Counter Terrorist
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Radicalization and De-Radicalization

"Soft" countermeasures to combat extremism and terrorism—which include de-radicalization and community engagement programs—are in a growth phase. Despite this, many obstacles remain for their potential to be truly harnessed. Gunaratna explores some of these challenges in the opening article of this issue and argues for greater attention being paid towards structural factors. He also notes that multilateral collaboration to build capacity where it is needed is a step in the right direction, but cautions against the threat of online radicalization.

In addition to addressing challenges to their implementation, an important aspect of producing appropriate de-radicalization and community engagement programs has been to first understand radicalization itself. Acharya examines the current endeavors to study radicalization and explains some of the limitations of the existing crop of literature. He then presents three arguments intended as a preliminary discussion. The first is that there is no single pathway to radicalization or set of causes linked to it. Second, ideologies plays an important role in the process of radicalization, and third, that theories of norm diffusion and localization can be used to explain the dichotomy between "global" and "local" jihad.

Hassan addresses a specific aspect of radicalization, focusing on the mobilization of Muslims for jihad. His article examines the factors which make such a mobilization successful through the lens of the jihad in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union's invasion in 1980. Hassan looks at structural factors—precipitant events and powerful allies—to show why the current attempt to mobilize Muslims for jihad by Al Qaeda and its affiliates is relatively unsuccessful. He argues that structural factors will continue to present challenges for counter-ideology, if long-standing grievances behind ongoing conflicts are not resolved.

Turning the focus to de-radicalization, Noor examines the case of Pakistan. She looks closely at the programs developed in the Swat Valley and in Punjab, and notes that more attention can be paid towards individualized assessment of detainees, engagement of family members and preventive measures.

Ending off the issue, Rajakumar looks at two theories used to explain criminal behavior and explores how they help us understand the radicalization of home-grown and "leaderless" terrorists better.

Revisiting Challenges to De-Radicalization and Community Engagement

Rohan Gunaratna

Structural factors pose a significant challenge to the implementation of de-radicalization and community engagement programs as countries strive to build capacity and address issues such as online radicalization.

In June 2012, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), an informal multilateral meeting involving 30 countries, adopted the Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders. The adoption of the Rome Memorandum, which drew extensively on the case studies of Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Sri Lanka, underscored the need for "soft" countermeasures to fight terrorism and extremism. The salience of such an initiative stems from the fact that since 9/11, the threat of terrorism has in fact grown. Although the core of Al Qaeda has suffered and its founding leader Osama bin Laden has been neutralized, the threat has dispersed during the last decade. In addition to the operational threat, the ideological threat has spread to the new conflict zones which have emerged in Asia, the Middle East and recently in Africa.

To counter terrorism, most countries have used kinetic measures, neutralizing and capturing terrorists or disrupting their activities. However, the predominantly "hard" military approach has been found to be counterproductive in many instances. In fact, such an approach has often protracted conflicts and made them more lethal by resulting in the use of terrorist tactics such as suicide attacks. The kill, capture and disrupt

Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaking at the GCTF in June 2012.
Photo source: Vos Iz Neias
http://www.vosizneias.com/107666/2012/06/10/istanbul-report-u-s-excludes-israel-from-terror-forum-because-of-turkey/

strategy has also dispersed the threat. Instead of hierarchical organizations, countries are now dealing with shadowy networks and home-grown terrorists engaged in "leaderless" jihad. The activities of these entities are difficult to detect and pre-empt.

This has prompted some governments to rethink their strategies and invest in strategic countermeasures to create an environment that is extremely hostile for terrorism and extremism. One major component involves initiatives in de-radicalization and rehabilitation of captured terrorists as well as engagement of communities that have been vulnerable to recruitment. The strategies at this end of the spectrum, however, remain underutilized on a global level and have often been unevenly implemented with mixed results. Several challenges persist, undermining the effective implementation of de-radicalization and community engagement.

Challenges

Ethnic and Religious Dynamics in Society
Most of the ongoing conflicts across the globe are ethnic or religious in orientation. Given the role played by ethnicity and religion in deriving individual and national identities, the interplay of these elements in a society is of significant importance. In multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, the dynamic between majority and minority ethnic and religious communities poses a constant challenge since it influences the structure of the state and society. Political entrepreneurs are also likely to exploit the ready source of emotional appeal that ethnic and religious differences provide.

Governments and their partners can utilize both legal and educational awareness measures to overcome these difficulties. A legal framework to deter ethnic and religious politicking and provide guidelines on harmonious living between all communities is an important first step. It must also be supported in the public domain by appropriately structured education policies and incentives for communities to work together. Where religious education has moved in to fill the vacuum created by an inadequate provision of mainstream education, efforts must be made to regulate curricula and engage religious teachers. What is important for governments to understand is that de-radicalization and community engagement programs cannot operate in a vacuum. In order for them to succeed, the mindset at all levels must adapt to reflect the values that de-radicalization and community engagement programs seek to inculcate.

Economic Empowerment and Social Development
In any terrorist group, the rank and file is several times larger than the leadership while the support base, which includes sympathizers, is the largest. Furthermore, not all ideologues and operational terrorists can be neutralized. Those incarcerated will have to be released sooner or later and if they harbor extremist thoughts they will not only have a higher potential for recidivism but may also spur recruitment. For this reason, de-radicalization programs seek to transform those individuals who are captured or surrendered. However, in-prison de-radicalization must also be complemented by reaching out to the margins of society from where ideological extremists emerge.

In former conflict zones, building roads, refurbishing schools, and creating job opportunities is crucial. For instance, had the US and Pakistan invested a small proportion of the resources spent on military operations in Afghanistan in tribal Pakistan (the Federally Administered Tribal Areas or FATA) instead, the positive impact on the civilian population in both countries would have been more significant. However, the rebuilding of physical infrastructure should be supported by a psychosocial infrastructure that gives meaning to the investment and a reorientation of the recipient community's mindset.

