

The Role of University Education in Confronting the Phenomenon of Terrorism and Promoting Belonging among Young People

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Abstract

This research investigates the influence of university programs on the battle against terrorism and the cultivation of a sense of belonging among young people. In this qualitative research, participants were interviewed and participated in a targeted Group Discussion with other stakeholders from the university programs as well as students themselves. According to the findings of the research, universities organize conferences to debate issues such as media and terrorism, which are effective in raising public awareness. The promotion of belonging happens when more material is made available via local colleges and as more students are involved in the program. Some significant areas, on the other hand, were still not covered and/or not launched by the various institutions.

Keywords : Terrorism, Self-Belonging, Youth.

INTRODUCTION

A deliberate effort is made to create a learning environment and process in which students actively develop their potential for religious spiritual strength, self-control, a distinctive personality and intelligence, a noble character, and the skills required by themselves, their communities, their countries, and their states. National education helps to build capabilities and form the character and culture of a dignified nation within the framework of teaching the country's life, to maximize the capacity of students to accomplish this goal (Rugh, 2002). A higher education program is a level of education beyond secondary school that includes diploma programs, undergraduate programs, master's programs, doctoral programs, professional programs, and specialty programs offered by academic institutions such as universities.

However, the emergence of radical views or what is known as radicalism among students presents a severe danger to the purposes of national education in general and the goals of education in Asir Region in particular, jeopardizing the goals of national education and education. When radicalism grows, students are often targeted as prospective targets, as part of a

young age still looking for their own identities (Rokhmanm et al., 2021; Sirry, 2020; Yusar, 2016). Students are not the only ones who may be influenced by radicals and movements; educators and education professionals must also be on the alert for them (Asroni, A2021). Radicalism is a notion or movement that advocates for social and political reform or renewal by violent or dramatic means, as well as extreme political ideas.

In general, radicals are described as intolerant, excessively fanatical, claiming to be the most correct, stigmatizing the west, carrying the Islamic caliphate and Islamic law, rejecting modernization and tending toward anarchism in their struggle for their ideology, appearing rigid and textual in their interpretation of verses and hadiths, and claiming to be the most correct (Demiralp, 2009; Khosrokhavar, 2009; Yusoff, 2010).

The circumstances and descriptions provided above indicate that it is vital to do a study on the strategy and function of universities in the Asir region to avoid the growth of extremism among students. Students are the educated young generation who represent the country's potential and promise as agents of future progress. They are also the future of the

nation. As a result, it is vital to lead and nurture a new generation that not only understands science and technology but also has a nationalistic mentality and spirit, as well as a feeling of ownership, that protects the unity and integrity of the country and state.

Methods

This investigation is qualitative. In this study, the law is seen as a manifestation of the symbolic meanings of social actors as manifested in the actions and interactions of community members, and the goal of this qualitative research is to reveal deep and meaningful meanings that have been hidden or obscured by the laws of the country. information about the subject of the inquiry and the informants As for this approach, specifically what is studied and researched is the extent to which universities in the Asir Region are involved in addressing radicalism movements among students, particularly the role of universities in addressing radicalism movements among students so that students are kept out of this movement, to be able to anticipate potential radicalism movements. In the end, he was able to develop measures for dealing with radicalism in the Asir Region, which was much appreciated.

The information was gathered via interviews and focus group discussions (focus Group Discussion). The data that has been obtained for this research will be processed via the use of data reduction, and data classification techniques, among others. In the data reduction step, the data is summarized, and themes and patterns are sought by focusing on the most important things and searching for them.

Results and Discussion

Radicalism Spread Pattern

The academic environment, no matter where it is located, is experiencing tremendous transformation. At the global level, the shift may be understood as a rise in the significance of a knowledge-based society, which is built on scientific discovery and technological innovation. To progress themselves and their organizations in an increasingly competitive world, individuals and businesses will need to

master the art of information acquisition and application (Bailes, 2015). For their attempts to improve themselves and their enterprises, this will be a crucial condition, as well as the required financial resources. To live and prosper in such a society, each and/or organization must constantly improve its knowledge and abilities.

For all levels of society to respond proactively to such conditions, it is essential that higher education institutions, as centers of excellence, reposition themselves in their external environments through carefully planned and meticulously executed internal restructuring efforts that are carefully evaluated and controlled in the spirit of continuous updating in countering terrorism (Ahmed et al., 2018; Malik et al., 2018).

