO's annual reports, Australia might be witnessing a trajectory of increased violence among right-wing extremists. Further research into the dangers of cumulative extremism would also be highly relevant to developing a better understanding of community cohesion and social integration challenges between ethnic minority com-

munities and right-wing extremists in Australia. Additionally, research into the gendered recruitment and mobilisation strategies of right-wing extremist groups, would be worthwhile, especially to ascertain the roles of women in organisations that are rife with male supremacy.

4. **Provide research tools and software requirements**
Social media listening software and data-gathering tools will allow for a more rigorous quantitative analysis of open-source information via online social media platforms. These tools will provide a more complete picture of the extreme-right landscape and a deeper understanding of the activities of extreme-right groups, including membership demographics and location hotspots. For example, a geographical mapping exercise of extreme right-wing supporters was beyond the scope of this paper but would be a useful resource in monitoring how groups evolve online and offline in Australia. All research data would be collected from open sources, in accordance with data privacy laws. Australian think tanks and academic institutions would be best placed to conduct this research but would require greater government and private sector investment.

REFERENCES

AAP. (29 June 2016). Perth mosque attack: Petrol bomb explodes as hundreds worship. *The Australian.* Retrieved from https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theaustralian.com.au%2Fnews%2Fnation%2Fperth-mosque-attack-petrol-bomb-explodes-as-hundreds-worship%2Fnews-story%2Fbb820e4c042906080c6a07620a86f012&usg=AOvVaw18kpAXeuu0wd97j9VbcJtI.

Anti-mosque protesters face off with counter activists in Bendigo. (2015, October 10). *Australian Broadcasting Company.* Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-10-10/police-prepare-for-violent-mosque-rallies-in-bendigo/6842862.

Antipodean Resistance. (2018, January 30). January 2018 Action Report. Retrieved from http://antipodean-resistance.info/news/2018/01/30/january-2018-action-report/index.html.

Antipodean Resistance (2018, May 30). May 2018 Action Report. Retrieved from http://antipodean-resistance.info/news/2018/05/30/may-2018-action-report/index.html.

Australian Liberty Alliance. (May 2018). Home Page. Retrieved from https://www.australianlibertyalliance.org.au/.

Tracking Terrorism. (n.d.). Australian Nationalist Movement (ANM). Retrieved from https://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/australian-nationalist-movement-anm.

ASIO. (2012). *ASIO Report to Parliament 2011–12(Rep.).* Retrieved from https://www.asio.gov.au/sites/default/files/ASIO%20Report%20to%20Parliament%202011-12_0.pdf.

ASIO. (2014). *ASIO Report to Parliament 2013–14(Rep.).* Retrieved from https://www.asio.gov.au/sites/default/files/ASIO%20Report%20to%20Parliament%202013-14.pdf.

ASIO. (2017). *ASIO Report to Parliament 2016–17(Rep.).* Retrieved from https://www.asio.gov.au/sites/default/files/Annual%20Report%202016-17.pdf.

Aslanidis, P. (2015). Is Populism an Ideology? A Refutation and a New Perspective. *Political Studies, 64*(1), 88-104. doi:10.1111/1467-9248.12224

Arrests as Reclaim Australia, anti-racism protesters clash in Melton. (2015, November 22). Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-22/reclaim-australia-no-room-for-racism-rallies-clash-in-melton/6961942.

Atkinson, G. & Lowles, N. (2018). *2018 State of Hate* (Rep.). HOPE not Hate.

Australian Government. (n.d.). What is violent extremism? *Living Safe Together.* Retrieved from https://www.livingsafetogether.gov.au%2Faboutus%2FDocuments%2Fwhat-is-violent-extremism.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2rAjbHjUT_N7JPrBHKtmeV&cshid=1556087130209538.

Bartlett, J. & Birdwell, J. (25 July 2011). The Rise of the Radical Right. *Foreign Policy.* Retrieved from https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/07/25/rise-of-the-radical-right/.

Bartlett, J., Birdwell, J., & De Lange, S. (2012). *Populism in Europe: Netherlands* (Rep.). Demos.

Bennet, K. (2016, November 11). Who are the Soldiers of Odin? Retrieved from http://www.kieransreview.com/2016/10/10/who-are-the-soldiers-of-odin/.

Borgeson, K. and Valeri, R. Faces of Hate, Journal of Applied Sociology/Social Practice Vol. 21 No.2/ Vol. 6 No.2, Fall 2004, pp.99-111, [accessed online] https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/193672440421002O5.

BBC. (2018, January 03). Six held in far-right group National Action investigation. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-42552750.

United Kingdom, Secretary of State for the Home Department. (2015). *Counter-Extremism Strategy.*

Crothers, J. (2016, August 28). Far-right group holds anti-Islam rally at Melton in Melbourne's outer west. Australian Broadcasting Company. Retrieved from: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-08-28/true-blue-crew-holds-anti-islam-rally-at-melton-melbourne/7792284

Davey, J., & Ebner, J. (2017). *The Fringe Insurgency: Connectivity, Convergence and Mainstreaming of the Extreme Right* (Rep.). Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

Dean, G., Bell, P., & Vakhitova, Z. (2016). Right-wing extremism in Australia: The rise of the new radical right. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, 11*(2), 121-142. doi:10.1080/18335330.2016.1231414.

Dearden, L. (2018, May 25). Tommy Robinson arrested for 'breaching the peace' outside court during grooming trial. Retrieved from https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/tommy-robinson-arrested-leeds-court-child-grooming-trial-edl-founder-latest-a8368821.html.

Direct of Public Public Prosecutions (CTH) v. Phillip Michael Galea (February 7, 2018) (Law Library of Victoria, Dist. file).

Eatwell, R. (2006). Community Cohesion and Cumulative Extremism in Contemporary Britain. *The Political Quarterly, 77*(2), 204-216. doi:10.1111/j.1467-923x.2006.00763.x

Eatwell, R., & Goodwin, M. J. (2010). *The new extremism in 21st Century Britain.* London: Routledge.

Ex-EDL leader Tommy Robinson jailed at Leeds court. (2018, May 29). Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-leeds-44287640.

Federal Register of Legislation - Australian Government. (2003). Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2004A01125.

Flitton, D. (26 November 2016). Keyboard warriors of the alt-right have Australian in their sights. *Sydney Morning Herald.* Retrieved from https://www.smh.com.au/national/keyboard-warriors-of-the-altright-have-australia-in-their-sights-20161126-gsy43e.html.

Fleming, A. (2017, October 28). 'The Lads Society': A new neo-Nazi social club opens in Melbourne. Retrieved from http://slackbastard.anarchobase.com/?p=41981.

Gaston, S. (2017). *Far-Right Extremism in the Populist Age* (Rep.). Demos.

Goodman, R., Accused far-right extremist was 'nuts', associate tells court, 3 September 2018, The Age, https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/accused-far-right-extremist-was-nuts-associate-tells-court-20180903-p501iw.html.

Goonrey, A. (2017, March 17). Hate speech and freedom of speech in Australia. Retrieved from http://www.hrmonline.com.au/section/legal/hate-speech-freedom-speech-australia/.

Hope Not Hate. (n.d.). *What is the alternative right? The International Alternative Right.* Retrieved from https://alternativeright.hopenothate.com/what-is-the-alternative-right.

Hiscox, D. (2018, May 29). Australians rally for Tommy Robinson. *XYZ.* Retrieved from: https://www.xyz.net.au/australians-rally-tommy-robinson/.

Hall, B. (2016, January 01). Restore Australia: The party that would ban Islam. Retrieved from https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/restore-australia-the-party-that-would-ban-islam-20160101-glxsfh.html.

Harris-Hogan, S. (2017). *Violent extremism in Australia: An overview* (Rep.). Australian Institute of Criminology.

Heffernan, S. (2017, January 16). The Australian Settlers Rebellion Alive, Well and Not Racist. Retrieved from https://www.livetradingnews.com/australian-settlers-rebellion-alive-well-not-racist-26632.html#.W-QeU5MzaUk.

Ingram, Haroro, Three traits of the Islamic State's information warfare, 2014, The Rusi Journal, 159:6, pp. 4-11 [accessed online] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03071847.2014.990810?needAccess=true.

James, S. (2005). The Policing of Right-Wing Violence in Australia. *Police Practice and Research, 6*(2), 103-119. doi:10.1080/15614260500121088

Kincaid, J. D. (2017). Theorizing the radical right: Directions for social movements research on the right-wing social movements. *Sociology Compass,11*(5). doi:10.1111/soc4.12469.

Koslowski, M. (2019, January 11). How Australia's far-right were divided and conquered-by themselves. The Sydney Morning Herald. Retrieved from https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/how-australia-s-far-right-were-divided-and-conquered-by-themselves-20190108-p50qcb.html

Littler, M. (2018). *Online Radicalization, Risk and Terrorism in the Digital Space* (Publication). SETA.

Marshall, A. (2016). Far-Right Extremist groups alive and well in Australia. Retrieved from https://app.secure.griffith.edu.au/news/2016/11/25/far-right-extremist-groups-alive-and-well-in-australia/.

McNamara, L., & Gelber, K. (2014, May 09). Explainer: How do Australia's laws on hate speech work in practice? Retrieved from https://theconversation.com/explainer-how-do-australias-laws-on-hate-speech-work-in-practice-26105.

Miller, N. (2018, April 09). The man behind the far-right hipsters. Retrieved from https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/the-man-behind-the-far-right-hipsters-20180406-p4z84v.html.

Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition, 39*(4), 542-563. doi:10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x.

Munro, M. (2018, July 11). Massive Crowds Gather In Support of Tommy Robinson in Melbourne Australia. Retrieved from https://www.theunshackled.net/rundown/massive-crowds-gather-in-support-of-tommy-robinson-in-melbourne-australia/.

Nathan, J. (2018, April 20). Antipodean Resistance: The Rise and Goals of Australia's New Nazis. Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/religion/antipodean-resistance-the-rise-and-goals-of-australias-new-nazis/10094794.

New Matilda. (2015, September 16). Who Are The Australian Defence League? Retrieved from https://newmatilda.com/2014/01/29/who-are-australian-defence-league/.

Norris, G., Lincoln, R., & Wilson, P. (2005). *Contemporary comment: An examination of Australian internet hate sites*(Rep.). Bond University.

Norris, P. (2005). *Radical right: Voters and parties in the electoral market.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Oppenheim, M. (2017, August 21). Defend Europe: Far-right ship stopping refugees ends its mission after a series of setbacks. Retrieved from https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe /defend-europe-far-right-ship-stop-refugees-mediterranean-end-mission-c-star-setbacks-migrant-boats-a7904466.html.

Percy, K. (2018, March 13). 'Are you not pathetic?' Judge scolds 'childish' far-right activist. Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-13/neil-erikson-childish-court-wears-toll-vest/9542114.

Press, A. A. (2016, October 31). Victorian extremist Phillip Galea planned to bomb leftwing premises, police say. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/oct/31/victorian-extremist-phillip-galea-planned-to-bomb-leftwing-premises-police-say.

Puddy, R. (2018, June 07). Far right nationalists open private men-only clubs in Melbourne and Sydney. Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-07/far-right-opens-men-only-clubs-in-melbourne-and-sydney/9836458.

Ramalingam, V. (2014). *On the Front Line: A guide to countering far-right extremism* (Rep.). Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

Robertson, J. (2015, April 17). Toowoomba mosque damaged by second suspected arson attack. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/apr/17/toowoomba-mosque-damaged-by-second-suspected-arson-attack.

Safran, J. (2017). *Depends what you mean by extremist: Going rogue with Australian deplorables.* Melbourne, Victoria: Penguin Random House Australia.

Schmid, A. P. (2013). *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*(Rep.). International Center for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague.

Southern Poverty Law Center. (n.d.). Alt-Right. Retrieved from https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/alt-right.

Tran, D. (2017, November 10). Patriot Blue is ambushing politicians to get publicity. Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-09/patriot-blue-australia-far-right-groups/9134338.

UPF supporters outnumber anti-racism protesters in Bendigo. (2016, February 27). Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-27/anti-racism-group-calls-for-peaceful-protest-in-bendigo/7205178.

What is populism? (16 December 2016). *The Economist.* Retrieved from https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2016/12/19/what-is-populism.

Zammit, A. (2016, November 1). Far-right violent extremism in Australia: What's new? Retrieved from https://andrewzammit.org/2016/11/01/far-right-violent-extremism-in-australia-whats-new/.

Zannettou, S., Bradlyn, B., De Cristofaro, E., Kwak, H., Sirivianos, M., Stringini, G., & Blackburn, J. (2018, April). What is gab: A bastion of free speech or an alt-right echo chamber. In *Companion of the The Web Conference 2018 on The Web Conference 2018* (pp. 1007-1014). International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee. Retrieved from http://www0.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/G.Stringhini/papers/gab-CYBERSAFETY2018.pdf.

"There is no one pathway. While violent extremism is predominantly a collective and social enterprise, and dependent on context, for each individual involved there are different enabling, and push and pull factors impacting the path to violent extremism."

4 HOW GENDER MATTERS IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND EFFORTS TO COUNTER IT

Elizabeth Pearson

This paper and the corresponding presentation at the Hedayah CVE Conference, Swansea 2018 are based on original research conducted with Emily Winterbotham, Senior Research Fellow at the London-based think tank, RUSI. This research was funded by the Kanishka programme, part of the Public Safety Canada Research Fund on Violent Extremism. Funding has no bearing on findings. It was originally published in the RUSI Journal: Winterbotham & Pearson (2016) Different Cities, Shared Stories, The RUSI Journal, 161:5, pp. 54-65, and Pearson & Winterbotham (2017) Women, Gender and Daesh Radicalisation, The RUSI Journal, 162:3, pp. 60-72. A more comprehensive study by Elizabeth Pearson, Emily Winterbotham and Dr. Katherine Brown is forthcoming in 2019, published by Palgrave.

Introduction

Over the past decade, policy-makers, academics, and practitioners alike have put an increasing emphasis on gender in the space to both prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE). In 2000, with the introduction of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, guidance at the highest level recognised the need to include and incorporate a gender perspective in work on women, peace and security, advocating that the views and experiences of women should be built into strategies on conflict-solution. Signatories to the UNSCR 1325 were soon required to demonstrate in their National Action Plan (NAP) how they were working at a strategic level to meet its aims. Since this historic resolution, the UN has adopted a further seven resolutions concerning Women, Peace and Security, one of which, UNSCR 2242, specifically addresses the question of a gender perspective in measures to counter violent extremism. At the least, this means the inclusion of women. It can also encompass more sophisticated engagements, including: understanding gender as a

social construct that shapes behaviours and norms; and, addressing issues of sexuality and gender identity.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) has become an entrenched aspect of counter-terrorism practices for many countries seeking to prevent terrorism, particularly since the events of 9/11—Al Qaeda attacks on New York. Much CVE work in Europe and beyond now addresses Al Qaeda and Daesh-inspired violent extremism. Gendered CVE frequently and specifically involves women, particularly in Muslim communities, although often without an evidence base (USIP, 2014; Winterbotham, 2018). At the same time, CVE constitutes the 'softer' side of counter-terrorism; although communities impacted may not perceive it as such. It is about engaging communities in preventing terrorism through grassroots initiatives that promote social cohesion. Often, these communities are Muslim, given the CVE concept's links to the 'War on Terror'. Additionally, CVE differs from the more recently introduced concept of 'PVE', in that PVE is understood to be more broadly focused on an earlier stage, 'pre'-radicalisation, or to take a longer-term approach, addressing structural factors. However, in reality, many countries use the two terms synonymously and interchangeably.

In gendered terms, what projects often share are assumptions around women. Brown (2013, 41) has pointed to the presence of a 'maternalist logic' in a number of strategies worldwide, governments partnering women as allies against a suspect male Muslim community, and understanding Muslim women according to "their expected gender and racialized role as mothers." Meanwhile, Huckerby (2011) suggests that in a Western context, gender equality can serve as a litmus test of integration. In particular, interventions aimed at Muslim women's empowerment can become securitised when linked to the project of countering Al Qaeda-related ideology (Rashid, 2014). Women are also assumed to be able to better detect the signs of radicalisation in children than men; and to be positive agents of change, particularly in men (Chowdhury Fink, Zeiger, & Bhulai, 2016; Winterbotham, 2018).

There has been less of a focus on how gender might function in the dynamics of violent extremism and radicalisation. Theories and models of radicalisation, from pyramid and conveyor belt approaches, to Sageman's 'Bunch of Guys' theory (see for instance Sageman, 2004; also Moskalenko et al., 2009), betray similar assumptions. One such assumption is that 'gender' is not a term that applies to men. Another is that women are an insignificant part of violent

extremist groups, and a gendered perspective is therefore not necessary to understand them. To some degree, and in consideration of violent groups with an Islamist ideology, it is true that women are less frequently violent activists. Such groups tend to operate according to a strict gender binary, in which female violence is highly transgressive. Yet, women have certainly been active 'supporters' of Islamist groups such as Hamas, Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda in Iraq, Jamaat e-Islamiyaah or the Chechen Rebels, producing propaganda, raising money and providing material support (Klausen, 2015; Von Knop, 2007; Lahoud, 2014; Bloom, 2011). They have sometimes been involved in violence, such as suicide bomb attacks, although in fewer numbers. The emergence of Daesh did not change this, even as its English-language rhetoric often flirts with the idea of female violence (Winter and Margolin, 2017; Cottee and Bloom, 2017; Lahoud, 2017). However, its call to women and girls to travel to Iraq and Syria in order to help found a new society as a self-declared 'Caliphate' meant women were no longer so easy to ignore. Research by Cook & Vale (2018) suggests more than 4,761 women travelled to Syria and Iraq to join Daesh, and an additional 4,640 minors.[1] While a minority of the whole (13% and 12% respectively), their presence reveals women and girls as significant in the survival of the group and its ideology. All this makes a gendered approach more relevant, not less.

What is known about women and radicalisation to Islamist groups to some degree resembles what is known about men. There is no one pathway. While violent extremism is predominantly a collective and social enterprise, and dependent on context, for each individual involved there are different enabling, and push and pull factors impacting the path to violent extremism. For some, this is primarily ideological, for others this is about friendship groups. Pull factors include messages of empowerment, particularly to Muslim women, even if the reality of the Caliphate has been less liberating in reality (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017; Lahoud, 2018). Push factors can centre on grievances around discrimination, or socio-economic deprivation (see for instance Smelser, 2010; Wiktorowicz, 2005). Enabling factors include the 'how', 'who' and 'where' of radicalisation, the so-called charismatic preachers, radical mosques, prisons, the internet or other locations. Understanding the ways in which all of these factors intersect in the pathways into groups for men and for women, boys and girls is one aim of the research presented here. Recognising the often complex gender dynamics of 'radicalisation' clearly has implications for the ways in which radicalisation is countered.

[1] There is no gender breakdown for this figure.

This paper therefore asks, how does gender matter in violent extremism and in countering violent extremism? Its findings are based on a five-country study carried out by the author and Emily Winterbotham, a senior research fellow at RUSI, based on a milieu method devised in conjunction with Dr. Katherine Brown. What the essay seeks to emphasise are the key shared themes emergent from the focus groups in what were five very different contexts, with different histories, demographics and CVE approaches. A brief methodology is presented in the first section. The second section then addresses some key research findings relating to violent extremism and gender, suggesting the relevance of gender to four levels of factors: personal, organisational, cultural/societal, and individual. The third section goes on to address the question of how strategies to counter violent extremism recognise gender, and the degree to which that is consistent with the findings presented in section two. The final section provides some conclusions and recommendations based on the findings produced.

The essay uses the terms 'radicalisation', 'Daesh-inspired terrorism' and 'Islamist', in full recognition of the difficulties they pose, and the definitional contestation in the field.

Methodology

The findings presented in this essay derive from research carried out in late 2015 and early 2016 as part of a five-country study. The research questions addressed were: what are the gender dynamics of violent extremism? And, what is the role of women in CVE? Violent extremism is a term that can be applied to any ideology. In recent years, it has mainly been used to describe 'radicalisation' to Islamist groups inspired by Al Qaeda or Daesh. The research set out to explore Daesh-related violent extremism and also the far-right, as these are the two movements mainly countered in the countries of study and therefore the most crucial to understand in terms of practice and policy. This paper sets out the findings related to Daesh-inspired radicalisation only; those on the far-right are addressed in other work.[2]

The questions were explored through a series of focus groups held in two different locations in five countries: Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. These countries were selected as they had all seen young people travel to join Daesh, and had all sought to address violent extremism in a variety of different ways. The UK for instance initiated a

[2] See Pearson, Winterbotham & Brown forthcoming.

CVE programme called Prevent in 2006/7 following the London Transport Attacks, and Prevent has been the subject of critique from, among others, British Muslims. Meanwhile, France has only begun to seriously address violent extremism since the Paris attacks of November 2015. All integrate gender into their interventions in different ways. Additionally, these countries have diverse demographics and histories of immigration, Islam and radicalism, along with diverse government discourses on extremism.

Additional interviews were carried out with four families of those affected by Daesh-related extremism, and with CVE practitioners and other experts, including one journalist. In total the project spoke to more than 250 people. Muslim community focus groups included women, men and youth aged 16 and over. Participants included people who emigrated from countries including Somalia, Jordan, Pakistan; who were white converts, who were Asian, who were black. Some women wore hijab, others did not. Some were mothers, others were not. The focus group participants represented a variety of ages, ethnicities, and creeds.

In the Netherlands, France, and Canada additional research teams were engaged to lead focus groups, following a training session in London, and a separate session in Canada. Focus groups all began with the same question: how do you understand the terms violent extremism and radicalisation? The aim of the focus group approach was to produce a safe and contained space within which participants could develop discussion (Montell, 1999; Morgan & Spanish, 1984). From the initial question, which established the group's understanding of the terms under discussion, the focus group themes were evolved by participants, with group leader intervention on the specific issue of gender, and women's roles. Where appropriate, groups were homogenous and segregated by age and sex. In some country contexts participants challenged the need for sex segregation and a minority of the focus groups were mixed.

The method engaged was an innovative 'milieu' approach. This recognised three key points: firstly, that grassroots participants are frequently 'experts', with high degrees of knowledge about the context within which 'radicalisation' to Daesh occurs. Secondly, that discussion of 'vulnerability' might include not just vulnerability to Daesh, but also vulnerability to its effects, whether that is an Islamophobic attack, community division, media discourse or Government policy perceived to 'target' Muslims. Thirdly, that 'community' is not just about geo-location, particularly in the social media age. However, geo-location

still matters to a large extent in discussion of the effects of Daesh on communities, in particular when young people had travelled from particular urban areas in some numbers to join the so-called 'Caliphate'.

Findings: How Gender Matters in Violent Extremism

The first key research question was, what is the role of women in violent extremism? However, focus group responses to this question also yielded important information on the gender dynamics of radicalisation, highlighting important differences between radicalisation and violent extremism for women and girls, and for men and boys. The differences outlined could be categorised in four key domains: ideological, cultural/social, organisational, and personal. These domains overlap to some extent, and incorporate both push and pull factors, or in the case of cultural/societal norms and pressures, what can be described as 'enabling factors', as described above. Focus groups provided information in two ways. Firstly, focus group participants provided new data on radicalisation they had observed in communities, and how this was gendered. Secondly, they revealed important gendered attitudes and preconceptions towards the causes and processes of radicalisation and violent extremism.

Status, Gender and Cultural/Societal Norms

One key issue participants identified was the importance of social status for both young women and men, and the different ways in which that status could be attained. Focus groups talked about specific social pressures on young men, and the differences between what was expected of young men and what was expected of young women. A key theme was the need for young men to earn money and prove they could become 'breadwinners'. Participants suggested that young men could suffer from a lack of confidence and resilience in the job-search, particularly when meeting with challenges that related to the expression of faith, such as a beard or clothing associated with a non-Western culture. This made them uniquely vulnerable to financial incentives to join Daesh, focus groups suggested. The following observation came from a male respondent in a focus group in the Netherlands, in an area that had lost a small but significant number of young men to Daesh:

> There were two youngsters from this neighbourhood. One gets to work, the other doesn't. The reason is appearance. Pakistani clothing with a beard. As soon as you walk around like that, you don't have a job. One boy left because that happened, I have money for you in Syria, he was told (Interviewer, Abukar, 4/11/2015)

In fact, participant attitudes to this perceived lack of resilience of young men were very different from attitudes to young women who had left for Daesh. While focus group participants, both male and female, often expressed a degree of sympathy for 'vulnerable' young women 'seduced' by Daesh fighters, their attitude towards young men who had left was one of disappointment, betrayal, and anger. Focus group participants in communities who had lost young people to Syria and Iraq, despite their best collective efforts to engage help from police and prevent their radicalisation, suggested they felt both depressed and traumatised.

Participants also emphasised the ways in which Daesh might specifically appeal to young women's need for recognition, status and 'empowerment'. A number of focus groups across countries discussed the ways in which community attitudes towards young women were a likely factor in their recruitment by Daesh. As one woman suggested, community norms put teenaged women in a "subordinated position," which "contributes to their radicalisation" (Netherlands, female respondent). Focus groups suggested that a minority of young women believed that Daesh offered status and liberation and in two ways: either from what they felt were restrictive gender norms within their own families, and a paradoxical desire to embrace Daesh as a site of liberation; or through the rejection of secular western gender values, which they regarded as immoral and incompatible with the expression of faith. The Netherlands saw the highest degree of focus groups with participants that had been affected by Daesh radicalisation (four of five focus groups included at least one such participant). One Dutch female respondent rationalised the actions of a young woman she knew who joined Daesh, "Within radical groups women have a different role. They get - according to them - more recognition… the motive for those who want to participate is the longing for a more important position" (Interviewer, Abukar, 10/10/2015). Participants expressed concern that some young women were drawn to Daesh as an escape from personal difficulties. This might relate to family tensions, to tensions with wider society, particularly relating to bans on the niqab, or discrimination based on other forms of Islamic dress, including simply 'long black' garments, or the hijab. They described how pressure on young women came from both non-Muslims and Muslims alike, manifested in different ways.

Gender and the Locations of 'Radicalisation'

Another consistent theme across focus groups was the way in which gendered norms and social and cultural expectations shaped the liberties and activities of young men and young women in the public space, and in different ways. This became relevant to discussion of the importance of enabling factors in male and female radicalisation. Almost half of the focus groups had personal experience of radicalisation or recruitment to Islamist groups including Daesh. A number of young women described approaches made to them by Daesh recruiters via social media and the internet (private space). A number of parents and young men in the French, Dutch, and German focus groups meanwhile talked about how they or their children had been approached on the street (public space). Some such approaches pre-dated Daesh.

France, Germany, and the Netherlands have had more instances in the past of 'street radicalisation', in which a preacher or other member of an Islamist group engages young men in discussion in a public setting. In Germany, a Muslim mother described her fears when her sons were approached by a stranger in the street:

> He asked my son if he knew a surah and he didn't, so he said, "come with me ...you're Muslim, you need to know."15-years-old. Last year that was, and his friends went along too… And my other son, who's ten, has also been approached on the street in the same way! (Interviewer, Pearson, 21/1/2016)

Focus group participants across countries tended to agree that this was not a scenario that was likely to affect women to the same degree. Cultural attitudes towards young women, they suggested, while not uniform, often tended towards the protection of young women and girls, and a less permissive attitude towards their access to public space, particularly if this was likely to be unaccompanied. This meant that in a purely practical sense, young women were simply less accessible to radical preachers in mosques or on the streets engaging in street Dawah (preaching). This did not mean that young women were not approached, simply that the approaches happened elsewhere. One CVE intervention provider also suggested that young women invested more time than young men in developing online social networks, and this made social media a site of explicit female 'vulnerability' to Daesh recruiters. Here, the 'snowball' recruitment was important, as young women who had been convinced of the validity of Daesh put their networks to use to convince other female friends.

Considering the ideology of Daesh and its recruitment strategies, it is clear that these findings matter. Daesh positions men and women differently. It has carefully constructed a narrative in which the so-called Caliphate was depicted as, amongst other things, an adventure playground for young men, who would have the chance to live the video game, to take part in violence, and reap the sexual rewards of four wives, and additional female slaves. While the 'warrior Jihadi' was not the only role, and Daesh has also emphasised the need for doctors, police or engineers (Macdonald, 2016), the 'fighter' has been the key recruiting role for men. For women meanwhile, a different position has been constructed: mother of the future 'cubs', passionate propagandists, cooks, wives, and pioneers of the new 'Caliphate' (Lehane et al., 2018). Additionally, they are offered limited roles within the public space, as teachers or midwives, or in the Al Khansaa police. Daesh has also set out to present restrictions to the home and to clothing as positives: freedom to wear the niqab or the burqa, with such markers of female Muslim identity highlighted as important but often stigmatised in the West. Freedom to take status and satisfaction in 'God-given' domestic roles as wives and mothers, Daesh suggests, are wrongly denigrated in the post-feminist West. The messages Daesh has used to recruit men and women in the West have differed, and they have cleverly engaged with existing debates and arguments around feminism, women's rights, and discrimination (Winter, 2015; Lahoud, 2018). The focus groups suggested a number of these messages resonated, even as they belied the reality of life for women within Daesh territory (Lahoud, 2018).

The excerpts from the research presented here illustrate the granular ways in which radicalisation should be understood as 'gendered' at the micro-level. This section emphasised two areas: gendered cultural norms, and the importance of such norms in consideration of spaces of recruitment. Participant reflections emphasise the need to analyse every aspect of the 'process' of radicalisation, or the journey to join Daesh, with a consideration of the gender identity of the 'radicalised' actor. This affects their outlook, their circumstances, the ways in which Daesh appeals to them, the roles that they might adopt in the group/movement and the reasons for their support for the ideology. While the same broad issues often affect both men and women (discrimination and status for instance), the specific ways in which they matter are gendered and nuanced difference exists for women and for men.

