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Defining the Phenomenon of Radicalization in Pakistan

Introduction

The commonly accepted definitions of radicalism and radicalization are borrowed from Western scholars and are generally believed to be not as relevant in the Pakistani context. These definitions reflect the Western authors' respective environments and perspectives. In view of this, PIPS started a series of sessions in September 2008, besides conducting interviews with scholars from various disciplines. The sessions are still in progress. The objective is to appropriately draw an outline of the phenomenon of radicalization in Pakistan's context.

While exploring the subject through holding sessions and interviews, it was noted that the speakers generally proceeded directly to explaining the causes and factors that contribute to radicalization, instead of discussing definitional issues to any considerable extent. A serious effort to address the definitional aspects of the phenomenon continues to lack in the presentations made by the speakers as well as in interviewees' responses. The presentations have helped to broaden the scope of the discourse but definitional aspects have not been focused on to the extent desired. To expand the debate, two Western scholars were also invited who addressed the subject in the global context with an emphasis on Western states and societies. Summarized versions of the sessions and interviews held so far are being furnished in the following pages.[i]

Definition

Almost all speakers alluded to the difficulty in achieving consensus definitions for social phenomena and said that radicalization was no exception. It was agreed that radicalization is not necessarily a religious phenomenon. Rais opined that the definitions by Prince and the like serve the purpose.[ii] On the other hand, Iqbal and Akhlaq were of the view that Western definitions of the phenomenon do not help. Almost all of the speakers agreed that radicalization is a neutral term, without negative or positive connotations. It was also agreed that radicals want to bring change in society.

Mumtaz emphasized that identifying a person as a moderate or a radical depended on the political context or on one's ideological perspective. He differed with Roy's definition of Muslim radicalism. Islam and Dolnik identified it as a group phenomenon. Islam described terrorism and radicalization as one. Sufi shed light on the legal aspects of the phenomenon with a focus on international law and treaties. He called radicalization a mindset of deviation from law.

Factors

Most of the speakers observed that the major causes of the phenomenon are political. Some others, however, were of the view that political and religious causes and motives are interconnected. Sham asserted that there are no religious factors involved at all. Rais and Islam talked about Muslim states while elaborating the factors of radicalization in the Muslim world. Rais pointed out that Muslim States had failed to perform their fundamental functions in the post-colonial period. Islam alluded to the powerlessness of Muslim States as a source of increased frustration among certain groups in the Muslim world. Such groups are not content with the prevailing world order under which none of the Muslim States is among the major international powers.

Hoodbhoy also identified *mullas* as a factor. Other factors mentioned by more than one scholar included deprivation (Rahman, Javed, Akhlaq and Islam), lack of justice (Rahman, Javed and Hoodbhoy), inequality (Rais and Sham), ignorance (Sham and Yad), and poverty (Hoodbhoy and Yad). Factors mentioned by only one speaker included absence of constitutional means and human freedom, a biased social structure and weak law and order (Rais); globalization, society's vengeful attitudes, unjust policies of the government, unjust use of power (Rahman); oppression (Javed); xenophobia, suffocation and confusion (Akhlaq); feelings of hatred, helplessness and hopelessness (Islam); cultural problems and financial issues (Sham); illiteracy (Yad); and indoctrination in schools (Hoodbhoy).

Rahman elaborated radicalization in the historical perspective, focusing on the Indian Subcontinent.

A. Sessions

Rasul Bakhsh Rais

Professor of Political Science at School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Lahore University of Management Sciences

Absence of constitutional means, human freedom, unequal distribution of wealth, a biased social structure and a fragile law and order situation produce radical movements in the developing or developed societies. The following points seem to be important:

1. Radicalism primarily rejects the existing means of political participation and finds the prevailing social, economic and political institutions inadequate to address the grievances of the society.
2. Radicals and radicalism are about fundamental structural change in all spheres of societal life, including political and economic relations and social hierarchies.
3. Radicalism popularizes new ideologies, questions the legitimacy and relevance of the old ones and believes that existing ideologies have no answer to contemporary problems.
4. Radicalism creates a myth about change as a constructive and progressive term.

