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Youth Radicalization: The Case of Palestinian Refugees in
Lebanon

By

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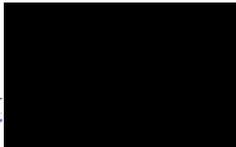
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Youth Radicalization: The Case of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

Mona Rafik Saadi

ABSTRACT

Many of young Palestinians have been the target of extremists' appeal. Studies have shown that radicalization gains grounds in poor socioeconomic and lacking human rights environment. Radical groups have been successful to exploit deprivation feeling for recruiting purposes. The Lebanese government, on the other hand, has imposed various limits on Palestinian refugees' civil rights in the pretext of insuring the "right to return". These limits include significant restrictions on refugees' socioeconomic development, livelihood, and movements. A situation that has served fertilizing the ground for radicalization. This paper highlights the significance of civil rights deprivation in driving youth toward extremism. It, thus, offers a response to whether the deprivation of civil rights is a major driver to radicalization. In contrast, it explores whether ensuring civil rights can serve as prevention of violent extremism (PVE). The evidence is extracted from previous empirical studies as well as from focus group discussion (FGD) conducted with radicalized Palestinian youth in Ain El Helwe Refugee Camp. At the same time, experts' opinions are compiled to confirm assumptions and validate conclusions.

Key words: Radicalization, De-radicalization, Extremism, Refugees, Youth, Rights, Discrimination, Ain el Helwe

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List of Acronyms

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CVE	Counter Violent Extremism
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
ME	Middle East
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PRL	Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon
PRS	Palestinian Refugees from Syria
PVE	Preventive Violent Extremism
SMT	Social Movement Theory
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
US	United States
VE	Violent Extremism

Interview questions with experts

1. What are known causes that encourage individuals to join radicalized groups?
2. How can radicalization be minimized or diminished?
3. Is there a link between the political and civil status of Palestinians and the radicalization of their youth?

Focused Group Discussion topics

1. Socio-economic background:

- Living conditions
- Education status
- Family income and source
- Future goals and expectations

2. Political and Religious status and background

- Factors that encouraged joining armed groups
- Presence of any religious mentality that encourages joining of those groups
- Effect of current political status on such decision

3. Civil status

- Work and employment
- Participating in decision making
- Equality with society
- Identity and sense of belonging

Chapter 1

Introduction

Radicalization has been the interest of several research studies. Various investigations have been conducted to explore its causes and consequences. However, research performed still lacks unity in providing a clear link between radicalization and its causal factors. This chapter briefly introduces radicalization and then discusses the background of Palestinian conditions in Lebanon with focus on legal framework governing life in the refugee camps. It also tackles the proliferation of radical Islamists in the camps particularly over the past decade.

Radicalization Conceptualization and Hypothesis

The Dutch institute for safety, security, and crisis management (ISSCM) identified the causal factors of radicalization on three levels. On a political level, it related it to integration, discrimination, and exclusion, while on an economic level, it linked it is causes with poverty and deprivation. Finally, considering the cultural level, the ISSCM marked it as an identity problem (Dzhekova, 2016).

Furthermore, it is essential to assess the main causation theories that scholars have studied to understand the underlying drivers of radicalization among youth. The Deprivation theory, the Rational Choice theory, in addition to Social movement theory and Communitarism that are examined in order to extract particular characteristics and motives of the radicalization among Palestinian youth.

For example, the theory of Communitarism is certainly linked to the major events that took place in the Arab world. The fragmentation of many states and the rise of factional divides has left a significant mark on Arab countries (Salamey, 2017). The significant failure of some states to provide social justice has led people to demand change within their respective governments. These movements brought about many changes in the toppling of certain authorities such as in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt. At the same time, it

instigated the rise of Islamist movements such as the Muslim brotherhood and other fundamentalist groups. So, this thesis examines how communitarianism derived Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to the cause of radical Islamists in post-Arab spring era.

In addition to the above, the Social Movement Theory (SMT) as formulated by Borum is evaluated. The theory suggests that more rational and strategic processes drive radical choices and recruits. That once a radical group is formed then “the primary task of any organization or movement is to maintain its own survival” (Borum, 2011). This requires a much more operational method of securing sustainability by making sure they achieve four major requisites: The ability to attract supporters and followers, the need to have the capacity and capability to form and motivate mobilization networks, the ability to keep enthusiasm to participate, and finally to clear away obstacles to participate in that group.

