Lack of Quality Education Is the Key Driver for Violent Extremism.

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Introduction

Prior to the last two decades, researchers and politicians placed greater emphasis on implementing physical security measures as a means of preventing terrorism. However, since the turn of the century, the concepts of extremism and radicalism have become more prominent in discussions about terrorism, resulting in increased attention towards preventative measures aimed at dissuading individuals from adopting radical ideologies. Following the terrorist attacks of September 2001, there was a growing recognition that solely targeting individuals actively planning acts of terrorism was insufficient, and that policy strategies needed to also encompass those who might be predisposed to violent behavior in the future.[1]

To date, there has been no universal agreement on the definition of radicalization, extremism and terrorism. Due to the fact that studies on radicalization processes have mainly been conducted in a conceptual rather than empirical manner, there are various interpretations available. However, there is currently no clear and definitive

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[1] Brockhoff, Stefan, Tim Krieger, and Daniel Meierrieks. "Ties That do not Bind (Directly): The Education-Terrorism Nexus." CESifo Working Paper no. 3346, CESifo Group, Munich, Germany, 2011.

conceptualization that can be applied to all individuals or groups. In a narrow sense, violent radicalization refers to the acceptance of the use of force to achieve the stated objectives.[2]

By connecting radicalization to violent behavior, it is possible to discuss violent extremism. According to Pressman and Flockton[3], both concepts are frequently interlinked when it comes to the discourse production, they can be viewed as a range of different interlinked concepts. Individuals can become persuaded of radical ideas that are in opposition to the dominant culture in order to bring about political, religious, or social change without the need for force. However, it is also possible that some individuals view this use of force as a legally sanctioned means of effecting change; this is an example of violent extremism. As radicalised individuals who do not physically take part in acts of terrorism can play a prominent role in other domains, such as recruitment or indoctrination of others, the line between radicalism and violent extremism can be sometimes confusing but they are interlinked concepts.

Sieckelinck have argued that radicalization can be seen from a pedagogical perspective. According to his argument,

"…radicalization occurs when a child starts to develop political or religious ideas and actions that are fundamentally different from what is expected in the educational environment or mainstream society."[4]

This means that education plays a critical role in shaping individuals' beliefs and behaviors and can therefore be seen as one of the key places where radicaliza tion can be prevented or halted.

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[2] Veldhuis, T., & Staun, J. (2009). Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model. Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael The Hague: The Hague, The Netherlands

[3] Bressman, E.D. and Flockton, J. Calibrating Risk for Violent Political Extremists and Terrorists: The VERA 2 Structured Assessment. British Journal of Forensic Practice, vol. 14, 2012, pp. 237-251.

[4] Sieckelinck, S., Kaulingfreks, F., & De Winter, M. (2015). Neither villains nor victims: Towards an educational perspective on radicalisation. British Journal of Educational Studies, 63, 329-343

The focus on the pedagogical aspects of radicalization has led to a renewed interest in the education sector's role in preventing and combating radicalization. Indeed, as history has shown, education can have a significant impact on the behavior and beliefs of individuals, making it a crucial area for addressing radicalization.

This concept was validated in December 2015 with the release of the "Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" by the United Nations Secretary-General.[5] One of the methods to address the causes of radicalization is through quality education, which is highlighted in this plan as one of the most important preventative steps for people who join violent extremist groups.

In addition, Resolutions 2178 and 2250 of the United Nations Security Council emphasized the importance of a good education. The Executive Board of UNESCO has reaffirmed the value of education in preventing radicalization and violent extremism, as well as genocide, racism, religious intolerance, armed conflict, and crimes against humanity. It has been argued that education, whether it be provided in a formal school setting, through extracurricular activities and groups, or at home, is essential for strengthening social commitment processes and preventing violent extremism.

Hence, now it can be said that the role of education in preventing and combating radicalization is increasingly recognized by governments and organizations worldwide. Education plays a critical role in shaping individuals' beliefs and behaviors, making it a key area for addressing the drivers of radicalization.