In southern Philippines, economic inequality fuelled an insurgency marred by terrorism for decades.
Photo source: Joe Penney
http://www.joepenney.com/index.php?/photo/war-on-terror---philippines/

As long as there is a gulf between the socioeconomic status of the majority and minority communities in a country, a conflict situation is unlikely to end. De-radicalization and community engagement initiatives that occur in an environment where fundamental economic and social grievances are unaddressed will ultimately be ineffective since the core motivations for individuals to join terrorist and groups have not been eliminated. This was the case in the Philippines, which recently embarked on a peace initiative seeking to address economic inequality in the Muslim dominated south. The increased engagement in economic activity that the new peace agreement will bring is intended to reduce the incentive for violence.

Best Practices and Capacity Building
Most countries that have implemented de-radicalization and community engagement programs understand the importance of tailoring these programs to suit local conditions. However,

it is often the case that many countries lack the capacity and expertise to do so. The result is a significant loss in the feasibility of implementing a program or a program that does not meet the demands of the local situation. Often, competition for salience on the policymaking agenda and limited monetary resources – the conditions which often perpetuate conflicts in the first place – prevent many countries from going ahead with implementing de-radicalization and community engagement programs.

There are indications, however, that these circumstances may not become permanent stumbling blocks. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague (ICCT) are two organizations committed to sharing expertise and building capacity. Furthermore, with multilateral undertakings such as the Rome Memorandum, it is clear that positive steps are

being taken in the right direction towards building an easily accessible pool of expertise for countries seeking to implement de-radicalization and community engagement programs.

Measuring Success
One of the principal critiques of de-radicalization and community engagement programs is that there is no method to measure their impact with absolute certainty. There are some obvious indicators, but these do not necessarily correlate with the successful implementation of a de-radicalization and community engagement program. They include a reduction in the number of incidents of violence or a reduction in the number of individuals recruited by terrorist groups. For in-prison de-radicalization programs, however, psychometric analysis has emerged as part of a drive within the field to provide a verifiable basis for the implementation of such programs. The data collected from such analysis is a useful means to create a positive feedback loop to ensure the sustainability and actual effectiveness of a de-radicalization program.

Addressing Online Radicalization

A cursory comparison of the number of extremist and radical websites and the number of counter-ideology websites reveals a significant gap. The contribution of the Internet in disseminating extremist and radical ideology is well-documented, but this has yet to prompt more significant efforts online to counter such websites. Faced with such a situation, governments need to be prepared to operate both in the real and virtual spaces. While some have advocated an approach of shutting down or curtailing the activities of extremist and radical websites, this has often proven to be counter-productive. It is also often the case that such websites are a valuable source of intelligence. A balance is needed with greater focus on providing a broader dissemination of counter-narratives online.

Conclusion

Community empowerment through engagement and rehabilitation by mainstreaming terrorists and countering extremist thinking is still an evolving counterterrorism strategy. However, deterring and countering extremist ideologies alone will not solve the problem, since geostrategic and geopolitical disputes are often at the heart of or closely intertwined with many conflicts involving terrorism and political violence. This poses a significant challenge since the grievances that arise out of such disputes are often the distillate of decades of misperception or poor governance. Governments must remain committed to addressing the roots of discontent and continue to engage a broad range of partners. This will enhance the effectiveness of "soft" countermeasures such as de-radicalization and community engagement in the long run.

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GLOBAL PATHFINDER

Global Pathfinder is a one-stop repository for information on current and emerging terrorist threats focusing on terrorism and political violence in the Asia-Pacific region. It is an integrated database containing comprehensive profiles of terrorist groups, key terrorist personalities, terrorist and counter-terrorist incidents as well as on terrorist training camps. The database also contains specific details and analyses of significant terrorist attacks in the form of terrorist attack profiles.

For further inquiries regarding subscription and access to the Global Pathfinder database, please email Elena Ho Wei Ling at the following email address: isewlho@ntu.edu.sg

Radicalization and Diffusion of "Ideology": A Preliminary Discussion

Arabinda Acharya

Given the role played by the acquisition and diffusion of certain kinds of ideologies, studies of radicalization can benefit from the inclusion of perspectives grounded in theories of norm diffusion and localization.

There has been an increasing realization that understanding and combating radicalization is critical to combat terrorism, especially involving the transnational jihadist movement. This has engendered a number of studies – both scholastic and analytical – on radicalization. Most of the studies and analysis endeavor to explain the phenomenon, determine its impact and prescribe measures to counter it (de-radicalization, disengagement to name a few). However, there are significant limitations in the literature, especially involving the attempts to "define" the term and "model" the pathways towards radicalism. Though this could be due to the fact that there is no universal explanation of radicalism, most of the definitions and models reflect the concerns and experiences of the authors, agencies or institutions in respective countries. Some of the explanations of radicalization focus on the individual while some others focus on a group or a particular community.

There is also no consensus as to whether radicalization is just a process, an end in itself or whether it necessarily leads to terrorism and violence. Similarly, there is no unanimity about the extent to which objective social, economic and political conditions, either individually or collectively, play a role in radicalization. While process-based explanations make *a priori* assumptions that radicalization is inevitable in

The failure of "hard" countermeasures to terrorism after 9/11 spurred a realization of the need to fight terrorism through other means. Photo source: The David Pakman Show
http://www.davidpakman.com/911-schooled-in-whats-real/

Radicals such as Anwar al-Awlaki played an important role in disseminating extremist ideology which ultimately radicalized many.