In addition to the theories, other nurturing situational factors shall be considered when researching radicalization. The social factors for example can also be linked to radicalization through causal factors as identity crisis, social influence, and network dynamics. Other factors such as the internet and the media are also associated with influencing a certain mentality. Factors such as psychological characteristics and personal experiences may also lead to radicalization considering the individual level.

Furthermore, the level of radicalization grows gradually starting from an individual level to group one or group level, and ultimately to a mass level. The research on radicalization based on precise investigations regarding the roots and the development of radicalization can be linked to individual psychological investigations.

Understanding the structural conditions that lead to rise of the radical political actors is one of the objectives of this research.

The following examines the psychological traits of those who engage themselves in violent political activity. Noting that the efforts to find a common trait between radicalized individuals is still ongoing worldwide by researchers even though the general message among them is that “they are more like us than we ordinarily care to admit” (Rubenstein, 1987).

Some of the Extreme groups have found opportunities to take a seat in marginalized groups and encourage youth to join their ranks (UNSC, 2015). Recruitment can take several aspects and tactics as demonstrated below (Scott, 2006):

- The Net, where violent extremist and terrorist groups diffuse undifferentiated propaganda, such as video clips or messages, to a target population deemed identical and perceived as a positive receptive to the propaganda.
- The Funnel, where an incremental approach is applied using psychological techniques to target specific individuals considered ready for recruitment, to increase commitment and dedication. Even targeted children who do not accept full recruitment may trigger positive outlooks on the group's activities.
- Infection: when the target group is tough to reach, an agent can be deployed to lead the recruitment process from the inside, employing direct and personal appeals. The social bonds between the recruiter and the targets may be strengthened by focusing on grievances, like marginalization or social frustration.

The mobilization displays a common feeling of negligence, grieving and use of religion as a focal point. The literature review examines the real and most recent facts in the camps to prove our hypothesis.

The paper discusses the historical and political reasons that lead to the social and legal restrictions applied to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. It then links the impact of the current paralyzed situation on the Palestinians life conditions inside the camps and how can this be consequently correlated with radicalization taking into consideration the Lebanese Legal restrictions on Palestinian communities. Finally, it studies the possibility to integrate the Palestinian community within the Lebanese society while preserving the right of return by addressing certain local premonitions.

The historical background of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

Following the Nakba¹ in 1948, more than one Hundred thousand Palestinian citizens have left their homelands to take refuge in Lebanon. A country with so many ethnical, ideological, and confessional diversities. Lebanon has welcomed the first waves of Palestinian refugees with tight security measures in and around Palestinian camps, notably from the Deuxième Bureau² (Crisis group, 2009).

According to UNRWA's official website (2019), Palestinian refugees are people whose original place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihoods as a result of the 1948 conflict.

Palestinian refugees have a special legal status which differentiates them from other refugees' status in the world. Mainly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the United Nations Conciliation Commission on Palestine governs the Palestinian refugee's regime (Akram, 2002). Back then, there was a commitment to consider the Palestinians as refugees by the UN and therefore adopted a special protection regime.

Initially, Lebanese authorities were present inside the Palestinian camps established on the Lebanese territories. They imposed a strict law rule on the Palestinian refugees by forbidding gatherings and providing movement permits for the individuals who wished to move to another region of the country (Akram, 2002).

In 1967, The Palestinians started to promote a military resistance campaign after the humiliating Arab defeat against Israel, which led to the loss of numerous Arab lands including new Palestinian territories³ (Akram, 2002).

As soon as the well-known "Black September"⁴, known for the deadly confrontations between the Jordanian Army and the Palestinian Liberation Organization⁵ took place in Jordan in 1970, where the PLO suffered a military defeat and had to resettle to Lebanon

¹ Catastrophe

² Lebanese military intelligence service

³ Gaza strip and West bank

⁴ Confrontations between the Jordanian Army and the Palestinian Liberation Organization for the overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan between 6 September 1970 – 17 July 1971

⁵ Palestinian armed organization founded in 1964 with the aim of liberation of Palestine

(Tristam, 2019). Prior to this controversial resettlement, the Lebanese authorities have signed the Cairo Agreement⁶ with the Palestinian resistance in 1969, granting the Palestinian fighters the ability to conduct military raids against Israel from the Lebanese southern territories affecting the strict religious-political system in Lebanon. Also, as a result of this agreement, Palestinian fighters were able to manage the Palestinian camps by mobilizing the popular committees. As a result, the movement restrictions were lifted, and Palestinian refugees had socio economic rights (Crisis group, 2009). Later on, in 1987, Cairo agreement was abolished by the Lebanese authorities after an attempt from Yasser Arafat to re-organize the remaining Palestinian fighters in Beirut and Sidon under the 1969 Cairo agreement regulations (Hijazi, 1987).