Educational Constraints: Limited Access and Substandard Quality

Moser and Rodgers argued that violence and unequal access to education, employment, healthcare, and basic physical infrastructure are closely intertwined.[6] When severe

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[5]United Nations. "Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism." United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. United Nations, New York, NY, USA, 2015

[6] Moser, C. and Rodgers, D. "Change, Violence and Insecurity in Non-Conflict Situations." Overseas Development Institute, London, UK, 2005

inequality is widespread, it can lead to frustrated and excluded populations, which in turn increases the potential for individuals, especially young people, to participate in various forms of violence. Breidlid further reinforced this notion by suggesting that in Sudan, deep-rooted grievances about unequal access to educational systems are said to be one of the main reasons for the ongoing civil war. Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the government's failure to provide equitable and quality education for young individuals was a factor that led many of them to join rebel groups.[7]The issue of unequal access to education is not only limited to primary and secondary education, but it also seeps into university admission processes where discrimination is often prevalent. This was the case for Tamil youth in Sri Lanka, where discrimination was one of the main drivers behind their involvement in military movements in the North during the 1970s.[8]

However, the relationship between a country's educational level and the risk of conflict is not straightforward, as Shafiq and Sinno pointed out.[9] In fact, political and socioeconomic variables may have a mediating role in this connection. This means that in unfavorable political and socioeconomic circumstances, the likelihood of terrorist acts may increase. Conversely, in more favorable conditions, education may further reduce terrorism. A study of 133 countries over 23 years, showed that lower educational levels, such as primary education, lead to more terrorism in a cluster of less socioeconomically and politically institutionalized developing countries.[10] In contrast, higher levels of education, such as university education, reduce domestic terrorism in countries with more favorable conditions.

Overall, the evidence suggests that unequal access to education, employment, healthcare, and basic physical infrastructure is a major contributing factor to violence and conflict.

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[7] Peters, K. and Richards, P. "'Why We Fight': Voices of Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone." Africa 68 (1998): 183-210

[8] Hilker, L.M. and Fraser, E. "Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States." Social Development Direct 30 (2009): 1-50.

[9] Shafiq, N.M. and Sinno, A.H. "Education, Income, and Support for Suicide Bombings: Evidence from Six Muslim Countries." Journal of Conflict Resolution 54 (2010): 146-178

[10] Brockhoff, S., Krieger, T., and Meierriecks, D. "Great Expectations and Hard Times: The (Nontrivial) Impact of Education on Domestic Terrorism." CESifo Working Paper no. 3817; CESifo Group: Munich, Germany, 2012.

The relationship between education and violence is complex, and the role of political and socioeconomic factors must be considered in any attempt to mitigate the risk of conflict.

Martin-Rayo's research highlights the crucial role of education in shaping the attitudes and beliefs of young individuals, particularly in relation to radicalization. He argues that access to quality education can significantly reduce the risk of individuals being swayed by extremist ideologies and engaging in violent activities.[11]

Specifically, Martin-Rayo points to the case of Somali refugees living in Kharaz, Yemen, who have faced various challenges in accessing quality education. Factors such as language barriers, corrupt payments, and violence directed at Somali students have led to institutionalized discrimination in the education system.

As a result of these obstacles, some Somali students have expressed an interest in joining extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda upon graduating from school. However, Martin-Rayo suggests that providing quality education to these individuals can have a positive impact on their attitudes towards violence and reduce their susceptibility to ideological manipulation.

Martin-Rayo's argument underscores the importance of providing quality education to young individuals as a means of reducing the risk of radicalization and promoting positive attitudes towards non-violent means of addressing grievances. By addressing the barriers that prevent individuals from accessing education, policymakers can help promote social cohesion and prevent the spread of extremist ideologies.

Quality of Education and Violent Extremism-In the Context of Pakistan

The educational system in Pakistan is not meeting the expectations of young individuals due to a mismatch between the style of education in state schools and madrasas and the

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[11] Martin-Rayo, F. "Countering Radicalization in Refugee Camps: How Education Can Help Defeat AQAP." The Dubai Initiative, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Dubai School of Government (DSG) and the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS): Cambridge, MA, USA, 2011

skills required to succeed in practical settings.[12] According to the authors, state schools and madrasas in Pakistan emphasize rote memorization and theoretical learning rather than practical skills development. As a result, young individuals often enter the job market without the necessary skills to meet the expectations that have been raised by their educational experience.[13]

The authors further argue that this mismatch between expectations and skills has serious consequences for both the individuals and the broader society. For young individuals, it can lead to frustration, disillusionment, and a lack of confidence in their abilities. This, in turn, can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and marginalization, which may make them more vulnerable to extremist ideologies.