Findings: CVE and Gender, Pitfalls and Preferences

The previous section suggested the importance of gendered community dynamics and social norms and differences in expectations and roles for men and women, girls and boys. This is emphasised in the research with Muslim community focus groups presented here, but is also true of wider society. It is also apparent that gender differences are evident in the 'radicalisation' paths and 'processes' of women and men.

This next section of the essay presents some key shared findings across the five countries of study relating to countering violent extremism and gender. In some cases, participants based their ideas on their own engagement with and participation in CVE interventions. Others talked mainly about feelings of discrimination related to media or government discourse on CVE, Daesh, and terrorism and extremism more broadly. Again, despite a variety of experiences and histories, participants across the countries related some shared themes.

Women's Empowerment

The first theme relates to women's empowerment as a keystone of community CVE projects aimed at addressing radicalisation to Daesh. As outlined in the introduction, women's empowerment projects for Muslim women can, in a Western context, be linked to CVE interventions. This was evident in the UK context in the early implementation of Prevent. For instance, a policy document "Empowering Muslim Women,"produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government (2008) noted that:

> Muslim women have a key role to play in challenging prejudice and stereotypes both within their own communities and in wider society. They possess a largely untapped potential to challenge the attitudes that can foster violent extremist ideas. Muslim women are at the heart of communities.... Resilient communities cannot be built and sustained without their active participation.

This 'maternalist logic' has also been apparent in CVE schemes in other global contexts (Brown, 2013).

Participants in the focus groups spent some time in discussion that resisted such narratives, regarding them as attempts at deculturation and the perpetuation of false narratives of Islam as oppressive to women. These discussions were heard across countries, irrespective of the longevity of localised CVE programming; and both men and women expressed concern and suspicion at what 'empowerment' might actually mean for Muslim women and communities, when delivered in a Western context. In Canada, a young Muslim man in his 20s suggested, "Usually, the 'empowerment' I see these days is that women are 'empowered' …in a way that brings them out of their culture" (Interviewer, Winterbotham, 16/11/2015). Discussion on empowerment, sometimes overlapped with discussion on clothing rules, particularly in countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands, where some regions banned the niqab or in some instances, even the hijab. What was clear was that legislation impacting Muslim women specifically, and affecting dress, was also acutely felt by Muslim men and affected whole communities. Additionally, veil bans in other parts of the World informed opinion about the treatment of Muslims by government and non-Muslims locally.

In particular, women suggested that feminism without sexual morality was not empowerment. In a German focus group one woman in her 40s talked about her earlier conversion to Islam, and adoption of the hijab. She described the ensuing loss of white privilege she had faced, including discrimination relating to her headscarf. On the 'empowerment' discussion, she said:

> Obviously, you want women to be strong and independent and choose their own path in life, but you have to accept which path they choose. It's not empowering women to want them to give up on being good Muslims … To empower them to be great go-go dancers, that's not right. [laughs] It has to be up to them to choose how they live, so give them the power to do that. (Interviewer, Pearson, 23/1/2016)

It was not that women believed that empowerment *per se* was negative. Most women suggested that they wanted help and support in dealing with the issues that concerned them: issues of work, discrimination, Islamophobia, parenting and local crime, for instance. However, they made clear that this empowerment had to come on their own terms, and could not seek to distance them from their culture or faith. There was concern regarding any conflation of CVE and women's empowerment, given that people saw these as very different things.

Participants suggested that it was counterproductive and potentially alienating to seek to empower women away from Islam, particularly at a time when they

felt that Muslims were frequently subject to discrimination, and that Islam had become permanently associated with 'terrorism', both in public and government discourses. Additionally, younger women suggested that Western narratives of empowerment could be patronizing, if they focused on the rejection of particular clothes such as the burqa or niqab. They emphasized the struggle for ownership of 'empowerment', with Daesh producing narratives to sell its own vision of 'empowerment', and frame this as a competition between two different cultures: one 'immoral' and secular; one 'moral' and Islamic.

CVE and Divisions Within Communities

Another finding related to the ways in which CVE narratives could prove divisive within communities. Across groups there was a generation gap between the views of older and younger women. Older women often questioned the need for younger women to wear clothes they regarded as 'extreme', including the niqab or burqa, or long black coats and dresses. For some these clothes were straightforward 'indicators' of extremism. Younger women meanwhile suggested that they faced discrimination not just from wider 'non-Muslim' society, but from within the (narrow) Muslim community they were from. A number of young women described family conflict, caused by their desire to express a more pious faith, including the wearing of niqab or all black.

Another division, particular to the UK focus groups, illustrates how CVE discourses in the public domain can be adopted in ways that prove divisive. In 2016, the UK government launched a scheme to teach immigrant women English, or risk losing the right to remain (Winterbotham & Pearson, 2016). This followed months of discussion of links between 'failed integration', including a lack of English language skills, and radicalisation. This link has not been proved. This comment came from a woman in a UK focus group:

> I think mothers nowadays have to be well-informed and know English because they cannot communicate well with their children who have been born or raised here, who go to English schools. If your kid comes home with some idea and you don't know how to deal with it, this is a problem. (Interviewer, Winterbotham, 29/10/2015)

This view was not exclusive to the UK. German women also suggested there were links between integration and the ability to resist radicalisation.

This division frequently evolved into a discourse of blame, with women within the focus groups pointing to o*ther* women, who had not integrated enough, and were not present, as 'the problem'. Indeed, this narrative often centred on assertions of difference within Muslims. Participants described how wider society frequently homogenised 'Muslim women', and how they resisted this. They instead described the ways in which their lives all differed, and the need to engage with Muslim women not as a unified group, but as diverse and often divided. They emphasised that, as there is no 'universal woman', there is no 'universal Muslim woman'. Frequently, they expressed the view that governments do not see Muslims as diverse, and in particular do not see Muslim women as diverse, instead perpetuating stereotypes of women as stuck in the home, and 'oppressed' by their male relatives.

Blaming Muslim women

Women participants also challenged the idea that mothers were necessarily the right or 'go-to' people to deliver CVE narratives within Muslim communities. They queried the notion that mothers are particularly skilled in addressing radicalisation, even if they were trained in methods to 'spot the signs of radicalisation' (Winterbotham, 2018). Women cited three reasons why this was flawed: firstly, a number of women believed that CVE programmes seeking to empower mothers, or to train mothers to spot signs of radicalisation, were effectively shifting the responsibility for radicalisation away from structural factors, such as discrimination or the inability to find a job, onto mothers instead. A number challenged this idea, particularly where they believed that governments themselves needed to do more to deal with the issue, rather than 'pushing' it onto them. Secondly, they felt that, as children grow older, particularly as they reach puberty, their friendship circles increased in importance. Mothers of young teenagers said this was a time when they felt less able to communicate with their children or 'reach' them, and children often confided in friends instead. Thirdly, some participants, particularly those who worked, felt that recognising the role of the mother meant that other important roles, such as female Muslim 'worker' were neglected, again playing to stereotypes of Muslim women as 'in the home'.

Another issue was that of fathers. Many participants, both women and men, suggested parenting was a task for two, and that fathers should also reasonably be expected to notice changes in children and encouraged to do so. Mothers said they would certainly like support as 'parents', although not specifically

around radicalisation. One woman in Canada said, "Why is it only the mother's role to pick up on these signs? It takes two to parent" (Interviewer, Pearson, 20/11/2015). This was not about blaming fathers, however. Men also said that they wanted to be engaged in countering extremism, but in a positive role. Many rejected the ways in which media and public discourse associate Islam, and particularly Muslim men, with terrorism. They wanted to carve out a positive public image for Muslim men, and for some this centred on fatherhood, rather than all-too-familiar popular media representations of Muslim men as potential terrorists or Daesh recruits.

Missing Convert Mothers

Another related theme emphasised other groups that tend to be missing from public discourse on radicalisation. Muslim men and women resisted CVE interventions aimed at countering Daesh that only engaged with Muslim immigrant or non-white communities. They pointed to the presence of white converts among those who had travelled to Syria and Iraq. Conversely, three of the interviews with mothers of those who had either joined Daesh or been prevented from travel were with non-Muslim women whose children had essentially converted not to Islam, but to violent Islamism. Two of the women were in Germany. One explained the trauma of being unable to find the right help for her son, because she was not a Muslim herself and had no idea where to turn:

> We are the mothers of the first generation … there was nothing, no one to talk to, no counselling, nothing … I looked for an imam, I couldn't find one. This just isn't a topic you really expected to be confronted with. Drugs sure, [but] converting to Islam [and Daesh] – that's just different – we were alone." (Interviewer, Pearson, 27/1/2016)

Indeed, there have been particularly high numbers of convert recruits to Daesh from both France and Germany and gender is an important factor. A 2016 German federal government report suggested 33% of German female recruits were converts, compared with 17% of males; and in France the figure that year was 25% (BKA et al 2016, 39; Pietrasanta 2015, 10). Muslim participants felt that this was conveniently ignored, as it was not consistent with Islamophobic discourses around the causes of terrorism and of Islam as a danger; non-Muslim parents of convert Daesh supporters suggested they had suffered isolation, also because of such perceptions and assumptions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Gendered strategies to counter violent extremism are at a pivotal point. Gendered practice has become something of a norm, in a variety of country contexts and gender is no longer marginal in the CVE space. This does not mean that gendered practice is perfect. It is in an early developmental stage. There are still questions about its efficacy and evaluation: how to evolve best practice and how to learn. There is now an increasing recognition too that gender is not just about women. It is about power relations. Understanding gender in violent extremism and how to counter it is about engaging with how gender maintains relationships of power and how it reproduces them. This is as important in thinking about how 'terrorist' or violent extremist groups function, as it is in thinking about relationships between institutions delivering CVE strategies and the people they are aimed at helping. It is clear that gender is no longer ignored in CVE and violent extremism. The use of gender in CVE programming has become widespread. Funding calls often ask that gender is considered. Much progress has been made, and some of this has come from top-down policy and decision making.

But what does this look like on the ground? There are many projects that have successfully employed a gender perspective to help women and men to counter extremism and prevent violence. However, it is also clear that some projects can be counter-productive. This is not a reason to abandon gender in CVE. Just because it is hard to do something well does not mean that it should not be attempted. The way forward now is to hone policies, programmes and strategies, and to ensure the ways in which gender is evident in CVE are relevant, and responsive to how we understand the gender dynamics of violent extremism. Communities presented a complex picture of the gender dynamics of radicalisation that they had encountered and experienced. However, that complexity was not always apparent in the CVE programmes that participants discussed and were familiar with. Focus group discussions rather suggested that across countries, there was a broad perception of CVE as homogenising, and often focused more on Muslim women, than on the gendered dimensions of violent extremism. This meant CVE could be experienced as an alienating and essentialising practice, rather than as safeguarding, responsive, nuanced or supportive.

Another key point in the research presented here is that communities of both men and women, mothers and fathers, often wanted and indeed needed help.

People, however, asked that this help speak to their specific and contextual needs. While participants often expressed a mistrust of governments, or institutions seeking to 'partner' Muslim communities, they also spoke of the trauma felt by communities and families who had lost young people to Daesh. They spoke of the feelings of depression, disappointment, and betrayal when calls for help to police or other institutions did not succeed in preventing youth travel. A number of other participants also described the positive ways in which they had been helped by those working in counter-radicalisation and the police. Trust was built at the micro level, between individuals, through listening and with empathy. However, it was often lost at the macro level, through anti-Muslim discourses around for instance immigration, the danger of Islam, or the banning of the niqab or, in some cases, the hijab. The positive work done by many practitioners seeking to engage gender in CVE battled against perceptions of wider prejudice.

In previous writing on the five-country research undertaken in 2015-6, Winterbotham & Pearson had suggested the following, going forward:

- Violent extremism and radicalisation are *gendered* and must be broadly understood as such, not just within explicitly gendered programming;
- Gender dynamics shape the power dynamics within communities, meaning that each of the four areas (social, organizational, ideological, persona) representing push, pull and enabling factors to Daesh radicalisation can be expected to impact men and women in different ways, which are often nuanced;
- Preventive programming must therefore also think about gender;
- It however should avoid gendered assumptions. Even if mothers are important and women do wish to be engaged in that role, this should be based on listening to people and learning about what matters to them. This means also recognizing the diversity of communities;
- Evidence must be the future for gender and CVE. In particular, interventions need to focus on context, and in that regard gender is vital. Understanding how gender affects and influences power dynamics and how the cultural context may limit women's agency to engage is crucial to understand who and how to work with, particularly in delivering CVE interventions;
- Empowerment means different things to different people, and is not always welcomed by Muslim women, unless it responds to their needs, on their terms.

There is much excellent gendered CVE work, which in general terms has often focused on the inclusion of women. It has also in some contexts and in some regards been on 'auto-pilot'. While a gendered approach is perhaps now assumed in CVE, it cannot be taken for granted. Much gendered CVE has been ill-evidenced and intuitive. The challenge now is to understand why CVE including both gender and women works well, when it does; and to improve, evolve, and amend those approaches that do not work, or indeed may cause harm. Radicalisation to a variety of extreme groups is a problem for societies worldwide. If CVE is to continue, and it seems that it is, then it is essential that the gendered dynamics of violent extremism are considered. This should include women, but must not be limited to discussion of women; and it must be less of a 'tick-box' exercise. It also needs to be based on evidence, which is contextually specific, and responsive to local dynamics. This will mean recognition of differences between countries, and approaches, particularly in the global north and global south. This essay focused on research with Muslim communities living as minorities in Europe and Canada. One would not imagine the findings would be replicated in a Muslim country in the global south, for instance. Even as many of the complaints about CVE were echoed across each of the five countries of this research, it is important to remember, there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

With thanks to Dr Milena Uhlmann and Rim-Sarah Alouad in France, Ayaan Abukar in the Netherlands, Ghadra Hassan in Canada, Jan Raudszus in Germany, and the many community workers and mosque leaders whose helped make this work possible.

REFERENCES

Bloom, M. (2011). *Bombshell: The Many Faces of Women Terrorists*. C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd.

Katherine, B. E. (2013). 'Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terror Measures'. In *Gender, National Security and Counter-Terrorism*, edited by Jayne Huckerby and Margaret L. Satterthwaite. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge.

Bundeskriminalamt (BKA), Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), and Hessisches Informations- und Kompetenzzentrum gegen Extremismus (HKE). (2016). 'BKA - Forschungsergebnisse - Analyse Der Radikalisierungshintergründe Und -Verläufe Der Personen, Die Aus Islamistischer Motivation Aus Deutschland in Richtung Syrien Oder Irak Ausgereist Sind'. Retrieved from: https://www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Publikationen/Publikationsreihen/Forschungsergebnisse/2016AnalyseRadikalisierungsgruendeSyrienIrakAusreisende.html.

Chowdhury Fink, N., Zeiger, S. and Bhulai, R. (2016). 'A Man's World - Introduction'. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah and The Global Center on Cooperative Security, 2016. Retrieved from: http://www.hedayah.ae/pdf/a-man-s-world.pdf.

Cook, J. and Vale, G. (2018). 'From Daesh to Diaspora: Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State / ICSR'. London: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. Retrieved from: http://icsr.info/2018/07/icsr-report-launch-daesh-diaspora-tracing-women-minors-islamic-state/.

Cottee, S. and Bloom, M. (2017). 'The Myth of the ISIS Female Suicide Bomber - The Atlantic', September. Retrieved from: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/09/isis-female-suicide-bomber/539172/.

DCLG. (2008). 'Empowering Muslim Women: Case Studies Ministerial Foreword'. Department for Communities and Local Government. Retrieved from: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/669801.pdf.

Huckerby, J. (2011). 'Women and Preventing Violent Extremism: The U.S. and U.K. Experiences'. NYU School of Law: Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. Retrieved from: http://chrgj.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Women-and-Violent-Extremism-The-US-and-UK-Experiences.pdf.

Klausen, J. (2015). 'Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq'. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 38*(1): 1–22. doi:10.1080/1057610X.2014.974948.

Lahoud, N. (2014). 'The Neglected Sex: The Jihadis' Exclusion of Women From Jihad'. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. August (February): 1–23. doi:10.1080/09546553.2013.772511.

———. 2017. 'Can Women Be Soldiers of the Islamic State?' *Survival 59*(1): 61–78. doi:10.1080/00396338.2017.1282675.

———. 2018. 'EMPOWERMENT OR SUBJUGATION: An Analysis of ISIL's Gendered Messaging'. UN Women.

Lehane, O.,Mair, D., Lee S., and Parker, J. (2018). 'Brides, Black Widows and Baby-Makers; or Not: An Analysis of the Portrayal of Women in English-Language Jihadi Magazine Image Content'. *Critical Studies on Terrorism 0*(0): 1–16. doi:10.1080/17539153.2018.1471054.

Macdonald, S. (2016). 'Terrorist Narratives & Communicative Devices: Findings from a Study of Online Terrorist Magazines'. In *Expanding Research on Countering Violent Extremism*, edited by Sara Zeiger. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah.

Montell, F. (1999). 'Focus Group Interviews: A New Feminist Method'. *NWSA Journal 11*(1): 44–71.

Morgan, D. and Spanish, M. (1984). 'David L Morgan and Margaret T Spanish, "Focus Groups: A New Tool for Qualitative Research", in Qualitative Sociology'. *Qualitative Sociology 7*(3).

Moskalenko, S.,, Hateley T., Leuprecht C/, and McCauley, C. (2009). 'Winning the Battle but Losing the War? Narrative and Counter-Narratives Strategy'. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, no. September: 25–35.

Pearson, E, and Emily W. (2017). 'Women, Gender and Daesh Radicalisation'. *The RUSI Journal 0*(0): 1–13. doi:10.1080/03071847.2017.1353251.

Pietrasanta, S. (2015). 'La déradicalisation, outil de lutte contre le terrorisme'. http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/154000455.pdf.

Rashid, N. (2014). 'Giving the Silent Majority a Stronger Voice? Initiatives to Empower Muslim Women as Part of the UK's "War on Terror"'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies 37*(4): 589–604. doi:10.1080/01419870.2013.816759.

Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Smelser, N. J. (2010). *The Faces of Terrorism: Social and Psychological Dimensions*. S.l.: Princeton University Press.

USIP. (2014). 'What Is U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 and Why Is It so Critical Today?' *United States Institute of Peace*. Accessed November 9. http://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325.

Von Knop, K. (2007). 'The Female Jihad: Al Qaeda's Women'. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 30*(5): 397–414. doi:10.1080/10576100701258585.

Wiktorowicz, Q. (2005). *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West.* Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Winter, Charlie. (2015). 'Women of the Islamic State'. The Quilliam Foundation. Retrieved from: http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf.

Winter, Charlie, and Margolin, D. (2017). 'The Mujahidat Dilemma: Female Combatants and the Islamic State'. C*TC Sentinel 10*(7). https://ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CTC-Sentinel_Vol10Iss7.pdf.

Winterbotham, E. (2018). 'Do Mothers Know Best? How Assumptions Harm CVE'. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. Retrieved from: http://institute.global/insight/co-existence/do-mothers-know-best-how-assumptions-harm-cve.

Winterbotham, E, and Pearson, E. (2016). 'Different Cities, Shared Stories: A Five-Country Study Challenging Assumptions Around Muslim Women and CVE Interventions'. *RUSI Journal 161*(5). Retrieved from: https://rusi.org/publication/rusi-journal/different-cities-shared-stories-five-country-study-challenging-assumptions.

"Given the elementary nature of search engine results and how prevalent it is in the lives of Internet users, publicly available data from Google about search activity may also provide vital insights to help direct and inform countering violent extremism efforts, whether online or offline."

5 SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF SEARCH IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO EXTREMIST CONTENT

Mubaraz Ahmed

Introduction

The overwhelming focus of research efforts into online extremism thus far has been the role of a handful of Salafi-jihadi groups, namely Daesh and al-Qaeda affiliates, and how they have exploited a selection of prominent social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (Conway, 2017). From graphic videos to glossy magazines, news updates to radio broadcasts, social media platforms have been used by jihadi groups to reach new audiences and foster online communities of likeminded individuals.

While governments, law enforcement agencies, and tech firms have been proactive in responding robustly to the exploitation of social media platforms by proscribed Islamist extremist groups and their supporters, other parts of the online ecosystem have been overlooked. The internet is a vast terrain in which social media represents one, albeit significant, dimension. In this regard, the role played by internet search engines, such as Google Search, in the accessibility and availability of extremist content online has yet to be fully explored, despite the scale and size of this rudimentary aspect of internet activity.

This essay will seek to demonstrate why policy and programmatic efforts to counter extremist messaging online need to look beyond a narrow position that concentrates largely on Salafi-jihadi groups and social media platforms. In particular, this essay will highlight the availability and accessibility of Islamist extremist material via the Google search engine and what observable trends in user search behaviour corresponding to Islamist-related content can

[1] For estimated numbers, see a European Parliament report, The Return of Foreign Fighters to EU Soil. Ex-Post Evaluation. 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS_STU(2018)621811_EN.pdf, accessed 6 February 2019.
[2] See https://www.voxpol.eu/, accessed 6 February 2019.

be gleaned from Google Trends, with a view to informing how policymakers and practitioners develop and deliver responses.

The Search Landscape

Google's search engine dominates the search landscape, with a global market-share of around 92% (Stat Counter 2019). Users turn to the platform to carry out 3.5 billion searches each day, amounting to over a trillion searches each year. Google's search engine trawls some 20 billion sites a day and has information on over 30 trillion unique URLS, helping users find answers to their search queries, from the mundane to the profound, in a matter of seconds.

Google's corporate mission statement (2019) reads: "To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." In the vast majority of cases it would be safe to assert that Google has largely delivered, and continues to deliver, on its objective of making information more easily *available* for users. From the obvious to the obscure, Google's search platform serves as a dependable online exchange connecting users seeking information with a ranked list of useful and popular sources to access that information. However, while it may deliver on accessibility, the *usefulness* of the information returned in the search results – in terms of social utility – has been called into question.

Research published by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change into the accessibility of Islamist extremist content via the Google search engine found that a range of content was no more than a click away. The report, *A War of Keywords*, analysed the contents and nature of listings returned in the Google search results for a range of keywords and found that of the Islamist extremist content identified through the platform, 44% was explicitly violent or condoning acts of violence, 36% was extremist but non-violent, featuring homophobic, antisemitic, and misogynistic content, and 20% was non-violent Islamist content associated with a particular political group, predominantly containing material about applying Sharia law, establishing the caliphate and conspiracy theories (Ahmed & George 2017). The study also showed there were over 484,000 global searches each month for keywords, ranging from the benign to the risky, that returned extremist content within the first two pages of the Google search results. In a number of cases, those websites found to be providing access to extremist Islamist material were also hosting masses of ordinary, relatively mainstream Islamic content, making it tricky for internet service providers and law enforcement agencies to distinguish between material advocating and supporting a violent Islamist message and ordinary, everyday Islamic content.

The role of the Google search engine in providing access to hateful or extremist content extends beyond the confines of just Islamist extremist content. In her book, *Algorithms of Oppression*, Safiya Noble's research highlights an inherent bias against people of colour in online search engines, arguing that these platforms are not simply creating a space for racism but perpetuating such worldviews (2018). Noble writes that "search happens in a highly commercial environment, and a variety of processes shape what can be found; these results are then normalised as believable and often presented as factual" (2018, p. 24). Ultimately, if the nature of information and how it is presented in the search landscape is biased and discriminatory, then millions of users' understanding of topics risks being distorted.

In a similar vein, an investigation by journalist Carole Cadwalladr for *The Observer* newspaper found that far right websites, anti-semitic content, and accusatory and conspiratorial material about Jews featured prominently in the autocomplete search predictions and results pages from the Google search engine (2016a). Searches, such as "Did the Holocaust Happen?" return results in which white supremacist site, Stormfront, among others, appeared prominently, perpetuating the offensive, conspiratorial ideas of Holocaust denial (Cadwalladr, 2016b). What was most concerning about this finding, opined Cadwalladr, was the idea that the Google search algorithm had deemed such content to be authoritative and useful. She commented:

> Are Jews evil? It's not a question I've ever thought of asking. I hadn't gone looking for it. But there it was. I press enter. A page of results appears. This was Google's question. And this was Google's answer: Jews are evil. Because there, on my screen, was the proof: an entire page of results, nine out of 10 of which "confirm" this. (2016a)

It is important to note that the nature of Islamist extremist content that has been found to be accessible via the Google listings is not necessarily the high-end, official, branded propaganda output of groups like Daesh and al-Qaeda, but rather material, in video and text formats, that may not be directly associated with a proscribed terrorist organisation, but which espouses the same ideology, worldview and interpretation of the Islamic faith.

The work of Donald Holbrook analyses the religious and political material found in the possession of individuals convicted of terrorism charges in the UK between 2004 and 2015 (2017). The findings showed that it was not just the work of ideologues with more well-established links to terrorism, such as Anwar al-Awlaki and Abdullah El-Faisal, that featured prominently in the materials but also individuals like Zakir Naik and Bilal Philips who – though not explicitly deemed to be involved in terrorist activity – have been banned from entering several countries, including the UK. This suggests that there should be concern not only about explicit exhortations of violent extremist activity ,but also the broader ecosystem of ideas that normalises such violent rhetoric. The communication landscape of groups like Daesh and al-Qaeda affiliates is replete with different layers and levels, spanning both official and unofficial messengers and affiliated and unaffiliated ideologues.

The significance of these unofficial messages and messengers is discussed by Peter Neumann. In the case of Daesh, Neumann identifies three types of communicators: fighters embedded within the group, unofficial clerics acting as the group's cheerleaders, and supporters that have no link to the group but promote and celebrate its activities (2016, p. 123-128). On this distinction between Daesh's official and unofficial communicators, Neumann asserts that "Often is it is not the Islamic State that is promoting the Islamic State online, but rather its followers, supporters and those it has inspired."(Ibid)

The concept of cheerleaders is particularly significant to a study of the availability and accessibility of extremist content in Google search results. These clerics, unattached to Daesh and dispersed throughout the world, represent localised agents that convey the ideological message of the group to an audience that places importance on Islamic legitimacy. The online landscape has become profuse with such self-appointed sheikhs who provide the ideological ballast to the Daesh worldview through their literalist, politicised and divisive articulations of Islam, giving succour to the Daesh project.

These cheerleading supporters provide justifications and validation for the Salafi-jihadi project but carry no direct links. Their narrative, which is cloaked in Islamic garb, provides implicit support, sympathy and succour for violent extremist activity. Through narrow articulations of Islam, and cherry-picked references to historic events, these cheerleaders' ideas tread the fine line between legal and illegal content, and because of little evidence linking them to terrorist activity, their content is deemed legal and continues to flourish online.

The consequences of this for impressionable, curious minds, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, are dire. Results from the search listings risk perpetuating an Islamic worldview congruent with the extremist mindset, rather than putting forward the vision of Islam lived and practised by millions of Muslims around the world.

A survey conducted by Radio Netherlands Worldwide (RNW), looking at how young Muslims in the West understand and access information about their faith, found that the internet was the most popular destination when confronted with critical questions about Islam (2010). The survey shed light on how some young people do not know where to turn for information, struggling to choose between conventional options that are either too strict, too vague or simply out of touch with reality. The internet offers an opportunity to try and find information that may be more useful, or as one respondent in the report put it, "Go to Sheikh Google, type something in and all kinds of stuff comes out."

The notion of 'Sheikh Google' is not new. Concerns about the type of content curious, inquisitive users may encounter in their quest for information about Islam or related issues have been raised before (Ferguson, 2014; Sanghani, 2014). The discussion is intrinsically connected to the nature of authority in Islam, the role of traditional Islamic scholars in the internet-era, the interplay between religion and globalisation, and ultimately whether Islamic institutions are able to address the needs and necessities of their communities in the 21st century (Pandith, 2019; Aly, 2016; Francis, 2009). Despite the immediate and wider concerns related to this area, academic and policy attention to this evolving and competitive space has been lacking.

Google Search Results

This section presents some examples of the first results page and the listings that appear for a selection of keyword searches, reflecting both searches where the intent is discernibly inclined towards seeking extremist materials and those that are more benign. According to Google, the company's search algorithm returns results by analysing keywords, identifying matches, ranking the usefulness of pages, and by considering the context around the keywords. The emphasis on the first page of the Google search results is underpinned by industry data that shows, in the case of both branded and unbranded keywords, that the click-through rate for page one is the highest of all pages. In other words, the first page of the results receives the highest level of traffic.

There are some important caveats to bear in mind with these examples. They represent English-language searches carried out in the UK during the summer of 2018. Results in other languages and territories are likely to vary, while the nature of the search engine means that results and listings can change over time.

Islam and Apostasy

Apostasy is a prominent topic of discussion in the modern discourse on Islam. Extremists use the charge of apostasy to excommunicate Muslims perceived as having reneged on their faith and designate them liable to execution. In the case of groups like Daesh, this accusation is extended to much of the world's Muslim population. A search for "Islam and Apostasy," a benign search that carries little in the way of an ulterior intent, returned results in which the most prominent organic listing after Wikipedia was a link to IslamQA.info outlining why it is permissible to kill apostates in Islam (Figure 1).