For many Lebanese, Palestinian factions were the catalyst in the Lebanese civil war in 1975 and the Israeli invasions in 1978 and 1982. As a result, PLO leadership had to withdraw from Lebanon along with its fighters by force in 1982 towards Tunisia (Joffe, 1987).

In September 1982, Lebanese militants⁷ backed by the Israeli Forces committed the horrible Sabra and Chatila camps where thousands of Palestinian refugees and Lebanese citizens were slaughtered. Additionally, Amal movement launched a military campaign against Palestinian camps in Beirut “Chatila” and its southern suburb “Borj el Barajne” in order to deter any potential of re-deployment for Palestinian factions in Lebanon (Siklawi, 2012). This campaign had led to the casualty of hundreds of Palestinian refugees (Siklawi, 2012).

Having this in mind, the refugee’s situation had deteriorated. Most of the social and economic entities were gone, along with the lack of funding from the gulf monarchies (socio economic survey, 2010). The Palestinian conditions have gone from bad to worse. The economic situation and the social life have deteriorated, lacking serious measures to contain the disaster.

⁶ Established on 2 November 1969 and was signed by Yasser Arafat and the Lebanese Army commander Emil Boustani and Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser to regulate Palestinian armed activities in southeast Lebanon

⁷ Militants from the phalanges party conducted the massacres as an act of revenge for the assassination of president Bachir Gemayel

Nowadays, there is no exact number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. For some reasons, numbers shared by official, institutional, or international entities are not similar. More than 500,000 Palestinian refugees are registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNHCR, 2016). However, according to the United States Department of State Report in 2015, between 250,000 and 300,000 Palestinian refugees are residing in Lebanon (Report on international religious freedom- Lebanon, 2014). By Contrast, according to a census done by Lebanon's central administration of statistics in partnership with the Palestinian Central Bureau of statistics, only 175,000 Palestinian refugees are living in Lebanon (Hass, 2017). The common explanation for the number's variation is that many of the Palestinian refugees residing in Lebanon have immigrated to other countries.

After All, when debating critical ideas such as changing the confessional system, State's neutrality, Lebanon' Demographics, non-state actors, and UN resolutions (1559), Palestinian refugees remain in the core of any political interaction in Lebanon.

Legal Status

Palestinian refugees are categorized within four groups, the first group is the registered refugees' group that is acknowledged and registered by both UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities. The second group is the non-registered group which is registered with the Lebanese authorities only. The third group is the "Non-ID" where the refugees are neither registered through UNRWA nor through the Lebanese authorities. The Final and the 4th category belongs to the Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) who came to Lebanon after the conflict in Syria in 2011 (UNHCR, 2016).

All these categories are still facing major socio-economic hardship, while some categories have a limited access to UNRWA services that includes primary and secondary health care. The "Non-ID" category faces major challenges accessing proper health care, education, and labor market. It is worth mentioning that health services funded by the UNRWA are facing major fund cuts (UNHCR, 2016). Moreover, most Palestinians in Lebanon do not have Lebanese citizenship and therefore do not possess Lebanese identity cards, which would grant those benefits from government services,

such as health and education (Unicef, 2017). Those factors added to the deterioration of the socio-economic status that the Palestinian refugees suffer from.

Also, Palestinian refugees are legally banned from owning property and from occupying some desirable job positions. As a consequence of such legal measures, the conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon have declined to a point where 65% live below the poverty line (Khoury, 2016).

In addition, Palestinians in Lebanon are excluded from the social security system, real estate market and labor market in general. The Lebanese measures are justified to guarantee the right to return for the Palestinian refugees (Amnesty International, 2007). Equally, the naturalization, or “Al-tawtin”, is a term often used by the different political parties and media outlets to promote sensitivity and rejection among the Lebanese society although it is generally undesirable by the Palestinians. In fact, the Palestinian and Lebanese communities insist on the right of return issued by the UN resolution 194 in 1948. This resolution clearly indicates that the refugees that would like to return to their homes should be permitted to (Progress report, UN mediator, 1948).