On a broader scale, the mismatch between expectations and skills can have economic and social consequences. The lack of skilled workers can hinder economic growth and development, as businesses are unable to find workers with the necessary skills to meet their needs. Additionally, young individuals who feel that their educational experience has not prepared them for the realities of the job market may be more likely to engage in criminal activities or turn to extremist groups for a sense of purpose and belonging.

Ladbury and Hussein's argument highlights the need for educational reforms in Pakistan that prioritize practical skills development and prepare young individuals for the demands of the job market.[14] By addressing this mismatch between expectations and skills, policymakers can promote economic growth, social stability, and reduce the risk of radicalization and extremism among young individuals.

The issue of radicalization in Pakistani society is complex and multifaceted. There are undoubtedly a multitude of factors that have contributed to the spread of extremism and

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[12] Ladbury, S.; Hussein, M. Developing the Evidence Base for Hypotheses on Extremism and Radicalisation in Pakistan; Independent Report to DFID; DFID: London, UK, April 2008.
[13] Ladbury, S.; Hussein, M. Developing the Evidence Base for Hypotheses on Extremism and Radicalisation in Pakistan; Independent Report to DFID; DFID: London, UK, April 2008.
[14] Ladbury, S. and Hussein, M. "Developing the Evidence Base for Hypotheses on Extremism and Radicalisation in Pakistan; Independent Report to DFID." DFID: London, UK, April 2008.

radicalism in the country, including geopolitical and socio-economic factors, as well as religious and ideological ones. It is difficult to isolate a single factor that has been predominantly responsible for this phenomenon, which has taken root over a period of time.

However, despite the many factors at play, the education system in Pakistan is often cited as a primary cause of the spread of radicalization in the country. The education system in Pakistan has been criticized for its divisive and inefficient nature, which has led to a confused and directionless populace. The quality of education in Pakistan is generally considered to be poor, with inadequate resources and a lack of investment in education infrastructure. This has led to a situation where only a small segment of the population has access to quality education, while the majority is left with inadequate resources and poor-quality education.

Moreover, the curriculum and teaching methods in Pakistan's education system have been widely criticized for their narrow focus and lack of critical thinking. The curriculum in Pakistani schools and madrasas has been accused of promoting intolerance and hatred, particularly towards religious and ethnic minorities. Some of the textbooks used in Pakistani schools and madrasas have been found to contain biased and distorted views of history and politics, which often promote a narrow and extremist worldview.

The negative impact of the education system on Pakistani society is not limited to academic outcomes. Rather, the broader impact is on society as a whole, and on the outlooks and behaviors of its citizens. A poorly educated and disillusioned population can become vulnerable to extremist ideologies, [15] which offer simplistic and seductive solutions to complex problems. In contrast, a well-educated and empowered populace can critically evaluate extremist ideologies and resist their appeal.

The education system in Pakistan has been identified as a significant factor in the spread of radicalization in the country. The quality of education and the curriculum in Pakistani

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[15]Rahman, Tariq. "The Madrassah and the State of Pakistan." 2004.

schools and madrasas have been widely criticized for promoting intolerance and narrow-mindedness. Addressing the deficiencies in the education system can play a crucial role in building a cohesive and tolerant society in Pakistan.

Role of the Quality of Education that is being Provided

The quality of education and the content of curricula have been shown to significantly influence the risk of radicalization in young individuals. For example, during the Cold War, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded educational programs in refugee camps in Pakistan and Pakistani madrasas to combat the perceived security threat of communism and the Soviet Union. However, the distribution of more than 13 million textbooks, which contained hate-filled curriculum focused on the Soviets, led to the radicalization of a generation of young individuals in Afghan refugee camps and Pakistani madrasas.[16]

Similarly, in Rwanda, research has shown that the curricula and teaching methods smothered critical thinking and ultimately contributed to individuals' responses to the genocide. In 2015, allegations surfaced that five madrasas in Uganda were educating students to become extremists in support of a Congolese armed group attacking the African Union. These cases highlight the importance of considering the content of educational programs when addressing the risk of radicalization.