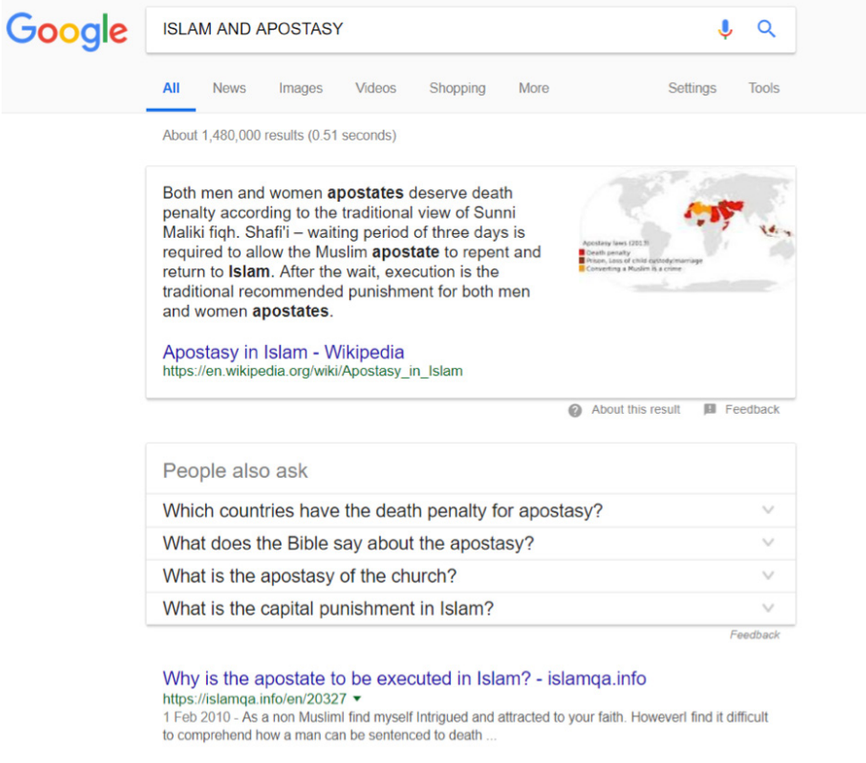


FIGURE 1: Google search results for "Islam and apostasy" (Source: Google Search)

Khilafah

Similarly, the rise of Daesh and the establishment of the group's attempted state-building project in parts of Iraq and Syria drew attention to the concept of the 'Khilafah' or caliphate, an historic Islamic system of governance within the Sunni tradition that came into being following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. In this context, it was understandable that internet users curious to understand the realities of the caliphate would turn to Google for answers. However, instead of reflecting the historical aspects of the caliphate – its successes, challenges and eventual fall – the listings in the Google search results presented an altogether different picture.

A search for 'Khilafah' returned a Google results page heavily dominated by material from the Hizb-ut-Tahrir group, an Islamist group founded by Taqi-uddin al-Nabhani in the 1950s, that seeks to replace modern systems of governance with the revival of the caliphate. The group's vision argues for political, economic and military power to be in the hands of an ever-expanding Islamic empire. Hizb-ut-Tahrir is banned in a number of Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and beyond, but continues to operate legally in a number of Western countries, including the UK, US and Australia.

Anwar al-Awlaki

As mentioned previously, the former al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula ideologue Anwar al-Awlaki featured prominently in the media collections of convicted terrorists in the UK (Holbrook, 2017). Furthermore, Awlaki's name and vision has continued to feature in prominent terrorism cases since his death, highlighting not only the inspirational nature of the charismatic preacher's sermons, but also how his messaging has continued to survive online. While a Google search for 'Anwar al-Awlaki' returned nothing but news, analysis, and reference items, one of the suggested searches that appeared at the bottom of the results page presented users with the option of searching for 'Anwar al-Awlaki Lectures' (Figure 2).

It is worth noting that Google has previously recognised and responded to the abundance of Anwar al-Awlaki content on its YouTube video-sharing platform. The New York Times reported that searches for "Anwar al-Awlaki" on the platform had at one point returned over 70,000 videos, a figure which dropped to less than 20,000 after YouTube adopted a more robust policy po-

sition, albeit under increasing pressure from governments and civil society organisations (Shane, 2017). Whereas Google has ultimately moved against Anwar al-Awlaki content on YouTube, it has not adopted an equally robust approach for similar content found and accessed via the Google search engine.

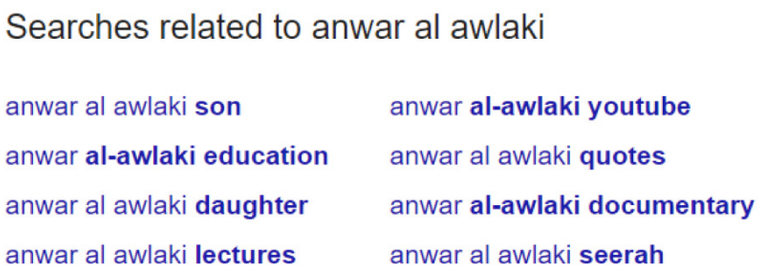


FIGURE 2: Suggested searches following a Google search for "Anwar al-Awlaki" (Source: Google Search)

A user following this Google search suggestion was led to a page populated with multiple links to websites and file hosting sites providing access to audio, video and text content by Anwar al-Awlaki (Figure 3). The selection of content included links to some of the prominent Awlaki titles identified in Holbrook's study (2017), including "The Lives of the Prophets" and the "Life of the Prophet Muhammad." These types of titles may not be inherently classifiable as terrorist material, but the divisive, binary worldview reinforces the ideological outlook of groups such as Daesh and al-Qaeda. Such content poses a real challenge for law enforcement agencies and internet service providers.

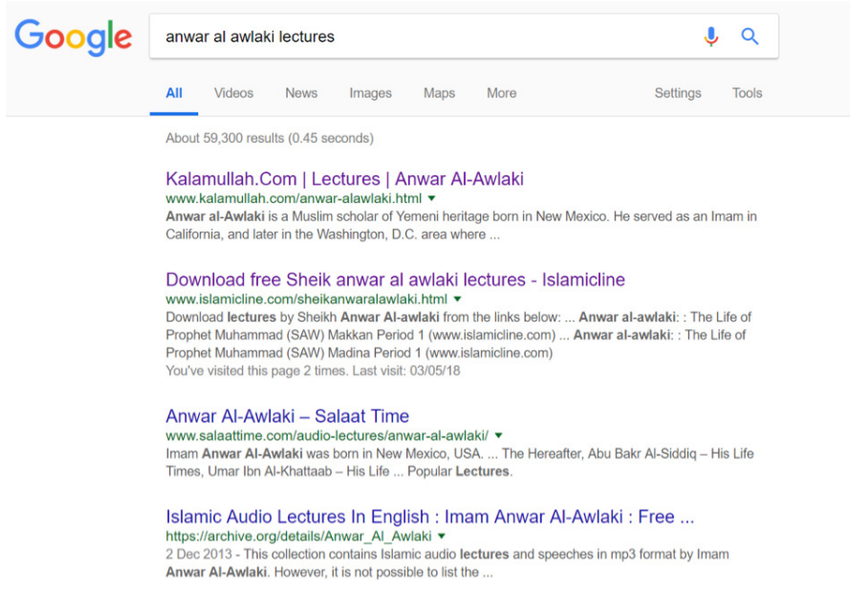


FIGURE 3: Google search results for "Anwar al-Awlaki lectures" (Source: Google Search)

Returning to Google's stated objective to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful, it may be asked whether examples of search results presented here fulfill this objective. Should curious, inquisitive users be led down a path towards intolerant, divisive, and sometimes violent content?

Website Traffic Analysis

Most research and programmatic efforts to understand and address online manifestations of Islamist extremism have tended to focus on social media platforms. This is, of course, with good reason. Groups such as Daesh have demonstrated their agility and cunning in exploiting the likes of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to promote their perverted worldview and influence prospective recruits. As a result, the role of search as a gateway to extremist content online has been largely neglected.

This part of the study accordingly examined whether the traffic to some of the most prominent Islamic websites in the world came more from search engine

results or social media. The sample included online references such as Quran.com and Sunnah.com, websites operated by Islamist group Hizb-ut-Tahrir, and the official websites of established Islamic authorities such as Egypt's Al-Azhar and Turkey's Diyanet. As Figure 4 shows, in each case the majority of traffic to these websites came from search engine results, not social media.

FIGURE 4: Desktop traffic: search vs. social (Source: SimilarWeb)

The fact that a range of Islamic, or Islam-related websites, receive large amounts of traffic from search engine results is not a problem in itself. It does, however, provide concrete evidence for why further research is required in this domain and why it should not be overlooked in favour of social media. There are numerous evidence-based reasons, underpinned by industry and market data, that conclude that effective digital marketing and campaigns require both a search and a social media component (Ramdani & Taylor, 2018; Tachkalova, 2016). Online efforts to counter extremism could benefit from directing more attention towards this incredibly influential part of the online landscape. Furthermore, given the elementary nature of search engine results and how prevalent it is in the lives of internet users, publicly available data from Google about search activity may also provide vital insights to help direct and inform countering violent extremism efforts, whether online or offline.

Google Trends

Data scientist Seth Stephens-Davidowitz's work has focused on understanding how data collected from the internet can be used to gauge new insights into the human psyche. In particular, his work harnessed a wealth of Google search data (Stephens-Davidowitz, 2017). The anonymised data is collated based on users' search queries and offers a wealth of information on the relative popularity of searches, related subject areas, geographic breakdown, and searches over time.

In spite of the enormous focus from academics and policymakers alike on social media platforms, Stephens-Davidowitz believes that "Google searches are the most important dataset ever collected on the human psyche" (2017, p. 14). Stephens-Davidowitz argues that the anonymised traces of truth left behind by millions of searches have the potential to reveal profound, often unseen, realities. Crucially, the degree of honesty in users' search queries is likely to engender a higher degree of honesty and trust when compared with social media.

In the context of understanding the drivers and conditions relating to Islamist extremism, as well as the development of adequate responses, search data carries the potential of offering a data-driven, evidence-based, and large-scale window into the questions, concerns and curiosities relating to Islam searched for by users around the world every single day. These insights, based on genuine, user-generated queries, could pave the way for better informed counter extremism responses that recognise real world events and realities.

For example, analysis of searches for the keywords "Islam" and "Quran" in the UK over a five-year period between 2013 and 2018 shows that for both search terms there is a near identical spike at regular intervals (Figure 5). Upon cross-checking what was happening in the world on those intervals, it became evident that these noticeable yearly surges in searches for "Islam" and "Quran" were in fact taking place in Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar in which Muslims fast to commemorate the revelation of the Quran.

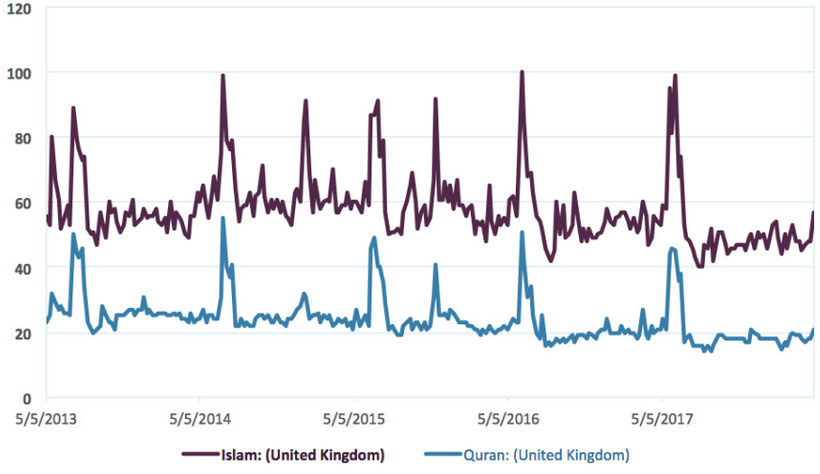


FIGURE 5: Google trends analysis of searches for the keywords 'Islam' and 'Quran', 2013-2018 (Source: Google Trends)

Similarly, Google Trends can also shed light on popular related keyword searches, helping to fan out queries and surface additional keywords and concepts associated with those searches. These could include related searches that could be considered obvious, such as searches for "What is Islam?" being related to searches for "Islam," or they could be slightly more counter-intuitive, such as searches for "Islam Marriage" and "Islam Women" (Figure 6). These additional related keywords surfaced by Google Trends could help flag related areas of interest or inquiry that could better inform understanding of the landscape.

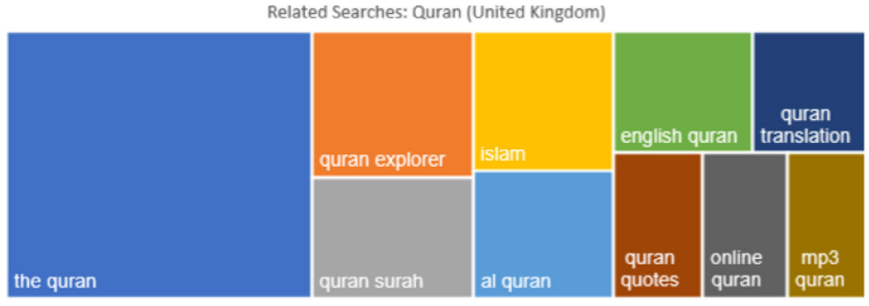


FIGURE 6: Google trends analysis of keywords related to searches for 'Islam' and 'Quran' (Source: Google Trends)

The abovementioned examples represent just a basic overview of some of the observations that can be gleaned from Google Trends. However, more targeted and specific analysis using the Google Trends platform has the potential to offer a different perspective on the concerns and challenges affecting individuals, as discerned from millions of user search queries. This is not to say that social media metrics and analysis should be disregarded, but rather that data from search engine results can be used to complement existing practices.

Conclusion

A narrow focus on certain online platforms or a particular set of groups runs the risk of overlooking or neglecting the broader online extremism ecosystem. Research into social media platforms and their use by extremists has made a vital contribution to better understand the landscape and inform policy and programmatic responses, but the internet ecosystem is bigger than just social media. Greater attention is needed to understand and address challenges on smaller, lesser frequented domains where extremists are operating.

A survey of the wealth of search data made available by Google and other third-parties shows that users around the world, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, motivated by positive or negative intentions, are turning to Google Search to seek information about Islam and related subjects, rather than social media. This represents an opportunity for religious leaders and organisations to ensure they engage in the battle of ideas and contest in the right online spaces, complementing rather than replacing existing efforts on social media.

While it is relatively straightforward to identify and remove the official propaganda of groups such as Daesh and various Al-Qaeda affiliates, there remains a plethora of content that can be deemed extremist but yet continues to be accessible via Google Search and on various websites. More worryingly, such content can be found on websites offering access to mainstream Islamic content such as the Quran and Hadith collections, making it difficult to distinguish between general religious content and extremist materials.

Intolerant, exclusivist, and sometimes violent articulations of Islam, are appearing prominently in the Google Search results pages for a plethora of keywords. Searches for topics relating to Islamic and Islamism return results which include ideas such as the replacement of democratic systems of governance with an all-encompassing Islamic caliphate or the permissibility of putting apostates to death. Efforts are needed to ensure mainstream opinions are more visible than those peddled by extremists.

The role of traditional religious leaders and institutions drastically changed with the spread of the internet, with those seeking information becoming less reliant on traditional sources and the flow of ideas no longer being restricted by physical proximity. Local mosques and imams are competing for influence with clerics and groups thousands of miles away that are successfully leveraging modern communication platforms. Traditional religious leaders and organisations must seek to improve how they engage with populations.

While longstanding, traditional religious institutions remain influential, their standing is overshadowed by new actors that have excelled in the online space. Leading intellectual hubs that have housed Islamic scholarship for centuries have failed to translate their pedigree and authority into the digital space. The rise of "Sheikh Google" requires that positive, authentic and authoritative religious content that is practical, accessible and engaging is produced in order to challenge and defeat extremist perversions of Islam.

Search data, such as Google Trends, offers an opportunity to better understand and address the challenges affecting communities, whether through online or offline interventions. From observing changes in search trends to determining geographic scope, there is a wealth of data available to better understand the needs of Muslims in the digital era. Data has the potential to empower and inform Muslim leaders and organisations' efforts to engage with communities, helping to identify what needs to be addressed and where.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, M. and George, F. L. (2017). *A War of Keywords: How extremists are exploiting the internet and what to do about it.* Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. Retrieved from: https://institute.global/sites/default/files/inline-files/IGC_War%20of%20Keywords_23.08.17_0.pdf.

Aly, A. (2016). "Brothers, believers, brave mujahideen: focusing attention on the audience of violent jihadist preachers." In A. Aly, S. Macdonald, L. Jarvis & T. Chen (Eds.), Violent extremism online: New perspectives on terrorism and the Internet (pp. 106-122). Abingdon: Routledge.

Cadwalladr, C. (2016a). "Google, democracy and the truth about internet search." *The Observer.* Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/dec/04/google-democracy-truth-internet-search-facebook.

Cadwalladr, C. (2016b). "Google is not 'just' a platform. It frames, shapes and distorts how we see the world." *The Guardian.* Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/11/google-frames-shapes-and-distorts-how-we-see-world.

Conway, M. (2017). "Determining the Role of the Internet in Violent Extremism and Terrorism: Six Suggestions for Progressing Research." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 40*(1): 77-98.

Ferguson, R. (2014). "Sheikh Google: Islamic terrorism has found the perfect way to creep into our teenagers' bedrooms." *The Spectator.* Retrieved from: https://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/10/sheikh-google/.

Google. (2019). About. Retrieved from: https://about.google/.

Holbrook, D. (2017). "What Types of Media Do Terrorists Collect? An Analysis of Religious, Political and Ideological Publications Found in Terrorism Investigations in the UK" *ICCT Research Paper.* Retrieved from: https://icct.nl/publication/what-types-of-media-do-terrorists-collect-an-analysis-of-religious-political-and-ideological-publications-found-in-terrorism-investigations-in-the-uk/.

Neumann, P. R. (2016). Radicalized: New Jihadists and the Threat to the West. (Alexander Starritt, Trans.). London: I.B. Tauris.

Noble, S. (2018). Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engine's Reinforce Racism. New York: New York University Press.

Pandith, F. (2019). How We Win. New York: How Cutting-Edge Entrepreneurs, Political Visionaries, Enlightened Business Leaders, and Social Media Mavens Can Defeat the Extremist Threat. HarperCollins Publishers.

Ramdani, Z. & Taylor, E. (2018). Does Social Media Impact SEO? We Ran an Experiment to Find Out. Hootsuite. Retrieved from: https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-seo-experiment/.

RNW. (2010). 'Sheikh Google' is confusing young Muslims. Retrieved from: https://muslimvillage.com/2010/08/12/5353/sheikh-google-is-confusing-young-muslims/.

Robinson, F. (2009). Crisis of Authority: Crisis in Islam? *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.* 3.19.3 (2009), pp. 339–354.

Sanghani, R. (2014). Forget radicalisation in mosques - 'Sheikh Google' is the real threat to young Muslims. *The Telegraph.* Retrieved from: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11120869/Muslim-women-Forget-radicalisation-in-mosques-Sheikh-Google-is-the-real-threat-to-young-Muslims.html.

Shane, S. (2017). In 'Watershed Moment', YouTube Blocks Extremist Cleric's Message. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/12/us/politics/youtube-terrorism-anwar-al-awlaki.html.

Stat Counter. (2019). 'Search Engine Market Share Worldwide Jan 2018 – Jan 2019'. http://gs.statcounter.com/search-engine-market-share.

Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2017). Everybody Lies, What the Internet Can Tell Us About Who We Really Are. New York: Bloomsbury.

Tachkalova, A. (2016). The Battle for Traffic: Organic SEP vs. Social Media Marketing. Moz. Retrieved from: https://moz.com/blog/battle-for-traffic-organic-vs-social-media.

"It is a general misconception that most user-generated data that is available online can be considered 'public'."

6 ETHICAL DILEMMAS FOR RESEARCH IN EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION USING INTERNET-GENERATED DATA

Jessie Hronesova

Introduction

The fields of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) have gained much public and research attention since the rise of Daesh and the outflow of thousands of European fighters to join its violent extremist ideology.[1] The ideological attraction and effective recruitment strategies of Daesh have taken aback societies that considered some forms of liberalism as the only viable societal and political order. In response, a wealth of research followed into the drivers, push and pull factors, and recruitment strategies. In the online sphere, this can be best demonstrated by the growing amount of research on Islam-related vocabulary and monitoring of online groups that propagate radical interpretations of Islam (Behr et al., 2013).

However, little attention has been paid to ethics and what it represents in this field. With the exception of some notable research hubs (such as the Vox-Pol Network based at Dublin City University[2]), the many ethical challenges of researching extremism were initially discussed on the margins. This, however, has changed and ethics has started taking a central place in research of digital content. By ethics, I mean the values that underpin our behaviour that are not associated with punishment or gain. This distinguishes ethical challenges from legal challenges in online research. While the legal aspects of online research are regulated by domestic laws, the ethical aspects go far beyond a standardised legal canon. In other words, ethics stands for our societal barometers for what is right or wrong, even if there is no cost or punishment associated with it (Buchanan, 2010).

[1] For estimated numbers, see a European Parliament report, The Return of Foreign Fighters to EU Soil. Ex-Post Evaluation. 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS_STU(2018)621811_EN.pdf, accessed 6 February 2019.

[2] See https://www.voxpol.eu/, accessed 6 February 2019.

This poses several challenges in the Web 2.0 digital space, i.e. the interactive and social-media driven space, given its constant change and still rather limited ethical and legal constraints. For example, conducting research linking online media to real-world extremism often necessitates some form of covert monitoring or infiltration and the usage of software that, whilst not in breach of legal standards, may still raise ethical concerns regarding the privacy rights of individual users. At a wider level, the surveillance aspects of any radicalisation research have generally seemed to juxtapose advocates of 'security first' (i.e. societal protection) and advocates of 'privacy first' (i.e. individual rights). However, as some argue, this juxtaposition and the metaphor of security vs. privacy may be flawed as it pits the two against each other in a simplified manner. Instead, a careful policy consideration is possible to adopt approaches that introduce safeguards for both privacy (as part of liberal values), as well as security of the wider society (MacDonald, 2009).

Nonetheless, the question of how to square security and privacy– as well as questions regarding the extent to which different methodologies for data collection should be used– accompany most policy research in CVE. It often becomes difficult to answer the basic question of: does the goal of the research justify the use of the methods? As there is no 'rulebook' to apply, there is rarely a clear answer to this. This is all the more important when international researchers assess cultures that are founded on different values and rules to their own. The imposition of a set of liberal values on the subjects of the study may result in findings that frame these subjects as 'radical' – but only from the mainstream perspective of the researchers (see Schmid, 2014; Pearson chapter). This is again an ethical dilemma of the research that needs to be factored.

For these reasons, ethics in online research has been gaining increased public attention. Although academic concern about online research ethics is not new per se, and a wealth of papers have been published (Warrel & Jacobsen, 2014; Townsend & Wallace, 2016; Gavin & Rodham, 2017; Sugiura, Wiles, & Pope, 2017), it is only recent controversies about users' privacy that have brought this issue to the attention of the wider public. From Cambridge Analytica's breaches of research conduct, to a growing concern about data privacy, resulting in the introduction of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), online data collection and analysis is under growing scrutiny from the side of governments and research institutions alike. This development has both positive and negative consequences for our efforts in researching extremism and radicalisation in online spaces. While more

regulation can ensure a welcome rigour in how researchers and respondents are protected and how findings are reported, it can also curb research efforts due to the reduced number of opportunities (and available data) to conduct internet-mediated research. For example, concerns about consent may lead researchers to avoid researching topics where their identity would have to be compromised, as is the case in research on extremism. A more nuanced and cross-sectoral discussion is thus needed to explore how to ensure that both legal and ethical standards are upheld while relevant research is conducted.

This essay presents a discussion of some of the key dilemmas. It focuses on online Web 2.0 data such as comments, posts, shares and likes on the surface and deep web, i.e. content that is extracted from online platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, as well as websites and blogs. The main focus falls on user-generated content as well as data about users and their behaviours (locations, profiles and other user-specific data). Such data differ from online surveys or online interviews and necessitate different approaches and strategies. Online surveys and interviews generally pertain to the same ethical standards as offline research, i.e. via direct engagement with participants and their consent. Instead, this essay discusses some of the key ethical issues in collecting and analysing user-generated and users' online data in the context of radicalisation and extremism. In particular, drawing on secondary literature and research, general concerns discussed in this essay include: 1) the 'do no harm principle'; 2) privacy and anonymity issues; and 3) online consent. The aim of this essay is not to provide stringent recommendations but, rather, to argue for a thorough contextual evaluation of each research project on a case by case basis, as well as for a wider discussion across governmental, academic, and private sectors.

1. Recent Developments: The scramble for data

Last year's outrage about the unethical and illegal usage of Facebook-facilitated data by the research organisation Cambridge Analytica unleashed unprecedented scrutiny and calls for transparency in regulating how personal data is used for research and marketing purposes. A series of other controversies followed (without any legal charges, though), including Crimson Hexagon and Palantir, data-harvesting and social-listening companies. Researchers and internet experts have been discussing and monitoring internet-mediated research ethics since the emergence of interactive platforms in 2004. However, it was only after these data scandals that public attention turned to how we

collect data online, what type of data we collect and what we use them for. Until recently, social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook have presented us with a wealth of data about users' backgrounds (metadata), users' preferences, friendship circles, and connections.

Researchers have been able to use social-media and online data for sentiment, discourse, and content analysis, among other types of research. Indeed, internet-mediated research may offer better access to hard-to-reach populations, reduced costs and time, and enabled the study of areas that might be too sensitive to analyse face-to-face. Potential benefits of such research for areas like CVE are clear, especially because of the accessibility and quantity of data. For example, network analysis previously led to important findings about connections between followers of extremist thinkers and their circles of contacts (Bermingham et al, 2009; Hussain & Saltman, 2014; Meleagrou-Hitchens & Kaderbhai, 2017; Amarasingam, 2018; Cottee, 2018). As the recent data breach cases show, though, the negative side effects of having access to large volumes of data about users are data misuse, privacy breaches and the use of data in electoral campaigns or in achieving non-competitive marketing advantages.

As Facebook is the most widely used social media platform that is based on personal and real-life connections, it has an advantage over platforms such as Twitter or YouTube where users might not always know each other in person and their relationships might be generally imagined (or formed online), rather than based primarily on offline personal relationships. This is particularly critical for CVE research where offline-online relationships are still difficult to analyse and detect. However, in response to the public outcry over non-transparent usage of personal data, companies such as Facebook (that also owns Instagram and WhatsApp) significantly restricted researchers' ability to collect and study large volumes of data legally (Bruns, 2018). Unlike Twitter and YouTube, Facebook curbed its Application Programming Interfaces (API) access in the spring and summer of 2018. Since then researchers have had to apply directly to Facebook to obtain its permission to collect data via specially designed tools. Reactions to the change in researchers' access have been largely negative by the research community (Bastos & Walker, n.d).

Soon after the change, a group of senior academics published an open letter arguing that the latest restrictions would consolidate Facebook's monopoly over personal data provision, further commercialise online research, and limit the scope for external scrutiny of social media research (Hill, 2018). Therefore, critics of the closing down of online large-N automated data collection opportunities on Facebook (that were also followed by similar measures by VKontakte in Russia) maintain that, 'Contrary to popular belief, these changes are as much about strengthening Facebook's business model of data control as they are about actually improving data privacy for users' (Bruns, 2018). However, Facebook argued that these changes are in the public interest to protect people's information.

Debates over what is in the public interest have dominated online research in extremism since the start. Emerging practice suggests that in the United States, public interest is skewed towards security with potential breaches of people's privacy (Conway & Buchanan, 2018). At the other end of the spectrum is the European experience that places more emphasis on the protection of personal data and rights of users online. Most recently, this was evident in the GDPR that came into force in May 2018. The GDPR deals with both data protection (i.e. how to secure data from unauthorised access) and data privacy (i.e. how the data is used) (Dataiq.co.uk, n.d). It introduced a number of novelties, such as the right to be forgotten (i.e. to have all digital footprints deleted, even data that was stored externally), the right to rectification (i.e. to change mistakes made online) and the right to data portability (i.e. to extract one's own data). It has also reintroduced some older ethical research techniques – such as obtaining consent, ensuring clarity about how data is being used, anonymisation of data, confidentiality, and due data storage – and turned them into legal obligations.

2. Key Ethical Dilemmas in Online CVE Research: Harm, privacy and interpretation

It has proven very difficult to apply existing research standards for the offline setting to online research – due to the scope and quantity of collected data, different jurisdictions, and different national interests (Sugiura, Wiles, & Pope, 2017). Indeed, conducting ethical research in CVE using internet-mediated data is not a clear-cut and simple area to examine; the only certainty is that it necessitates a deep understanding of the potential consequences (direct and indirect) of the research. Thus, it is important to take a step back and look at some of the current practices in online research into sensitive topics, such as extremism.

2.1. 'Do no harm' as the fundamental ethical imperative

Doing research ethically is in essence doing research without causing harm – direct or indirect – to any participants. This is particularly clear in research bodies that study vulnerable populations such as youth. For example, the British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2018) focus on the minimisation of harm via suitable research designs and methods. The simple imperative of minimising harm becomes more complex in the CVE setting, as the consequences of data collection, usage, and observation may not be as visible and obvious as offline. It is often hard to predict what the consequences of data collection and findings will be in a given context and how data will be interpreted. Potential negative consequences include exposing online groups to security or intelligence services, curbing the right to freedom of expression by flagging content and compromising the security of online users, and researchers. Stigmatisation of studied users online is the clearest issue, especially in large-N studies that rely on automated data collection via software and applications that use algorithms.

In CVE, this is especially important as the link between consumption of extremist content online and extremist (and violent) behaviour has never been established beyond reasonable doubt (Dean, 2019). Although data science offers new pathways to studying online radicalisation – from simple detection work (by creating keyword-based algorithms) to large analytical work of collecting large volumes of data – such methodology often results in collecting false positives, i.e. content and individuals that are labelled incorrectly as 'extremist', as well as false negatives (Fernandez, 2018). Human verification of all collected material is thus advisable as a measure to improve the quality of data but also to ensure that our conclusions are not introducing unethical biases (Brown & Cowls, 2015).