More important, regarding the legal frame, Lebanon has signed the Morocco protocol in 1966 which discusses the Protocol for the treatment of Palestinians in Arab state. The protocol guarantees the right of work for the Palestinians in the host countries. Lebanon has raised several reservations on the protocol, specifically in article number two that clearly states the right of employment equally with the Lebanese citizens (Shafi, 2006). Right before the signature of the protocol, the Lebanese state classified the Palestinians residing in Lebanon as foreigners, thus requiring them to gain a work permit in order to engage in the work market (International Federation for Human Rights Report, 2003). The Main Idea behind Morocco protocol was to safeguard the Palestinian status as refugees but guarantee a legal and stable presence in the host countries. Nowadays, Palestinians in Lebanon are facing challenges accessing basic rights, along with strict legal and security restriction which affect their movements and their well-being within the Lebanese society (Pal BelenYesi, 2017).

Work and Education

Lebanon is relatively known in adopting strict laws and regulations on the Palestinian refugees (Roberts, 2010). Below, is a list of several restrictions affecting Palestinian opportunities and chances of development in Lebanon.

Palestinians are forbidden from more than a dozen professions, including law, medicine, and engineering (Roberts, 2010). Likewise, they are also banned from accessing lands outside their camps (Al Jazeera, 2003). Likewise, most of them do not have the financial means to pay for private education increasing the dropout rates specifically from secondary education (UNRWA, 2012). As a result, 50% of the Palestinians aged between 16 to 18 years are enrolled in secondary schools or training centers, 13% of refugees older than 18 years have a Baccalaureate or higher, and only 5% of them hold a university degree (UNRWA, 2012).

Poverty is likely to be high when the head of the household has a primary education, while when s/he attains a higher education level, the risk of poverty decreases (Chaaban et al, 2010). The chances of having a job are higher when the individual has a higher level of education. It is important to highlight that there is a category of the refugees (non-identified refugees) who lacks access to education facilities (Chaaban et al, 2010).

As we can see, these restrictions affect many aspects of the Palestinian refugee's status. Many Palestinians are forced to work in low paying jobs with no social security protection while almost two third of the Palestinians are jobless (ILO, 2014).

Socio-Economic Status

Most of the Palestinian refugees live in overcrowded gatherings and camps that lack proper infrastructure. By Lebanese Laws, construction material is prohibited inside the camps where legal accountability and fines are imposed upon individuals convicted of smuggling those materials to the camp (Roberts, 2010). According to a study done by the American University of Beirut in 2010, Palestinian refugees are highly marginalized

(Chaaban et al.,2010). Two thirds of them are considered Poor or extremely poor (Roberts, 2010). Thus, Palestinians are facing challenges accessing healthcare, education, employment, adequate livelihoods, and housing. In addition to that, political rupture and competition overruling the camps have resulted in major security escalations and instability which affected the civilian population the most. Statistically speaking, 70% of children and adolescents live in poverty while 9% live in extreme poverty, placing the young Palestinian population under a high risk of poverty (Chaaban et al, 2010). According to one of Fatah ex leaders, money is floating to extremist factions instead of the poor citizens, People are suffering more from the economic situation, and therefore young men are joining these factions (Owes, 2016).

To sum it up, despite their seven decades presence on the Lebanese lands, Palestinian refugees are excluded from basic aspects of civil and social life in Lebanon. Their camps are considered as isolated areas where the Lebanese state lacks authority and ruling power. Ain el Helwe residents are exposed to social, economic, and political risks resembled in disintegration, poverty, and marginalization. These residents are demanding basic human rights by being included in the Lebanese system so that they can join the labor market, pay their taxes, and enjoy the freedom of mobility without restrictions (Chaaban et al, 2010).

The lack of basic human rights, poor economic status, and social discrimination may lead to a sense of hatred and consequently to the feeling of revenge. People living in such circumstances are prone to vulnerability where some scholars argue that radicalization specifically targets those vulnerable individuals. Environmental conditions and the sense of discrimination and deprivation must always be considered in radicalization research. For example, the inconsistency of what is expected and what can actually be earned, the identity crisis of a group that shares a common conflict, and choices that may generate as a result of those circumstances, are all considered as direct causes of radicalization and are thoroughly discussed in the following chapter.