According to some scholars, the direct effect of education on radicalization depends on the content of the curricula and the values instilled in educational institutions. Macaluso argues that the solution to radicalization is not just education, but rather the quality of education provided. It is critical that students learn from a variety of disciplines and are open to different opinions in order to engage in intelligent and critical discussions and understand both domestic and international realities. Many scholars have supported this

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[16] Novelli, M. "Education and Countering Violent Extremism: Western Logics from South to North?" Comparative Education 47 (2017): 835-851

argument, emphasizing that the direct effect of education on radicalization depends on the content of the curricula and the values instilled in educational institutions.

Therefore, the quality and content of educational programs are crucial factors in preventing radicalization. Policymakers should focus on ensuring that curricula are designed to promote critical thinking and an understanding of diverse perspectives, rather than perpetuating hate or extremist ideologies. By doing so, they can promote social cohesion, tolerance, and a sense of belonging among young individuals, ultimately reducing the risk of radicalization and extremism.

The Correlation between Education and the Adoption of Radical Beliefs

As it is discussed above, Radicalization is a phenomenon that has gained global attention and no society seems to be immune to its effects. The extent to which radicalization has taken root varies from society to society, depending on several factors, such as socio-economic developments. Research suggests that if a society is well-educated, enlightened, and economically prosperous, the chances of extremism leading to militancy, radicalization, violence, and terrorism become proportionately lower. However, if a society is backward, under-developed, and illiterate, the threat of extremism becomes more pronounced.

The relationship between education, economic development, and radicalization is complex and multifaceted. Studies have shown that education plays a vital role in shaping individuals' outlooks and behavior, and it is an essential tool in preventing radicalization. Education helps in inculcating social and political responsibility, rooting out anti-social tendencies, and creating habits, instincts, and patterns of behavior that eliminate anti-social and selfish tendencies.

Furthermore, economic development also plays a crucial role in preventing radicalization. In societies where economic opportunities are scarce, individuals may become disillusioned, leading them to be susceptible to extremist ideologies. In contrast,

economic prosperity can provide individuals with a sense of purpose and hope, making them less likely to engage in radicalization.

The role of education in shaping the outlooks and behaviors of individuals cannot be understated. It is an essential component of any society's development and progress, as it seeks to instill a sense of social and political responsibility in its citizens. In Pakistan, the need for such training in citizenship is even greater, given the country's lack of political maturity and weak social values. Unfortunately, Pakistan has yet to develop an effective education system that can provide its citizens with the necessary skills and social conduct required for their employability and participation in civic life.

The Muslim system of education or we can say traditional/classical system of education in Pakistan aimed to produce pious and practicing Muslims, with the hope that their Islamic character would enable them to play a vital role in creating a moral society. However, a decline in social values has often led to political disintegration in the Islamic world. Radicalization, which is a manifestation of deviant and irrational behavior patterns, is a reflection of societal inadequacies in training citizens. It is generally understood as a process that leads to the increased use of violence to meet political ends. While many writers use the terms terrorism and radicalization interchangeably, conscientious writers prefer to use the term "radicalization" for current violent activities, as they are dissatisfied with the loaded nature of the term "terrorism."

Overall, education plays a crucial role in developing responsible citizens and creating a cohesive and harmonious society. However, in countries like Pakistan, where societal inadequacies persist and political maturity is lacking, the need for a well-organized and effective education system is even more pressing. It is only through conscious efforts and proper understanding of society and institutions that a society can create a responsible and well-functioning citizenry.

Policy Context

Preventing the Spread of Extremism in Indonesia: The Crucial Role of NGOs, Exemplified by the Wahid Foundation

In addition to the state's efforts, society can play a crucial role in preventing violent extremism. Non-governmental organizations can work in collaboration with government agencies to prevent or address terrorism. The involvement of society in preventing terrorism is highly significant because as people understand the destructive nature of terrorism, they are less likely to be swayed by extreme ideologies. Furthermore, the rejection of terrorism by society creates less space for it to flourish. In achieving this, socialization among people is a more attractive strategy than government-led vertical socialization.