A related challenge is of a conceptual nature: definitions of extremism and radicalisation are not clear-cut and become very difficult to operationalise online. The rich and nuanced conceptualisations and definitions of extremism (Borum, 2011) do not easily translate into keyword-based automated research and algorithms. As comments are often collected without details of the context, the manner of speech (such as irony) or nuanced data about the user's background, online research faces more challenges in terms of ascertaining who and what can be labelled as 'extreme'. As Dean (2019) explains, "people's ability to evaluate the 'truth' or congruence of a message is heavily dependent on being able to 'see' the other person's non-verbal behaviours" (234).

Moreover, as Borum (2011) notes, "the term extreme refers to deviations from the norm" (9). However, perceptions of what is radical and extreme are context dependent – it may be more common for users in certain societies to use potentially threatening vocabulary. Yet that does not mean that they themselves would pose any security threat (although toxic discourse online may lead to hardening views about certain issues (Cottee, 2018)). This is related to the reusability and integrity of data, i.e. how to preserve data for posterity: it is not enough to preserve the relevant raw data but also the context in which they were produced. Therefore, studying isolated big data without qualitative explanations can distort the real story behind them. For example, in the context of former Yugoslavia, support for war crimes is often presented in the public discourse as a sign of radicalisation of the opposing sides. Yet, the fact that some youth in Republika Srpska, the smaller Bosnian entity mainly inhabited by Bosnian Serbs, would chant 'Knife, barbwire and Srebrenica' does not directly mean that they would violently attack Bosnian Muslims and repeat the Srebrenica genocide. It is more a sign of the political and societal lack of reckoning with the past.

Finally, although traditional ethical concepts of security risks, physical harm and traumatic experience for researchers are less of an issue online, they need to be considered. This is not only vis-à-vis online users whose user handles may be incorrectly 'labelled' in such research as pertaining to radical categories (and thus stigmatised) but also vis-à-vis researchers who leave their digital footprint and can be targeted. In other words, researchers have a responsibility to protect both the research 'subjects' (online users) as well as themselves and their research teams. This is particularly important in research on extremism where it may be dangerous to reveal and share researchers' identities, as discussed below. Overall, although it is difficult to uphold the responsibility to do no harm online if potential harm cannot be foreseen with certainty, it is critical to ensure that research designs and methodologies mitigate potential risks as much as possible.

2.2. Privacy and anonymity of users

One specific category of harm – infringements of privacy – has attracted particular concern. Privacy concerns in online research are equally important given the increasing scrutiny over data anonymisation and protection of on-

line identities. It is a general misconception that most user-generated data that is available online can be considered 'public'. The idea that all users that post comments or posts online are implicitly agreeing with such content being used and reproduced is mistaken. For example, while users may implicitly agree with the content of their posts to be used, they are very likely not aware of the fact that the metadata linked to their posts (i.e. data about themselves such as location, gender, or age) may also be used. This was also recognised in the GDPR as it specifically acknowledges that online users often do not understand the implications of the content they post and thus should be given more protection.

As rule of thumb, Twitter is considered as a public source, which distinguishes it from other social media, such as Facebook and YouTube. Although tweets on Twitter with hashtags are considered to be part of a public discussion, it is still a matter of debate to what extent it may be harmful to publish user names of Twitter users (Feisler & Proferes, 2018). As many Twitter users may be young or vulnerable, and hashtags may be of sensitive nature, posting individual user handles may, in fact, cause harm in the long run. In some cases, publishing user handles in open research may stigmatise the users, even if their posts may be considered public, i.e. the key ethical principal of 'do no harm' may be violated (some users exposed in research have been targeted by doxxing). There is a rife debate as to whether usernames should be used or not. The emerging standard is increasingly to anonymise data in research such as extremism or other sensitive topics as it can stigmatise individuals whose online comments may be taken out of context (Conway & Buchanan, 2018). Moreover, since Twitter acts as a 'data controller', it also now needs to comply with the GDPR (ibid). In other words, if a user removes his or her tweet, Twitter, in theory, requires all API users to remove this data from the database they have built via Twitter's API (Urosic, 2016). This, of course, is difficult to monitor.

As a general practice, anonymisation of data should be applied where individuals have not consented to the use of their names and identities. This is complicated by the fact that some platforms' terms and conditions require that data be published only in their original form (this used to be the practice on Twitter). Ethical judgment should be exercised in such cases to weigh handle-name publication against the principle of do no harm. A mere removal of the username may not be enough as exact citations (verbatim) may still enable the user to be identified online. Even some minor modifications may not be enough as additional identifiers may be retraced to the original user.

The emerging consensus suggests that although complete anonymisation of data and users may be difficult to ensure, all identifying and sensitive data should be removed before reporting or publishing the data (Sugiura, Wiles, & Pope, 2017). In cases when individual names of extremist individuals or potential terrorists must be mentioned, the research may move into the realm of security service operations – be it at the national or international level. Individual ethics committee (in academia) or funders (in the private sector and international development) should provide researchers with enough information about how to proceed in such cases – that is how to flag or report such content and users.

2.3. Consent online versus genuine datas

Finally, obtaining informed consent online is challenging, especially in studies on radicalisation, as the researcher may not want to reveal his or her presence. Informed consent is a standard research practice, whereby participants are provided with information about the purpose of the research and its implications. Although some users may be aware of the fact that their comments and posts may be studied (some might even have read the terms and conditions of the platforms where they post), most users are oblivious to the fact that their online activities are potentially being observed and studied. In the offline space, researcher's presence is physically visible and consent can be directly sought from individuals whose views or opinions are being cited or used. The opportunity to do so online is less clear. It may be difficult to contact users or, in the case of research into radicalisation, direct contact may compromise the research or even be dangerous. From a practical perspective, acquiring informed consent when conducting large-N analysis may also be problematic as potentially thousands or more participants are involved.

In covert research that is generally used in the CVE space, researchers do not announce their presence in order to study the subject in a 'natural setting'. There are two main types of covert research assuming false identities and lurking. Assuming false identities and actively participating in conversations is a method that borders with intelligence and security service types of research. It is a method that raises several ethical questions, especially in terms of deception of the studied subjects. It becomes more difficult in closed or private groups that generally have a moderator (gatekeeper) that approves new members. In such cases, it is possible to gain consent by the moderator when the researcher explains the purpose of his or her research. Yet in other cases,

even that may pose security risks and the researcher may choose to join a group without providing explicit explanation about the research project due to security reasons or the need not to 'disturb' the nature of the discussions. In such cases, a more thorough assessment is needed for each individual research project.

Lurking (i.e. online observation without any contact with or announcement to the online participants/users) is becoming a standard practice in certain research fields such as drug use, organised crime, or radicalisation (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). Consent is generally not sought in public forums and groups. The justifications are, first, that research findings may be devalued by a researcher announcing his or her presence and seeking consent and, second, for security reasons. However, lurking is not a fully secure approach either. During a recent research project led by the author, one of our researchers was targeted by Facebook users pertaining to the Salafi community because s/he was often looking at their profiles and was that captured by Facebook algorithms. Users' ability to withdraw from the research is also limited. In addition, anecdotal evidence from other contexts demonstrates that violent extremists are gradually moving to encrypted digital platforms outside of the surface web, i.e. to apps such as Telegram, Signal, Viber, WhatsApp and the Darknet (Amarasingam, 2018). This means that access – both for researchers but also for intelligence agencies – to individuals that are radicalised is much more limited.

Given these challenges, in cases where the researcher, subjects, or research may be jeopardised by direct contact, an informed judgment should be used and extra care given as to how to go about conducting such research (Sugiura, Wiles, & Pope, 2017). The ethical imperative of 'do no harm' again takes priority. If data could be distorted and decontextualised by announcing a researcher's presence, or if the researcher may become a victim of direct online attacks by contacting users, it is advisable to consider resorting to 'lurking' and other more covert research practices such as when researchers adopt false identities. Nonetheless, decisions about online consent in the realm of radicalisation should always be guided by the need for security of researchers, as well as the need to protect users online.

3. Conclusion

This brief essay has presented some of the key dilemmas of conducting research on extremism online using existing ethical research standards. The fundamental imperative of any research should be to minimise the potential risks to anyone involved in the research, on both sides. This may result in the need to anonymise data and users where necessary, not distorting or decontextualising data, and ensuring no participant has been endangered by the research. It is especially important to think about how the collected data and research will be used (e.g. intelligence purposes or public research), and how it will be interpreted by third parties such as governments or the public. Publishing data without its appropriate context or specifying data collection limitations may lead readers to wrong conclusions and subsequently misguided policy choices. The practical consequences for research in CVE are manifold. On the prevention side, intelligence services have in the past relied on tracing users online and studying their interaction patterns in order to foil violent attacks, or to identify individuals who may be vulnerable to extremist material. On the side of explanatory research, researchers have used vast online data sources to create connections between extremist preachers and their followers in order to explain how narratives travel. In some cases, they were able to make links between such online influencers and subsequent terrorist attacks (Amarasingam, 2018). However, the definition of extremist material and behaviour online is not clearly conceptualised. Many individuals that might be following the same online influencers would never resort to any violent behaviour. Their online branding or identification as 'extremist' may thus be highly misleading and stigmatising.

Understanding the complexity of ethical usage of online data is thus even more important for CVE research as individuals branded as extreme may face dire consequences in their local communities. Ultimately, the burden of ethics sits with the researcher who needs to manage the risks stemming from each individual study. As this area is still rather murky, and current research ethics guidelines often fail to provide comprehensive rules about how to behave and collect data, discussions and fora about online ethical research are not only welcomed, but indispensable if we are to move ahead in producing ethical research on extremism using Internet-generated data.

REFERENCES

'A Summary of the EU General Data Protection Regulation | Www.Dataiq.Co.Uk'. (n.d). Retrieved from: https://www.dataiq.co.uk/blog/summary-eu-general-data-protection-regulation.

Amarasingam, A. (2018).'Jihadism on Telegram: A Large-Scale Study of Recent Trends and Group Dynamics'. presented at the VOX POL Conference, Amsterdam, 20 August 2018.

'An Update on Our Plans to Restrict Data Access on Facebook | Facebook Newsroom'. (n.d). Retrieved from: https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/04/restricting-data-access/.

Behr, I., Reding, A., Edwards, C., & Gribbon, L. (2013). 'Radicalisation in the Digital Era', RAND. Retrieved from: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR453.html.

Bastos, M. & Walker, S. T. (n.d) 'Facebook's Data Lockdown Is a Disaster for Academic Researchers'. The Conversation. Retrieved from: http://theconversation.com/facebooks-data-lockdown-is-a-disaster-for-academic-researchers-94533.

Bermingham, A., Conway, M, McInerney, L.,O'Hare, N., &Smeaton, A. F. (2009). 'Combining Social Network Analysis and Sentiment Analysis to Explore the Potential for Online Radicalisation'. In Social Network Analysis and Mining, 2009. ASONAM'09. International Conference on Advances In, 231–236. IEEE.

Borum, R. (2011). 'Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research'. Journal of Strategic Security 4 (4).

British Educational Research Association (2018). Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, Fourth Edition (2018). Retrieved from: https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018.

Brown, I. & Cowls, J. (2015). 'Check the Web: Assessing the Ethics and Politics of Policing the Internet for Extremist Material'.

Bruns, A. (2018). 'Facebook Shuts the Gate after the Horse Has Bolted, and Hurts Real Research in the Process'. Internet Policy Review, Retrieved from: https://policyreview.info/articles/news/facebook-shuts-gate-after-horse-has-bolted-and-hurts-real-research-process/786.

Buchanan, E. A. (2010). 'Internet Research Ethics: Past, Present and Future'. In The Handbook of Internet Studies - Google Books, edited by Robert Burnett, Mia Consalvo, and Charles Ess, 83–108. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell

Conway, M. & Buchanan, E. A. (2018). 'Researching Violent Extremism, Terrorism and the Internet: Ethics Issues'. presented at the VOX POL Conference, Amsterdam, 21 August 2018.

Cottee, S. (2018, September). 'Can Facebook Really Drive Violence?' The Atlantic. Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/facebook-violence-germany/569608/.

Dean, G. (2019). 'Framing the Challenges of Online Violent Extremism:"Policing-Public-Policies-Politics" Framework'. In Violent Extremism: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice, edited by Majeed Khader and et al., 302–335. IGI Global.

European Parliament. (2018). The Return of Foreign Fighters to EU Soil. Ex-Post Evaluation. Retrieved from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS_STU(2018)621811_EN.pdf.

Fernandez, M. (2018). 'Online Radicalization: Towards the Generation of Gold Standard Datasets'. presented at the VOX POL Conference, Amsterdam, 20 August 2018.

Fiesler, C. & Proferes, N, (2018) '"Participant" Perceptions of Twitter Research Ethics'. Social Media + Society. 4(1), https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118763366.

Gavin, J. & Rodham, K. (2017). 'From Ethical Rules to Ethical Puzzles: Research Ethics in the Digital Age'. Psychology Review. 23(1), pp. 2–5.

Hill, R. (2018). 'Academics: Shutting down Facebook API Damages Research, Oversight, Competition'. Retrieved from: https://www.theregister.co.uk/2018/04/25/shutting_down_facebook_api_damages_research_oversight_competition_warn_academics/.

Hussain, G. & Saltman, E. M. (2014). Jihad Trending: A Comprehensive Analysis of Online Extremism and How to Counter It. Quilliam, 2014.

Macdonald, S. (2009). Why we should abandon the balance metaphor: a new approach to counterterrorism policy. ILSA Journal of International and Comparative Law 15(1), 95-146.

Meleagrou-Hitchens, A. & Kaderbhai, N.(2017). Research Perspectives on Online Radicalisation. A Literature Review, 2006-2016. London: VOX POL Network of Excellence.

Schmid, A. (2014). "Violent and Non-Violent Extremism: Two Sides of the Same Coin?" (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism), http://www.start.umd.

edu/publication/violent-and-non-violent-extremism-two-sides-same-coin.

Sugiura, L., Wiles, R., & Pope, C. (2017). 'Ethical Challenges in Online Research: Public/Private Perceptions'. Research Ethics 13(3-4), pp. 184–199.

Townsend, L.& Wallace, C. (2016). 'Social Media Research: A Guide to Ethics'. University of Aberdeen.

Urosic, H. (2016). 'The Right to Be Forgotten or the Duty to Be Remembered? Twitter Data Reuse and Implications for User Privacy'. Leiden: THE COUNCIL FOR BIG DATA, ETHICS, AND SOCIETY, Retrieved from: https://bdes.datasociety.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Ursic-politiwoops.pdf.

Warrell, J. G., & Jacobsen, M. (2014). 'Internet Research Ethics and the Policy Gap for Ethical Practice in Online Research Settings.' Canadian Journal of Higher Education 44 (1), pp. 22–37.

"A combination of factors—and never one factor alone—can lead to radicalization, and that there is not always a causality between the risks, potential drivers, and radicalization."

7 THROUGH REDISTRIBUTION, RECOGNITION, REPRESENTATION AND RECONCILIATION IN EDUCATION SYSTEM TOWARDS BUILDING RESILIENCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Marija Risteska

Introduction

Education is believed to be an effective space for countering violent extremism (CVE). Mostly because the education sector is often one of the most critical development interventions supported by governments and donors as a way of strengthening peacebuilding efforts during post-conflict recovery, as well as addressing long-term human development needs in fragile states (Silva, 2017). In this context, education's role in prevention is through programs that offer understanding, building of skills such as critical thinking and empathy to support countering violent extremism measures and build resilience among students.

The Republic of North Macedonia has experienced the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon, with over 140 young men heading to Syria and Iraq to join ranks of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and other terrorist groups. Despite the territorial defeat of ISIS in Syria, the capacity of the group to inspire new recruits, conduct attacks, and cultivate divisions among the population remain. In the case of North Macedonia, the interethnic tensions among communities continues especially in communities that are located in areas where violent extremist groups are actively present and often use violence to achieve their political goals. So far, there have been several cases of violence against citizens (for example in the pre-election period there have been cases of interethnic clashes on public transportation, and sporting events (Jonuzi, 2017)) and institutions (in example the deadly conflict between an armed group of ethnic Albanians and the North Macedonian police in Kumanovo in May, 2015; and following the election of an Albanian speaker

of parliament that led to the storming of the Parliament building by mainly North Macedonian nationalists and the injuring of 77 parliamentarians) of North Macedonia, which may intensify violent reactions.

Preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) has increasingly become a priority for the government following the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy, considering that the country is candidate for EU membership and needs to approximate the country's legislation, policy and institutional mechanism to the one of the EU. The country has adopted a Strategy for Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism implemented by the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT), a coordination body for countering terrorism and violent extremism. The strategy mirrors the EU Counterterrorism Strategy and recognizes four priorities: prevent radicalization, protect the people from violent extremism, pursue threats to VE and terrorism; and respond actively and aggressively and in ways that are transparent and consistent with rule of law in the spirit of solidarity and in consideration of the needs of victims.

Education and CVE in North Macedonia

In October 2015 UNESCO's Executive Board adopted a decision highlighting the significance of education as a means to preventing violent extremism and terrorism. Two months later, the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was launched which acknowledged that quality education was valuable in addressing the drivers of the phenomenon (UNESCO, 2016). This issue was also internationally acknowledged and supported through the Youth Action Agenda to Prevent Violent Extremism and Promote Peace (Global Youth Summit Against Violent Extremism, 2015). These international agendas state the importance of education in reducing violence and contributing to harmonious societies.

In North Macedonia, education is delivered through a decentralized school network managed by municipalities. Hence, prevention mechanisms and religious communities operate on local level, which creates an environment where both education institutions and municipal authorities can develop locally tailored interventions for early detection of radicalization and prevention. The National Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia for Countering Violent Extremism (2018-2022) recognizes education as one of the tools for countering and preventing from radicalization that can lead to violent extremism. In this regard the strategy foresees working with teachers on enhancing their skills to detect violent extremism and radicalization (National CVE Strategy, goal 1.1.); with students by implementing programs that will protect from influence of radical and extremist contents (National CVE Strategy, goal 1.2); and with parents through strengthening the role of parent councils in recognizing and preventing violent extremism and radicalization in schools (National CVE Strategy, goal 1.3). Although these policy documents recognize education as one area of CVE to date the work on CVE using education as a tool is scarce. This is due to the fact that the Strategy document has been developed and adopted not so long ago and time is needed for awareness-raising, capacity building and implementation of the activities provisioned.

Methodological framework

The research presented here uses the sustainable approach to peacebuilding through education systems and programs that were developed by Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, and Smith (2017). According to the authors, education systems need to engage with four interconnected dimensions (4Rs): redistribution, recognition, representation, and reconciliation in order to prevent radicalization that may lead to violent extremism. The first of the 4Rs dimension is 'redistribution' which encompasses allocation and redistribution of resources and addresses whether schools and learning spaces operate through integrated approaches and not in parallel. The second dimension is 'recognition' or developing inclusive, comparative, and relevant curricula that do justice to various (ethnic, linguistic, religious, gendered or other) diversities to ensure that education supports students' identity-building through respectful recognition of others. The third dimension is 'representation', or assessing ways in which education policy design, implementation, and decision-making processes are inclusive of multiple perspectives, including those of marginalized groups (students, teachers, etc.) at local and national levels. The fourth dimension is 'reconciliation' or addressing the ways in which education systems, resources, and learning interactions deal with grievances and tensions of the past and negotiate nonviolent means to foster social cohesion and plural societies.

This essay assesses how the education system is responding to the 4Rs and whether it has the capacity to prevent radicalization processes that can lead to violent extremism. In the analysis the author uses findings of research on the perceptions of teachers and front-line workers on radicalization and violent extremism conducted by the Centre for Research and Policy Making in May

2018 within the project *Educate to prevent – Strengthening Front-line School Workers and Parents to Build Youth Resilience to Violent Extremism* (hereinafter Educate2prevent). The research encompasses: (i) a survey conducted in 22 high schools based in Skopje and the municipalities of Kumanovo, Tetovo, and Gostivar, and (ii) 40 in-depth, semi-structured, and face-to-face interviews conducted with frontline school workers, municipal representatives, local religious leaders and police officials closely working with the Local Councils for Prevention (LCPs). A total of 505 respondents (front line school workers in the designated high schools) filled in the questionnaires, of which 52% are Albanians, 43% are Macedonian, while the remaining 5% belong to the other ethnic communities living in North Macedonia. The aim of the research was to depict the perceptions on radicalization for teachers and other school support staff (psychologists, sociologists, pedagogues, etc.) on their awareness, attitudes, and values related to the radicalization process in general and its different phases. It also assesses opinions on the extent to which these topics are directly or indirectly incorporated in the curriculum and with the extracurricular activities, including curriculum goals and activities related to tolerance, inclusion, multiculturalism, etc.

This methodology inevitably has its limitations as it is based on perceptions, which may or may not correspond to the country's reality. While this paper discusses risk factors and potential drivers to radicalization, the author recognizes that a combination of factors—and never one factor alone—can lead to radicalization, and that there is not always a causality between the risks, potential drivers, and radicalization. Therefore, the paper uses the concept 'radicalization leading to violent extremism' but recognizes that radicalization does not necessarily lead to violent extremism.

Radicalization that can lead to violent extremism in North Macedonia

It can be argued that the onset of radicalization in North Macedonia and the Balkans came with the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1989. In this period the whole territory was hit by ethnic conflict becoming a major attraction for Islamic militancy (Panovski, 2011). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, foreign fighters were organized into the El Mujahid division, which was attached to the Bosnian army. In Albania, terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda, the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the Islamic Armed Group (GIA), and Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) infiltrated the country and used charities to raise and distribute funds (Shay, 2007, p. 114). According to various sources, during

the conflict in North Macedonia, the ranks of the National Liberation Army (NLA) included approximately 150 Mujahidin from Albania, Bosnia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan, all of whom participated in the fighting (Ibid). Consequently, in North Macedonia the media and international experts have primarily paid attention to the rise of Islamic extremism in the capital where there is a recurrent "long standing, dispute within Islamic religious community and the penetrated foreign funded Wahhabis who are challenging the legitimate leadership of IVZ for political and economic gain" (Shay, 2007). Claude Monique claimed that:

> The mufti Zenun Berisha maintained close ties with al Qaeda affiliates and shared goals of establishing terror camps and cells related the Saudi- inspired Wahhabi Islam with the fundamentalist cells of al Qaeda. These fundamentalist cells created fear among local Muslims who witnessed violence directed against members of the Islamic community (CSIS, 2004).

Since this time, North Macedonia has experienced the process of youth Islamic radicalization, which was especially visible during the Syrian conflict, through the "foreign terrorist fighters" phenomenon (over 140 fighters), mainly from Skopje (Chair, Gazi Baba), Kumanovo, Lipkovo, and Tetovo. With the defeat of ISIS in Syria, the capacity of the group to continue inspiring new recruits, conducting attacks, and cultivating divisions among the population remain a concern. This is especially recurrent in areas where the foreign fighters came from as extremist groups are reported to be still present and active and can use violence for achieving political goals (National Strategy North Macedonia for Countering Violent Extremism (2018-2022). There have been several cases of the violence against citizens and institutions of the Republic of North Macedonia, which may intensify radicalization. Some of these have been religious, whereas others are ethnically motivated. Religiously inspired violent extremism is manifested within the Muslim community, as in the case of the so called "Mosque War" in Skopje, and towards other non-Muslim communities, as with the case of the FTFs. Ethnically inspired violent extremism is manifested through clashes of ultras, organized groups of football supporters known for violence, and clashes between party youth organization members and incidents among students and youth deriving from the urban/rural divide and the economic inequality.

In terms of terrorism, since 2015 the law enforcement agencies have imple-

mented a number of actions. There was the detainment of a group of 30 suspected terrorists providing logistical support to armed clashes with the police in Kumanovo (BBC, 2018). Operation Cell, a crackdown on FTFs that began in 2015, led to house searches on 28 locations and arrests of 14 persons in 2018 (Telegraf, 2018). These were accompanied by simultaneous searches at seven locations and 4 arrests in an operation called Cell 2, leading to the arrest of 25 suspected terrorists who were planning a terrorist attack during the World Cup qualifying soccer match between Albania and Israel (RFE, 2018a). And there were 36 arrests related to right-wing Macedonian nationalists carrying out a terrorist attack on the Parliament on 27 April 2017 (RFE, 2018b).

Radicalization that can lead to violent extremism in schools in North Macedonia

The CRPM study depicted that almost 19% of frontline workers in 8 municipalities in the country believe that radicalization in high schools had always existed with the same intensity (7.43%), radicalization is increasing from year to year (6.83%), and/or this process had started in the last several years (4.62%). More than half of the respondents believe that this process does not exist in their school (55.62%), while 25.3% do not know.

There is a significant difference regarding the ethnic background of the respondents. The perception for religious radicalization is much higher among the ethnic Macedonians (27.96%) than among the ethnic Albanians (10.32%). This can be explained by an overestimation, false perceptions of Macedonians and, on the other side, by an underestimation of the threat by Albanians due to their fear of being stigmatized. This explains that the Albanian community does not want to recognize the problem of radicalization and falls into the stigma trap. This is a result of the fact that Islamic radicalization—due to the Syrian war and the participation of foreign fighters from North Macedonia in ISIS—is most prominent and most of the foreign fighters were from ethnic Albanian descent. As a result, the Macedonian ethnic frontline workers associate religious radicalization with the Islamic community in the country which creates a trap to associate violent extremism with Islam. The Albanian descent frontline workers not recognizing radicalization in the same degree as the Macedonian descent frontline workers demonstrates the fear of being perceived as potentially radical and violent because of their religious affiliation and/or ethnicity. Hence, the Macedonian descent frontline workers showing prejudice towards Muslims demonstrates the frustration and resentment of

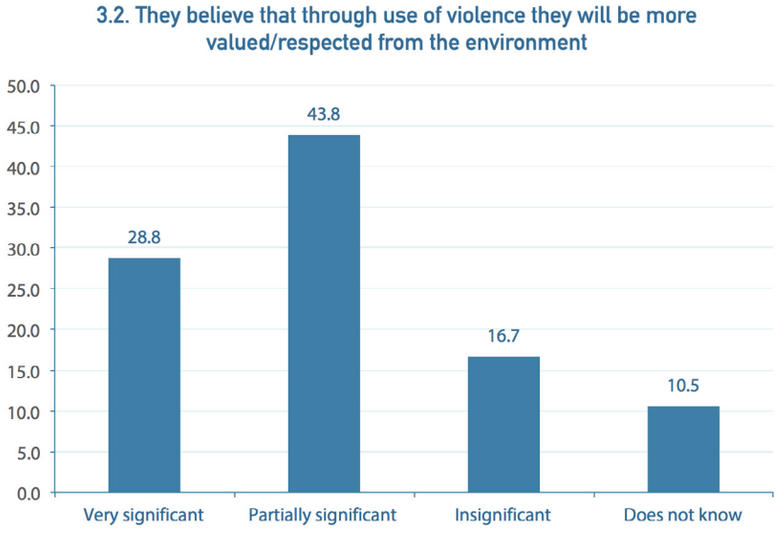
certain ethnocultural groups due to the global events in which the people from the country participated.

This shows there is a polarization between the two communities, which leads to a simple view of reality, structured around the "us" and "them" distinction. Researchers have recently proposed to address the issue of radicalization by linking it to polarization, which can be defined as "strengthening the opposition between groups in society, which results or may result in (greater) tensions between these groups" (Noppe, Hellinckx & Vande Velde, 2015). Polarization dynamics can affect the entire society or institutions in which different groups live together. At the same time, the demonstrated fear of ethnic Albanian frontline workers to recognize radicalization due to the social consequences shows vulnerability that can be exploited by recruiters for Islamist organizations who deftly capitalize on this unspoken distress (IRIPI, 2018). The false perception of Macedonians towards Muslim communities can create a favorable environment for exclusion and further discrimination that, in turn, invigorates radicalization leading to violent extremism. This is important because research on radicalization shows that contends creates a breeding ground for further radicalization (Hafez & Mullins, 2015). Furthermore, if these feelings are rooted in cultural or socioeconomic marginalization, the social consequences of radicalization might further generate radicalization (Piazza, 2011).

Causes for youth radicalization that can lead to violent extremism in high schools

The research results of the Educate2prevent project show that violent and masculine culture, social exclusion, and limited availability of other nonviolent ideologies are the main meso-reasons why young people choose to accept propagation of radical ideology and use of violence. The masculine and violent culture of society is contributing to violent behavior. Namely, the reason why young people would accept radical ideologies which propagate the use of violence is because they believe that through the use of violence, they will be more valued and respected from the environment (72.62% believe this reason to be very significant of partially significant). To this end, peer pressure is also creating a conducive environment for adoption of violence as a behavior option. There is no difference in terms of ethnicity or municipality where the respondents come from. What is worrying is that once again, the majority of respondents find that there is no better alternative with regards to ideology in the environment they live in (70.37% find this reason very significant or partially significant) and

therefore youth accept propagation of radical ideology and use of violence. An exception is the City of Skopje, where probably there are more options available so the ratio between those that find this statement significant and partially significant is 61.75% vis-à-vis 28.19% who find it insignificant.