Communism or Marxism is considered a radical ideology because it questions the legitimacy and advocacy of existing institutions. Marxism and anarchism justify violent means to topple the existing system. Islamic religious movements should be examined very closely as we cannot lump all of them together. Radical groups always have a radical ideology or agenda.

The post-colonial Muslim States failed to perform their fundamental functions i.e. ensuring justice, social development, rule of law, security and safety of the individuals, human freedoms and constitutional values and institutions.

In addition, social and economic forces play a vital role in the spread of radicalization in Muslim countries. When people are not treated in the same way at the social level and lack the opportunities available to the elite, they are either forced to accept their deprivation as their fate or hold the system responsible for it. When they revolt against the system they are declared radicals by the elite.

Radicalization is a neutral term. Conservatives do not accept radicalism because it challenges the existing institutions. Although the era of radical or revolutionary change is history now, such a change can take place when all other avenues of political participation are closed. The only solution to the existing chaos is a non-violent democratic struggle.

Tariq Rahman

Distinguished National Professor & Director National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

Radicalism is not necessarily a religious phenomenon. It can occur in any ideological or secular leaning. It is secular. In fact, when Israel was created there was a group which was similarly indulging in terrorism, placing bombs, threatening the British and other forces to accept their demands. They practiced terrorism which culminated in the creation of Israel.

The native population responded in three ways to the British colonization of India.

a) Confrontation
b) Resignation and withdrawal
c) Cooperation

The first native response to colonialism was confrontation with the British colonial power starting in 1831. It was a precursor to any future action by the native population, even against the military.

The second response was resignation and withdrawal. Some people went to madrassas in a bid to preserve the past. In a way, madrassas were and are seen as a source of preservation of the past and of a distinct identity. That is why one sees that the madrassa has strong emotional attachment with the Dars-e-Nizami, the basic syllabus followed by the vast majority of madrassas in South Asia. Some of the Dars-e-Nazami texts date back to the thirteenth century. Urdu translation of the original texts, in Arabic, is now available but the old texts are still recommended for the sake of continuity and preservation of the past. The Dars-e-Nizami itself is not radical as some writers would have us believe.

The third response was cooperation with and subordination to the colonial rulers. It also meant becoming part of the modern state's large bureaucracy.

Those waging *jihad* were a small group. A group of young people was ready to use force in order to achieve political aims. They were committed enough to use force against the dignitaries of the empire. The planned to destroy the empire but failed.

If we go further back, both Shias and Sunnis considered Kharijites as extremists, who were seen as people who would fight till the end. Such commitment was also there in the late seventh century. But when we see the same phenomenon in the modern era, we find things like forced motivation, etc. That is why people call it a new phenomenon. It has different manifestations due to modernity. The phenomenon is challenging the status quo and this challenge leads to conflict. The anarchist challenge in the late 19th century was a similar example. The anarchists thought that by creating enough disruption and terrorism, they could destroy the State and make human beings happy. It was a secular phenomenon.

The Marxists in Latin American and many other countries formed groups to fight against the State. Several of these groups thought that they could establish a better world and claimed to have a roadmap for that purpose.

Why do extremists groups succeed? Because they have a strong sense of grievance, which easily transforms into the response referred to here as radicalization. For example, the Chechen people took on the Russians out of the same strong sense of grievance against them.

The historical context motivates people to react or take on the system. The following factors are instrumental in the emergence of the phenomenon.

1. Role of the ruling elite (corruption)
2. Frustration among the deprived
3. Framework of the society

In Pakistan's context those who are armed, trained and have anti-US sentiments have the ability to create an environment where such phenomenon may emerge –where people stand up against the system or the State. The same thing happened in Indian-held Kashmir, leading to radicalization of the people.

Deregulation and globalization etc. are also factors that cause radicalization in a society. Other factors include lack of justice, vengeful attitudes in a society, unjust policies of the government/State, unjust use of power, and a sense of deprivation and its psychological impact. Class discrimination in a society also contributes to the phenomenon of radicalization.

The radicals' mindset is to bring 'change' in society because they are not satisfied with the existing order. In order to overcome the impact of radicalization on our system we must first recognize our weaknesses and mistakes and remove all the sources that fuel anger and grievances in society.