With the fast advancement of science and technology from a philosophical standpoint, the concept of pragmatism-utilitarianism has grown in scope (Kellogg, 2018), as everything is increasingly seen through the lens of practical advantages and relevance to human existence. If we live in an ideal society, the objective of education is to help people grow via the transmission of culture, values, and standards, with little or no consideration for the practical repercussions of this education, particularly the economic consequences, on people's lives.

The emergence of radicalism and ideas, particularly religious radicalism, has harmed higher education, as well as other aspects of society. A large number of examples regarding the rise of radicalism and extremist ideas among students and members of the academic community have been reported in the media, and these cases should not be ignored as isolated incidents. As a result, efforts must be made to raise awareness among students and members of the academic community about the latest threats and dangers associated with the development of radical ideas and thoughts. This will obstruct the achievement of higher education's goals and pose a threat to national stability, as it has the potential to undermine national unity and thus national stability if it is not prevented.

From the results of the FGD, the youngsters in this group will gain information via several means, including mentoring, and will be exposed to political topics, which will implant cynicism in them about the current political system. Although his core philosophy was kept under wraps at first, he would finally reveal it

via something like an explanation later on. The objective of accepting someone's ideology would be carried out softly and discreetly, and we would gradually be led to it.

Finally, one may say that the process of radicalization begins with the extension of restricted fanaticism in terms of event comprehension, personal values, and religious convictions. Following that, an intensive approach was implemented through mentoring activities or small groups, until they truly believed and believed that what they were doing was correct and that their group was the only correct group, and considered all other groups to be wrong, heretical, or infidels, and eventually gave up their beliefs. Only once this condition is achieved will radicalism's understanding and inculcation begin to be absorbed, resulting in the formation of a radicalism movement, which in turn will result in the establishment of a terrorist movement.

The role and actions of universities in the Asir Region

Local institutions, such as King Khalid University, contribute significantly to the study of terrorism and the media via their frequent international conference programs. This symposium had a considerable impact on the literature, boosting knowledge of the role of social media in the spread of terrorism and improving public awareness of the subject. When it comes to terrorism, social media not only has a function to play, but it also has the potential to play a part in the phenomenon's evolution. Apart from functioning as a news source, social media may act as a catalyst and motivator for the growth of a problem, in this instance terrorism. Generalization: The first responsibility of the media, in general, is framing, which refers to the process by which the media, in this case, social media, wraps and distributes news to the general audience, also known as the community. Social media acts as a megaphone/amplifier for news, ensuring that it is spread widely. According to Blaker (2016), the media is critical to terrorists' efforts to create awareness about the issues they are fighting. Brian McNair said that fear is a kind of political communication that occurs beyond the bounds of constitutional standards. Terrorists want notoriety to permanently imprint their psychological aims on people who see them.

Terrorism's objectives are accomplished indirectly via news operations conducted through social media, which include terror campaigning and propagation, as well as political communication in the form of ideas or thoughts that "terrorists" strive to impart. In this context, social media has two opposing sides, namely the side of reporting and the side of expanding insight into the community, both of which contribute to the propagation of terror and political objectives. The dissemination of ideas and terror is facilitated by the spontaneous nature of social media. For instance, a bombing in an office building attracts a large audience who instinctively capture the event without considering the ramifications. When seen objectively, social media seems to play a relatively benign role in the propagation of ideology and terror. Terror is felt indirectly. However, there are times when public journalists seek financial benefit by reporting sensational news and garnering widespread attention, such as when terrorist incidents are reported.

It is also possible to disseminate fear purposefully, with the same objective in mind, namely the spread of terror and certain ideas or concepts. Terrorist groups are defined as those who take advantage of society's psychological dread and exploit it via violence. One example that is common social media realm is the sharing of videos portraying the terrorist organization ISIS committing acts of violence and atrocities, including murder, torture, and other human rights violations. As a consequence of the deliberate propagation of terror videos on social media, social media use is equipped with the purpose of having a psychological effect on society.

Social media use may also function as a stimulus for terrorist acts and the creation of terrorist phenomena. Occasionally, the broadcast of radicalism through social media in the form of videos or speeches acts as a spark for someone to act dangerously or anarchically in response to radicalism. The proliferation of fake news, or what is more often referred to as a "Hoax," also adds to the establishment of an axis for the conduct of terrorist acts, although on a lesser scale, such as sending death threats against particular persons or prominent figures.