Radical groups' presence in Ain el Helwe Camp

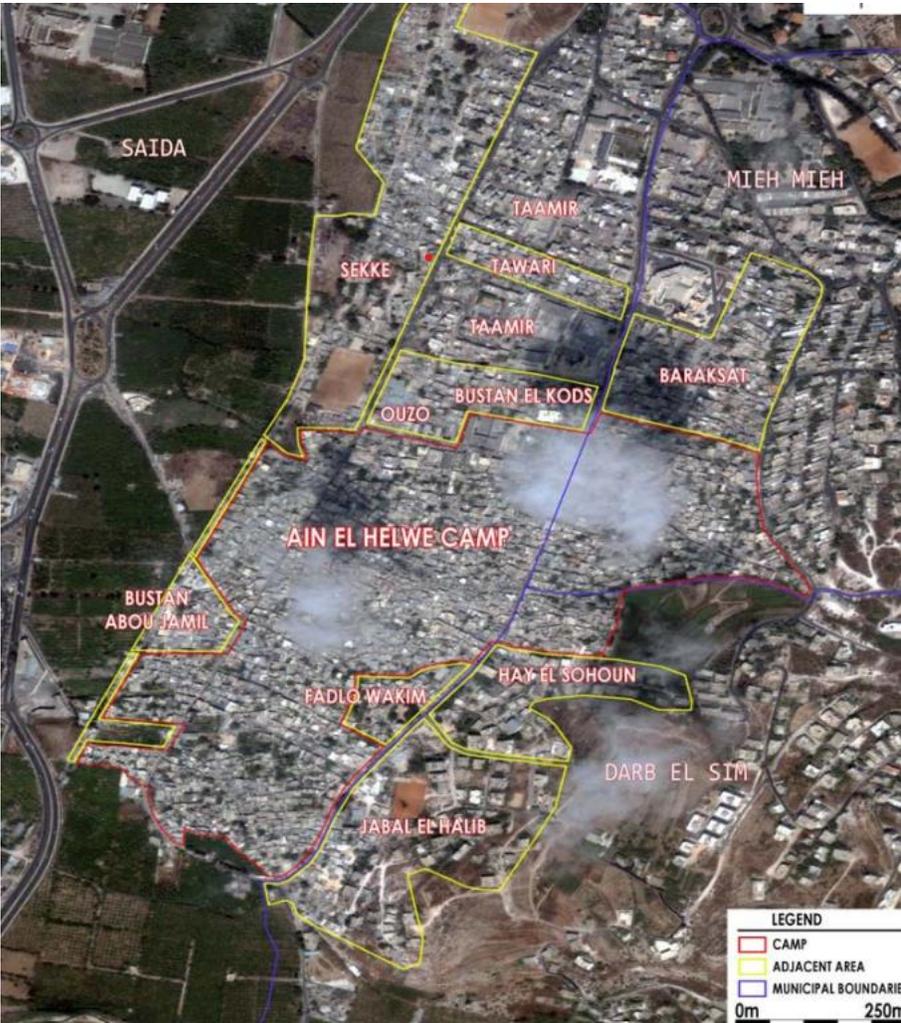


Figure 1: Map of Ein el Helwe Camp

Ain el Helwe camp is considered as the biggest Palestinian camp in Lebanon with 80,000 residents (MSF, 2013). Originally, it gathers refugees from coastal Palestinian citizens along with displaced refugees during the civil war in Lebanon in addition of those who fled the Syrian conflict in 2011.

On the ground, and by the end of the 1980's, many factors have led to the rise of the radical groups in the Palestinian Camps in Lebanon. Starting by the deteriorating living

conditions, peace process failure, Islamism's spread in the Middle East, Camps detachment from the rest of the country, political leadership vacuum, and the youth's identity crisis (Shayaa, 2009). In addition, the Soviet Union influenced regression on the Middle East and the dominance of the US on the Arab and Islamic world in parallel with the enormous support to the Israeli state had also played a role in the rise (Shayaa, 2009). It is worth mentioning that radical groups adopt several ways to recruit members and attract sympathizers; however, and specifically for the Palestinian case, displacement and refugeehood have created rich ground for recruitment.

After the Palestinian political gap that followed in the Israeli invasion⁸ of Lebanon in 1982, jihadi groups started to infiltrate the camp. They presented themselves as a natural alternative to the PLO which started to lose its credibility in leading the Palestinian resistance. Clearly, they have a new project based on Islamic ideas and values. The idea of fighting Israel had become less applicable over the years with the spark of the conflicts in the Middle East including the rise of the Sunni-Shi'a tensions across the region, and the presence of the United States in Iraq in 2003 which became an alternative target (Crisis Group, 2009). For this reason, hundreds of militants moved from Palestinian camps to fight Americans troops in Iraq through Syria. The fact that many fighters came back to resettle in these camps, attracted new recruiters, thus increasing the risk of instability (Crisis Group, 2009).