Studies have shown that the primary cause for people's decision to join extremist groups, especially religion-based groups, is the injection of ideology, brainwashing, or doctrine. This doctrine can penetrate an individual's life when they reach a saturation point, which is often triggered by personal problems such as boredom with domestic life. To prevent saturation point from occurring in an individual's life, social bonds become a crucial supporting system, both online and offline, to prevent extremist doctrine from taking hold. Therefore, the role of non-governmental organizations in supporting social bonds becomes even more important.

Wahid Foundation is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that is playing an important role in preventing violent extremism in Indonesia.[17] It was established in 2004 by the former President of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid, under the name of Wahid Institute. The foundation's main aim is to disseminate the ideas of President Wahid, which emphasize Islam as a religion of peace that promotes tolerance and diversity, and

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[17] Achsin, M. Z., et al. "The Role of Non-Governmental Organization in Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: The Case of Wahid Foundation." Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, et al., Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, 2021, pp. 1-12.

to promote democratic values in Indonesia. The Wahid Foundation operates under the belief that violence and extremism have no place in a pluralistic society like Indonesia.

Since its inception, the Wahid Foundation has been actively involved in various initiatives to prevent violent extremism in Indonesia. It conducts research and analysis to better understand the root causes of extremism, develops and implements various educational programs to promote peace and tolerance, and engages with different communities to build trust and mutual respect. The foundation has also established partnerships with government agencies, civil society organizations, and international institutions to enhance its effectiveness in preventing violent extremism.[18]

Wahid Foundation has implemented a program called Sekolah Damai that targets the youth population within the community. This program is conducted in Indonesian public high schools located in East Java, Central Java, and West Java, and has been initiated in sixty schools with only twenty schools granted the official name and status of Sekolah Damai. The decision to utilize public high schools for Sekolah Damai's implementation is strategically advantageous for two main reasons. Firstly, youth mobilization in a resilient community is ideally rooted in peaceful and tolerant means, as opposed to violent extremism. Secondly, public high schools are seen as a strategic place where people from different communities can interact with one another, making them an ideal location for promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Libasut Taqwa, a staff member at Wahid Foundation, outlines three key criteria that are used to determine whether a public high school is fit to be officially recognized as Sekolah Damai.[19]

- The high school must have proper policies regarding extremism prevention, as active participation from school boards is crucial to the success of the program.

[18] Satria, A., Putri, P., Sari, N., and Adriana, R. "The Current State of Terrorism in Indonesia: Vulnerable Groups, Networks, and Responses." 2018, pp. 0-18.

[19] Achsin, M. Z., et al. "The Role of Non-Governmental Organization in Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: The Case of Wahid Foundation." Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, et al., Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, 2021, pp. 1-12

- A peaceful and tolerant environment must be established within the school, as members of the school community must actively participate in campaigns and acts towards tolerance.
- The values of tolerance and peace must be integrated into all elements of human interaction within the school, and into the learning materials taught to students. This way, the students can be equipped with the awareness and understanding of how those knowledges can be used for peaceful means, and contribute to the building of a resilient community in a constructive way.

Wahid Foundation recognizes the potential for youths to be mobilized into using their knowledge for wrongful means, and therefore this last criterion is seen as a way to complete the Sekolah Damai program. However, the foundation currently lacks the tools to evaluate whether or not the program is targeting the right people.

In addition to its efforts in preventing violent extremism, the Wahid Foundation has also been involved in promoting human rights, social justice, and sustainable development in Indonesia. It has been recognized both nationally and internationally for its contributions to promoting peace, democracy, and pluralism in Indonesia. Through its activities, the foundation has been able to reach out to different communities in Indonesia and has become a trusted voice in promoting a more peaceful and tolerant society.

The concept of Wahid Foundation's Sekolah Damai program can be applied to Pakistan to prevent violent extremism among its youth. Like Indonesia, Pakistan is a diverse country with people of different religions, cultures, and economic backgrounds. Therefore, public schools in Pakistan can also become a strategic place where students from different communities interact with one another and learn about tolerance and peaceful coexistence. To implement this program, the first step would be to ensure that public schools have proper policies regarding extremism prevention. The government of Pakistan can initiate this by partnering with organizations like Wahid Foundation to develop a comprehensive curriculum for schools that includes teachings of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The next step would be to create a peaceful and tolerant

environment within schools where students can participate in campaigns and activities aimed at promoting these values. Lastly, the quality of the teaching-learning process must be improved to integrate values of tolerance and peace into all elements of human interaction. Through this approach, Pakistani youths can be empowered to contribute constructively towards building a resilient community rooted in peaceful values, rather than becoming victims of violent extremism.