Mumtaz Ahmed

Executive Director Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, International Islamic University, Islamabad

The definitions of moderates and radicals keep on changing. They are determined by the political context or one's ideological perspective. An individual or a group is radical in one context and moderate in another. For example, the last generation of Taliban was considered moderate when they were fighting against the Soviets. In a famous quote, Brezezinski said, "We have to make a distinction between good fundamentalists and bad fundamentalists. The good fundamentalists are the Afghan *Mujahideen* who are fighting against the Soviets and the bad fundamentalists are the Iranians who are opposing us."

An individual may be extremely radical with regard to religion but moderate politically. Those belonging to the *Tablighi Jamaat*, the non-political *salafis,* may be called radicals but politically they probably are not. I do not agree with the first element of Olivier Roy's definition of Muslim radical movements,[iii] in which he says that Muslim radicals 'call for a return of Muslims to the true tenets of Islam' because the *Tablighi Jamaat* also calls for a return to the Quran and *Sunnah* but they are not radicals.

Javed Iqbal

Professor, Department of Psychology, International Islamic University, Islamabad

When people's psyches are different, just like fingerprints and irises, how can we have one psychological definition of radicalization.

I believe that the creators of abstract ideas are western scholars and think-tanks. We (the Easterners) are at the second level, i.e. of utilization of experiences and ideas. Definitions of radicalization are also coined by Western scholars. After going through a huge volume of research, particularly that available on the internet, I have concluded that we accept any definition or idea from the West as the last word. We have not come up with a definition of radicalization reflecting our own perspective.

The major causes of radicalization are:

1. Sociopolitical:
    a) *Oppression:* The more oppression is there, the more radicalized people will become.
    b) *Lack of justice:* Human rights violations and injustices lead to radicalization among the masses.

2. Economic:

    When the gap between haves and have-nots increases, people become radicals.

3. Psychological

    Three types of 'genocides' can also cause radicalization:

    a) of one's beliefs
    b) of one's lifestyle
    c) of one's values and ideology

Qazi Javed

Resident Director, Pakistan Academy of Letters, Lahore

In this part of the world, the use of weapons and resort to aggression has become more frequent over time. Though the people here already had a religious background, religion has been brought into the political spectrum for the first time. Recent interpretations of religion have pushed some people towards activism. This has led them to violence and blatant use of weapons.

Ahmer Bilal Sufi

Director Research Society of International Law

Radicalism or radicalization is a mindset, which may be called religious aggression or violation of religion. In fact, it is a mindset of deviation from law. In my view, when someone deviates from law, he behaves as a radical. Law is not a metaphor but a symbol of the expression of state's authority. Deviation from that authority takes place due to two reasons; firstly, when someone does not regard the law of the land as law; and secondly, when someone thinks that *Shariah* is what he perceives it to be and if the country's law is a hurdle in the implementation of his version of *Shariah* he will disregard it. This approach provides the basis for radicalization.

Furthermore, because of ignorance about the law people do not actually realize when they have crossed the line. Pakistan has signed over 50,000 agreements and treaties with other states. But people are not aware of them and of their implications. Sometimes they also violate these international agreements without even realizing that they have done so.

Zafarullah Khan

Director Centre for Civic Education, Islamabad

The discourse of defining the phenomena is very strange. Terms of radicalization, extremism and terrorism are viewed as interchangeable. The phenomenon of radicalization is about bringing reform or change, which can be categorized further. Defining radicalization is tricky. Primarily, it seems that these are two competing worldviews. In fact, there are so many functional elements in these definitions. These elements demarcate the instrumentality of a term as well as identify its parameters. Another difficulty is that the term radicalization has to be used with reference to something or someone. One has to specify the context.

Akhlaq Ahmed

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, International Islamic University, Islamabad

Religious elements in our society, whom we call radicals, are very vulnerable to manipulation by others. They have no motive of their own. They have been sacrificing for the state or for private interests of others. They have never played any role for societal rights or any broader social change.