There are around seventeen actors in Ein el Helwe camp. Some Islamist groups like Al Jihad el Islami and Hamas try to concentrate on the Palestinian cause and the refugees grievances, in addition to that they try to contain the security situation by coordinating with the PLO and the radical Islamists factions. Many radical groups are active in Ein el Helwe camp. These groups are remarkably armed, and they try to impose their influence on the camp's neighborhoods. ISIS and the formerly known as al Nusra front have operating cells linked to the ongoing war in Syria (Tensions at Ain el Helwe, 2017). Moreover, Al Shabab el Muslem publicly praised ISIS and Al Nusra in 2016.

⁸ Israel Defense Forces invaded southern Lebanon after several attacks and counterattacks with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) operating in southern Lebanon

The radical group is composed of Fateh el Islam and Jund el Sham militants, it is known by adopting a radical Sunni ideology (Tensions at Ain el Helwe, 2017).

In addition to that, Abadallah Azam brigades which are linked to Al Qaeda and they are responsible of conducting several terrorists' attacks in Lebanon. Moreover, Jund el Sham which is an active Salafist group that was constructed in 2004 in addition to militants from different nationalities are enrolled in their ranks. This movement is known for being involved in combats with the Lebanese Army and Fatah movement (Tensions at Ain el Helwe, 2017).

Finally, Fateh el Islam is also a radical group which got grounds in Ein el Helwe after the loss of Naher el Bared camp in Northern Lebanon back in 2007 (Tensions at Ain el Helwe, 2017).

Since 2011, the security situation in Ain el Helwe has been challenging for all stakeholders due to the Syrian conflict's replications. A joint task force of non-radical actors was established to deter the radical group's influence (Dot-Pouillard, 2019). This force clashed with Bilal Bader's⁹ groups in Al Tiri neighborhood which managed to expel him out of the camp after 6 days of fighting (Dot-Pouillard, 2019). According to the Palestinian Association for Human Rights (2017), the humanitarian impacts resulting from those clashes were disastrous. This incident has highlighted that not all Islamists groups tend to attract and radicalize refugees, in fact some work to limit and minimize the radicalization process.

Many Islamist groups have emerged in the camp, while others as Usbat el Ansar and the Islamic combatant movement were previously present since the 1990's. Both movements do not encourage confrontations with the Lebanese state; on the contrary, these groups have developed diplomatic relations with the Palestinian and Lebanese authorities. Even though some of these armed movements were labeled as terrorist by the UN Security Council, as Al Usba for being associated with Al-Qaeida.(UN security council, 2011), they committed to stay neutral regarding the Syrian crisis and they even tried to strengthen their network with Amal Movement and Hezbollah (Sogge, 2016).

⁹ A prominent leader linked with Fateh el Islam and AL Qaeda

Thus, Usbat el Ansar is playing a major role in de-escalating the disputes in Ain el Helwe camp. They managed to make a peace deal with Usama Shahabi's¹⁰ affiliates one of the most radicalized and wanted groups in the Camp (Sogge, 2016).

On the other side, the last waves of newcomer's refugees from Al Yarmouk camp¹¹ have indicated that many young men formed a recruitment target for the radical groups. The young angry and hopeless men may face the same fate as the older generations due to all the imposed restrictions. The weakening of the secular actor Fatah over the years have let the rise of extremist groups such as Jund el Sham, Abdalah Azam brigades and remaining fighters of Fateh el Islam.

Hamas, Haraka el Islamia al Mujahida, and Ansar Allah are described as moderate because of their lack of support of al Jihad in Syria (Saab, 2013). Conversely, Hamas and Usbat el Ansar are designated as terror groups by the US department of state (US Department of State, 2020).

Some radical individuals and groups are linked with the ongoing fighting in Syria since 2011. Many Jihadi groups in the camp publicly endorsed Al Qaeida Operations in Syria and Iraq. Similarly, radical leaders such as Abu Mohamad el Falastni¹² tried to insight young men from Ain el Helwe to join him in his jihad in "The promised Land" (Weiss, 2018). This is a minimized example of the psychological warfare used by the radicals to spread fear and provoke anger and revenge spirit among the audience so they can recruit new fighters (Jensen, 2011). Additionally, many individuals and cells from the camp managed to join ISIS and other groups fighting in Syria and along its borders where the terrorist groups were largely present launching attacks on Lebanese soil (Collard, 2015).

Without a doubt, the escalation of violence is remarkable over the last years between extremist groups and Fatah, where almost all clashes start with a personal dispute and eventually ends up with human and economic losses.