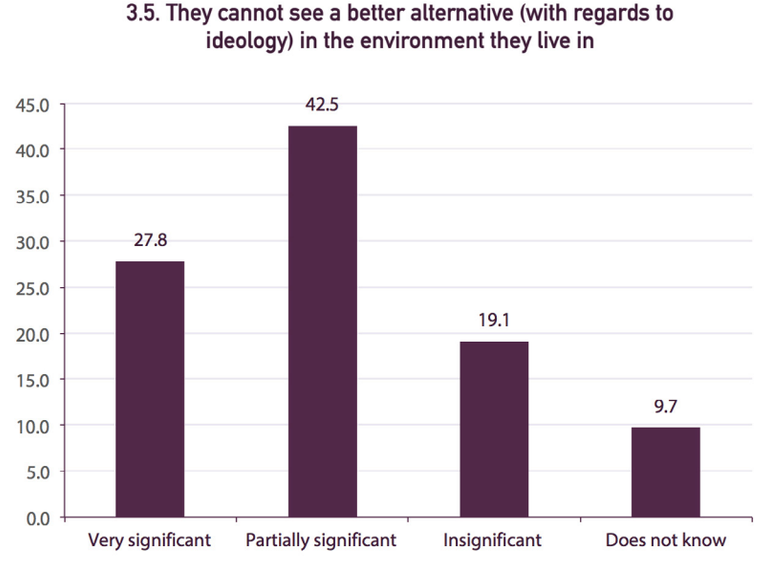
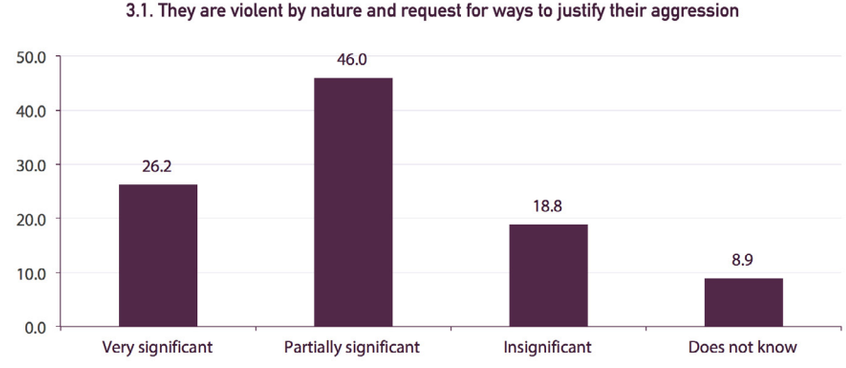


FIGURE 1: Front-line workers' perception on statement 3.2 and 3.5 in CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018.

At the micro-level, identity problems, failed integration, feelings of alienation, marginalization, and discrimination seem to be the main reasons why young people tend to accept propagation of radical ideologies and use of violence. The CRPM survey showed that frontline workers believe that accepting radical ideologies which propagate the use of violence in high schools is due to the fact that these young people "are violent by nature and request for ways to justify their aggression" (combined answers of 72.2% of the respondents think this is significant or at least partially significant). A significant number of frontline workers in education also believe that young people "feel discriminated (e.g. on ethnic, religious, political and social basis)" (68.65% find it very significant or partially significant, while 22.82% believe that this reason is insignificant) and therefore accept radical ideologies. There are no significant differences in regard to municipalities and ethnicity in this regard. The discontent with the system and the need to change and rebel is the third reason why respondents think that young people accept radical ideologies that use violence.



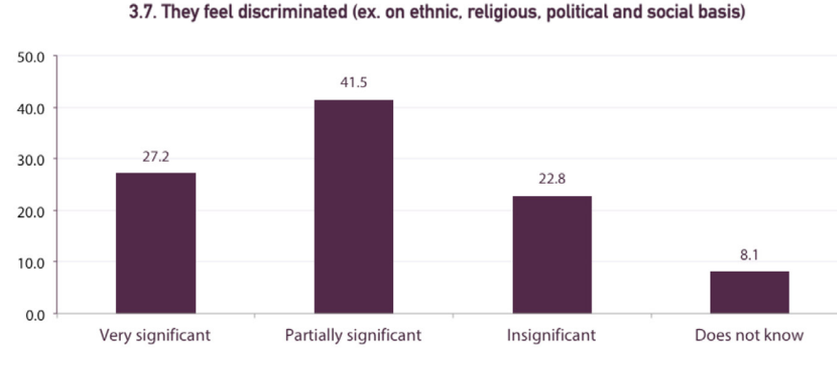


FIGURE 2: Front-line workers' perception on statement 3.1 and 3.7 in CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018.

Namely 73.02% of the respondents find the statement "They feel that they are victims of the injustice of the system and rebel because of that" as very significant or partially significant. This is mainly because they are not integrated and/or "have difficulties to fit in the environment and look for groups which will accept them" (according to 71.97% of the surveyed who believe that this reason is very significant or partially significant). The situation with integration is relatively better in Gostivar, where the ratio between those who find the statement significant and partially significant is 59.61% vis-à-vis those who find it insignificant (31.73%).

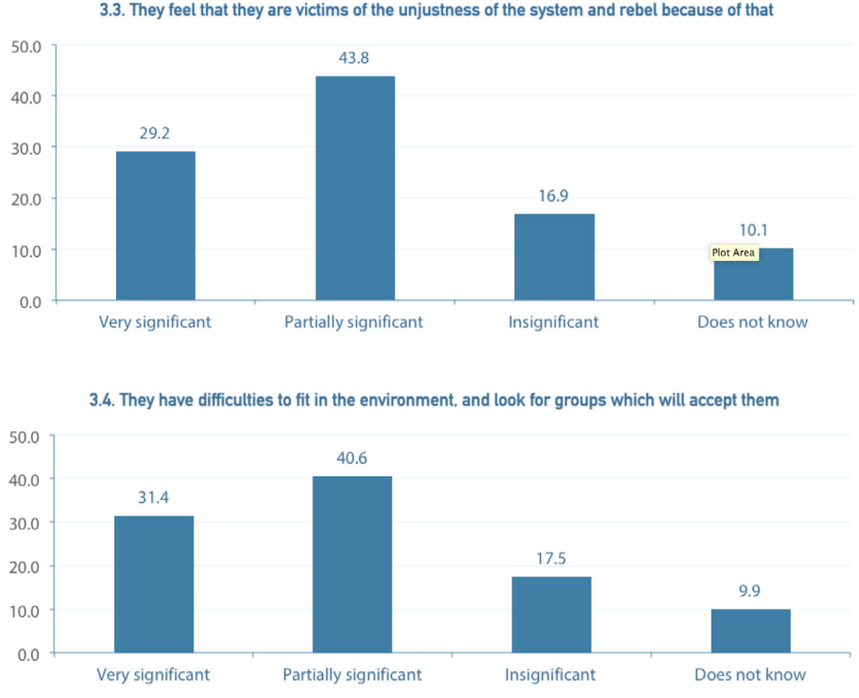
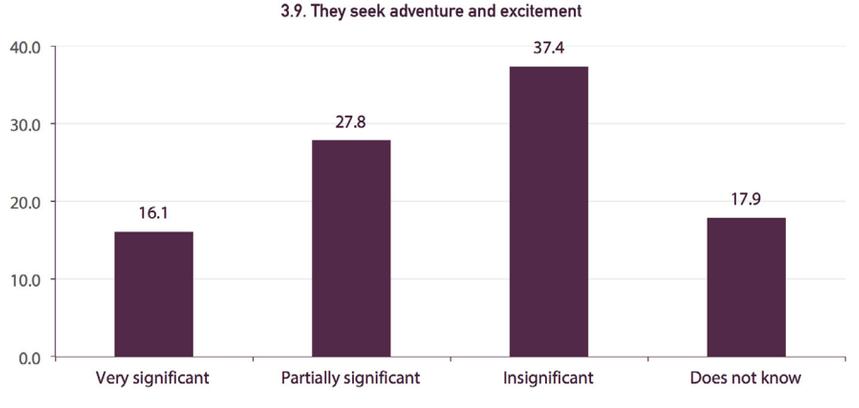


FIGURE 3: Front-line workers' perception on statement 3.3 and 3.4 in CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018.

It seems that acceptance of radical ideologies is less because of the perception that youth "seek adventure and excitement" (43.93% of frontline workers find this reason very significant or partially significant, while 37.38% believe that this reason is insignificant). While in Skopje and in Gostivar, the figures follow

the national trend; in Kumanovo and Tetovo, the ratio between these two figures is 56% vis-à-vis 25% and 34.67% vis-à-vis 49.33% respectively. This means that in Kumanovo, the radical ideologies seem more appealing than in the rest of the country, whereas in Tetovo, they are less appealing. In regard to the ethnic structure of the respondents, 47.64% of the ethnic Macedonians treat "seek adventure and excitement" as a reason for accepting radical ideologies as very significant or partially significant and 39.15% see it as insignificant, while within the Albanian camp, 38.58% see this reason as very significant or partially significant and 37.01% as insignificant. Similarly, around half of the respondents believe that the youth "are curious regarding different ideologies" (49.21% believe this reason to be very significant of partially significant, conversely to 35.06% who find this reason insignificant) and therefore more open to accepting radical ideologies and use of violence. Another reason is that "they are in search of their identity/sense of belonging" (59.2% find this reason very significant or partially significant). The alienation and the quest for one's own identity is mostly significant in the municipality of Kumanovo, where the ratio between these two figures is 78.21% vis-à-vis 14.85%, while the results are similar for both Macedonian and Albanian respondents. The "search for answers/more understanding about religion and find them in extremist groups" is also backed as a reason for acceptance of radical ideology and use of violence by more than the half of the CRPM surveyed frontline workers in education (57.08% find it very significant or partially significant, while 26.95% believe that this reason is insignificant). There are no significant differences among municipalities and ethnicity.



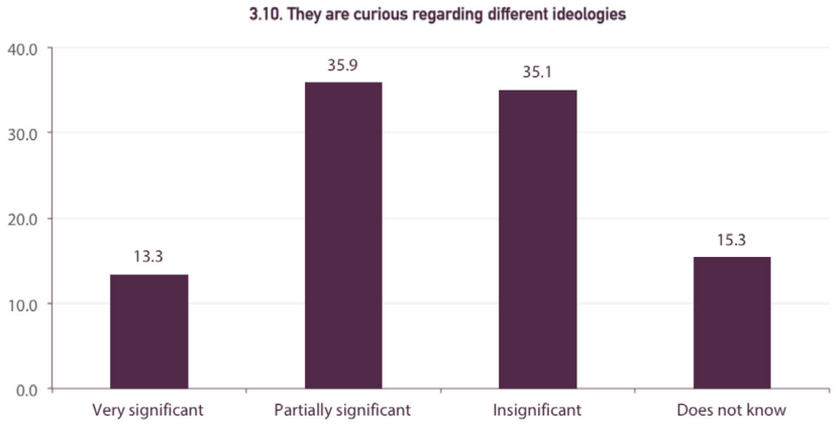


FIGURE 4: Front-line workers' perception on statement 3.9 and 3.10 in CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018.

On a macro level, there seems to be agreement that youth consider radical ideologies and the use of violence as "an appropriate reaction to certain global injustices (unresolved conflicts, wars, repressions on certain ethnic, religious, political groups)" (63.42% of front-line workers in education find this reason either very significant or partially significant, while 21.87 find this reason insignificant). The majority of the municipalities follow the trend, but in the municipality of Kumanovo, the ratio between these two figures is 76.24% vis-à-vis 10.89%. This can be explained with the fact that this municipality was most affected by the Kosovo refugee crises and the interethnic conflict from 2001 and remains to be the main hotbed for mercenaries working in conflict regions such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. On the other hand, there is no difference in trends on national and municipal level for both Macedonian and Albanian respondents

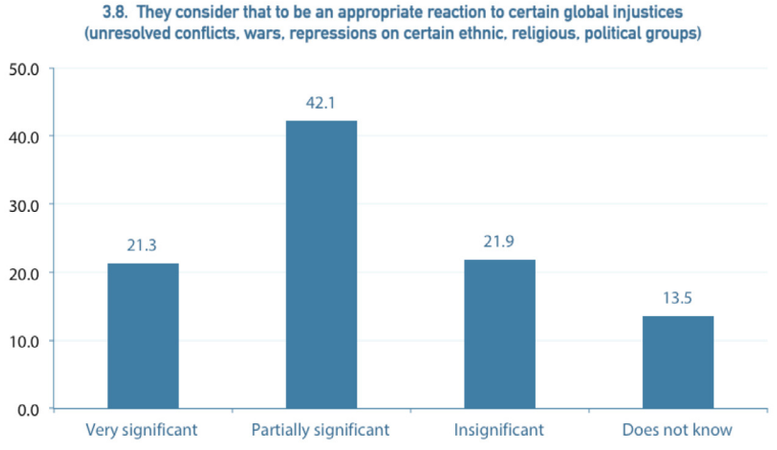


FIGURE 5: Front-line workers' perception on statement 3.8 in CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018.

Modes of radicalization in high schools

According to numerous theoretical frameworks, different modes of radicalization contribute to one's radicalization. They often come in a combination from different levels rather from one level alone. Therefore, we cannot determine which modes are mostly contributing to radicalization leading to violent extremism. The micro-level individual reasons, presented above, suggest that in North Macedonia the self-radicalization mode is dominant. However, the CRPM research shows that frontline workers recognize recruitment as a mode of radicalization. The environments that are most suitable for indoctrination and radicalization of youth, according to the surveys, are internet and social media (70.89%), followed by religious institutions and religious schools (46.73%), and peer groups (31.09%). In regard to the ethnic structure of the respondents, there is no significant difference. The ethnic Albanians' choices are following those on national level, while the Macedonians opted for the same top two choices, putting party youth organizations as a third relevant environment for indoctrination and radicalization (33.64%), instead of peer groups.

Striving to define the categories of youth that are radicalized or can be potentially groomed into adopting radical views, the CRPM has asked frontline workers to identify which students/young people are most susceptible to accept

radical ideologies, taking into consideration their socioeconomic background. On a national level, high school staff believes that students from poorer families are most susceptible to accept radical ideologies (44.36%). This is followed by students from families with lower education (42.57%) and students from families in which vices like alcoholism, drug abuse, gambling, crime etc. are present (38.02%). There are minor differences in regard to the ethnic structure of the respondents

Risk factors for radicalization in Macedonian high schools

National average	Macedonian average	Albanian average
• poor families - 44.36% • lower education - 42.57% • vices - 38.02%	• vices -46.26% • poor families - 45.33% • lower education - 41.59%	• poor families - 47.64% • lower education - 42.52% • broken relationships - 34.25%

Source: CRPM survey on front-line education workers on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018

FIGURE 6: Risk factors for radicalization in North Macedonian high schools, 2018.

The North Macedonian education system and its preparedness to prevent from radicalization that can lead to violent extremism

The education system in the country is divided into four stages: pre-school, primary, secondary, and higher. The language taught in pre-school education is Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish in the municipalities where these languages are used as official (in municipalities where one ethnic community is represented with over 25% of the total population the language of that ethnic group is recognized as second official language of the administration and all services including childcare service are delivered in that language as well). Children from non- Macedonian ethnic backgrounds can take part in educational activities in their respective languages. Preschool education in North Macedonia is not mandatory. Primary education is compulsory and involves children between the ages of 6 and 14. Secondary education is also compulsory and starts at 14 and ends at 18. Both are delivered in the mother tongue of the Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, and Serbs in the country, whereas

the other smaller communities like the Vlachs, the Roma, and the Bosniaks have the right to study their mother tongue and culture as an elective course. Higher education includes academic university courses and vocational studies. Non-vocational programs start with a three to four-year undergraduate degree, followed by masters and PhD (Eurydice, 2018). There are three Macedonian-speaking universities and two Albanian-speaking universities, both funded by the state.

This, in principle, means that if you are ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian you can be schooled in your mother tongue from kindergarten to university graduation. The Macedonian language, as the official national language, is compulsory from sixth grade. English is the first foreign language for all students from all ethnic backgrounds from the first grade. Considering that perceptions about the 'other' are formed by the age of 12 when the Macedonian language is included in curriculum, prejudice about the 'other' group is already formed before children have a chance to have contact with the language and have the opportunity to use it to communicate and exchange views with the 'other' group. In addition, evidence shows new generations of Albanians are less fluent in Macedonian with English slowly becoming the lingua franca between the Macedonian and Albanian communities. The other, smaller, communities of Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlachs, etc. are becoming versed in Macedonian and/or Albanian depending on where they live and the number of Macedonians and/or Albanians in the municipality where they live. This particularly makes the Turks and Roma trilingual in the country.

The Ministry of Education is developing education policy in which the curriculum and teacher training are controlled by the Bureau for Development of Education. The state education inspectorate controls the legality of delivery of education to citizens. In this institutional network, the Agency for Education of the Communities Smaller than 20% observes the awareness of rights to education of the Turks, Serbs, Vlachs, Roma, and Bosniaks.

The following sections assess whether the country's education system, policy and institutional mechanisms provide sustainable approach to peacebuilding. To this end it is evaluated whether schools and learning spaces operate through integrated approaches and not in parallel (redistribution); whether relevant curricula is developing inclusive and do justice to various (ethnic, linguistic, religious, gendered or other) diversities of students and the community (recognition); whether education policy design, implementation, and deci-

sion-making processes are inclusive of multiple perspectives (representation); and whether education systems, resources, and learning interactions deal with grievances and tensions of the past, and negotiate nonviolent means to foster social cohesion and plural societies (reconciliation).

Redistribution

The provision of education in the mother tongue has an impact on segregation in schools in North Macedonia. The separation of students according to language of instruction has been at the expense of ethnic cohesion (UNICEF, 2009; UNDP, 2004). Since the 2001 interethnic conflict, there is a growing trend of ethnic segregation in both primary and secondary schools, epitomizing Marcel Baumann's concept of "voluntary apartheid" (Lyon, 2014). If the government, local politics and resources permit, schools can even split into separate legal entities. In the long term, this threatens to undermine the cohesion of North Macedonian society and ultimately the state since the education system, rather than representing a tool for promoting mutual understanding, perpetuates mutual mistrust and intolerance among the different communities (Schenker, 2011). This problem is also underlined by the European Training Forum (ETF), emphasizing that the "physical separation between pupils implemented especially in the last decade of transition, poses a challenge for the inclusiveness of the education system" (Macura-Milovanovic, Gera & Kovacevic, 2010). The OSCE High Commissioners on Minorities recommended that "segregation in education should be avoided, even when it is created by the minority communities themselves, at the same time fully respecting educational rights of persons belonging to minorities" (OSCE HCNM, 2012).

Education delivered in multiple hourly shifts is organized along linguistic (and therefore ethnic) lines rather than by grade. In some cases, even the schooling in different languages for different ethnicities is delivered in separate buildings. This formula of mixed schools was argued to be favorable to both providing minority education in the mother tongue and avoiding confrontations between students with different ethnic backgrounds. However, it is also argued that ethnic segregation in schools has contributed to the violence and increased confrontations between students with different ethnic backgrounds demonstrated in cases among secondary school students in Struga and Skopje. The CRPM study of primary school students from different ethnic backgrounds commissioned by OSCE show that "attitudes towards other ethnicities are based, in part, on shared religion (e.g. Macedonians – Serbs; Albanians – Turks), due to closeness of traditions and customs. Yet this is not a rule, as it can be seen that Turkish students have a positive attitude towards both Macedonians and Albanians" (OSCE Skopje, 2010, p. 10). School segregation though is considered to be inducive to development of negative feelings as it "appears that contact between communities is meaningful and a critical aspect of development of positive feelings and respect for other ethnicities" (Ibid, p.11).

Contact with other communities also has an impact on ability to defuse radical views. Therefore, in the CRPM "Educate 2 Prevent" research interviewees from Skopje note that the segregation in the town, and "living in mono-ethnic, mono-cultural and mono-confessional environments is a potential factor" (Stefanovski, 2018) to embrace radical ideas. However, the municipal representative in Kumanovo confirmed what the teachers from the high schools had reported interethnic violence in schools, but see the ethnic segregation of the schools as a solution, and not as a problem (Boskov, 2018). The same situation is observed in Tetovo, where teachers commented that ethnic and religious incidents are either nonexistent or completely fading away, linking it to segregation of the students in different school buildings, or in separate school shifts (Rexhepi, 2018). One of the teachers commented that sometimes minor incidents happen, mainly due to political tensions created by the political parties (Rexhepi, 2018). On the other side in Kumanovo, a vast majority of the teachers interviewed claim that there are no such processes as ethnic and religious violence in their schools.

Recognition

The strive for recognition or development of inclusive, comparative and relevant curricula that do justice to diversity (ethnic, linguistic, religious, gendered or other) commenced in 2010 when the segregation impact became evident on societal cohesion, especially between Macedonians and Albanians in the country. In January 2010, the Ministry of Education and Science and the OSCE, supported by the OSCE High Commissioner on Minorities, adopted a strategic document, *Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System in the Republic of North Macedonia*. The strategy implied reforms and activities in five areas: interaction by means of extracurricular activities of pupils, intensification of mutual knowledge of languages of pupils and adults; adjustment of the curricula, programs, and textbooks (specifically emphasizing textbooks in history, geography, language learning, as well as introducing History of Religions as a subject); training for teachers on interethnic issues; and administration of schools in the context of decentralization.

However, this strategy has not been implemented as it received strong political pressure from the Albanian political block not to introduce the Macedonian language as a regular subject in the first grade for pupils that attend classes in a different language to ensure unity (Bakiu, Dimitrova & Brava, 2016). Since integration implies "democratic and decentralized school management; interesting and inclusive textbooks; extra-curricular activities and depoliticization of the curricula and the textbooks," the analysis of textbooks shows that they continue to support ethnocentrism. In general, "there is a lack of contents, characters, pictures and authors that would help pupils get acquainted with culture and tradition of other ethnic communities, as well as to develop an understanding for shared values" (Petroska-Beska et al., 2009 cited in Bakiu, Dimitrova & Brava, 2016, p.10). This suggests that education does not support students' identity-building from a perspective of respect and plurality.

Nevertheless, some teaching programs, such as the compulsory subject of Life Skills and Civic Education, include educational goals that promote multiculturalism and respect for the cultural and/or ethnic differences. The new strategy for education development recognizes that North Macedonia is a multicultural, multireligious, and multiethnic state. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in education which would teach the youth to celebrate their differences and respect equality. The Ministry of Education's goal in this regard is to promote a sense of difference, multiculturalism and interethnic education, but also to establish programs for an inclusive education. To this end, in 2016 the Ministry "provided financial or other types of means for schools which organize events that contribute for promotion of multiculturalism, tolerance and interethnic integration in which all ethnic communities were equally represented, use of all the languages spoken in the state, balanced groups according to gender, ethnicity and age" (MIA, 2018). In this regard, the role of education is through curricula and school programs to promote healthy exchange of ideas that encourage students to broaden their horizons, think critically, and become more self-aware. This is achieved by engaging with youth outside the classroom with sports, art, drama, theatre, clubs, debate teams, and other after-school programs, specifically designed for a particular subset of vulnerable youth, for them to develop positive interests and promote a sense of self-worth and self-confidence (CGCCP & Hedayah, 2013)

However, in terms of prevention from violent extremism, intervention in curricula is not enough. CRPM research shows that change in teacher training and provision of appropriate tools for the teachers to use in classroom to detect

early signs of radicalization is also needed (CRPM, 2019). The CRPM Baseline study of perceptions of frontline school workers on violent extremism and radicalization detected needs for further education and training on radicalization and violent extremism, capacity building on the phenomena and the factors that impact the occurrence of radicalization as well as signs to detect radicalization in schools not just for teacher staff but also for the students and for municipal administration. The topics recognized as necessary to be covered with training are the following: basics of radicalization, violent extremism, and prevention; ethnic tolerance; religious tolerance; recognizing hate speech; recognizing extremist propaganda; conflict resolution; stereotypes and conflicts and their influence and critical thinking (Stojkovski, Stefanoski & Aleksovski, 2019). Hence, teachers are already burdened with many challenges, and adding a complex topic such as countering violent extremism to their curricula may actually hinder their ability to recognize signs of radicalization (CGCC & Hedayah, 2013). Therefore, CVE lessons should be integrated into existing teachers training in an intelligible and easily digestible way where it is addressed as one of the many risky behaviors or dangers affecting youth (Ibid, 2013).

Representation

The school staff cannot be left alone in tackling radicalization processes in a community. Joint actions and commitment with municipal representatives, social and health workers, religious leaders, and police officials are needed to comprehensively support frontline school workers in reconciliation of conflicts and prevent from radicalization that can lead to violent extremism. The application of the 'whole of the society' approach to this end is dependent on the interaction the school has with the rest of the community. The role of education in prevention from violent extremism is strengthened when it develops opportunities for students to engage in positive activities in their communities and may create a sense of shared responsibility for their safety and development (CGCC & Hedayah, 2013).

Partnerships with the community, leaders, practitioners, and parents is pertinent to the success of education's role in prevention of violent extremism. The structure of the primary school management body is to this end appropriate to facilitate such partnerships, as the School Board is composed of nine members: three teachers' representatives, expert associates and educators in the school, three representatives of the parents, two representatives of the founder (the municipality/community) and one representative from the Ministry of

Education and Science (MES). The mandate of the members is three years, while the mandate of the parents is limited or connected to the education of their child; once the child graduates the parent is no longer eligible for Board membership. However, the parent mandate should not be longer than three years. The teachers' representatives are chosen by the Teachers' Council, while parents' representatives are chosen by the Parents' Council. The School Board regulates the Statute, the Annual program, and the Report of the school presented to the Municipal Council, adopts the program for school development, the program for implementing higher standards and other programs, proposes financial program to the founder and financial reports, and announces public calls for electing a new principal and other obligations regulated by the Law. In order to promote coexistence with all groups and communities the strategy of the Ministry of Education and Science is to include the parents in the educational process of their children. One of the programs in this regard is the "Council for Students and Parents" and it involves activities such as regional teacher-parent meetings, meetings with the local authorities, parents, and school directors for the level inclusiveness of students with minority ethnic backgrounds, opening of regional offices for councils. However, involving parents in decision making on school level will not be sufficient in prevention from violent extremism. Education has a role to involve families and the broader community in the education system for example through the provision of informal literacy (including media literacy) classes or vocational training, or using spaces available to support community activities.

Formal organizations of pupils/students also exist. Currently, there are two formal school student unions. High School Student Union of North Macedonia and Youth Association of High School Vocational institutions were founded according to the law on civil society organizations and foundations. However, there is no specific law or bylaw that regulates school organizations in primary and secondary education. Each educational institution follows unstandardized guidance provided by initiatives from civil society or practices established in previous systems that depended on individuals (EACEA, 2018). The role of these organizations "is marginal, and they do not participate in the decision-making process or in the interethnic dialogue" (Bakiu, Dimitrova & Brava, 2016). To this end, three youth rights organizations—the Youth Educational Forum, Coalition SEGA, and the First Children's Embassy—worked on amendments to the Law on Secondary Education to allow for more organized forms of student association and proactive student participation in schooling. The draft law regulates the student class associations, student parliaments, and

student associations on local and national level. It also covers a commission between students and teachers for peacefully resolving any issues of conflict at school level. Unfortunately, the political crisis in the country was not favorable for the draft law to be debated and changes to be adopted by the Parliament of North Macedonia. However, including youth in school level decision making will not suffice the prevention from violent extremism. Hence, developing a more inclusive education policy which provides room for the students to be included in development of curriculum design is assessed to increase effectiveness of prevention. In this way, curriculum is "based on beneficiary views, and not simply adults' perceptions of what youth want/need" (CGCC & Hedayah, 2013).

Reconciliation

Schools are lacking the capacity for constructive conflict resolution and tackling radicalization processes. Typical reaction of frontline school workers to violent incidents, cases of radicalization, and extremism is to call the students' parents (38.02% of respondents in the CRPM survey on frontline education workers on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018). Further reactions include students going to counseling with the schools' psychologist (32.28% of respondents in the *CRPM survey on frontline education workers on violent extremism and radicalization*, 2018), or class master teachers disciplining the students (27.13% of respondents in the CRPM survey on front-line education workers on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018). However, according to the perceptions of front-line school workers homes (52.28% of front-line workers) and schools (47.33% of front-line workers) remain the most appropriate place for addressing the problems of radicalization and indoctrination of students/young people.

RANKING		
Parents	1	339.23
Teachers	2	203.43
School support/professional staff	3	147.82
Social services	4	56.90
Municipal administration	5	55.29
Police / security forces	6	54.77
Religious communities	7	52.68
Civic / non-governmental organizations	8	39.46
Other.....	9	1.36

TABLE 1: CRPM Survey on violent extremism and radicalization, 2018 using Dowdall system of scoring on perceptions related to the question "*In the case you notice signs of indoctrination and radicalization among students, who do you think should react/intervene?*"

The main interventions in schools have been to introduce curricular and extracurricular programs to tackle conflicts and radicalization that might lead to violent extremism. These programs aimed at providing opportunities for all students to learn about one another, regardless of ethnicity and language of instruction (Petroska-Beska & Najcevska, 2004). The program offers mainly cultural learning about themselves and the 'other' and enhances their self-awareness and identity, while also opening their minds to different customs, practices, and traditions. However, promoting comparative analysis and multicultural values is something that needs to be institutionalized and strengthened with text books and curriculum where cultural learning offered through critical texts, popular novels, and storybooks from authors of the 'other' culture. The curricular programs are limited to introduction of Civic Education as an obligatory course. According to the Bureau for Development of Education, the aim of this course is to teach students to accept the system of values required for functioning as a democratic and active citizen. The methods for teaching this course contribute to the development of the student's personality, the core human values, individual freedom, integrity, equal rights, and creating conditions for strengthening tolerance, responsibility, and justice. To this end the emphasis is given on building social and communication skills

necessary to address their grievances in a positive, nonviolent way. The curriculum provides group work and individual work for students that contribute to independent and critical thinking. In this respect, the education role is to enhance logic, problem solving, and critical thinking skills of young people, which has been seen by experts as vital element in preventing violence and extremism (CGCC & Hedayah, 2013).