The kinds of radicalization we experience presently, like bomb explosions, should be seen as a response to social deprivation. These are manifestations of xenophobia and these people are committing such acts out of frustration. It clearly means that the people we call Pakistani Taliban are neither radicals nor extremists. They are struggling for their defence and survival. I call them 'alienated' rather than 'radicals'. The reason is that they are cut off from the whole process. Following are the causes of prevailing chaos in Pakistani society:

i) Deprivation and alienation
ii) Xenophobia
iii) Suffocation
iv) Confusion

We have to see whether the Western discourse on radicalism is relevant in the Pakistan's context. Secondly, it needs to be determined whether those identified as radicals in Pakistan are really that. And, if the answer is in the affirmative, what are the motives that have attracted them, or the forces that have pushed them towards radicalism?

It seems that the definitions we see in the discourse do not conform to the situation prevalent in Pakistan. In fact, origins of various radical movements in other parts of the world can be found in denial of certain rights and privileges. When we try to see the available definitions in the Pakistan's context we find that none of the radical movements in Pakistan, whether political or religious, was based on a demand for certain rights. Though the issues are there in some pockets, we do not observe any clash between haves and have-nots in Pakistan. We have never observed a phenomenon of overall social change. That means the definitions of radicalization borrowed from the West do not help.

The questions that need to be stressed are: who do we identify as religious extremists? Is someone using them? Are these people instruments for others? Are they self-motivated or motivated by others? All of that needs to be analyzed.

Keeping the Western definitions of radicalization in mind, when we look at these people we learn that they have been playing in to others' hands, sometimes against the Soviets, and at other times against someone else. Iran used Pakistan's Shia community and some parties used the Sunni community against the Shias. These are among the couple of examples of radicalism we have in the entire history of Pakistan. There is such suffocation in our society that the people are afraid of disclosing their religious identities. The society does not provide them with a room to express their views. Dissent is not tolerated.

Muhammad Islam

Professor of Political Science, Bahria University, Islamabad

Radicalization is a group phenomenon where views and actions become violent in a comparative perspective. Radicalization is generally described as a situation in which groups, or society as a whole, resort to violent tactics. But that would be an incomplete definition. Radicalization actually occurs at the level of perceptions/ideas – or ideology – before the action or strategy level. And all this happens in a 'comparative perspective' where a group compares its values, notions and perspectives with that of another group. And members of the former group conclude that the two views are not compatible and that they need to achieve their goals in a different manner. They do not resort to negotiations. Consequently, they are of the firm belief that the best way to achieve their objectives is through violence.

There are a number of reasons for emergence of radical ideologies. Different religious sectors become radical against each other because of the feelings of hatred. These feelings are born when the leaders of rival sectors fail to cultivate arguments against each other's concepts and beliefs and become radical in

their approach. Secondly, deprivation is undermining the basic rights of the common people. Helplessness and hopelessness are also among major contributing factors to radicalization. When gaps between values, expectations and achievements widen, particular groups of a society become segmented. Their approach becomes cohesive. And, they indulge in violence for achieving their aims.

Psychological reasons also lead to breeding of radical ideologies at times. When people cannot realize their dreams, they rapidly become radical against the existing system and try for a 'revolution' in all spheres of society.

A sense of deprivation is at its highest in Muslim societies that are more fragmented than the Western ones. Radicals and terrorists are both the same as they use violence as a major tactic to pursue their aims.

Stephan Tankel

Associate Fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence, King's College, London

Desire for revenge is also a factor behind radical (violent) behavior. Resorting to violent means points to the belief that non-violent means have failed and something must be done.

People also become radicalized when they share oversimplified view of the world and when everything is viewed in terms of black and white. Radicals see the world in terms of us versus them. 'Them' is the enemy. Mahatma Gandhi and Anwar Sadaat were assassinated by people of their own faith and nation.

While seeking to understand what can lead people to embrace such extreme worldview, a possible perspective is 'relative poverty' that is more important than absolute poverty. A sense of humiliation, political grievances and breakdown of existing culture or political structure are behind radicalization in developed countries. Rapid modernization is a vital factor in developing countries. These conditions make people radical or more vulnerable to radical ideologies and groups.

Richard agrees and suggests three ingredients of radicalization: a disaffected individual; a complicit community – a person who is unhappy and a community that is willing to support them in their unhappiness; and, an ideology that legitimizes violence.