Photo source: thecommentator http://www.thecommentator.com/article/3605/the_children_of_anwar_al_awlaki

respect of certain communities and that the radicalization process is necessarily a linear precursor to terrorism, cause-based explanations lead one to believe that there will be radicalization if certain "core" or "root" conditions are present. All these have led to sweeping generalizations that focus on situations in which people may become radicalized without examining the underlying dynamics and simple explanations that are inadequate and often lead to counterproductive interventions.

Three arguments are presented for preliminary discussion here. First, there is no single pathway to radicalization as there is no single profile of a person or a community that is vulnerable to radicalization. There is also no single cause or set of causes that leads to radicalization. Social, economic, psychological and ideological factors play critical roles, though it is difficult to determine whether these variables could be individually or collectively implicated. This is where the literature on radicalization is most fragmented, leading to sweeping generalizations (such as the "Clash of Civilizations"), focus on situations in which people may become radicalized (e.g. religious study undertaken in *madrasahs* [Islamic religious school]) without examining the underlying dynamics, or simply

explanations that are inadequate. By implication, it may also leads to interventions that themselves could be radical (e.g. closing down *madrasahs*, legislation against *hijab* [headscarf worn by Muslim women]), and mostly counter-productive. The pathways to radicalization or the radicalization process is neither linear nor predictable, and not inevitable in respect of particular individuals or communities. Similarly, proceeding down a radicalization path does not always result in violence.

Second, the acquisition of certain kinds of ideologies plays an important role in the process of radicalization. Ideology is important as it links particular actions with a wider set of meanings, thereby legitimizing and rationalizing certain courses of action. A variation of this argument emphasizes "narrative" instead of "ideology" per se, which articulates the suffering of the *ummah* (global community of Muslims) and appeals to individuals who are torn between competing identities, and for whom the idea of becoming an "avenger" provides a sense of power, meaning and identity. Attempts to invoke religion or ideology are overwhelmingly based on perceptions of marginalization, prosecution or of being under attack. Though such grievances do not necessarily lead to radicalization, they can

make people more receptive to deviant ideologies that justify violent action to mitigate the same.

Third, there is a vigorous attempt to diffuse this ideology or the narrative in the Muslim world using all available means – from individual sermons in the religious and educational establishments to the postings, discussions and depictions in the Internet. The dissemination of the ideology/narrative is accompanied by appeals and exhortations to the Muslims to commit them to jihad to mitigate the grievances or avenge the wrongs against Islam and its "true" followers

However, as the socio-political contexts vary in terms of the receptiveness to external stimuli (ideology of jihad) or in formulating grievances (which is at the core of the ideology/narrative), predisposition to radicalization would inevitably vary at least in terms of its degree and intensity and in terms of the nature of reactions to constructed grievances. This is based on the argument that when ideas spread, there is no automatic absorption of the same in the local context, nor do they get adopted in their entirety without undergoing any modification. On the other hand a main aspect of diffusion of ideas is localization and factors such as local culture, identities and values shape the ideas to fit the local mold. Acceptance of ideas is shaped by subjective and inter-subjective factors such as culture and identity. Localization seeks to actively construct foreign ideas through discourse, framing, grafting and cultural selection by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices.

In the context of radicalization, theories of norm diffusion and localization would explain the incongruence between the ideology of global jihad being spread by groups like Al Qaeda and the objectives of groups at the local level, which, while agreeing with the former on broader aspects of global jihad, remain firmly grounded in local issues and grievances. This would also explain the pronounced distinction that the local groups make between the "global" and "local" objectives and the "far" and the "near" enemy, as well as a visible bias in favor of pursuing "local" goals against the "near" enemy as opposed to "global" objectives and engaging the "far enemy."

This is not to say that the importance of local cultures and values are not recognized in the literature of radicalization. But the scholarship appears incomplete as in most cases these variables are used to explain, empirically, variations in one form of radicalization from another. Partly, this stems from a reluctance to accept that terms like "terrorism" and "extremism" could be described as norms in the same manner as terms like "sovereignty" and "inter-dependence" are explained in international relations theory. However, definition of norms could encompass both formal, institutionalized ones as well as informal social/religious ideas which moreover, need not necessarily be moral. It is in this context that, this discussion can utilize the scholarship on norm diffusion to explain how radical ideology spread through the international system and became internalized. It is expected that this would further stimulate more scholastic discussions on the subject.

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Mobilization of Muslims for Jihad:
Insights from the Past and their Relevance Today

Muhammad Haniff Hassan

What makes the mobilization of Muslims for jihad successful? Answering this question requires a look into a case representing a success story of such mobilization in recent history.

There have been many attempts at mobilizing Muslims for jihad in modern times, beginning with the invasion into Muslim lands by European colonial powers. However, the most successful mobilization is arguably the one carried out to counter the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan from 1980 to 1990. Neither the call for jihad against the European colonization of Muslim lands nor for the liberation of Palestine achieved the same result in terms of the response from and the impact on Muslims. Tens of thousands of volunteers joined the fight and millions flowed to fund the jihad in Afghanistan during the peak of the mobilization. Even the current attempt by Al Qaeda and its affiliates to mobilize Muslims for jihad in Afghanistan and Iraq which has been ongoing for more than a decade has not experienced the same success.

The factors which contributed to the success of the mobilization against the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan can be categorized into two: ideological factors rooted to the vision of Islamic revivalism and the notion of jihad in Islam against non-Muslim domination of Muslim life and countries, and structural factors that contributed to the appeal and spread of the ideas behind the mobilization. While acknowledging that ideas were indeed responsible in creating the mobilization, the structural factors are only touched upon here. They include: 1) a precipitant event that provided justification for a rallying call or frames of collective action and context for a mobilization, and 2) powerful allies in the form of political elites, major powers and existing religious institutions that had provided assistance to jihad mobilization efforts, directly or indirectly.