In general, the majority of people consider a few issues when debating the role of social

media in terrorism, including psychological impacts and fear in society, as shown by the temporary closure of an area or environment in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist incident. In connection with the function of social media, the general public becomes increasingly aware of the threat they face via the dissemination of evidence of terrorist acts. Social media can also play a role in the commission of a terrorist act; in this case, the general public can be influenced by radicalizing thoughts, leading to an invitation to commit an act of terrorism, or, more commonly, they can spontaneously record the phenomenon without realizing the implications of indirectly spreading terror. However, there are times when public journalists seek financial benefit by publishing sensational news and garnering significant attention, such as when terrorist incidents are reported.

It is also possible to disseminate fear deliberately, with the same objective in mind, namely the spread of terror and certain ideas or concepts. Terrorist organizations are defined as those that exploit society's psychological dread and utilize violence to attain their goals. One example that is prominent in the social media realm is the broadcast of recordings portraying the terrorist organization ISIS committing acts of violence and atrocities, such as murder, torture, and other human rights violations. As a consequence of the deliberate propagation of terror videos on social media, social media use is equipped with the purpose of having a psychological effect on society.

Thus, in light of the aforementioned understandings, the local university has assumed a strategic and vital role as a repository of information against terrorism.

What can be extended by the university?

At this point, the most rational question to ask is how the programs affect students? Where are the provisions of literature holistically spread out to all students?

Civic Education in the Locals University

Citizenship Education (CE) has been made mandatory in Saudi Arabia's Asir region, where it has been highlighted as a critical component of the battle against terrorism. Saudi Arabia's educational system aims to educate people so they to participate in the country's creation and instill a sense of duty to serve and maintain it. Additionally, this course is aimed at those

interested in learning about and contributing to the challenges confronting their community. It seems as if the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Citizenship Education (CE) curriculum does not adequately handle the subject of domestic terrorism. However, it was observed that CE in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) focuses on national concerns and students' roles in their communities, rather than on global issues, citizens' rights, or the international level (Alharbi, 2017). This is a glaring omission from the curriculum.

According to the interview results, the university's CE course does not include any of the hosted content from the conference mentioned during the interview. As a result, it is more likely than not that CE has been ineffective in educating pupils about terrorism and its ideology. When a group agrees to adopt a new standard or value, it is vital to proceed with caution and thoroughness (Yahya, 2020; Mumby, 1989). Additionally, an accumulating body of evidence suggests that Saudi Arabia's curriculum, especially its emphasis on combating extremist ideology, should be revised (See, for example, Aldubyan, 2013; Alharbi, 2015; Al-Malki, 2016; Alharbi, 2017; Hamdan Alghamdi, 2020). CE, when used to its best capacity, maybe an excellent platform for promoting self-belonging among teenagers, as well as an excellent method for countering extremism.

Students Activity

Leaders in higher education are responsible for monitoring every activity carried out by students, including internal as well as external activities, enforcing strict sanctions against students who violate campus rules, and the administrators of student organizations are technically responsible for all student activities that take place outside of lecture hours.

According to the interview results, institutions do provide freedom and even cover for their students' activities. Although there is less evidence of such conversations occurring inside student groups, as highlighted during the interview, the presence of such activity must be one of the causes alerting the university.

The development of radical ideology among students does not begin with a confrontation with someone's religious vision or point of view, but rather with the raising of

provocative questions that challenge the individual's convictions (Syam et al., 2020; Ummah, 2020; Zhussipbek, 2013; Gasa et al., 2020). Additionally, since the subject is so sensitive, students may opt to keep quiet in other situations and, maybe, during this ideological argument.

Conclusion

At the end of the day, this research illustrates a pattern in which radical ideology emerges from a provocative dialogue that calls into question students' beliefs and practices. The university's involvement in the Asir region has been critical, and it has given a vital platform for countering terrorism in the region. However, it is also discovered that the institution has not taken use of the existing mechanism since there is no national curriculum in place to promote students' feeling of belonging via Citizenship Education, as was the case before. A more in-depth investigation is required to analyze not just students and university stakeholders, but also how this impacts the overwhelming majority of society in the area, as well.

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