The Need for a Balanced Education System

In modern societies, states and governments have an obligation under international covenants and state laws to establish effective structures and systems to provide adequate education to their citizens. Education is considered to be the cornerstone of development, progress, and prosperity. In Pakistan, the government has uncountable times pledged to achieve a 100% literacy rate but this target has proved unattainable because of the lack of seriousness. Furthermore, it is essential that the education provided to citizens be balanced, catering to all three aspects of an individual's life, namely physical, intellectual, and spiritual. While the primary task of schools is to provide letters, character building is considered to be of utmost importance in modern education systems. Therefore, there is a need to develop an education system that can help develop a well-rounded personality of a student, citizens' skills, including clarity on the ideology of the state, domestic and global responsibilities, sense of justice, tolerance, and the capacity to accommodate differing views and perspectives, and requisite technical and occupational training that can help students find suitable employment in society upon completion of their studies.

Manzoor emphasizes to enhance the education system of Pakistan, there is a need to develop such an education system,[20] which may help develop:

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[20] Abbasi, Manzoor Ahmed. "Towards the De-radicalization of Pakistani Society: The Need for a Balanced and Progressive Education System."

- It is essential to cultivate a holistic personality in students that encompasses physical fitness, spiritual strength, and intellectual acuity. Such a well-rounded development of an individual not only benefits their personal growth but also contributes to their success in society.

- The education system must also focus on equipping students with the necessary skills to be active and responsible citizens, both domestically and globally. These skills include a clear understanding of the state's ideology, the ability to bear witness to justice, tolerance, and openness to different perspectives, and a broad outlook towards the world.

- Technical and occupational training is also crucial for students to achieve their goals and succeed in society. This training should be provided in a way that aligns with national aims and objectives and helps students find suitable employment opportunities upon graduation.

It is beyond the capability of governments in recent times to meet all socio-economic needs of citizens, particularly in countries with huge populations such as Pakistan, without the involvement of the private sector. Nevertheless, governments cannot relinquish their responsibilities in connection with policy-making and legislation, particularly in matters related to education. Education is such a crucial subject that the very survival of the nation depends on it. Therefore, it cannot be left to the whims of individuals to design the whole scheme of education without taking into account national aims and objectives, society's needs, and educational standards compared to other nations worldwide. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, policymakers have yet to come up with a cohesive and uniform system of education that can have sufficient private sector involvement, with all streams of education guided by common educational principles and ideals. Both madrasas and private schools functioning in every other street need to be effectively regulated and integrated into a well-structured national education system.

Improving Education Access and Quality to Prevent Violent Extremism in Developing Countries

Based on the findings of previous research, it is recommended that policies aimed at preventing violent extremism in developing countries should focus on improving access to education and its quality. Previous research has shown that young people who are not in school are at a greater risk of being radicalized and recruited into violent extremist groups or participating in criminal activities. Therefore, sufficient resources should be allocated to improve equal access to education.

Educational initiatives provide opportunities to create awareness about the recruitment strategies of extremist groups and can stimulate students to think about their future plans. Education must become a more attractive platform in comparison to other alternatives, such as involvement in violence.[21] In order to achieve this, education should be accessible for everyone, including the most marginalized populations.

However, it should also be noted that simply improving access to education may not be sufficient, as previous research has shown that well-educated youths also participate in violent extremist groups. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the quality of education is also improved. Education policies should focus on providing a balanced and progressive education system that emphasizes character building, citizens' skills, technical and occupational training, as well as critical thinking and problem-solving skills.This can be done by implementing such education policies in developing countries which should be aligned with national aims and objectives, needs of the society, and comparability of educational standards to other nations of the world. This can be achieved by developing a cohesive and uniform system of education that can effectively regulate and integrate all streams of education, including Madarrassas and private schools.[22]

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[21] Ahmar, Moonis. "The Challenge of Extremism in Pakistan: Are There Lessons to be Learnt from the Experience of Singapore?". IPRI Journal XI, no.2 (Summer 2011): 44.