Precipitant Event

The precipitant or dramatic event in this case refers to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The invasion became a major source of grievance among Muslims. Its resulting impact on Afghan Muslims provided an opportunity for active mobilization of Muslims all over the world. The Soviet invasion also generated international support for the Afghan jihad from the US and its allies who viewed it from a strategic viewpoint as a means to contain and defeat the Soviet Union during the Cold War period.

Validation of the relationship between the success of the mobilization and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is found across many studies in the field of political violence. Tore Bjørgo's conclusion on the root causes of terrorism is particularly instructive. He wrote in *Root Causes of Terrorism* that "Repression by foreign forces or occupation by colonial powers has given rise to a great many national liberation movements that have sought recourse in terrorist tactics, guerrilla warfare, and other political means. Despite their use of terrorist methods, some liberation movements enjoy considerable support and legitimacy among their own constituencies, and sometimes also from segments of international public opinion."

Similarly, other scholars have sought to highlight the importance of historical context on the emergence of political violence. Frances F. Piven and Richard A. Cloward in *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* noted that "Popular insurgency does not proceed

from someone else's rules or hopes: it has its own logic and direction. It flows from historically specific circumstances: it is a reaction against those circumstances, and it is also limited by those circumstances." In this case, the Soviet invasion was as much the context as the precipitant event.

Powerful Allies

Many researchers on the era of the Soviet-Afghan jihad have highlighted the involvement of the US and its allies in the form of financial, material and political support as part of their Cold War strategy against the communist bloc. In facilitating the mobilization and training of Muslim fighters and supplying weaponry for jihad, they contributed to the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 and the fall of its local collaborators in Kabul in 1992. The assistance was done covertly under the codename of Operation Cyclone. It was estimated that between 1980 and 1987, the United States spent US$15–30 million to as high as US$600 million a year on the operation. Although mujahideen factions tended to downplay the United States' role in the Afghan jihad by denying that any assistance reached

them, the presence of US support can be inferred from the writings of `Abdullah `Azzam who was the leading figure in mobilizing Muslims during the Afghan jihad.

For instance, `Azzam admitted receiving Stinger missiles (portable surface-to-air missiles) from the US but claimed that the cost of each missile (US$70,000) was borne by the Saudi government, thus avoiding giving credit to the United States. The denial of receiving direct assistance from the US is not surprising, however. In fact, it corroborates research which found that all forms of support from the US during that period were channeled through a third party, which may have been either the Pakistan or Saudi Arabian intelligence agencies, before they were distributed to various Afghan militant groups.

`Azzam also highlighted the lack of US interference in the mobilization of Muslims for the Afghan jihad on its own territory, a policy in stark contrast to that of today. For instance, Maktab Al-Khidmat, an agency founded for the purpose of mobilizing Muslims' assistance for Afghan jihad all over the world, operated all over the US.

An Afghan mujahideen firing American-supplied Stinger missiles during the war against the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Photo source: Truth by Kbaig
http://www.truthbykbaig.com/2012/11/the-conspiracies-against-islam-and.html

`Azzam also confirmed the existence of an affiliate agency, Al-Kifah Refugee Centre that helped to raise awareness, funds and support for the jihad in Afghanistan, established by the Al-Faruq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York. `Azzam also had an account with the Independence Savings Bank for fundraising purposes in the United States.

Saudi Arabia, one of the key US key allies supporting the Afghan jihad against the Soviet invasion was noted to have matched dollar-for-dollar the United States' financial support. The Saudis also adopted a policy of non-intervention towards jihad mobilization within their country and `Azzam admitted that Saudi citizens made up the largest group of foreign volunteers in Afghanistan. Other sources report that the Saudi Arabian national airline even gave 75% discounts on airfare tickets to Pakistan to support travelers to Afghanistan who wished to answer the call of mobilization.

Pakistan was another key ally in the Afghan jihad against the Soviet invasion, noted for being the main conduit of US assistance for the Afghans through its Inter-Services Intelligence agency. In addition, Pakistan initiated training for the fighters, provided safe havens, opened borders and mobilized Pakistanis for jihad. `Azzam held the Pakistani president at the time, Zia ul-Haq, in high regard, and described him as a staunch supporter willing to sacrifice his own life for the jihad in Afghanistan. It was also known that `Azzam operated his mobilization network from Peshawar in Pakistan.

All the above accounts point to a significant degree of tolerance, support and facilitation by the US and its allies towards mobilization efforts which also included the dissemination of militant ideology. Sageman wrote in *Understanding Terror Networks* that "The global salafi jihad is without doubt an indirect consequence of US involvement in the Afghan-Soviet war. Without the US' support for the jihad, the Soviets would probably not have withdrawn from Afghanistan. US covert action supported a traditional jihad, which included foreign Muslim volunteers."

Resource Mobilization

There is much more evidence to support the existence of non-ideational structural factors that contributed to the success of Muslim mobilization. However, the objective here is not to provide an exhaustive list but to sufficiently validate the role of such non-ideational structural factors in determining the success of the mobilization that were also validated by other researchers, particularly in the field of resource mobilization and political opportunity theory within the study of social movements.

Recognizing that political/collective action and mobilization does not occur in a vacuum, scholars of social movements have long acknowledged the role of structural factors in constraining and facilitating political action and in providing environments that are conducive (or otherwise) for successful mobilization. Specifically, many scholars of social movements have recognized the importance and the positive effects of powerful allies within political elites on the movement's mobilization process.

Resource mobilization, a theory within the study of social movements, states that the success of a movement's mobilization is critically dependent on the availability of resources and its effective use. One of the resources identified is the existence of powerful allies like the US and states that sponsor the movement's mobilization. Another theory within the study of social movements is political opportunity which holds that the success of a movement is due to the political opportunities available to it. Among many opportunities identified by the theory is the existence of powerful allies among the political elites that enable and facilitate mobilization.