However, this program requires changes not only in what is taught but also in how it is taught; modifications and additions to the content of lessons must be accompanied by a profound shift in the teaching method toward a more student-centered approach (Ibid, 2004). The implementation of the curricula of Civic Education involves using special interactive learning methods, such as keeping focused discussions, debates, simulations, role play, resolve conflicts, group work, pair work, etc. in function to promote active participation of each student in the classroom, which makes the teacher one of the main actors in creating a positive climate in the classroom (Kochoska, 2016).

On the other hand, the accent of these extracurricular activities is on universal human values, which are neglected in the educational process and in the public sphere in the Republic of North Macedonia, in general. The extracurricular programs have been supported with different donor-funded programs such as the Interethnic Integration in Education Project (IIEP) that increased awareness for interethnic relations and coexistence based on the detected needs of pupils and teachers. However, since the extracurricular activities are not compulsory, there is no additional funding for their implementation and it is assessed to have partial sustainability and restricted impact on cohesion efforts on long term (Janev, Stojadinovic & Guleva, 2016). To provide for sustainability the draft Law on Primary Education (MON, 2018) regulates extracurricular activities as compulsory part of the curriculum (art. 38) and need to be funded by the school/the municipality as the responsible management body for delivery of education services on local level. At the same time, the draft Law provisions enhancement of multiculturalism and multiethnic cooperation (art.42) by forming a Team of integrated education that plans and organizes activities that contribute to respect of multiculturalism and strengthen and advance inter-ethnic integration. In addition, the draft law obliges the state and the local self-governments to provide funding for these activities.

Conclusions

Education sector can play an important role in the general prevention from radicalization that can lead to violent extremism. In order to effectively leverage this sectors, the Government of Republic of Macedonia would need to explore ways in making schools safe and well-developed integration policies. The contrary, poorly resourced, poorly managed, and divided schools are more likely to create an enabling environment for violent extremists. One its part, the educational sector would need to assess and address local needs through engagement of young people, parents, and community at large. For instance, involving students in curriculum development or transforming schools into community centers can potentially help build resilience against violent extremism. CVE programs implemented in schools should aim at not only increasing awareness among teachers and equipping them with necessary tools for early detection of signs of radicalization, but also promote skills of understanding, empathy, and critical thinking. CVE education should be directed at building resilience through endorsement of values such as respect for others' values, cultures, religions- all of these skills are best taught to children at a young age. (de Silva, 2017) Empowering students to think critically, teaching them to challenge ideas in a constructive manner, and engaging in meaningful debate will be critical for children as they develop. (Ibid, 2017)

Although the study is not directed towards identifying drivers of radicalization and takes into consideration that singular factors alone do not lead to radicalization, the CRPM study identifies that violent culture, social exclusion, and limited availability of other nonviolent ideologies are the main meso-reasons why young people choose to accept propagation of radical ideology and use of violence. On an individual and micro level, identity problems, failed integration, feelings of alienation, marginalization, and discrimination seem to be the main reasons why young people tend to accept propagation of radical ideologies and use of violence. On a macro level, front-line workers believe youth consider radical ideologies and use of violence as an appropriate reaction to certain global injustices (unresolved conflicts, wars, repressions on certain ethnic, religious, political groups). Being a multicultural country, North Macedonia will need to further use education in strengthening cultural learning about the other and creating a sense of belonging to multicultural society in which different customs, practices, and traditions are respected and the collaboration between cultures is promoted. Building effective partnerships with the rest of the community, leaders, business, with parents and students is an area where improvement should happen as it is important in developing resilience to the divisive narratives expounded by extremist groups. Educational institutions can play a role in facilitating community dialogue, by involving parents, community members and youth and therefore strengthen the relationship between institutions and their communities; and trust between schools and communities.

The decentralized education system of North Macedonia allows for education in the mother tongue as recognition of one's identity, but this is at the expense of ethnic cohesion. The schools and learning spaces do not operate in integrated ways but rather in parallel or segregated ways, where schooling in North Macedonian and Albanian language, for example, is offered in separate shifts or in different buildings, whereas curriculum is ethnocentric and does not promote joint education. School segregation is considered to be inductive to development of negative feelings for the 'other' community and even a trigger for violent behavior and interethnic conflicts by some of the frontline workers that were subjects of research as well as the international community. Other frontline workers see the segregation in schools as a successful strategy to prevent school-based violence.

The education system is therefore not prepared to recognize or develop inclusive, comparative, and relevant curricula that do justice to various (ethnic, linguistic, religious, gendered or other) diversities. There was an effort to introduce integrated education which failed and was substituted with compulsory and elective courses that promote multicultural values but do not lead to support of students' identity-building from a perspective of respect and plurality. Furthermore, the education system does not offer a representation model, especially for students, leaving them to feel discriminated and excluded. The student associations do not have entry points for contributing to educational policy-design development, neither in implementation nor in decision-making processes. This leaves the education policy deprived from multiple voices and perspectives, including those of marginalized groups (students, teachers, etc.), at national, local, and school levels.

Finally, only one curricular and several extracurricular courses are providing basis for reconciliation, resources and learning interactions to deal with grievances and tensions of the past and negotiate nonviolent means to foster social cohesion and plural societies. The Civic Education course, which is compulsory in seventh and eighth grade, uses methods such as keeping focused discussions, debates, simulations, role play, resolve conflicts, group work, pair

work, etc. in function to promote active participation of each student in the classroom; this makes the teacher one of the main actors in creating a positive climate in the classroom and develop creative thinking. This, however, is not enough for preventing radicalization that can lead to violent extremism.

Hence, reforms towards re-organization of the delivery of education services abandoning the principles of segregation and adopting different systematic interventions in curriculum and extracurricular activities to foster tolerance towards the other ethnicities will decrease the causes of further social rifts among youth in the country. Redesigning the educational policy development and implementation to include the different voices and perceptions of students, as well as improving student participation in school level decision-making will improve the feelings of belonging and inclusion of youth as well as the perception of non-discrimination that may lead towards refusal of adoption of radical ideologies. In conclusion, teacher training and curriculum development should systematically include basic knowledge and skills on CVE as well as prevention methods such as critical thinking, fostering in-class dialogue and conflict resolution. Developing tools and reference materials for teachers is also a necessity, such as protocols and checklists that will support the process of detection radicalization in the classroom. Setting up a system for monitoring such activities will be of use for further policy development in the education policy area as well as for measuring the effectiveness of the role of education in prevention of violent extremism in the country. However, teachers should not be left alone to tackle radicalization. A whole of society approach is needed where different stakeholders, the municipality, the religious communities, health and social services as well as the police will have a role and provide a systematic response when front-line education workers need support.

REFERENCES

BBC. *North Macedonia charges 30 with terrorism after Kumanovo clashes.* Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32695909.

Bakiu, B., Dimitrova, M., & Brava, A. (2016). *How to Achieve a Truly Integrated Education in the Republic of North Macedonia?* Working paper, pp. 4-19. Skopje: European Policy Institute.

Center for Research and Policy Making. (2010). *Age Contact Perceptions: How Schools Shape Relations Between Ethnicities (Rep.)*. Skopje: OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. Retrieved from https://www.osce.org/skopje/41442?download=true.

Center for Strategic and International Studies. (2004, December). Islamic Fundamentalist Cells Preaching Wahhabi Islam in North Macedonian Capital. *Transnational Threats Updates, 2*, 2. Retrieved from http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/ttu_0412.pdf.

Center for Strategic and International Studies - CSIS (2004), Fundamentalist Cells Preaching Wahhabi Islam in North Macedonian Capital, Transnational Threats Updates, Vol. 2, No. 13, December 2004, retrieved from http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/ttu_0412.pdf.

Doe, J. (2018, January 11). Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure. Retrieved September 14, 2018, from https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure-48_en.

Janev, G., Stojadinovic, S., & Guleva, A. S. (2016). *The Role of Local Government in (Integrated) Education in the Republic of North Macedonia* (Publication). European Policy Institute. Kochoska, J. (2016). The role of civic education in overcoming conflict situations. Faculty Of Educational Sciences, 413-418. Retrieved from http://js.ugd.edu.mk/index.php/AMC/article/view/1440.

Jonuzi, A. (2017). Ситуацијата во земјата предизвикува национализам (The situation in the country leads to nationalism) 21 TV show 27.02.2017. Available online: https://bit.ly/2rkV0u4.

Hafez, Mohammed, & Creighton Mullins. (2015). *The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 38, p. 958-975.

Lyon, A. (2014). *Decentralization and the Delivery of Primary and Secondary Education* pp. 1-67, Rep. Skopje: Center for Research and Policy Making. Retrieved from http:/p/www.

crpm.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Decentralisation-and-the-Delivery-of-Primary-and-Secondary-Education.pdf.

Macura-Milovanović, S., Gera, I., & Kovačević, M. (2010). *Mapping Policies and Practices for the Preparation of Teachers for Inclusive Education in Context of Social and Cultural Diversity*. Working paper. European Training Foundation.

North Macedonian Information Agency – MIA. OSCE-supported 'Building Bridges' event in Skopje gathers students of different communities to interact together. Retrieved from https://www.mia.mk/en/Inside/RenderSingleNews/201/133368443#.

Government of the Republic of Macedonia: National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism. (2018). National Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia for Countering Violent Extremism (2018-2022). Retrieved from https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/ct_national_strategy_eng_translation_sbu.pdf

Fink, N. C., Veenkamp, I., AlHassen W., Barakat, R., & Zeiger, S. (2013). "The Role of Education in Countering Violent Extremism", CGCC & Hedayah. Retrieved from: https://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Dec13_Education_Expert_Meeting_Note.pdf.

Noppe, J., Hellinckx, J., & Vande Velde, M. (2015). *Polarisation en radicalisation: Une approche préventive intégrale* pp. 1-197. Rep Brussels: Groupe de recherche Governance of Security. Retrieved from http://savebelgium.org/b4c5d0ebac666fa0c485c7144f81ba294a670974.pdf.

Novelli, M., Lopez Cardozo, M. T., & Smith, A. (2017). The 4RS Framework: Analyzing Education's Contribution to Sustainable Peacebuilding with Social Justice in Conflict-Affected Contexts. *Journal on Education in Emergencies, 3*(1), pp. 14-43.

Panovski, A. (2011). *The spread of Islamic extremism in the Republic of North Macedonia*. Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School. Monterey. Retrieved from https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/10666/11Dec_Panovski.pdf?sequence=1

Pereznieto, P., & Uznov, V. (2009). *Child-Focused Public Expenditure Review* (pp. 23. Rep.). Skopje: UNICEF. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/tfyrNorth_Macedonia/MK_ChildFocusedPER_ENG(2).pdf.

Petroska-Beska, V., & Najcevska, M. (2004). *North Macedonia: Understanding History, Preventing Future Conflict* (Rep.). Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved from: https://www.usip.org/index.php/publications/2004/02/North_Macedonia-understanding-history-preventing-future-conflict

Petroska-Beska, V., Najcevska, M., Kenig, N., Ballazhi, S., & Tomovska, A. (2009). S*tudy on Multiculturalism and Inter-ethnic Relations in Education* (Publication). UNICEF Country Office, Skopje. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/northNorth_Macedonia/reports/multiculturalism-and-interethnic-relations-education.

Piazza, J. (2011). "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism," *Journal of Peace Research, 48*(3), pp. 339-353

Radio Free Europe. (2018a). Kosovo Sentences Eight Men To Prison Over Plot To Attack Israeli Soccer Team. Retrieved from https://www.rferl.org/a/kosovo-sentences-eight-men--prison-plot-attack-israeli-soccer-team/29235986.html.

Radio Free Europe. (2018b). North Macedonia Files Terror Charges Over Parliament Attack. Retrieved from https://www.rferl.org/a/North_Macedonia-terrorism-charges-parliament-attack/29128750.html.

Selimi, K. & Stojkovski, F. (2016)."Assessment of North Macedonia Efforts in Countering Violet Extremism, View From Civil Society." Analytica, p.10.

Silva, S. (2017). *Role of Education in the Prevention of Violent Extremism.* Working paper No. 120997, pp. 1-27. Washington D.C.: World Bank. Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/448221510079762554/120997-WP-revised-PUBLIC-Role-of-Education-in-Prevention-of-Violence-Extremism-Final.pdf

Stojkovski, F., Stefanoski, I., Aleksovski, K. (2019). *Baseline study: Perceptions of front-line school workers and community officials from Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar on radicalization leading to violent extremism*. CRPM.

Institute Recherche Sur L'intégration Business Des Immigrants. (2018). *Students faced with religious radicalization leading to violence. The more you know, the more you can prevent.* pp. 1-83, Rep. Quebec. Retrieved from http://iripi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/iripi-report-radicalization.pdf.

Schenker, H. (2011). Integrated Education: Emerging concepts in North Macedonia. *Political Thought: The Challenges of Education Policy.*

Telegraf. (2018). The arrest of terrorists from North Macedonia who fought in Syria and Iraq: Islamist returnees are a threat to everyone. Retrieved from: https://www.telegraf.rs/english/2981598-the-arrest-of-terrorists-from-NorthMacedonia-who-fought-in-syria-and-iraq-islamist-returnees-are-a-threat-to-everyone-photo.

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. (2012).*The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies.* pp. 63.

UNICEF. (2009). Child-Focused Public Expenditure Review. UNICEF: Skopje. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/1841/file

UNDP. (2004). National Human Development Report 2004 - FYR North Macedo-

nia: Decentralization for Human Development. UNDP: Skopje. Retrieved from: https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressources/fyr_macedonia_nhdr_2004.pdf

UNESCO. (2016). *A Teacher's Guide on Prevention of Violent Extremism*. pp. 1-47. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002446/244676e.pdf.

Youth representation bodies - EACEA National Policies Platform - European Commission. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/53-youth-representation-bodies-former-yugoslav-republic-North Macedonia.

Youth Action Agenda To Prevent Violent Extremism and Promote Peace Produced at the Global Youth Summit Against Violent Extremism New York City, September 28, 2015. Retrieved from https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/FINAL-Youth-Action-Agenda-1.pdf.

"A combination of factors—and never one factor alone—can lead to radicalization, and that there is not always a causality between the risks, potential drivers, and radicalization."

8 IN PURSUIT OF A DEGREE; BEING PURSUED BY TERRORISTS: UNDERGRADUATE RADICALISATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Thomas Samuel

Introduction

The research question for this paper was to see how undergraduates in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand think and feel with regards to certain issues surrounding terrorism and counter-terrorism. This paper sought to gain better understanding on the thought patterns of the undergraduates on the subject with the hope that such understanding would lead to better intervention strategies with this particular group.[1]

The specific areas that were looked into included the undergraduates' source of information on the subject of terrorism and counter-terrorism; their definition of terrorism; their perception of terrorism; the dynamics and interactions between the undergraduates, the media, the Internet and terrorism; their perception on counter-terrorism; their perception on mental radicalisation; and their views on possible alternatives to terrorism.

The research was carried out by examining the current literature on the subject and by conducting a quantitative survey on undergraduates from the five respective countries in the region.

Among the key findings were: (i) radical violent and "not-yet" violent ideas were a clear and present danger; (ii) images and videos were powerful mediums utilised by terrorists, and could also be used in counter terrorism efforts; (iii) there was an urgent need to identify and develop credible alternatives to terrorism in the context of addressing grievances and addressing conflict; and (iv)

[1] This research project was funded with the generous support of the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and with technical assistance from the ASEAN Secretariat. The paper was presented during the 'International CVE Research Conference 2018 organised by the Hedayah Centre and the University of Swansea in Wales, United Kingdom (August, 2018) and is based on the monograph published by the author (Samuel, 2018).

there was a small but significant minority of undergraduates who were actively seeking out terrorists and violent extremist content via the Internet.

Research Methodology

This study is a combination of empirical and theoretical research methods with the purpose of understanding the thinking and perception of undergraduates in selected countries in the Southeast Asian region on the subject of terrorism and counter-terrorism. A five country survey was conducted in both public and private universities and institutions of higher learning in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. In Indonesia, a total of 4,442 undergraduates were surveyed and out of all the surveys, 4,423 or 99.6% were completed accurately. In Malaysia, a total of 2,116 undergraduates were surveyed and out of all the surveys, 1,989 or 94.0% were completed accurately. In the Philippines, a total of 782 undergraduates were surveyed and out of all the surveys, 779 or 99.6% were completed accurately. In Thailand, a total of 1,555 undergraduates were surveyed and all 1,555 surveys (100%) were completed accurately. In Singapore, a total of 171 undergraduates were surveyed and all 171 surveys (100%) were fully completed accurately. Views from experts in the relevant fields, as well as literature on the subject were also obtained and reviewed.

This methodology was selected with the hope that by triangulating components from the survey results, field interviews, and existing literature on similar instances in other countries, a more comprehensive picture could be obtained on the thought process and reasoning of young people when it came to the issue of radicalisation. This would in turn provide the necessary framework when formulating the recommendations.

Limitations of the Study

Firstly, the language issue, particularly in several of the five countries, meant that there was the possibility for the risk of miscommunication and inaccurate reporting. While great care was taken in translating the survey to minimize this problem, the possibility of getting "lost in translation" was acknowledged. Secondly, the relatively limited availability of literature on undergraduate radicalisation in the five countries surveyed was an area of concern. While more work on this subject had been done beyond this region, particularly in South Asia and the West, the models and theories developed there were often times

ill-suited to explain the phenomenon of undergraduate radicalisation in this region. Thirdly, access to certain data, particularly with regards to undergraduates arrested for terrorism-related offences in several of the five countries, was at times considered sensitive due to the age of the alleged offenders and the nature of the subject of terrorism. This made it difficult to obtain. Also, conducting interviews with such individuals or even the law enforcement officers involved in their incarceration was challenging. Finally, cultural or other forms of biasness could emerge when carrying out a survey of this nature. While survey questions were framed taking cognizance of this, there was nevertheless the possibility of biasness on the part of the respondent that could affect the accuracy of the study.

Findings

Radical violent and not-yet violent ideas: A clear and present danger

The majority of the undergraduates in the region (Figure 1) believed that terrorism usually started out by an individual having radical ideas. They were also of the opinion that there was a possibility for undergraduates to develop radical ideas such as terrorism (Figure 2), and subsequently, move from having such radical ideas to actually conducting acts of terrorism (Figure 3).

Figure 1: A terrorist usually starts out by having violent radical ideas

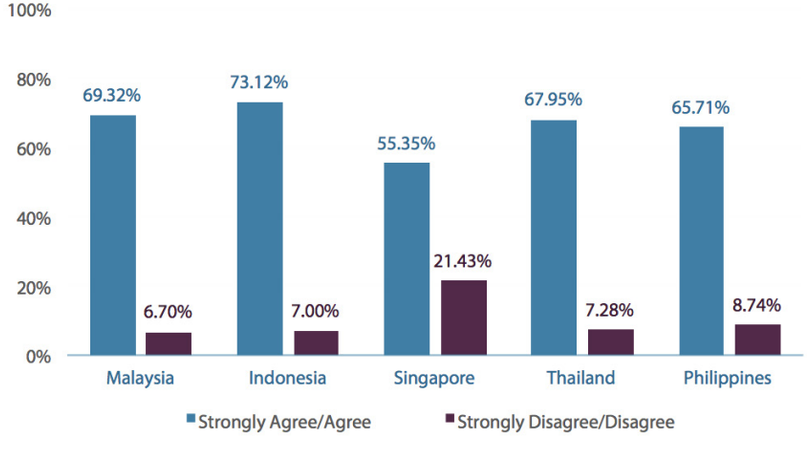


Figure 2: It is possible for an undergraduate to develop violent radical ideas such as terrorism

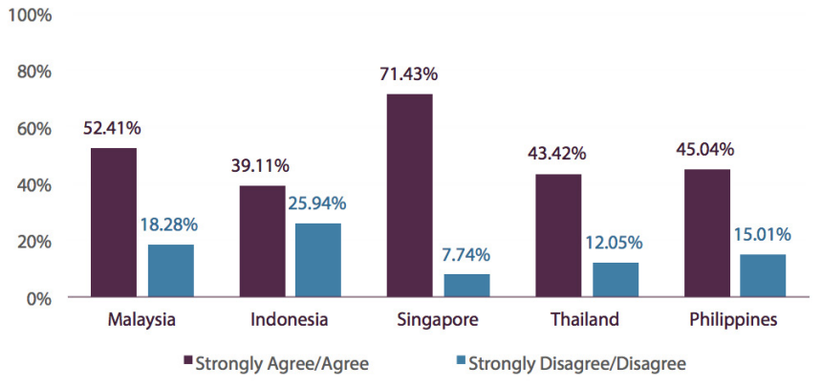
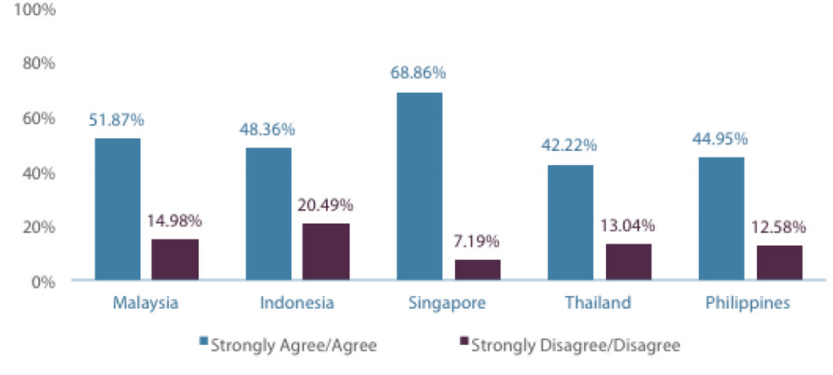


Figure 3: It is possible for an undergraduate to move from having violent radical ideas to actually conducting violent acts such as terrorism



The significant issue that we need clarity on is the following: Is having violent radical ideas a prerequisite for terrorist behaviour among young people? If it is not a prerequisite, could it then be considered a possible trigger or push-factor?

Or perhaps should having "not-yet violent/violent radical ideas" merely be seen in the lenses of freedom of expressions? Perhaps it is just a harmless avenue for young people to express themselves without actually doing anything violent?

In this regard, Kumar Ramakrishna highlighted the contending views on how "not-yet violent/non-violent extremism" was considered by some to be a "safety valve" that allowed an individual to express pent-up ideas and thoughts that while being radical were, nevertheless, not-yet violent. However, some on the other hand, felt that it was a "conveyor belt" for violent extremism, meaning that it was the penultimate stage before violent acts such as terrorism were carried out (2012).

Ramakrishna explained that it was not just terror networks that posed a problem but also the so-called "non-violent" but extremist groups, like Hizbut Tahrir (HT). Groups like HT took great effort to focus on university campuses with the intent of indoctrinating undergraduates into their ideology that rejected the idea of a nation-state and democracy, while advocating for a caliphate. Hence, groups such as HT focused on furthering an ideology rather than violence in the region, which according to Ramakrishna allowed them greater freedom and leeway and hence made them more insidious and deadly (Ibid.).

While Ramakrishna (Ibid.) focused on "non-violent extremism", there are those who are of the opinion that even "violent radical ideas" should be seen as being rather benign for even though they are violent, they remain mere ideas that have yet to be translated into actual actions.

In this regard, it is also significant to note that the distinction that differentiates "violent radical ideas" and "violent behaviour" is fully appreciated and exploited by terrorists. For example, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, when asked about his role in guiding and motivating terrorists in Indonesia, clarified his position by saying, "I am only a craftsman selling knives – I am not responsible for how those knives are used" (Singh, 2007).

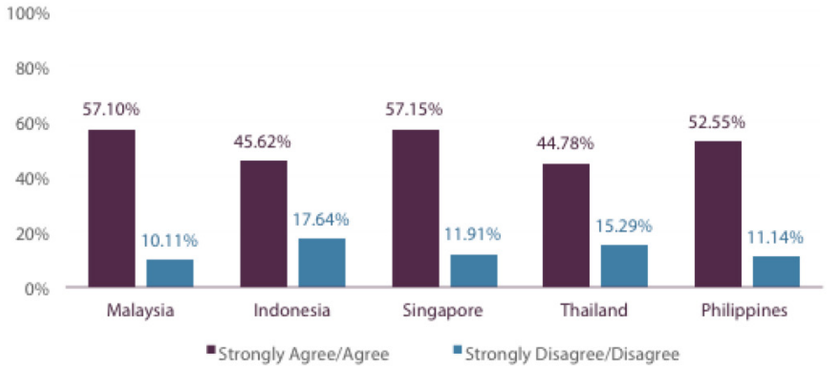
In another example, Ed Hussain, formerly a member of Hizbut Tahrir, highlighted how certain world-views 'even when held without advocating violence provides the mood music that encourages terrorist acts' (Rosenberg, 2012). Given this, authorities must consider dealing not only violent radical behaviour but also 'not-yet violent/violent radical ideas'.

Images and videos were powerful mediums utilised by terrorists

The undergraduates in the region believed that graphic images and videos, particularly of people suffering, had the potential and capacity to lead an in-

dividual to be radicalised and subsequently consider acts of violent terrorism (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Graphic pictures and videos of people suffering can cause an individual to be radicalised and consider violent acts such as terrorism



In this regard, supported by the author's earlier works, and in the case of Daesh-type radicalisation, individuals were often times motivated by the desire to protect and avenge the atrocities that they believed were committed by the Bashir regime on their fellow Sunni Muslims (Samuel, 2016).

Alex Schmid explained this phenomenon well by highlighting that in certain conditions and situations, terrorist groups often "adopt somebody else's grievances and become self-appointed champions of a cause other than their own" (Schmid, 2013, p. 35). This occurrence, known as "vicarious grievances," was based on "altruistic feelings," in which an individual felt the pain of another (secondary trauma) and subsequently "identified with the fate of an adopted constituency and acts on its behalf" (Ibid.).

The author concluded the same hypothesis in interviews with former terrorists. For example, Marhmudi Hariano, alias Yusuf, a former terrorist with Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), now based in Semarang, Indonesia shared how watching videos at the age of 17 on the plight of Muslims played a key part in his radicalisation process (Hariano, 2011). In another example, a 22-year old British undergraduate who wanted to be the first female British suicide bomber was said to be radicalised when shown videos of Muslims allegedly "suffering because of the West" (Talwar, 2010). In Guantanamo Bay, a study of young

detainees highlighted that the recruiters extensively used visual displays and films of suffering women and children in refugee camps in Chechnya, Palestine, and Afghanistan (Benard, 2005).

When interviewing former terrorist Nasir Abas, Abas highlighted to the author how his instructors indoctrinated them by showing videos of Muslims suffering in Afghanistan and Palestine (personal communication, 2011). Similarly, Harry Setyo, a former Indonesian terrorist, recalled to the author the technique his instructors used of showcasing videos that focused on the suffering of the people in Palestine and Ambon to indoctrinate potential young recruits (personal communication, 2011). In another example, Noor Umug from the Philippines, recounted how teachers in certain religious schools in the Southern Philippines actively used videos of suffering Muslims in Palestine, Afghanistan, and other Middle Eastern countries to entice and subsequently radicalise potential recruits (personal communication, 2011).

In this regard, this author's earlier work suggested that:
Terrorists have focused and have been able to connect the individual to the perceived injustice of the aggrieved party. By cleverly manipulating the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) revolution, in tandem with the globalisation phenomenon, terrorists have been very successful in ensuring that pain, anguish, and misery happening in distant lands, and even in different times, have been brought into the lives of the people, vividly and graphically, by the media in general and the Internet in particular. Through blogs, chat rooms, and YouTube, perceived or real injustices happening all around the world have been condensed, edited, packaged, and delivered to arouse a variety of feelings and emotions with the express purpose of eliciting sympathy, 'igniting the flame' or even encouraging active participation in violent actions. (Thomas, 2012; Thomas, 2018)

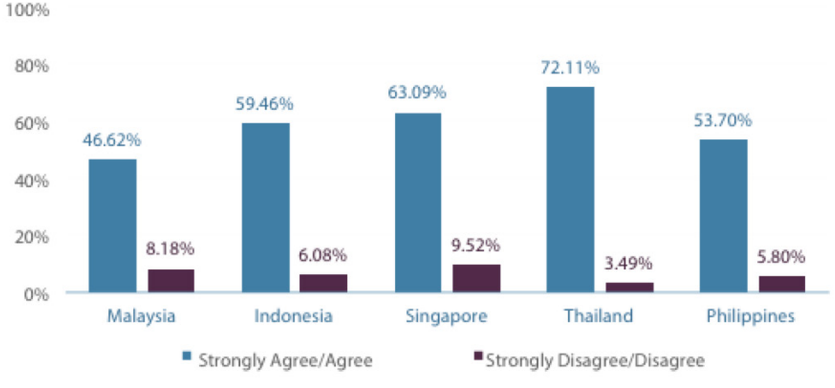
In this regard, Anne Speckhard (2018) shared from her research how terrorists were adept in exploiting images to both indoctrinate and recruit potential members. For example, in the case of Daesh, Speckhard was of the opinion that images were often times used to convey that Islam, Muslims and Islamic lands were under attack (2018). She contended that the messages conveyed through such images were indeed very powerful. Conversely, it was significant to note that Speckhard, who was very much involved in countering the narratives of the terrorists, felt that images, if used sensitively and creatively, were also powerful tools in countering terrorist narratives.

Therefore, the findings from this study indicate that undergraduates in the region realise the potential of graphic images to act as a trigger point for radicalisation. The irony, however, is that the capacity and willingness to exploit images often times seems only to be realised and exploited by the terrorists. Generally speaking, there has been little effort by the relevant authorities to utilise images and videos which could be used in countering violent extremism.