In the US and the UK, some of these factors exist and have led to the radicalization of a number of groups. During the 1970s, the businesses and farms of a number of white Christians in the US, particularly in the Western part, closed and they faced widespread unemployment. The US was entering a post-civil rights era at the time. A movement that called itself Christian Identity was growing. It espoused radical religious anti-government sentiments and the people were driven by the belief that the government had betrayed white Christian America in favor of multiculturalism and of people following other religions.

Christian Identity propagated that the government was out to get 'white Christians'. It painted blacks, Jews and other racial and religious groups as the enemy. Christian Identity argued that the government had betrayed them and, therefore, true white Christians of America needed to wage war both against the government and against the people who were being favored by the government.

In the UK, injustice and humiliation were among the causes of radicalization. The term 'Muslim Penalty' refers to many British Muslims of Pakistani descent who suffer from relative poverty and are effectively excluded from the British society. They feel that they are suffering because of their ancestral background. Muslims in the UK are susceptible to a widespread perception that frames all of these issues as a war against Islam and victimization of followers of the religion.

Muslims see themselves as belonging more to the *Ummah* than to the British society. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have had a strong radicalizing impact. In the UK, radicalization spreads through the internet, books and talking to likeminded friends. The message is disseminated through personal mentors and private locations. In the US, recruits are enlisted through more broad and public networks and over time shifted to violent wings of the movement. Recruitments take place through family ties, business and professional relationships, social gatherings, places of worship, meetings, rallies and protests. Prisons have also been effective avenues for recruitment. The internet has been seen as a problem, attracting potential recruits on its own. This has been reported more in the case of Muslims in the UK than Christians in the US.

Activists and facilitators motivate themselves to find new recruits. In the UK, self-recruited people remain in touch with people in Pakistan. In USA, self-recruited people seek support locally, not necessarily through the internet. Timothy McVeigh, perpetrator of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, and those behind the 7/7 bombings in the UK were alienated people.

Supporting a movement is not the same as joining it. Joining is not the same as acting to support violence, which, in turn, is not the same as committing violence. It is a multi-stage process. Most of the people join the movement to support it rather than commit violence themselves. Religion is used to rationalize violence. Eric Robert Rudolph, architect of the 1996 Centennial Olympic Park bombing in the US, used the language of the Bible to justify his action. In the UK, the 7/7 bombers, also justified their action in religious terms.

Adam Dolnik

Director Research Programs and Senior Research Fellow at Center for Transnational Crime Prevention, University of Wollongong, Australia

There is something more than mere psychological forces, which motivates people to become radical. Radicalism and terrorism are strategic choices by radicals and terrorists to correct their perceived or stated sense of deprivation, grievances or injustice.

Researchers use different definitions of radicalism and terrorism, which makes it essentially very difficult to build on other peoples' conclusions, and also confuses the concepts and causative factors. Secondly, most of the studies in this regard are very descriptive and event-driven. The 'firefighter approach' to studying the subject and the western bias are also hurdles in the analysis of how and why people become

radicals and terrorists. At the same time, enclosed circular research systems, difference in statistics and limits of retrospective account of events create hurdles in researching the subject.

Psychological, physiological, organizational/group study approaches, root-cause narratives, and social network analyses are used to study the factors of radicalism and terrorism.

There are four stages to homegrown radicalism in some Western countries: pre-radicalization, cognitive openings, self-radicalization, and the concept of jihadization. Cognitive opening is a situation where one is ready to take another look at what s/he believes and that completely changes one's perspective. It is frequently triggered by thematic events, even television reports or divorce of one's parents and so on. A cognitive opening is really the key to people becoming radicalized. Self-radicalization mostly happens at home when people access websites, videos, profiles etc., on the internet. Self-radicalization leads to jihadization.

B. Interviews

Hussein Naqi[iv]

National Coordinator for HRCP Core Groups

Western thinkers deem that radicalism is a synonym for being irrational. But that is not true. 'Being irrational' may be called extremism or fanaticism. So many words can be used to describe that, but not radicalism or radicalization. In many articles, radicalization has been taken as something negative. But, radicalization is required to bring about urgently-needed change in many fields of human activity in underdeveloped and developing countries. In Pakistan, we need radicalization in agriculture through drastic land reforms, transferring ownership to actual tillers. At the same time, Pakistan needs to guard against radicalization under the garb of religion and against subverting national political philosophy to promote terrorism. Basically, radicalization means willingness to change one's way of thinking. That would require openness to new ideas and to drastically changing one's opinion and views. Such a change would generally be dictated by objective conditions and their appreciation by the sections of society enjoying influence over the attitudes and behavior of the public at large.