The American invasion of Iraq in 2003 created a significant source of grievance exploited by radicals and extremists. Photo source: CNN
http://edition.cnn.com/CNN/Programs/anderson.cooper.360/blog/archives/2008_01_06_ac360_archive.html

Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy wrote in *Social Movements in an Organizational Society* that "Resource mobilization perspectives have stressed that resources and the structures of everyday life are important to understanding social movement processes, and the behavior of religious groups in this regard offer extensive illustrations of the point. Rather than stressing the role of religious belief in such facilitation, which was common earlier, [they indicated] how religious institutional structures may affect social movement trajectories." This is similar to the role played by existing Islamic groups like the Muslim World League and religious establishments in Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries that significantly helped facilitate mobilization efforts for the Afghan jihad.

Relevance

The past carries useful insights for understanding current phenomena. The successful mobilization during the Afghan jihad against the Soviets can therefore provide useful insight to the current attempt to mobilize Muslims for jihad in various conflict zones by Al Qaeda and its affiliates. Similar to the mobilizations in the past, the first factor – a precipitant event – has direct relevance. Studies of the process of radicalization point to the significance of the war in Iraq and, to a lesser extent, Afghanistan as precipitant events in radicalizing Muslim youth to join the transnational jihad effort and plot attacks against foreign military powers in both countries.

In *Inside Jihadism*, Farhad Khosrokhavar comes to such a conclusion after analyzing the spread of militant ideology among Muslims in the West. Khosrokhavar wrote that "It is clear from a review of extremist material and interviews that militants are seeking to appeal to young American and European Muslims by playing on their anger over the war in Iraq and the image of Islam under attack" and then argues that the withdrawal of

foreign military forces from Muslim countries will have a direct impact in mitigating the current threat of jihadists. According to him, quick resolution to the wars, while ensuring the stability of countries involved, was imperative to avoid security problems at local, regional and international levels.

Additionally, Marc Sageman argued in *Leaderless Jihad* that the removal of the American forces in Iraq, among other initiatives, was "absolutely essential… to counter Al Qaeda propaganda" and to extinguish "the sense of moral outrage" among Muslims. Furthermore, in 2006 the Pew Global Attitudes project *Islam and the West: Searching for Common Ground* surveyed Muslim perceptions of and attitudes to the image of the United States and its policies. Comparing the results from 2006 with the first survey data obtained in 2002, the project reported that its "surveys have documented the rise of anti-Americanism around the world, and especially in predominantly Muslim countries." Seven out of eight people surveyed viewed the United States unfavorably. Additionally, the project report noted that "Anti-Americanism is largely driven by aversion to United States policies such as *the war in Iraq*, the war on terrorism, and the United States support for Israel (emphasis mine)," and that "Anti-Americanism worsened in the Mideast in response to the war in Iraq – but it soared among Muslims in other parts of the world that previously did not view the United States poorly – notably in Indonesia and Nigeria."

In the same vein as what was seen during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and more recently Syria have created grievances among Muslims worldwide leading to opportunities to mobilize Muslims for jihad. When Muslim grievances meet with jihadist worldviews and frames, radicalization is facilitated. However, where the role of powerful allies is concerned, the current wave of attempted mobilization for jihad differs from the case of Afghanistan in the 1980s. The absence of this factor also made mobilization for jihad in Palestine is less successful before or after the Afghan jihad, a fact that was admitted by `Azzam who was a Palestinian and former resistance fighter himself.

The current mobilization lacks the strong and wide support of powerful allies such as the US and its allies, and this significantly limits its success due to the fear of terrorism that is associated with it. Unlike the past, countries all over the world today employ a repressive policy towards the current mobilization of Muslims for jihad to safeguard their national security or avoid international sanctions in an era where a norm against the state support of militant groups that carry out acts of terrorism has become entrenched. The perception of terrorism and security in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, facilitated by American efforts has led to various laws, regimes and conventions against terrorism at the international and state level. As a result, the current mobilization is not experiencing the same structural support enjoyed during the Soviet-Afghan war which significantly limits its effect and success.

However, the regimes put in place do not make the structural factor of powerful allies totally irrelevant. Limited but significant allies still exist to sustain jihad mobilization, perpetuate militant ideology and complicate its solution. In the war in Iraq, this structural factor existed in the form of neighboring states with vested interests in opposing the US that provided direct or indirect support to jihadist groups operating in Iraq. Direct support included provision of training, finance, materials, safe havens and volunteers for jihadist groups, while indirect support was in the form of interference in the internal affairs of Iraq in order to affect instability and creating permissive environments for jihadist groups to operate.

One important state, in this regard, is Iran as observed by many researchers. As for

Afghanistan, these structures are in the form of elements within the Pakistani government and military, tribal societies bordering Afghanistan and radical religious institutions. Perceiving itself to be encircled by the US from Iraq and Afghanistan located on its western and eastern borders, Iran has been providing support to insurgents and militant groups operating in both countries so as to inflict harm on the US and its allies. Its geostrategic ambition to be a major power in the region also means that it would seek to be actively involved in both countries with the intent of shaping their future. Admittedly, Shiite Iran has no love for Sunni militant groups in Iraq and Afghanistan; notwithstanding this, its pragmatism, as exemplified by its support of Hamas and its meddling in the affairs of both countries with the aim of undermining the coalition forces, did contribute to a permissive environment for jihadist groups to sustain their struggle and survive.