The need for credible alternatives to terrorism

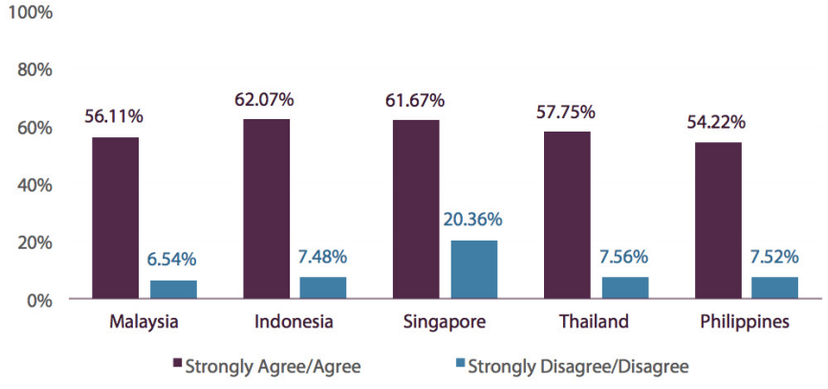
The majority of the undergraduates in the region felt that there could be successful alternatives to violence in order to address grievances (Figure 5).

Figure 5: There are successful alternatives to violence in order to address grievances



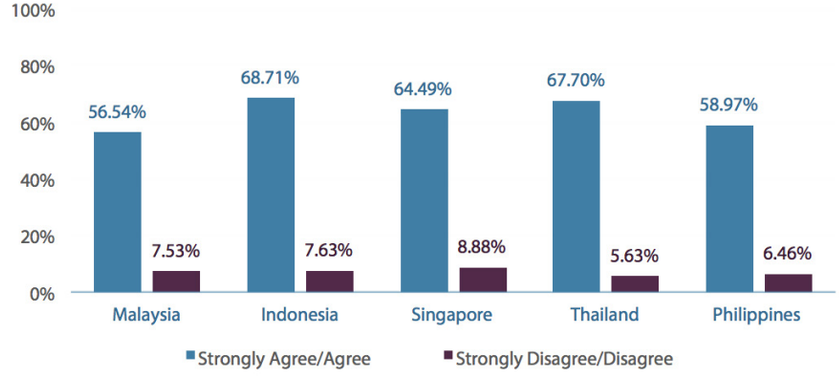
Nevertheless, they also admitted that they were unaware of the various alternatives that were available to address violence (Figure 6).

Figure 6: People are unaware of the numerous alternatives to violence in order to address grievances



It is also significant to note that the majority of the undergraduates in the region were of the opinion that if people did become better aware of credible alternatives to terrorism in resolving conflict, there could be a potential for greater receptivity for such options (Figure 7).

Figure 7: If people were aware of the alternatives to address injustice, there is a possibility that fewer people would resort to violence



However, the stark reality on the ground was that at times, the terrorists were seen to control the discourse and narrative with regards to addressing grievances. They subsequently present a landscape in which the only option that is

both viable and available was to resort to indiscriminate violence manifested through terrorism. Terrorism was not just seen as the better choice, it was marketed as the only choice.

Terrorism is the only choice

In light of the terrorists' ability to shape this narrative, it is therefore imperative that the authorities channel expertise and resources to develop credible alternatives to terrorism and to dismiss the idea that terrorism is the only choice. Given this, there is therefore a need to develop and articulate the concept of non-violence, particularly to young people.

An article, "Why Nonviolence? Introduction to Nonviolence Theory and Strategy", defined the concept of non-violence as "taking action that goes beyond normal institutionalised political methods (voting, lobbying, letter writing, verbal expression) without injuring opponents" (Irwin & Faison, 1984, p. 2).This highlighted that the three main forms of non-violence were: (i) protest and persuasion; (ii) non-cooperation; and (iii) intervention. The author previously explained that:

Protest and persuasion would include activities such as speechmaking, picketing, petitions, vigils, street theatre, marches, rallies, and teach-ins. Non-cooperation is displayed, whereby, when facing perceived injustice, people may refuse to act in ways which are considered to uphold the status-quo, for example, to work, buy, or obey. Examples in this category would include refusal to pay taxes, withholding rent or utility payments, civil disobedience, draft resistance, fasting, and different kinds of boycotts and strikes. The third category, intervention, can be defined as the active insertion and disruptive presence of people into the usual processes of social institutions. Examples of such activities include sit-ins, occupations, obstructions of 'business as usual' in offices, the streets, or elsewhere. (Samuel, 2012, p. 57)

Terrorism is the better choice

Given the need to address the absence of alternatives for youth to discuss grievances, the theory of non-violence and its effectiveness must be taught, critically examined, and articulated, to dispel the false notion that terrorism is the only choice available when addressing grievances. Not only must it be taught, but based on findings that young people are often times unaware of

alternatives to terrorism, there is also the need to advertise, market, highlight and disseminate these alternatives to the public and especially to the young. In this regard, given the results from the study that indicated the positive response that the undergraduates had on case-studies on individuals such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Aung San Suu Kyi, and organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the International Committee of the Red Cross's (ICRC), perhaps the way forward would be not to stress on the theory of non-violence but, rather, to showcase examples of individuals and organisations that have made a significant difference in the face of crisis and conflict without resorting to violence and terrorism. Those individuals are excellent examples which appeal to the youth. Such well-recognised individuals and campaigns are seen by the youth as heroes and the stories resonate with the young people.

Given this, authorities need to consider going beyond just battling an ideology but instead highlight non-violent strategies as heroic, sophisticated and viable mechanisms to address grievances. Hence, there is an urgent need to articulate and disseminate these ideas, particularly to young people, by advertising and highlighting the successes, viability and superiority of non-violent methods as the better choice in resolving conflict and addressing grievances.

In short, the authorities need to retake this discourse from the hands of the terrorists. Based on the data and analysis of this study, the time is ripe as undergraduates in the region are positive on the possibility and potential of non-violence to be a credible and viable alternative to terrorism in addressing grievances.

A minority of the undergraduates are actively seeking out the terrorists via the Internet

As seen in Figures 8 and 9, the results indicate that there were a number of undergraduates from the respective countries represented in the study who have visited or are interested in visiting militant or terrorist websites. It was also significant to note that there were also undergraduates who would even consider chatting online with those who advocated violence as a means to achieve a political objective.

Figure 8: Would you visit a known-militant/terrorist website?

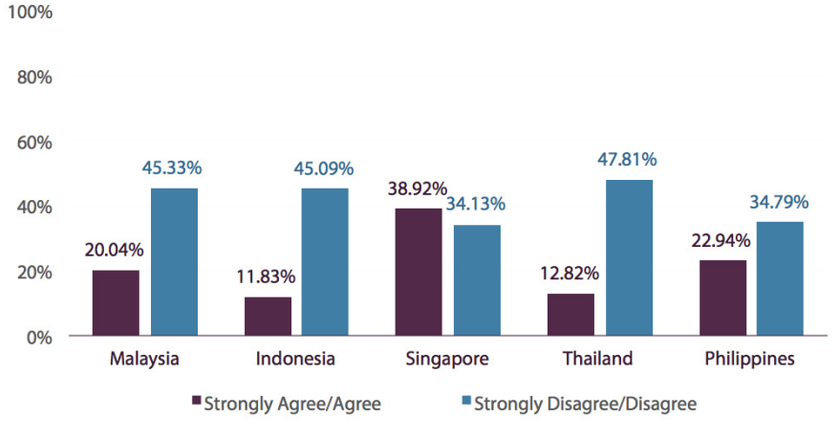
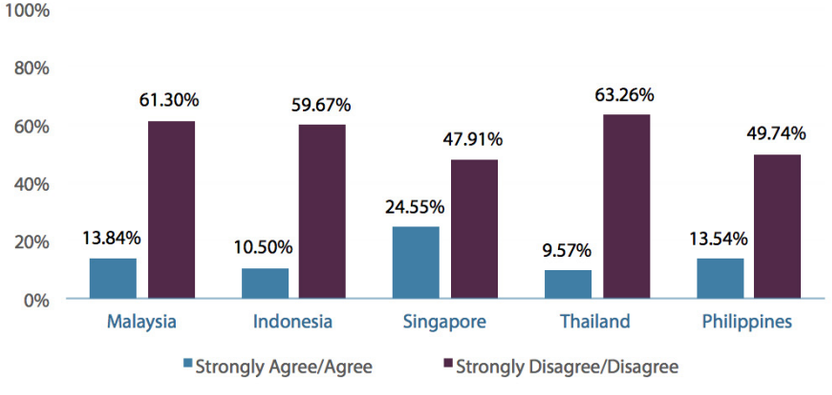


Figure 9: Would you chat in a chat room with people who advocate violence as a means to achieve a political objective?



At this juncture, it is important to note that "visiting" online terrorist sites and "chatting" with known terrorists might not necessarily indicate that the undergraduates themselves have become radicalised or are even necessarily sympathetic to the cause of the terrorists. Also, it must be said that undergraduates wanting to visit known terrorist websites and engage with them were still a minority. Nevertheless, this is a matter of concern and, in terms of numbers, it is pertinent to note that a minority of a huge number is nevertheless a matter of significance. It was also possible to infer from the study that a number of undergraduates who did visit those sites, and subsequently engaged with terrorists, did so despite knowing that the Internet was a possible medium for radicalisation to occur.

At the worst-case scenario, these undergraduates intend to visit/chat, or have visited/chatted, with known terrorists because they are sympathetic to the cause of the terrorists or they want to find out more about the group and the cause before they actually join. On the other hand, it could also be because the undergraduates who are mostly young, having heard something about the terrorist group, are curious to know more. While it is clear from the study that undergraduates in the region do know about terrorism, there is a possibility that they would like to know more from the point of view of the "other side," and hence are drawn to visit and chat with the terrorists.

Regardless of whether the undergraduates are sympathetic to the cause of terrorists or are genuinely curious about the motivations and goals being articulated, the end result is that there could be a small minority of undergraduates who are actively seeking to connect with terrorists in some way. There is also the possibility that those who have actually visited the terrorist websites or who have engaged with them could share their "new-found discoveries" with others. The end result is that there is a chance that the motivations, inspirations, desires, stories, goals and struggles of the terrorists would be well disseminated and articulated among undergraduates.

In this regard, besides education and awareness on the dangers of such websites, the grim reality is that the ability of the authorities to prevent undergraduates from visiting terrorist sites and subsequently communicating with terrorists is limited. As a response, there could be the adoption of punitive laws that make it an offence to download terrorists' propaganda. There is evidence that that such punitive laws are perhaps necessary to prevent terrorists from being able to fully come into contact with the public. However, with the current technology, the actual ability to track, monitor, and prevent undergraduates from coming into contact with such terrorist propaganda is relatively limited. Hence, the situation on the ground is that the ability of the authorities to prevent and limit contact between its citizens and undesirable elements such as terrorists are very limited. Therefore, emphasis to focus on preventing such contact, while theoretically important, would be difficult to implement and enforce.

Given this, the author would like to suggest a paradigm shift in resolving this quandary. Firstly, the author would like to advocate the need for the authorities to move from the premise of "preventing contact between the youth and terrorists/terrorist material" as was the situation in the past, to "inoculating the youth who come into contact with terrorists/terrorist material." Inoculating here would mean, building the youths "mental resilience" and critical thinking skills that would prevent them from being influenced by terrorist rhetoric and propaganda. Secondly, the author would like to propose moving from the premise of "focusing CVE efforts on the youth susceptible to terrorism," to "focusing CVE efforts on all youth" instead.

Moving from "preventing-contact" to "contact-preparedness"

In the past, the prevention component by the authorities meant that the enforcement agencies did their best in preventing terrorists from coming into contact with their target audience. This meant ensuring that borders were protected from terrorists recruiters attempting to infiltrate and physically slip through boundaries to spread their narratives, or even ensuring that their literature (books, magazines and articles) promoting their propaganda was carefully kept at bay.

However, all these means of protection and defence were rendered quite useless with the advent of the Internet. The Internet has allowed the terrorists to reach out and communicate directly with their target audience, sidestepping most of the conventional security hurdles that were placed by the enforcement agencies. Hence, a Daesh recruiter, through their online magazine Rumiyah and their media centres such as Al-Hayat can now bring their rhetoric, reasoning and justification through words, images, chat rooms, pod-casts, online games, videos, and infographics right to the "doorstep" of their potential target audience, all the while circumventing security hurdles and mechanisms that in the past have served us fairly well. Given this, the authorities' efforts to "prevent contact" between terrorists and the citizens would prove to be extremely difficult to carry out.

In such a situation, the time is ripe to move from "contact-prevention" to "contact-preparedness." Contact-preparedness is based on the understanding and assumption that given the difficulties involved in preventing the contact between the terrorists and their target audience due to the Internet, it would

be prudent to instead prepare the target audience by building "cognitive-firewalls." These cognitive firewalls will work to undermine the terrorists' rhetoric, justification and logic, and provide alternatives such as non-violent strategies to address possible grievances. Hence, in the event that an individual is "exposed" to the narrative of the terrorists, he or she has, to a certain extent, been "inoculated" with counter arguments, case-studies, and alternative narratives that could turn the tide against the terrorists' "story."

This concept follows the public health strategy of vaccinating an individual against certain diseases regardless of their risk in contracting the disease, given the risks involved if such a disease infects an individual or even a community.

Given that there is little that can be done in identifying those who are at risk of being radicalised and there is little that can be done in preventing terrorists to engage with their target audience, it becomes incumbent upon the authorities to equip its citizens with the emotional and mental reasoning that would prepare them for the mental onslaught from the terrorists.

Moving CVE efforts from "youth susceptible to terrorism" to "all youth"

In the past, the security authorities would build and develop profiles of those they deemed were susceptible to terrorists' rhetoric and propaganda, prioritising and focusing their resources on vulnerable individuals and communities.

However, given the almost limitless nature of the Internet, terrorist groups no longer have to reach out to certain demographic profiles which they perceive have a better chance to be influenced and indoctrinated. Now, with the aid of the Internet, no one is beyond their reach and possible influence.

Hence, given the widening of the potential audience' base for the terrorists, it would follow that the authorities too should no longer limit their CVE efforts solely on those they deemed to be vulnerable and susceptible. Perhaps, a tiered approach would be better suited in which certain youth demographics are given priority and attention, while the remaining others are still given some attention, particularly by building their cognitive resilience through activities that focus on constructing their "cognitive firewalls."

Conclusion

Both radically violent and "not-yet violent" ideas are a clear and present danger. In this regard, it is significant to note that both radically violent and "not-yet violent" ideas have the potential to set the stage for radical violent behaviour. While criminalising such radical ideas that lean towards extremism and intolerance might not necessarily be a step in the right direction, efforts must be undertaken to identify, debunk, expose, and counter such ideas, simply because not doing so could facilitate the process to violent behaviour such as terrorism.

Images are a powerful tool in the hands of the terrorists, and at the same time, hold promising potential in countering terrorism. Hence, while there is a potential for images to act as a possible "trigger" and "driver" for radicalisation, there is also the possibility that images and videos, particularly focusing on victims of terrorism, survivors of terrorism and rehabilitated terrorists, could be used to illicit emotion and provide a counter or alternative narrative.

There is an urgent and significant need to identify and develop credible alternatives to terrorism in the context of addressing grievances and addressing conflict. This is based on the terrorists' constant rhetoric that terrorism is not just the better choice but rather the only choice. Hence, there is not only the need to develop alternatives to terrorism, such as the non-violent approach of civil disobedience, but also to advertise, market, highlight, and disseminate such alternatives to the undergraduates in the region.

Finally, there is a small but significant minority of undergraduates who are actively seeking out and engaging with terrorists via the Internet. Given the limitations in preventing this contact, the authorities need to pre-emptively focus on building "cognitive-firewalls" that would equip the undergraduates with counter arguments, case-studies, and alternative narratives that have the ability to turn the tide against the terrorists "story".

Recommendations

There is an urgent need for the universities to be actively involved in countering terrorism. No longer is it sufficient for the university authorities to focus solely on educating undergraduates but rather in view of the terrorism landscape, they now need to consider education in a more holistic manner.

Besides the traditional efforts of CVE practitioners to debunk the rhetoric and propaganda of the terrorists, university authorities could join in the efforts by developing positive content in the field of counter-terrorism. This can be done by focusing on peace studies, non-violent conflict resolution, alternatives to terrorism in resolving conflict, and the importance and strength of unity and diversity.

There is a dire need to involve undergraduates in countering terrorist/extremist messaging. There needs to be a paradigm shift of viewing undergraduates not exclusively as a "client" but rather as a "partner" in countering terrorism. Indeed, while the undergraduate remains a viable target of the terrorists, it cannot be denied that these undergraduates also have the potential, energy and creativity to play a significant role in countering terrorism, particularly in the area of countering the terrorist narratives. Given this, it is therefore urgent that partnerships between undergraduates and the university and security authorities are institutionalised when creating and developing programmes.

There is an urgent need to "exploit" the media. Terrorists have been far more adept and faster in making effective use of media and in particular, the digital platforms, when compared to the authorities. Given this, it is of particular importance that the skills and resources available to many of the authorities in terms of counter-terrorism specialists, media and communications practitioners, digital and social media specialists, advertisers and marketers, and religious experts be coordinated and utilised in exploiting the media.

There is a need to develop and facilitate digital story-tellers. The terrorist is essentially a "story-teller" developing and selling to the target audience a well-crafted and developed narrative. Given this, it is imperative that the authorities craft programmes that will identify, train, and deploy their own digital story-tellers on various social media platforms, who could at the very least, provide a differing view to that of the terrorists.

There is a need to target non-violent radicalisation to prevent violent radicalisation. While radicalisation leading to violence would be the final goal for most terrorist organisations, it is significant to note that such kinds of radicalisation initially grow from an environment where "not-yet" violent radicalisation is allowed to be nurtured. As mentioned earlier, developing and disseminating radical ideas that while might not necessarily be violent, set the stage for subsequent radical violent behaviour. Hence, "not-yet" violent radicalisation has the tremendous potential to act as a "conveyor belt" for subsequent violent ex-

tremism. Given this, it is imperative that authorities deal with "not-yet" violent radicalisation before it evolves into violent radicalisation.

There is a need to tell the story of the victims and former terrorists. The terrorist strategy of gaining sympathy and recruits through their emotional appeal is a calculated strategy to "bypass the mind and go straight to the heart." This emotional plea crafted by the terrorists is designed to elicit feelings of outrage and sadness, which has the express intent of radicalising the target audience. Given this, the authorities have the potential to turn the tables on the terrorists by getting victims of terrorism and former terrorists to share their stories and testimonies. In this regard, it is significant to note that the former has the moral grounds and the credibility to speak, while the latter possesses the "credentials" to showcase and debunk the arguments and propaganda of the terrorists.

There is a need for real-life heroes and heroines. Given that part of the success of the terrorists, particularly in gaining the trust and the allegiance of young people, is due to their ability to sell themselves as real-life heroes and heroines of a cause, it is therefore imperative to develop and disseminate stories of real-life heroes, both present and of yesteryear. Highlighting and studying well-known heroes such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Malala Yousafzai and Nelson Mandela as well as "ordinary" heroes, well-known to the local community, who made a significant difference, must be actively developed, highlighted and disseminated, particularly among the undergraduates.

There is a need for critical thinking. Terrorists have been experts in using emotions as a bait to gain both the attention and sympathy of the undergraduates. Manipulating emotions has also been one of their techniques to bypass the thought process of their potential recruits. Given this situation, university authorities need to inculcate and teach their undergraduates the skills required in critical thinking. They need to equip the undergraduates with the ability to critically evaluate ideas and thoughts pushed by the terrorists. Such critical thinking and evaluation skills could be structured into the university syllabus and made mandatory for all undergraduates.

There is a need to move from "selective CVE-inoculation" to "comprehensive CVE-inoculation." Thus far, authorities have focused their attention on those who have shown tendencies towards radicalisation or to those who could be susceptible to terrorist ideologies. However, with the terrorists' ability to manipulate social media and the sheer number of youths from diverse backgrounds who have been radicalised, the previous model of "selective CVE-inoculation" might no longer be credible. Given this, security and educational authorities need to consider developing programmes that would ensure that all youth, regardless of their background or circumstances, have the opportunity to critically evaluate the propaganda of the terrorists and discover non-violent methods to address conflict and address grievances.

REFERENCES

Abbas, N. (2011, April 7). [Interview].

Alex P. S. (2013). *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review.* ICCT Research Paper. Retrieved from: https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013_2.pdf.

Alex P. S. (2014). *Al-Qaeda's Single Narrative and attempts to develop Counter-Narratives: The State of Knowledge*. ICCT Research Paper. Retrieved from: http://www.icct.nl/download/file/Schmid-Al-Qaeda's-Single-Narrative-and-Attempts-to-Develop-Counter-Narratives-January-2014.pdf.

Benard, C. (2005). The Dark Side of Jihad: How Young Men Detained At Guantanamo Assess Their Experience in A Future for the Young: Options for helping Middle Eastern Youth Escape the Trap of Radicalization. *RAND*, pp. 1-177. Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2006/RAND_WR354.pdf.

[E-mail to A. Speckhard]. (2018, March 14).

Hariano, M. (2011, April 5). Teenage Radicalization [Telephone interview].

Irwin, B., & Faison, G. (1984). Why Nonviolence? Introduction to Nonviolence Theory and Strategy. *International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.* Retrieved from: https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WhyNonviolence.pdf.

Khosrokhavar, F., & Macey, D. (2005). *Suicide bombers Allahs new martyrs.* London: Pluto Press.

Rajaratnam School of International Studies [E-mail to K. Ramakrishna]. (2018, January 23).

Ramakrishna, K. (2012, October). '*Radicalisation over the Internet: Radicalism, Extremism and the Transition to Real-Life Violence' for the 'Social Media in a Crisis – Effective Engagement in the Digital Age Workshop*'. Lecture presented at Social Media in a Crisis – Effective Engagement in the Digital Age Workshop in The Centre for Excellence in National Security (CENS), Singapore.

Samuel, T. (2018). *Don't-lah Wei!: A Peer-to-peer Resources Guide on Ensuring Your Kawan Never Becomes a Terrorist*. Kuala Lumpur: SEARCCT.

Samuel, T. (2016). *Radicalisation in Southeast Asia: A Selected Case Study of Deash in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines* (Rep.). Kuala Lumpur: SEARCCT.

Samuel, T. (2012). "Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative". SEARCCT, 1-89. Retrieved from: http://www.searcct.gov.my/images/PDF_My/publication/Reaching_the_Youth_Countering_The_Terrorist_Narrative.pdf

Samuel, T. (2018). *Undergraduate Radicalisation in Selected Countries in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Quantitative Analysis on the Perception of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism among Undergraduates in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand (*Rep.). Kuala Lumpur: SEARCCT.

Setyo, H. (2011, April 5). [Interview].

Singh, B. (2007). *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia: Losing the war on terror to Islamist extremists.* New Delhi: Vij Books.

Talwar, D. (2010, August 05). Muslim women 'targeted by extremists' at UK universities. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-10855565

Umug, N. (2011, March 30). [Interview].

"A combination of factors—and never one factor alone—can lead to radicalization, and that there is not always a causality between the risks, potential drivers, and radicalization."

9 CREATING "SAFE" SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND DISCUSSION: THE IMPACT OF A PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM THROUGH EDUCATION (PVE-E) INTERVENTION IN UGANDA

Sara Zeiger

Introduction

This essay provides a selected evaluation of a capacity-building program for teacher-trainers (tutors) on preventing violent extremism through education (PVE-E) in the context of Uganda. It evaluates one particular objective (improving understanding of pedagogical approaches to address drivers of violent extremism) of a workshop that was conducted in January 2018 that was hosted by Hedayah, UNESCO, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA), and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) of Uganda in Kampala. The workshop trained 28 tutors from 10 districts: Kisoro Primary Training College (PTC), Kabale-Bukinda PTC, Lodonga PTC (Yumbe district), Erepi PTC, Kitgum PTC, Arua PTC, Bundibugyo PTC, Bulera PTC, Bishop Stuart PTC, and Buhungiro PTC. Each of the tutors from a PTC is responsible for one or more districts in Uganda for teacher-training under the MoES of Uganda. It should also be noted that most of the tutors are also teachers in classrooms, so they often play a dual role in their communities of both teaching and training other teachers.

The results presented in this essay are part of a more comprehensive evaluation that was conducted of the workshop (Zeiger, Mattei & Nettleton, 2019), and this essay draws heavily on the logic and order of that evaluation report. The capacity-building that took place in Kampala was a follow-up to a "Capacity-Building Workshop on the Prevention of Violence through Education in Sub-Saharan Africa" hosted by UNESCO and UNESCO IICBA in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in February 2017. This particular module was presented as a pilot program, and

[1] The identitarian movement began in France in 2003. They share common ideas: the need to stop mass immigration, the undesirability of Islam and the corrupt authoritarianism of the EU. The movement is largely rooted in European culture and history, but the values can be translated to different historical contexts. Generation Identity made some waves in Australia but did not achieve the same following as in Europe.

the results are fundamental to the development of the later modules on PVE and education. For example, Hedayah, UNESCO IICBA, UNESCO Juba Office, and the Ministry of General Education of South Sudan also organized a similar workshop on PVE-E in South Sudan in October 2018.

This essay focuses on evaluating one particular objective of the workshop: to improve the understanding of pedagogical approaches that can help address the drivers of violent extremism, build resilience in the classroom, and nurture a culture of peace in and through education. The workshop covered three pedagogical approaches, but the particular pedagogical approach assessed in this essay is on "Creating safe spaces for classroom dialogue about challenging topics, including violent extremism." The other two pedagogical approaches are "Enhancing social and emotional learning (SEL)" and "Developing digital and critical literacy skills in students." However, for the purposes of this essay, only the first pedagogical approach will be expanded upon and evaluated.

One important outcome of the evaluation from this workshop included some evidence that there was a positive impact on the "safe spaces" pedagogical approach for both the tutors and students in Uganda. There was evidence that the tutors changed their teaching methods to implement a "ground rules" exercise, one of the suggested "safe spaces" methods, as part of their everyday classroom practices. There was also anecdotal evidence of a positive impact of the "safe spaces" pedagogies in one school, where there was reduced violence (destruction of property) in the school as observed by the tutors.

Local Context and Drivers of Radicalization in Uganda

Uganda is not necessarily the first country that comes to mind in the modern era of violent extremism and terrorism, although it may trigger a recollection of the historical case of violent extremism, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) that operated out of Uganda in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the intervention of training tutors on PVE in Uganda is actually quite important based on an assessment of potential drivers of radicalization. At the same time, the manifestations of violent extremism in Uganda in the last five years has been relatively low.

The three factors potentially contributing to radicalization and recruitment in Uganda that are the most concerning are: 1) the emergency response situation in the country (migration and refugees), 2) both a historical and current presence of radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism and terrorism, and 3) youth idleness that has led in some cases to violence in certain parts of Uganda. These factors alone do not necessarily lead to radicalization to violent extremism, but they are risk factors that could contribute if the appropriate prevention measures are not adopted.

The first critical factor is related to the influx of refugees into the country, particularly through the northern border from South Sudan. The Ugandan government takes an open and flexible approach to receiving refugees, and they are quickly assigned a physical location and integrated into the local communities and towns. In advance of the January workshop and as of December 2017, there were 1.4 million refugees in Uganda, and around 1 million of those refugees were South Sudanese (UNHCR, 2017). Because of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, this means that some refugees are escaping severe violence and torture. The Bidi Bidi refugee camp in Yumbe alone hosts over a quarter of a million refugees ("Welcome to Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement," 2018), and according to recent reports over 60% of the refugees from South Sudan have entered Uganda (Akumu, 2018). The Arua district had 252,000 refugees (23% of the population of Arua) and Yumbe district had 287,087 refugees (34% of the population of Yumbe). In addition, refugees from Burundi are entering the country through the southwestern border. Because of these factors in the local communities, the workshop facilitators specifically chose districts where communities were facing the most challenges with respect to integration of refugees.

It must be emphasized that this essay does not suggest that refugees are more at risk to radicalization, nor is there evidence to suggest that the presence of refugees necessarily contributes to violent extremism. Rather, in the context of northern Uganda, and particularly in the Yumbe and Arua districts, the refugee situation contributes to macro-level "push" factors that could potentially contribute to radicalization or recruitment. A significant number of refugees entering northern Uganda means there is competition over resources in the community, including food and water, land, infrastructure, education, and employment. In a school setting, this means class sizes have doubled or even tripled, and teachers are often under-resourced both in terms of physical resources (furniture, textbooks) and professional capability and training. This can contribute to community tensions and conflict between the host community and the refugees seeking integration. Moreover, the South Sudanese refugees may not speak English (language of instruction in Uganda), and migrate

to Uganda with different cultural backgrounds than the local community. In addition, the traumatic events experienced by these refugees and differences in cultural expectations could be potential triggers or vulnerabilities that could lead to radicalization, amongst a number of other deviant behaviors. In this regard, the PVE-E intervention designed for Uganda takes into consideration these potential elements.

In addition to the emergency response situation in Uganda, radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism has been prevalent both historically and currently, bringing us to the second main factor leading to radicalization in Uganda. Historically speaking, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) caused significant damage to the country's reputation and morale through its insurgency tactics in the center regions of Uganda. While the group previously contained thousands of members, the current statistics around official LRA members puts membership at 120 (Okiror, 2017). While an Amnesty Reintegration Program was started by the government in 2000 ("MDRP-Supported Activities," 2009) funding has since dissipated, meaning that former LRA members that did not go through the program could be recruited again if circumstances are right.