Radicalization would generate extremism in the assertion of the righteousness and finality of one's beliefs and their supremacy. In Pakistan, the motives behind radicalization are patently political. Radicalization, extremism and terrorism are dissimilar terms. Radicalization means a drastic change accepted willingly about a particular issue. Extremism is the acceptance or adoption of an irrational position about any issue. Terrorism means forcible imposition of ideas, agendas or views, etc. on the unwilling. To differentiate *jihad* from terrorism, we can say that today *jihad* would be a painstaking exercise conducted to improve the conditions of life for those subjected to deprivation on various counts, whereas terrorism is to impose one's diktats through lethal tools or instruments.

Ayesha Siddiqa[v]

Writer and independent defense and political analyst

Radicalization signifies lack of communication in a society and end of dialogue. Radicalization is linked with poverty which not only means lack of resources but absence of opportunities and political culture to improve an individual's social existence. Political and religious motives of radicalization are interlinked. Radicalization, extremism and terrorism are also connected. Radicalization is a state of mind. Terrorism is a tool to achieve objectives that a radical mind creates. *Jihad* is a defensive war as opposed to terrorism.

Kishwar Naheed[vi]

Distinguished poet, writer and human rights activist

Radicalization in Pakistan was and has been a state-sponsored movement since the regime of military ruler Ziaul Haq under the supervision and funding of the US. That movement – in the form of Saudi- and Iranian-funded madrassas – spread all over FATA, in Turbat, interior Sindh and Southern Punjab. A spirit of *jihad* was provoked among the children of large and chronically poor families through the teachings of the Quran and *Hadith*, through rustic interpretations by Imams and madrassa teachers. The radical ideology's basic elements are keeping women confined in domestic courtyards and rejecting all electronic and print media that portrays an enlightened social structure.

Religion never propagates or promotes radicalism. It teaches tolerance and human respect irrespective of gender. But radicalization negatively affects the overall perception about religion. In Pakistan, radicalization has been promoted and continues to be promoted by religious clerics with the knowledge and tacit approval of the state.

Both religious and political motives are blended together by the colonial-minded superpower that engages and takes into confidence the local and national politicians in combination with tribal leaders.

Radicals may not be terrorists but they do not reject terrorism as un-Islamic.

Pervez Hoodbhoy[vii]

Professor of Nuclear Physics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

Mullas' propaganda in mosques and madrassas, indoctrination in schools, and poverty, and societal injustice are the basic factors leading to radicalization in Pakistan. Radicalization leads to terrorism.

Fateh Muhammad Burfat[viii]

Chairman and Professor Department of Sociology, Criminology and Population Sciences, University of Karachi

Radicalization means intolerance, an inflexible attitude and considering oneself as perfectly right. Insufficient information is also a characteristic of radicalization. Radicals wrongly interpret religion, which has nothing to do with radicalization. Factors and objectives of radicalization are political in nature. Religion is being used to achieve political goals. The common people in Pakistan are not radicals. A culture of radicalization has been promoted by design to achieve certain objectives.

Sajid-ur-Rehman[ix]

Editor Fikr-o-Nazr, Seerat Section, Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad

Radicalization means imposing one's opinion on others. A faulty education system is the strongest factor in radicalization in Pakistan. Social and economic injustices are also among its causes. Economic deprivations also play a role in the spread of radicalism. Those trying to implement the Islamic system through radical means, i.e. by using force, are creating a wrong impression of Islam. Islam is spreading because of the study of the Quran and Sunnah, not because of *jihadi* organizations.

Political factors of radicalization are more important than religious ones. At national and international levels, many powers are involved in it, which are leading people towards radicalization in the name of religious and economic issues.