Conclusion

Based on the successful mobilization of Muslims for jihad during Soviet-Afghan war, it can be concluded that mobilization is not purely the result of ideational factors. The effects of ideational factors were also compounded due to non-ideational structural factors that contributed to capture Muslims' sympathy and create a permissive environment to effect mobilization for jihad in Afghanistan and the proliferation of militant jihad. Some of the key consequences of this were the arrival of thousands of non-Afghan volunteers for jihad who were then exposed to militant ideology, the propagation of militant ideology to the Muslim masses through public talks at mosques, organizations and conferences, and the circulation of print, audio and video materials, and lastly the raising of millions of dollars that were partially used for ideological propagation and mobilization on a large scale.

Prolonged war in Iraq and Afghanistan with the presence of foreign military forces as well as civil war in Syria between Syrian government forces and Free Syrian Army fighters, and the continued existence of structural factors will limit the effect of any attempt to counter and delegitimize militant ideology that seeks to mobilize Muslims for jihad. Counter-ideology, despite its importance and centrality in counterterrorism strategy, is not and cannot be the silver bullet against the current mobilization trend – its success and effectiveness are dependent on other aspects of state policies, which do not only pertain to the counterterrorism domain, but also address foreign policy and international politics.

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From Radicalization to De-Radicalization:
The Case of Pakistan

Saba Noor

De-radicalization efforts in Pakistan have shown promise, but must go further in engaging families as well as the communities that radicals and extremists belong to.

In the years since 9/11, Pakistan has shown an increased vulnerability to radicalization, beginning with its support of US efforts to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that was resented by Islamist extremists. State policies, including the concept of "Enlightened Moderation" coined by former President Pervez Musharraf, aggravated a wave of religious radicalization that has been gaining momentum since the 1980s when former President General Zia-ul-Haq initiated policies to Islamize Pakistan. The mishandling of the 2007 Lal Mosque incident also provided an opportunity for militant groups to open a new front against the Pakistani government and its armed forces. Incidents of suicide terrorism increased sharply after several hundred religious seminary students, both male and female, were killed during the week-long military operation at the Lal Mosque. Till today, the incident remains a central factor contributing to extremist Islamist radicalization in Pakistani society.

The growth of religious radicalization in Pakistan is particularly evident in the rising number of sectarian clashes. From January 2012 to June 2013, there were 203 incidents of sectarian violence in which 717 people, including 635 members of the Shia community, were killed and 1,800 were injured. A detailed factsheet issued by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) indicate that for this period, not only Shias, but other religious minorities were also targeted by radicals and extremists. Around 126 incidents were reported in which radical groups targeted various religious minorities including Christians, Ahmadis, Hindus and Sikhs. There have been other indications of the severity of religious radicalization as well. They include the killing of Salman Taseer, the

The 2007 Lal Mosque incident remains a factor contributing to religious radicalization in Pakistani society today.

Photo source: in.com
http://www.in.com/photogallery/10-horrific-terrorist-acts-since-911-20505377.html

Sabaoon Center for Rehabilitation, Swat Valley.

Photo source: BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/ newsbeat/12521626

former Governor of Punjab, in 2011 by his bodyguard in reaction to his comments on amendments to blasphemy laws, assassinations of the leaders of secular political parties, the attempt on the life of Malala Yousafzai, a young education activist, in 2012 and attacks on girls' schools in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province.

De-radicalization Programs in Pakistan

Pakistan's armed forces led the way in introducing de-radicalization programs in conflict-hit areas to rehabilitate and reintegrate detainees. De-Radicalization and Emancipation Programs (DREPs) got underway first in various parts of the Swat Valley, where the armed forces quelled a violent insurgency by extremist Islamist militant groups in 2009. Most de-radicalization programs are now run by civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with the close cooperation of the armed forces. It is estimated that over a hundred CSOs are working at different on-site de-radicalization and rehabilitation programs all over Pakistan. In addition to the DREPs, the Madrasah Enhancement Project (MEP) and Pakistan Institute of National Affairs (PINA) programs are active in carrying out training

workshops for religious teachers and *khateeb* (individuals who deliver sermons in a mosque). The main objective of such training programs is to promote religious tolerance, spur inter-faith dialogue and establish moderate religious seminaries to provide counter-narratives against extremist Islamist ideology.

Swat Valley

The Pakistan armed forces established the Sabaoon Center for Rehabilitation in September 2009 after a successful military operation in Barikot, Swat. The program at Sabaoon aimed to de-radicalize, rehabilitate and reintegrate youth aged 12 to 17 who had been involved with militant groups. It was eventually handed over to Hum Pakistan Foundation (HPF), an umbrella organization of Pakistani CSOs and NGOs. From 2009 to 2010, Sabaoon enrolled 184 youngsters who were formerly trained by militants for suicide bombing into an eighteen month-long program. The program had four components including formal education, vocational training, counseling and therapy. It also included a social module to discuss social issues and hold sessions with the rehabilitees' families.

Rastoon, another DREP initiated in Barikot along similar lines targeted youth aged 16 to 25

instead, while the Sparley DREP focused on adult detainees. It included an initiative to provide financial assistance and vocational training to families of the detainees. Under the Mishal program, the Pakistani armed forces runs two centers, one in Paithom, Swat and the other in Barikot. In this program, participants undergo extensive religious rehabilitation and vocational training. Classes are run to train rehabilitees to become mechanics, electricians, tailors, welders, appliance repairmen or carpenters. The program participants are also taught basic IT skills from word processing to creating spreadsheets. The program issues the rehabilitees certificates for successful completion of these courses, thus providing them with a qualification.