In Fact, the main concern for all the traditional actors in the camp is to maintain stability and order by securing constant dialogue and negotiations. Mediators can play

¹⁰ A US designated Terrorist

¹¹ A Palestinian refugee Camp located near Damascus

¹² Leader in Subunit of the Ughor jihadist in Syria

an important role in safeguarding the Palestinian refugee's interests. Secular and Islamist organizations constantly cooperate by implementing an inter Palestinian mediation process to deter radicalization in the camp (Pouillard, 2015).

Methodology and Significance

This research paper examines the different theories of radicalization to explain Islamic radicalization among Palestinian youth in refugee camps. In order to achieve that we perform a literature review and examine radicalization theories in general among the most vulnerable communities. Secondly, the case of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon is studied through a focus on Ain el Helwe camp. The purpose is to reveal the most relevant theory in explaining youth radicalization and, consequently, potential de-radicalization.

The significance of this study is offering a focus interpretation of radicalization that can inform policy action and international organizations needed interventions at the community level to moderate local grievances and formulate appropriate youth de-radicalization programming.

In other words, one of the Purposes of this research paper is to highlight the challenges faced by the Palestinian youth considering the Lebanese laws' restrictions of human rights, their immediate effects, and their links to radicalization from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Lebanon's case is taken as a case study for this research as it can inform policies and intervention programs common to other refugee settings in the region and elsewhere.

Research question

The main research question of our study is the following: What radicalization theory (ies) is/are most relevant to the phenomenon of radicalization among Palestinian youth refugees? How relevant are the push and pull factors to the imposed refugee legal framework? Can de-radicalization programs be implemented without addressing legal and circumstantial conditions? If so, how? In order to answer these questions this research explores religious, political movements, and radicalization theories to provide

a platform to study the radicalization's facilitation from a worldwide perspective to then relate it to the case of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The research relies on detailed analysis of Legal, social, and economic status of Palestinians in Lebanon, in addition to reviewing books, studies, conventions, and reports on the subject.

In order to highlight the link between the social, economic, and political indicators with the rise of radicalism, Ain el Helwe Refugee Camp is taken as a study case. The goal is to show that general exclusion and segregation laws nourish radicalism among youth.

The research is based on key informant interviews with Palestinian youth and radicalization experts utilizing focus group discussion (FGD) and one-to-one interviews, respectively. One FGD with seven radicalized Palestinian youth from the Ain el Helwe camp is constructed to test various radicalization assumptions. Additionally, three interviews are conducted with radicalization experts to better inform and validate the analysis. The Institutional Review Board approval was granted, and consent forms were signed accordingly. This part of the research is qualitative and focuses on the radical group's perspective.

The discussion with the key informant interviewers required indirect, open ended questions. This was implemented due to the high sensitivity of the topic and to allow participants to voluntarily bring other issues related radicalism without imposing answers or being offensive or collaborator. This was done through set of questions that were sent to the IRB for revision and approval. The interview tools and the FDG tools used are present in the appendix.

Analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data allows us to analyze the youth perspective behind joining armed groups and the direct factors behind their decision. This gives us a clearer understanding of the circumstances leading to the susceptibility of the young Palestinians thus reformulating their stories by considering the context of each case and experience of the respondents.

Analysis of qualitative data also comprise identifying the main criteria by which youth are radicalized. The pull factors and the motives used by Jihadi groups to encourage the youth to join their forces is identified. Moreover, an assessment of the existing strategies is applied by armed groups to engage the target population.

Finally, a Content Analysis is conducted on Lebanese policies regarding Palestinian civil rights, obtained from interviews, and a Narrative analysis on answers provided from interviews with selected experts, to assess the repercussions faced in the Lebanese context, thus allowing us to target the cause of the problem.

Chapter 2

Radicalization Theories

This chapter suggests that to answer the question we must examine the different theories of radicalization and reveal their relevancy to Palestinian refugees. After surveying several theories, the chapter set different hypotheses as plausible explanation framework.

Contending Definitions

The term radicalization was used in studies on political violence. It was referred to as the actual use of violence, with intensification in conditions of forms and intensity (Malthaner, 2018). Until early 2000's, the term was barely mentioned in texts on political violence or terrorism and was questioned in academic and political debates. Contemporary political science literature suggests that radicalization means the process by which political moderates become extremist in its positions, while others consider it as a revolutionary in response to declining power (Dzhekova, 2016).

By examining various definition, radicalization is explained by adopting extreme views that lead to the use of rampage. Scholars have put a lot of efforts to define radicalization, to allocate its causes, and eventually find relevant solutions, yet it is still poorly defined (Borum, 2011). The aim of this chapter is to delve into the social, political, economic factors that associate youth to radicalism.