There is a clear-cut distinction between *jihad* and terrorism. *Jihad* is waged when a country's geographical boundaries are under attack or someone conspires against it. But to announce *jihad* is the government's prerogative. Individuals and groups are not authorized to do that. How can you characterize killing your Muslim brethren as *jihad*?

Mavara Inayat[x]

Associate professor, Department of International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

Radicalization is an attitude of mind where violence is not used. Basic factors of radicalization include individuals' interaction with radical groups; role of madrassas preaching radicalization; and the actions of US forces in Afghanistan, damaging lives and property. Radicalization has no room in Islam, a religion of peace and moderation. Politics has played a large part in the advent of radicalization in the region. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s, post-9/11 US and NATO occupation of Afghanistan and the so-called war on terror have played a significant role in the spread of radicalization.

Shahzad Iqbal Sham[xi]

Assistant Professor, Sharia Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad

Radicalization means trying to impose one's opinion upon others. It is being rigid in one's views. Considering the 'imported' definitions of radicalization, America's War of Independence can also be categorized as radical.

Radicalization is not confined to religion. It can be in any form. A minister, a senior or junior officer, a driver, a cleric or anyone else can be a radical. Ignorance is one of the basic factors of radicalization. Unless the components of culture and civilization - particularly in the case of Pakistan - are corrected, the problem cannot be solved. Cultural institutions have fallen apart. For example, mothers do not look after their children properly. There are no religious factors involved at all. The real factors of radicalization are political forces, political powers and political figures. In Pakistan's context, radicalization is caused by economic inequality and financial issues.

Mansha Yad[xii]

Prominent Fiction Writer and Playwright of Pakistan

Radicalization is an extreme point of view pertaining to religion, politics or any other sphere of life. Illiteracy, poverty and ignorance are basic elements of radicalization. In Pakistan, we see radical elements carrying out suicide bombings and killing innocent people, destroying schools and places of learning for females, delivering lectures only on *jihad* in Friday prayer sermons, burning and destroying CD shops. The radicals do not let people speak their minds.

Ashfaq Saleem Mirza[xiii]

Director Media, South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA), Islamabad

Radicalization is a complete and comprehensive change in existing socioeconomic and political situation in the context of progressive ideas. Political motives of radicalization are more important than religious ones. Ideology, political will, mass appeal and commitment are basic elements of radicalization. The concept of radicalization is different from the concepts of jihad, extremism and terrorism.

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[i] Findings of the subsequent sessions will be published in the next issue.

[ii] Two definitions were presented in the session before his address. One by David Prince that characterized radicalization as "The process by which an individual becomes open to the prospect of committing … terrorist acts." (Opening statement of Congressman David Price, chairman House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, March 12, 2008, http://appropriations.house.gov/pdf/PriceDHSScienceTechnology03-12-08.pdf, retrieved on Feb 28, 2008.) The other definition is by Gregory Saathoff that radicalization is "the process by which (people) adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes …." (Testimony for the US Commission on Civil Rights, http://www.religionandsocialpolicy.org/docs/legal/cases/rl_dscrm_prsn_cs/GregorySaathoffCvlRghtsComm.pdf, retrieved on Feb 28, 2009.)

[iii] According to Olivier Roy, Islamic radicalism is a combination of two elements: a call for the return of all Muslims to the true tenets of Islam or what is perceived as such; and, a political militancy against the foes of Islam who could include existing Muslim rulers. Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam,* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).

[iv] Interview with Noureen, M.A. 3rd semester, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies (DSS), Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

[v] Ibid.

[vi] Interview with Umaira Qaisar, M.A. 3rd semester, DSS, QAU, Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

[vii] Ibid.

[viii] Interview with Asif Ali, M.A. 3rd semester, DSS, QAU, Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

[ix] Interview with Mujtaba Rathore, Islamabad, Nov. 2008.

[x] Interview with Abdul Karim Liaqat, M.A. 4th semester, Department of International Relations, QAU, Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

[xi] An interview with Mujtaba Rathore, Islamabad, Nov. 2008.

[xii] Interview with M. Ajmal Shabbir M.A. 3rd semester, DSS, QAU, Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

[xiii] Interview with Moazam Bashir Tarar, M.A. 3rd semester, DSS, QAU, Fall 2008, Islamabad, Nov 2008.

About Institute

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