Punjab Province

A joint de-radicalization program of Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) Punjab and Technical Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) was launched by the Punjab government in 2011. The program followed a three-pronged strategy of prevention, rehabilitation and after-care. The preventive aspect of the program was supported by the Punjab government taking steps to engage in surveillance of religious seminaries identified as posing a threat by spreading radical and extremist ideology. Most of the religious seminaries located in Lahore, Jhang, Bahawalpur, Multan, Rawalpindi and Dera Ghazi Khan were put under close observation due to suspected linkages with sectarian militant groups. Furthermore, the police were tasked to focus on investigating sources of funding for all banned militant groups and take action under Section 16 of the Maintenance of Public Order ordinance (16 MPO) to constrain their financial support.

The four to six month-long CTD and TEVTA program includes psychological assessment, religious rehabilitation by moderate clerics and vocational training. The program has also provides financial assistance to beneficiaries so they can support their families while participating in the rehabilitation program. The Punjab government gave the program's participants Rs. 500 per month (approximately US$5) as an allowance and provided a Rs. 30,000 (approximately US$300) interest-free loan to the individuals that successfully completed the program to support their livelihood. Thus far, 311 individuals have gone through the program and 231 former militants have been selected from 15 different locations in the Punjab province for the fourth batch.

Rehabilitees learning electronics at Mishal De-radicalization Center.

Photo credit: Reuters
http://forpakistan.org/fpdata/swat-gets-a-re-de-radicalization-center/

Limitations

The scope of de-radicalization programs in Pakistan is often limited, with programs usually confined to individuals in post-conflict scenarios. Many programs also fail to include preventive and pre-emptive components of de-radicalization as part of their overall strategy. While the de-radicalization program run by the Punjab government showed some initiative in this regard by engaging in surveillance of radicals and extremists, this measure was confined to religious seminaries. Data collected during DREPs, however, reveal that most of young militants who were trained to carry out suicide bombings came from mainstream schools.

To some extent, all de-radicalization programs in Pakistan pay attention to the role of moderate clerics holding religious classes for the detainees. DREP programs in Barikot make effective use of Islamic re-education to create a contrast with the ideology employed by militant groups seeking to radicalize youth. However, the effectiveness of religious rehabilitation is difficult to gauge without individualized assessment. In this regard, the Singapore model provides a useful precedent since it employed one-on-one discussion sessions between clerics and detainees that were supported by detailed psychological assessments. Furthermore, such interaction can also help moderate clerics find out the key issues and ideas motivating the radicalization of youth in order to improve counter-narratives seeking to prevent the growth of radicalization in Pakistani society.

Family engagement is one aspect that has been relatively ignored in most de-radicalization programs in Pakistan. Data collected by the Sabaoon program on young suicide bombers reveals cases in which families gave up their children to militant groups for monetary compensation of approximately US$90. Though some programs do engage the families of detainees for counseling sessions, on its own this measure is inadequate. There is a need to define a common plan to extend the de-radicalization process to cover the families of detainees as well. The Saudi program is a model that can be considered here. It involved detainees' families in the de-radicalization process by introducing a measure of accountability should the de-radicalization program participant return to violence.

Rehabilitation and de-radicalization is not an end in itself. It is only one way to counter the terrorist threat and limit its sphere of influence. De-radicalization is inherently a long-term process which cannot be achieved in few months or years. It requires building a high level of expertise through experience and continuity to succeed. Radicalization is perhaps the greatest challenge currently faced by Pakistan and needs a definitive state policy to ensure the role of the government at all levels is more effective.

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MODERATION STUDIES PROGRAM

In late 2012, ICPVTR introduced its newest initiative, the Moderation Studies Program. The program's objective is to promote and cultivate moderation in society as a moral barrier against extremist ideas.

The program's key activities include: conducting interdisciplinary and multi-perspective study on the concept of moderation, assessing best approaches to promoting moderation and socializing ideas of moderation. The Moderation Studies Program has also conducted research on representations of moderation in Islam, as well as defining Islamic moderation and its attributes.

Alternative Perspectives on the Radicalization of Home-grown and "Leaderless" Terrorists

Vikram Rajakumar

Two theories used to explain criminal behavior are adapted here to provide an alternative means of understanding the radicalization of home-grown and "leaderless" terrorists.

Radicalization is a complex issue influenced by regional and country characteristics and dynamics as well as individual circumstances. However, another way of understanding the radicalization process of home-grown and "leaderless" terrorists could involve the use of theories that explain criminal behavior. Two such theories are discussed here – Strain Theory and Differential Association Theory – with the aim of exploring how they can improve our understanding of radicalization in order to take better preventive action as well as design more suitable de-radicalization or disengagement programs.

Home-grown terrorists usually refer to individuals that are citizens or residents of the country they carry out acts of violence against. They may draw resources, expertise and leadership from external terrorist groups and networks, but this is not an essential characteristic as home-grown terrorists can also be "leaderless." Leaderless terrorists usually have no connection to external terrorist groups or networks. They are individuals that are self-radicalized, typically through the Internet, and carry out attacks independently.

The radicalization process of home-grown and leaderless terrorists is not readily explained by existing models and theories. However, in order to develop effective preventive action against the emergence of such terrorists, their radicalization process must be thoroughly understood. In light of this, Strain Theory and Differential Association Theory, which originally seek to explain the

causes of criminal behavior, are adapted here to provide an alternative perspective.

Strain Theory

Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory implies that strain is caused by a failure to achieve certain material goals. There are three parts to this: 1) the failure to achieve positively valued goods, 2) the removal of positively valued stimuli, and 3) the presentation of negative stimuli. Agnew acknowledges that individuals have varying abilities to cope with stress, peer influence, past experiences, socio-economic status and financial circumstances. Along with these, ethnic minority status and religious, cultural and linguistic differences between an individual and his peers will create strain on an individual in one way or another.