[22] Fair, C. Christine. "The Madrassah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education." 2009, 36

Education Itself Is Not the Answer: It Needs To Be The Right Sort of Education

The statement "education itself is not the answer: it needs to be the right sort of education" highlights the significance of the type of education provided to young individuals in countering radicalization. Several researchers have emphasized the role of schools as a secure space where students can freely explore their ideas. Pratchett suggested that education can be effective in challenging extremist ideology if it promotes independent thinking and encourages individuals to question and challenge themselves and others.[23] This approach enables the introduction of different ideas to counter groupthink and potential radical views.

Education can also have a negative effect if school curricula exacerbate inequalities or raise unrealistic expectations, using them as a powerful tool to mobilize young individuals. Therefore, the educational setting should aim to provide a safe environment where students can express their ideals in a more inclusive and less rigid manner.

"As education has the ability to change values and attitudes, this can also contain a negative effect in which school curricula are used as powerful means to mobilize young individuals by exacerbating inequalities or raising unreal expectations. Therefore, it should be the aim of the educational setting to serve as a safe environment where students can find a more inclusive and less rigid expression for their ideals"[24]

Osler argued that in such an environment, sensitive political issues and ideals can be discussed without offending any person or group.[25]

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[23] Pratchett, L., Thorp, L., Wingfield, M., Lowndes, V., and Jabbar, R. "Preventing Support for Violent Extremism through Community Interventions: A Review of the Evidence-Rapid Evidence Assessment Full Final Report." Department for Communities and Local Government: London, UK, 2009

[24] Hilker, L.M. and Fraser, E. "Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States." Social Development Direct 30 (2009): 1-50.

[25] Osler, A. "Patriotism, Multiculturalism and Belonging: Political Discourse and the Teaching of History." Education Review 61 (2009): 85-100

To achieve this goal, educational policy should prioritize providing safe and inclusive learning environments that foster independent thinking, questioning, and the open exchange of ideas. Such an approach can help students develop critical thinking skills, enabling them to recognize and reject extremist narratives.

Discussion and Conclusion

The complex and multifaceted issue of radicalization in developing countries and the role of education in addressing this challenge.

One of the key takeaways from the entire research and discussion is that radicalization is a complex phenomenon that has deep roots in social, economic, and political factors. It is not simply a result of religious or ideological beliefs, but rather a combination of various factors such as poverty, discrimination, political instability, and lack of opportunities. Therefore, any effort to address radicalization must take into account these broader structural issues and address them in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

At the same time, the crucial role of education is important and can play a role in preventing and countering radicalization. Education can provide young individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and values to become active and engaged citizens who are capable of critical thinking, independent decision-making, and peaceful conflict resolution. It can also create a safe and inclusive space where young individuals can explore their ideas freely and engage in constructive dialogue with others.

Based on the analysis of the existing research and policy recommendations, some concrete recommendations for the education sector in developing countriescan be made.

- First, policymakers should prioritize equal access to education, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations. Research has shown that young individuals who are not in school are at greater risk of radicalization, recruitment into violent groups, or participation in criminal events. Therefore, education initiatives should provide opportunities to create awareness about the recruitment

strategies of extremist groups and stimulate students to think about their future plans.

- Second, education must be focused on promoting critical thinking and independent decision-making, rather than simply rote learning or memorization. Teachers should be trained to create a safe and inclusive learning environment where students can explore their ideas freely and engage in constructive dialogue with others. Moreover, education must be grounded in local cultural and social contexts and should incorporate the perspectives of diverse groups.

- Third, education should be part of a broader strategy that addresses the structural factors that contribute to radicalization. This may include policies and programs that address poverty, inequality, discrimination, political instability, and lack of opportunities. Education must be seen as a key component of a comprehensive and holistic approach to preventing and countering radicalization.

In conclusion, the issue of radicalization in developing countries is complex and multifaceted and requires a comprehensive and holistic approach that addresses the broader structural factors that contribute to it. Education can play a crucial role in preventing and countering radicalization, but it must be the right kind of education that promotes critical thinking, tolerance, and respect for diversity. Government must prioritize equal access to education, promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, and incorporate education into a broader strategy that addresses the root causes of radicalization. By doing so, a brighter future can be created for young individuals in developing countries and promote a more peaceful and stable environment for all.