Beyond the LRA, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) are considered a terrorist group by the Ugandan government. The ADF primarily operates out of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but there also is evidence that they are recruiting individuals across the Eastern border of DRC from Uganda. The ADF were suspected of conducting attacks in the DRC such as the Beni massacre in 2016 and an attack in Semuliki in 2017, and the Ugandan government has continued to station troops on the southwestern border of Uganda to prevent the violence from entering the country. The ADF has been highly adaptive to political, social and cultural developments in East Africa, and have been able to survive for over 20 years. The original narrative of the ADF took a religious role, as a spinoff of a Salafi movement from the 1990s. However, over time, their narratives have also adapted secular and political language, and their tactics became more violent as they have struggled to maintain a stronghold in DRC (Nantulya, 2019). Still, their recent recruitment cells, including those in Uganda and Tanzania, have promoted religious narratives, perhaps in an attempt to establish credibility amongst local Muslim communities (Nantulya, 2019; Stearns, 2018). According to one report that interviewed former ADF members, there have also been recent attempts for the ADF to establish formal links with other groups in the region, including Al-Shabaab and Daesh (Stearns, 2018). Another report on radicalization in Eastern Uganda also indicated that ADF may be active there, which is concerning given that the geographic location of DRC (close to the western border of Uganda) is quite far from the eastern regions of Uganda (BRICS, 2019). This may provide further evidence of connections to other groups in the region, if they are able to mobilize networks over a vast geographic scope.

Finally, there is a threat of radicalization and recruitment of Ugandans into Al-Shabaab, especially in the neighboring districts to the Kenyan border and the Kampala area. Despite limited abilities to carry out attacks outside Somalia and Kenya, there was an attack in Kampala in 2010 on football fans that killed over 70 people, and that was ultimately linked to Al-Shabaab (Rice, 2010). However, it should be noted that there is a lack of evidence of Al-Shabaab operating in Uganda, and a recent study investigating violent extremism in Uganda was not able to confirm Al-Shabaab involvement or activity in the eastern regions (BRICS, 2019). At the same time, it was also noted that there is potentially a link between communities in Uganda and radicalized individuals coming from Garissa (Kenya) to study (BRICS, 2019). In order to combat this potential threat, the Ugandan government launched a "de-radicalization" campaign in 2015 (Clottey, 2015). While incidents of Al-Shabaab recruitment and terrorist activity are infrequent in Uganda, the threat of Al-Shabaab is indeed still a concern for Ugandan government and communities.

According to one of the locally-based facilitators for the workshop, "youth idleness," to include lack of employment and homelessness, was a third contributing factor to potential radicalization and recruitment in Uganda. While direct evidence of this link has not yet been established, there have been some studies that have suggested that youth living in slums are at higher risk for participating in or being victims of violent crime. For example, one study of youth in Kampala slums correlated consumption of alcohol, drugs and hunger with the perpetration of violence (Swahn et al., 2012). Another study suggested that risk factors associated with commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth in Kampala included perpetual street living (e.g. homelessness), alcohol use, domestic violence or rape, and dating violence (Self-Brown et al., 2018). A study on radicalization and drivers of violent extremism in Eastern Uganda also indicated that poverty and lack of livelihood was one of the main drivers of radicalization in the region (BRICS, 2019). Again, while the direct link between "youth idleness" and radicalization cannot be made definitively, the youth "at risk" for other anti-social behaviors (such as alcohol abuse or perpetration of violence) are often without jobs or homes and are idle in the

slums, particularly in Kampala. In this respect, "youth idleness" combined with poverty and lack of livelihoods could lead to conditions where radicalization and recruitment are more likely.

Given the abovementioned risk factors in Uganda, prevention measures are all the more timely to ensure that radicalization and recruitment in Uganda does not escalate. Indeed, an intervention related to education has an important potential impact on Ugandan societies.

Relating "Safe Spaces" to Preventing Violent Extremism

The aim of creating "safe spaces" for classroom dialogue is to build resilience in students through critical thinking skills and respect for others by ensuring the classroom is "safe" for learning (an approach that goes beyond physical safety). It is assumed that a classroom that is safe for dialogue and discussion will help to foster an environment where students can critically engage with sensitive topics in a foundation of trust. A "safe" classroom is one where students can listen respectfully to each other, discuss new ideas, receive constructive feedback on their ideas, and to not be intimidated by their fellow students. In the context of violent extremism, a "safe space" creates an environment where students can express grievances related to macro-level "push" factors or structural conditions. A safe space also ensures that students have the opportunity to express grievances related to potential "push" factors, and to come to some understanding (through good facilitation) to overcome those grievances in ways that are non-violent.

Research has suggested that facilitating "safe spaces" for classroom learning can help foster resilience against violent extremism amongst students (Facing History and Ourselves, n.d.; Mae, Cortex & Preiss, 2013; Arao & Clemens, 2013). In an evaluation of the "Generation Global" program, hosted by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, independent researchers found that the "safe spaces" pedagogical approach had a statistically significant difference on the measurement of students' open-mindedness towards others (Doney & Wegerif, 2017, p. 8). In this case, increasing open-mindedness builds resilience against the "us" versus "them" narratives utilized by violent extremist groups, and reduces "black and white" thinking that may lead to de-humanizing, and therefore justifying violence, against another group.

In the PVE-Education intervention in Uganda, one of the primary ways in which the "safe spaces" pedagogy was recommended to be implemented was through several practical exercises. One of these exercises was to establish "ground rules" in the classroom—rules suggested by the students themselves on how to communicate with each other in the classroom. At a basic level, this allows teachers a reference point where students can be held accountable for respecting each other and using appropriate communication skills in the classroom. For more about the "safe spaces" methods taught in the PVE-E intervention in Uganda, refer to the Preliminary Report prepared after the workshop (Zeiger & Mattei, 2018).

Theory of Change Statement

One key component of good CVE program evaluation is to develop a robust Theory of Change (ToC) to outline the hypotheses, logic, and assumptions about the program. This is a common practice in many development and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) programs, as described in much of the emerging P/CVE program literature (Mattei & Zeiger, 2018; Khalil & Zeuthen, 2016). At a basic level, the ToC can be used to project the impact of a CVE program through measuring and evaluating the conditional statements (or hypotheses). If it can be demonstrated that one or several of the conditional statements ("IF") are met, then we can project that there will be a prevention of violence in the local community based on the logical process of the ToC.

The Theory of Change Statement for the PVE-E program, in simple language, is described below. The "approaches" underlined in the statement refer to the three core approaches to classroom teaching as outlined previously.

IF	Teachers increase their knowledge of approaches (pedagogies), skills and activities that build resilience to violent extremism in the classroom;
AND	Teachers are given sufficient tools to apply this knowledge in the classroom environment;
AND	The knowledge and skills gained are applied effectively in the classroom environment in their countries;
THEN	The emergence of violent extremism will be prevented in the

local community;

BECAUSE Students will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to resist violent extremism.

The evaluation in this essay will take into consideration the ToC Statement listed above, particularly referencing the first "IF" statement and third "IF" statement. In this respect, the essay will assess if there was an increase in knowledge and skills of the "safe spaces" pedagogy, and if tutors effectively applied the knowledge and skills in the classroom. From an assessment of these hypotheses, it is possible to project some impact of this program on reducing violent extremism in the community, but of course it is not possible to assign causality any such reduction of violence.

Methodology

The evaluation for the PVE-E workshop in Uganda was developed by Hedayah, Albany Associates, and consultants from University College London's Institute of Education (Richardson & Panjwani, 2018). The structure of the monitoring, measurement and evaluation (MM&E) was grounded in Hedayah's own framework (Mattei & Zeiger, 2018). This essay draws on three primary sources of information: 1) an analysis of lesson plans that were submitted by workshop participants in January as part of the training program; 2) comparison between a pre-workshop and post-workshop survey regarding open-ended questions related to creating safe spaces; and 3) anecdotal evidence from semi-structured interviews that took place in a follow-up visit 6 months after the workshop.
The goal that is being assessed in this essay is to increase tutors' knowledge and to increase tutors' skills (applied) of creating safe spaces in the classroom. The increase in knowledge is assessed through a textual analysis of the lesson plans submitted by workshop participants on safe spaces, as well as open-ended responses in the pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys. An increase in skills related to this pedagogy is assessed through anecdotal evidence from the semi-structured interviews conducted after the workshop.

The lesson plans were developed by participants during the workshops in small groups. Each group was allowed to choose which pedagogy they wanted to address and were asked to design a lesson plan around that pedagogy. Participants were encouraged to choose a particular pedagogy that related the most to their classroom context, and they were also asked to identify a main problem related to violent extremism that the lesson attempted to overcome.

The lesson plans were analyzed using thematic coding associated with some of the main learning points throughout each of the modules that were presented during the workshop. The coding was conducted by one evaluator who also participated in the workshop discussions.

The open-ended questions from the pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys were also thematically coded and analyzed in a chart comparing the results. The evaluator was independent of the workshops conducted, and to ensure consistency, only one evaluator coded the results. There were two (2) participants that did not fill out the pre-workshop survey. In addition, several participants left blank some of the responses in the pre-workshop survey. To avoid a bias, the results in the chart analysis are displayed as (X + n), whereas n represents any differences accounting for a lack of pre-survey response for comparison. It should also be noted that one single participant may have several coded themes in their responses, meaning that the total number of answers for any given question may not add up to the 28 participants of the workshop.

With respect to the open-ended questions from the surveys, the relevant questions for analysis included in the pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys are:

1. Describe an activity that will help to build trust in the classroom.
2. How do you engage students with difficult topics?
3. How can you ensure that pupils engage in useful debates and dialogues? What strategies could be used to support this?
4. Explain how you set and implement ground rules in the classroom.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted 6 months after the original workshop (July 2018) and were conducted by an independent evaluator that did not participate in the workshops. The evaluator was also accompanied by a consultant that had been part of the workshops, whom provided mentorship to the participants after the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with 9 participants from the workshop in January, and represented three regions/districts (Arua/Lodonga region, the Yumbe region and the Kabale region).

For the purpose of this essay, the relevant questions assessed were:

1. Have you been able to discuss challenging issues in the classroom? / debating

a. If yes, how have you done this/ensured that you created a safe environment to debate in?
b. If no, why?

2. How would you assess whether you/your trainees have created a safe environment for students to express themselves in?
3. Can you enumerate some examples of "ground rules for discussion"? Do you usually implement these rules?

The methodology has several limitations that are important to highlight before diving into the analysis and results. First, the coding system for the lesson plans was conducted by one of the workshop facilitators, which has both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, there may be a potential for bias in the interpretation of the results, but on the other hand, the facilitator also had insights into the explanation behind the lesson plan as it was presented by the group, meaning they have access to information that may not appear in the written lesson plan. In addition, the pre- and post-workshop surveys are self-rated, meaning that there are limitations to the actual increase in knowledge that can be assessed. This was overcome by the thematic coding system by an independent evaluator to avoid bias that potentially comes with self-ratings. When it comes to numerical comparisons between the pre- and post-workshop survey, the sample size is low, meaning statistical significance is difficult to ascertain. In this case, anecdotal evidence is also provided to supplement the conclusions in the numerical data. Finally, the semi-structured interviews come with certain limitations, including the fact that only 9 of the 28 participants were interviewed. This means the evaluators can utilize the testimonials as supplementary evidence, but not as actual causal proof of impact of the program.

Results and Projected Impact

After an evaluation of the "safe spaces" pedagogy using the abovementioned methodology, several overall results are important to highlight:

- Tutors demonstrated an improved confidence and an increase in knowledge of the "safe spaces" approaches;
- Tutors demonstrated they had applied this knowledge in the classroom setting;
- Tutors observed that there had been changes in their students' behaviors related to the reduction of destroying school property after the "safe spaces" methodologies were implemented.

First, the tutors demonstrated that they had gained confidence and knowledge around the "safe spaces" approach. For the purposes of this essay, one lesson plan was chosen of the 10 groups to showcase how the participants increased their knowledge in creating a "safe space" in the classroom. The lesson plan for Group 6 is outlined below in Figure 1. This lesson plan is illustrative of several key learning points discussed during the workshop and incorporates good practices as identified by the facilitators' guide under the implementation of "safe spaces" for discussion. These learning points were used as a reference point for evaluating the lesson plan, and the colors in the bullet points correspond are also highlighted in the lesson plan that illustrate those points (See Figure 1).

- The lesson is interactive and involves students into their own learning process;
- The lesson helps students to identify and take ownership of creating a safe space for learning (both physically and mentally);
- The lesson aims to develop relationships between students and school staff that encourages safe learning.

This example demonstrates that this particular group was able to apply the appropriate knowledge of approaches to "safe spaces" by developing a lesson plan that incorporates core concepts in the classroom setting. In addition, it should be noted that the lesson is simple and practical to implement, especially in the context of Uganda. This is critical for teachers who have little time and large classrooms to handle at any given point.

TOPIC:	CREATING A SAFE & FRIENDLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT		
Age: 6-10		**Lesson Duration:**	60 minutes
Subject:	Social Science	**Timing**	Beginning of year; beginning of new semester/quarter

Lesson Objectives/Outcomes:
The aim of the lesson is to help children develop awareness of situations that can bring about a safe & friendly learning environment. Central to PVE-E is creation of a safe & friendly learning environment in which learners feel happy, comfortable & secure to learn freely & interact with others. Learners are also encouraged to suggest ways of making the learning environment safe & friendly, help to ensure they work towards that.

TIME	KEY POINTS	INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUE
5 minutes	The teacher introduces lesson by asking learners: "what can you find in a school?"	Learners should be encouraged to mention what is found in school as: buildings, play grounds, people, etc.
10 minutes	The teacher leads learners around the school to identify the physical infrastructures, different personnel in the school & their roles.	In groups of 20, learners should move around the school to identify & note down different infrastructure, people & their roles
15 minutes	The teacher guides learners to share their findings in a plenary session.	Groups present findings, others are encouraged to share comments on how they can contribute to keep or make the environment a safe & friendly one.
20 minutes	The teacher asks learners to suggest skills/activities on how to make the learning environment safe & friendly	Learners are encouraged to suggest skills/activities on how to maintain & use the physical facilities in the school & how they can better relate with the peers, teachers & other persons in the school.
10 minutes	The teacher summarizes on how a safe & friendly learning environment should be. The teacher asks learners to suggest ways of making the learning environment a safe & friendly one.	Learners suggest how they can contribute in making the learning environment safe & friendly

Materials:

1. Newspapers
2. Posters
3. Text books
4. Short video clips

Take Home Task: N/B

FIGURE 1: Lesson Plan, Group 6

3-day workshop. The question is displayed in column A, and the coded results in Figure 2 are displayed in column B & C. An analysis of the results of that particular question are displayed in column D.

QUESTION	PRE-WORKSHOP SURVEY	POST-WORKSHOP SURVEY	ANALYSIS
Q19: Describe an activity that will help to build trust in a classroom.	An activity that: • **Promotes participation (9)** • **Establishes a trustworthy environment by assuring confidentiality between teachers and learners (7)** • **Holds an open dialogue/listens to all students/views (5)** • That is well explained/ well prepared (4) • Shares responsibilities between teachers and students (4) • Ensures freedom of speech (1) • Includes evaluation/ feedback (1)	An activity that: • **Holds an open dialogue/listens to all students/views (9)** • **Establishes a trustworthy environment by assuring confidentiality between teachers and learners (8+1)** • **Promotes participation (5)** • Establishes clear ground rules (3+1) that is well explained/ well prepared (4) • Shares responsibilities (3) • Addresses diversity (2) • Evaluation/feedback (1)	The main themes in this question remained the same in both the pre- and post- workshop, although the number of ideas increased. For this question, it cannot be concluded if their increase of knowledge of this particular skill increased significantly. (1)
Q20: How do you engage students with difficult topics?	• **Open dialogues (11) Using experiences that are familiar to the learners (6)** • **Have relevant material handy that can be used (5)** • Through researching the subject (4) • Assessment (2) • Accepting diversity (1) • Being supportive (teacher-learner and learner-learner) (1) • No theme (2)	• **Open dialogues (16+1)** • **Have relevant material handy that can be used (6)** • **Using experiences that are familiar to the learners (5)** • Accepting diversity (2) • Being supportive (teacher-learner and learner-learner) (2) • Through researching the subject (2) • Ground rules (1) • No theme (1)	The main themes in this question remained the same in both the pre- and post- workshop, although the number of ideas changed slightly. The notion of an open and honest dialogue became more prominent in the post-workshop survey. This is important because during the workshop, participants expressed concerns with facilitating dialogues with a large number of students.

Q21: How can you ensure that pupils engage in useful debates and dialogues? What strategies could be used to support this?	• **Encourage an environment where they can speak openly/ debate respectfully (8)** • **Selection of topics that are interesting to them / get their opinion on which ones to select (7)** • Teach them how debates are carried out (4) • Offer peaceful resolutions & reflection (3) • Using methods such as games to stimulate participation (2) • Research/ Preparation (2) • Setting ground rules (0) • No themes (2)	• **Encourage an environment where they can speak openly/ debate respectfully (12+2)** • **Setting ground rules (5+2)** • **Selection of topics that are interesting to them / get their opinion on which ones to select (4 +1)** • Teach them why and how debates are carried out (3) • Offer peaceful resolutions & reflection (3) • Research / Preparation (1) • No theme (2)	Setting ground rules became an important factor in many of the participants' responses in comparing the pre- and post-workshop surveys (increased by 7). Encouraging an environment in which students can speak openly remained the most important theme, but with an additional 4 (+2) participants adding it to their pre-workshop answer. This can be taken to mean that tutors recognized that dialogues were an important tool.
Q24: Explain how you set and implement ground rules in your classroom.	• **Ensure the students are involved in the setting of the ground rules (18 +1)** • **Discuss the advantages of following them/ having penalties if not (4)** • **Regularly refer back to them (5)** • Place rules in classroom (4) • Leader to enforce them (2) • Develop rules according to what has happened in class (2)	• **Ensure the students are involved in the setting of the ground rules (20 +3)** • **Discuss the advantages of following them/ having penalties if not (4)** • **Regularly refer back to them (3)** • Develop rules according to what has happened in class (1) • Place rules in classroom (1) • Leader to enforce them (1) • No theme (1)	The main themes in this question remained the same in both the pre- and post- workshop, although the number changed slightly. It cannot be concluded whether their knowledge on this subject changed greatly.portant tool.

FIGURE 2: Main themes from results from pre- and post-workshop survey.

As seen from the results in the chart, it cannot be concluded that the tutors increased their knowledge and skills of this particular pedagogy to a great degree, although the number of answers related to the main themes of the workshop did shift slightly in the intended direction. For example, 7 more tutors in the post-workshop survey indicated that setting ground rules were a more important factor, which was one significant component of the training workshop.

Several questions during the semi-structured interview 6 months after the workshop also assessed how the teacher-trainers retained the knowledge related to the different pedagogies. The interviews were coded and arranged by theme. The results of the interviews by each of the themes under the pedagogies are displayed in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: Semi-structured interviews, themes around safe spaces.

For this question, 8 out of 9 of the participants stated *respect of other's opinions* as well as *offering counselling and guidance* as the most important themes in creating safe spaces for discussion. This is consistent with the post-workshop surveys results where these 2 themes are prominent in the same question as evaluated above (Q21).

Finally, the semi-structured interviews also revealed some anecdotal evidence of tutors applying the "safe spaces" pedagogies in the classroom setting. While the direct link to reducing violent extremism is difficult to measure, it is possible to project some impact in terms of violent extremism by assessing the influence of these lessons on the students, according to the teacher-trainers interviewed. One example illustrates several learning points that were emphasized in the workshop during the lesson of ground rules. The learning points that are highlighted in the example correspond to the following statements, color-coded in the text in Figure 4:

- Addressing the problem of violence through an assessment of the needs of the classroom (destruction of property) and developing a localized solution (ground rules);
- Involving students' regular feedback in the implementation of ground rules;
- Ensuring students interaction and active ownership in the implementation of ground rules.

> *We had to put a debate and we put up class rules and regulations. So we put our class rules, it is there in the classroom. We put 10 of them. One rule was* ***respect of each other's views by everyone****, 2 was* ***keeping everyone's property safe****, then another one which I remember is participating in all class activities and then…* ***everybody should take a role in group discussions, so they rotate. When they have a group discussion you lead and then the next time the other person will lead****, like that.*
>
> *{…}*
>
> *For my class,* ***we used to have a lot of destruction of, like, property.*** *Somebody would not care about the other person's property, even the school's property, but these days, I don't see it because I have not yet got any report. We normally go to review our rules and regulations. We normally review it every Friday. We go down and say 'OK, can we review our rules and regulations'. Now, when they see me with the list, they laugh. They say 'now number 1, how is it going? How is it being implemented? Is there any problem? Do we need to amend it?' and they say 'no, that one is still Ok'. 'OK, 2, is it ok? Yes. 3, are we violating this?'* ***Then they will keep on giving their comments. So we find that, the interaction is OK,*** *even how we keep our things, are now OK. (Participant, Arua District, Uganda).*

FIGURE 4: Open-ended response in semi-structured interview.

Importantly, this example starts to show some level of impact on students in the approach of creating a safe space for discussion. Specifically, it reveals a shift in cognitive processes, observed by the teacher in this case, of the reduction of violence measured through the indicator of a destruction of property in the school setting. In this case, while it is not possible to assess the actual impact of this particular workshop on reducing radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism, it is possible to say that the example of creating ground rules may contribute to the reduction of violence in the classroom through less destruction of property.

A second anecdotal example from a participant from the Kabale district reveals how creating a "safe space" in an informal setting (in an after-school club) has allowed teachers at their school to have discussions about violence and violent extremism with their students. This particular example reveals that for this participant, the training gave them both the confidence and the knowledge on the following points, color-coded in the example provided in Figure 5:

- Ability to create a safe space (even in an informal setting) for discussion about difficult topics with students;
- Knowledge about violence and violent extremism as it applies in their own context;
- Ability to discuss violence and violent extremism with students on a regular basis.

On creating a safe space for discussion:

Interviewee: So for us we said let's meet everybody we schedule outside the time of the clubs...we choose just a day which is outside the time table [of the clubs]. That is when we meet [the students]. Because we came to find that they developed interest in the theory behind the terms [of violent extremism]… So they developed a lot of interest let's say when you talk about what is happening in Nigeria among the Boko Haram, when you talk about what's happening in South Sudan. So, they see it as something that is new and they need to know the current affairs so you feel like they want to come time and again. So that's why I'm saying that the challenge is that to have a time to bring all of them as a club. So we assume that instead of club limiting let's be having all of them at a time we choose.

Interviewer: So you have been able to speak to the whole school about it?

Interviewee: To the whole school.

Interviewer: How many times was that once, or?

Interviewee: Since we came… about four times

Interviewer: And each time it's about violent extremism, OR terrorism…

Interviewee: We speak about violent extremism; we speak about the violence, what makes a safe and free classroom. We are aiming at educating them about eradicating violence in schools, then in classroom and then to show them the kinds of violence in our country, and how one can escape them, or when involved, what is the effect of violence in one's life as an individual. So that is how we have narrowed it down. As an individual what happens if you want to be engaged in violence extremism, what you benefit, what do you lose? So we are settling on that as an individual. What does it impact on you at the end of it all.

Interviewer: And all of this you did after the training?

Interviewee: After the training. Of course we didn't know. We would do something but not focused, not having the real program and the real content… but now I know that am talking about violence, forms of violence are caused by, and in school violence is evidenced in one two three at least that we know. Actually we didn't know and don't want to tell lies.

FIGURE 5: Second open-ended response in semi-structured interview

Whilst this is one particular anecdotal example, it can be concluded that the workshop had some impact on the confidence and knowledge of the teacher tutor. The teacher tutor was able to have discussions with their students after the training in ways that they were not able to do before the workshop. In addition, the creation of this after school safe space, where students have convened regularly, shows that there is at least a change in interest in the students in reducing violence, potentially having the ability of having more frank and open conversations with their teacher about these difficult topics.

Conclusions

In order to assess the impact of this particular workshop on reducing violent extremism in Uganda, it is important to link back to the theory of change for the program. This is particularly important because causality (as with any PVE program) is very difficult to prove, and the assessment of the ultimate goal (reducing violent extremism) needs to be done through proxy indicators.

According to the theory of change, an increase in knowledge and skills of tutors from Uganda would lead to building the resilience of students, ultimately leading to a reduction of violent extremism in the community. Matched to the goals of the workshop, it is difficult to ascertain from the pre- and post-workshop surveys a significant change in overall knowledge of the tutors when it comes to this particular pedagogy of creating a "safe space." However, there seemed to be some small shift in the level of knowledge and skills on this topic. An evaluation of the lesson plan example does reveal certain learning points that were captured by the teachers, but since there is no pre-workshop comparison, it is still difficult to assess if there had been a change in the knowledge and skills during the workshop. The best examples of change, however, emerge in the anecdotal evidence from the semi-structured interviews when the teachers and tutors had the chance to implement the ideas from the workshop. In both examples provided in this essay, there was evidence of impact both on the teacher/teacher tutor as well as the students. In this case, it can be said that while the actual impact on reducing violent extremism in Uganda is limited, the workshop seems to have had some impact in changes in knowledge and behavior of both the tutors and the students that the teachers are reaching in the Ugandan context.

REFERENCES

Akumu, P. (2018, May 19). Inside the world's largest refugee camp: 'We just want to go home'. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/19/inside-world-largest-refugee-camp-uganda-south-sudan-civil-war.

Arao, B., & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue around Diversity and Social Justice. In Landreman, L (ed.), *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators*, pp. 135-150. Sterling: Stylus Publishing.

BRICS. (2019). Violent Extremism in Eastern Uganda. Building Resilience in Civil Society (BRICS).

Clottey, P. (2015). Uganda Army Launches De-Radicalization Campaign. *VOA News.* Retrieved from: https://www.voanews.com/a/uganda-army-laucnhes-de-radicalization-campaign/2761087.html.

Doney, J. & Wegerif, R. (2017). Measuring Open-Mindedness: An evaluation of the impact of our school dialogue programme on students' open-mindedness and attitudes to others. London: Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. Retrieved from: https://institute.global/sites/default/files/inline-files/Measuring%20Open-mindedness_29.06.17.pdf.

Facing History and Ourselves. (n.d.). Fostering Civil Discourse: A Guide for Classroom Conversations. Retrieved from: https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/publications/Fostering_Civil_Discourse.pdf.

Khalil, J. & Zeuthen, M. (2016). Countering Violent Extremism and Risk Reduction: A Guide to Programme Design and Evaluation. Whitehall Report, pp. 2-16. London: RUSI. Retrieved from: https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20160608_cve_and_rr.combined.online4.pdf.

Mae, B., Cortez, D., & Preiss, R. W. (2013). Safe spaces, difficult dialogues, and critical thinking. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 7*(2), pp. 5.

Mahamba, F. (2018, January 24). Scores convicted in Congo's Beni Massacre Trial. Reuters. Retrieved from: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-violence/scores-convicted-in-congos-beni-massacre-trial-idUSKBN1FD2OV.

Mattei, C. & Zeiger, S. (2018). Evaluate your CVE Results: Projecting Your Impact. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah. Retrieved from: http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Admin/Content/File-16720189339.pdf.

MDRP. (March, 2019). MDRP-Supported Activities in Uganda. Retrieved from: http://tdrp.net/mdrp/PDFs/MDRP_UGA_FS_0309.pdf.

Nantulya, P. (February 2019). The Ever-Adaptive Allied Democratic Forces Insurgency. Washington, D.C.: Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Retrieved from: https://africacenter.org/spotlight/the-ever-adaptive-allied-democratic-forces-insurgency/.

Okiror, S. (April 26, 2017). End of Joseph Kony Hunt Breeds Frustration and Fear. *IRIN News.* Retrieved from: https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/04/26/end-joseph-kony-hunt-breeds-frustration-and-fear.

Rice, X. (2010). Uganda bomb blasts kill at least 74. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jul/12/uganda-kampala-bombs-explosions-attacks.

Richardson, M. & Panjwani, F. (January 17, 2018). Capacity Building Workshop on the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education (PVE-E), Methodological Framework for Assessing the Efficacy of Workshop Interventions. London: Albany Associates.

Self-Brown, S., Culbreth, R., Wilson, R., Armistead, L., Kasirye, R., & Swahn, M. H. (2018). Individual and parental risk factors for sexual exploitation among high-risk youth in Uganda. *Journal of interpersonal violence.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518771685.

Stearns, J. (2018). Inside the ADF Rebellion: A Glimpse into the Life and Operations of a Secretive Jihadi Armed Group. New York: Congo Research Group. Retrieved from: https://insidetheadf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Inside-the-ADF-Rebellion-14Nov18.pdf.

Swahn, M. H., Gressard, L., Palmier, J. B., Kasirye, R., Lynch, C., & Yao, H. (2012). Serious Violence Victimization and Perpetration among Youth Living in the Slums of Kampala, Uganda. *The Western Journal of Emergency Medicine, 13*(3), 253-9.

UN High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR). (2017). Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal. Retrieved from: https://ugandarefugees.org/en/country/uga.

Welcome to Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement. (2018). *American Refugee Committee.* Retrieved from http://arcrelief.org/welcome-bidi-bidi-refugee-settlement/.

Zeiger, S., Mattei, C., & Nettleton, L. (2019). National Capacity-Building Workshop on Preventing Violent Extremism through Education in Uganda: Workshop Report. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah. Retrieved from: http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Admin/Content/File-2112019155147.pdf.

The essays included in this volume reflect the presentations given at the fifth International CVE Research Conference, held in Swansea, the UK, in August 2018. The conference was co-organized by Hedayah, University of Swansea, TRENDS Research & Advisory, UN Women, and M&C Saatchi. The conference was sponsored and supported by the Government of Spain, Government of Turkey, the European Union- Global STRIVE Program (Hedayah), Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Aktis Strategy, BRICS, Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding (CCCPA), the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR), RESOLVE Network, and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

This edited volume aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on P/CVE, providing latest evidence from different regions of the world. The essays in this volume were written by academics and practitioners covering a variety of thematic and regional areas, as well as providing recommendations for policy makers, practitioners, and future research.

Hedayah

countering violent extremism