For instance, when an individual's socio-economic status or discrimination due to being an ethnic or religious minority limits his or her ability to attain a college degree, this can reduce their opportunities to secure a well-paying job, which in turn affects whether they can realize their material desires. However these materialistic desires do not cease to exist even though they cannot be achieved, and strain occurs on the individual to achieve them at some point. One possible way for individuals to resolve this strain is to circumvent the limits on their socio-economic situation and status as a discriminated ethnic or religious minority through criminal means. This encapsulates Agnew's

assertion that the compulsion to commit a crime is a result of social strain. The same concept can be used to explain one part of home-grown terrorism involving leaderless, self-radicalized terrorists. A well-known example is that of Timothy McVeigh, nicknamed the Oklahoma Bomber. When the Oklahoma City bombing occurred in 1995, one of the immediate questions that arose was how did a former soldier who had served a tour of duty in Iraq turn into a home-grown terrorist?

Since young, McVeigh had a fascination for guns and the survivalist movement, which turned into obsessions by the time he was in junior high school. He joined the US military partly to satisfy his passion for weapons and survivalist behavior, and partly out of frustration with a lack of employment opportunities. Having access to a number of weapons and a steady income was a positive stimulus to McVeigh. After his tour in Iraq during the first Gulf War, however, McVeigh was affected by failing to realize his goal of entering the US Special Forces. Furthermore, he also experienced removal of positive stimuli in the form of his friends in the military leaving for civilian life and the short conclusion of the Gulf War which robbed him of the chance to see extensive combat.

After McVeigh left the military at the end of 1991, he developed anti-government sentiments. He confided his fears about the government taking away his personal collection of weapons and published letters in local newspapers claiming that America was in decline. The presidency of Bill Clinton, which saw a campaign for gun control, presented a further removal of positive stimulus given McVeigh's obsession with guns and his odd jobs in the gun show circuit.

However, from McVeigh's own statements regarding why he carried out the Oklahoma City bombing, there were two major negative stimuli

which combined with his anti-government sentiment and finally motivated him to carry out the attack. First, the shootout in August 1992 between federal agents and survivalist Randy Weaver, in which Weaver's wife and son were killed and second, the April 1993 siege at Waco in Texas during which members of a Christian sect were killed in a raid by federal authorities.

McVeigh's example is thus a useful indicator of Strain Theory's value in explaining the push and pull factors involved in the radicalization of leaderless home-grown terrorists. All three indicators of the theory – the failure to achieve positively valued goods, the removal of positively valued stimuli and the presentation of negative stimuli – are seen in this case.

Differential Association Theory

Edwin Sutherland's Theory of Differential Association explains crime as a function of a learning process that could affect any individual from any background. The first principle of the theory states that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with other persons. Although this seems an obvious fact, the theory elaborates that criminal behavior is learned through intimate interactions within personal groups. Differential association may vary in frequency, duration and intensity. The extent to which criminal behavior is learned thus depends on how it is reinforced through the interactions that take place in personal groups.

The same is also true of terrorist behavior. A case study that can be used to illustrate this is that of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, one of the two brothers responsible for the Boston bombings in April 2013. In the year prior to carrying out the Boston bombing, Tamerlan Tsarnaev was reported to have spent six months in Dagestan, located in the North Caucasus region of Russia. During his time there, it is believed he came into contact with Dagestani militants during frequent interactions at a radical mosque. Furthermore,

Tamerlan Tsarnaev carried out the Boston bombings with his brother Dzokhar in April 2013.

Photo credit: Barcroft
http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/tamerlan-tsarnaev-boston-bombing-suspect-1842271

Tamerlan was actively engaged in online contact with other self-radicalized individuals such as William Plotnikov, a Russian-born Canadian who returned to Dagestan in 2010 to engage armed jihad.

Another important aspect that Sutherland identifies is the de-sensitization of individuals to criminal behavior itself. When criminal behavior is constantly discussed and idolized within a personal group, its legitimacy begins to shift. An illegitimate act can attain the status of perceived legitimacy and in some instances, righteousness. This aspect of Differential Association theory is particularly useful to explain the radicalization process when an individual comes into contact with a group of people that shares strong views and opinions. In the case of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, it is believed that his time in Dagestan, as well as his exposure to radical and extremist websites and literature de-sensitized his view of committing violence.

Conclusion

Strain Theory and Differential Association Theory provide useful insight into the radicalization of home-grown and leaderless terrorists. Strain Theory helps explain the push and pull factors during the process of radicalization, as seen in the case of Timothy McVeigh, while Differential Association Theory can illustrate how the internet and intimate contact within personal groups facilitates leaderless terrorists' radicalization. As more literature continues to emerge in the study of radicalization, the theories explored here point to a useful synergy that can be developed in future between theories used to explain criminal behavior and theories that map out radicalization and seek to explain terrorist behavior.

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The website features content beyond the theme for each month's issue and also has an archive of past issues and contributors.

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For more information, please visit the website or send an email to ctta@ntu.edu.sg.

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The International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) is a specialist center within the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

ICPVTR conducts research, training, and outreach programs aimed at reducing the threat of politically motivated violence and at mitigating its effects on the international system.
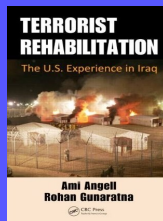
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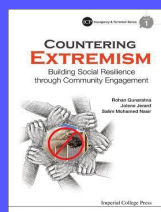
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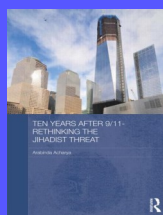
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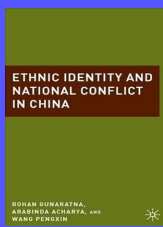Arabinda Acharya (Routledge, 2013)

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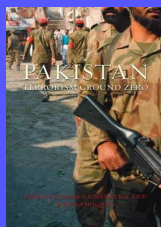
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