Initially, there is no common definition for radicalization. To some researchers, radicalization is a process of involving an individual or a group of people that have learned a set of convictions supporting acts of terrorism (Rahimulah, et al, 2013). Even more, "radicalism" is not equal to "terrorism," given that, a radical individual may not be willing to commit terror actions (Mandel, 2010). Most individuals who retain radical thoughts are not appealing in terror activities while on the other hand some terrorists are

not radicalized in a conventional way (Borum, 2011). Moreover, and according to Nuemann (2013), radicalization can be viewed as the process where an individual becomes an extremist. Another explanation to radicalization is presented by Staunn and Veldhuis (2009), where they focused on two important perceptions. The first one considers the violent radicalization that justifies the use of violence to achieve the ultimate goals, while the second perception highlight that the desirable change can be completed without the need to use force, thus democracy is not endangered.

The term radicalization is often defined as “the process of adopting an extremist’s belief system. including the willingness to use, support or facilitate violence as a method to effect social change (Allen, 2007). Radicalization is also viewed as the mechanism of a complex interaction of factors that does not always lead to violence. The reason behind this stance is that the mechanism can develop in different ways including a non-violent way. Although not every radical can become a terrorist, every terrorist experiences radicalization (Allen, 2007).

In addition to researchers, security agencies focused on radicalization and defined it. Such as The Dutch Intelligence service that states radicalization as growing readiness to support and pursue, by undemocratic mean, changes that clash with the democratic order (AIVD, 2005). Also, the Danish intelligence service focused on violent radicalization by explaining it as a process where an individual accepts the use of undemocratic means including terrorism to reach a specific objective (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009).

Obviously, there is lack of agreement on defining extremism, fundamentalism, terrorism, and political radicalism which can be labelled strictly as a political phenomenon.

Drivers

Likewise, political tensions and cultural divergence can lead to radicalization according to some researchers while others claim that personal factors, such as personal

experiences, could lead an individual to radicalize (Vidino, 2010). Many scholars pointed that radicalism or terrorism can be the outcome of personal awful struggles, most likely traumatizing experiences such as abusive childhoods (Borum, 2004).

On the other hand, Martha Crenshaw is one of the fundamental specialists in radicalization, she came up with a model that pores over and interpret the radicalization's process. Many researchers have used this prototype to support their studies and analyses. Her model highlights the several types and causes for radicalization, and there is indeed a theoretical framework for it (Crenshaw, 1981). She states that it is vital to examine the background where radicalism emerge as there are many elements that motivate the process (Crenshaw, 1981). The skeletal variables and individual-level variable are dealt with accordingly in this chapter. The outputs complement the answers given by the anonymous surveyors that, as already mentioned in the introduction, are interviewed in the next chapter.

Nonetheless, there is a distinction between the elements that sustain terrorism on the long term "pre-conditions" and the special circumstances that foreshadow the existence of terrorism "precipitants" (Crenshaw, 1981). Surprisingly, the concept of modernity is considered as a precondition for terrorism. (Francis, 2012). In other words, it is known that some of the radical groups stand up against the prevailing world's form of modernity, in contrast, they have used its modernized products such as technology and urbanization to promote radicalization. That is to say that the use of internet did a compelling job for the radical groups in broadcasting their radical ideas and ideologies to tremendous audiences. Not to mention that urbanization and mass transit brought the world closer to each other and it did allow the flexible carry of individuals, groups and even ideas around the globe.

For some scholars, it is not the only cause for radicalism, other predictors like globalization, fundamental ideologies, and psychological factors; on a personal and group level; can push radicalization to terrorism (Ziemke, 2006). On the subjects of the "percipient" factors, considered as the spark for radicalization, taking a form of a reaction, or response to an event or incident, thus radicals treat their rage and anger with violence (Francis, 2012).

With regards to the trigger events, they put together another form of radicalization catalyst represented in the model of Staun and Veldhuis. It states that individual triggers, such as the death of a relative, discrimination experience, or mistreatment by the authorities are responsible for revenge (Staun & Veldhuis, 2009).

Also, radicalization is linked to violent extremism (VE), however; it may not necessarily lead to VE (Subedi, 2017). What is more interesting to highlight is that VE may not automatically englobe radical components (Subedi, 2017). It is true that by theory, both VE and radicalization are sometimes associated but we need to keep in mind that there exists a network of sequence of social and psychological push factors that lead to radicalization.

Although some scholars align economies marginalization with radicalization, others do not (Abarahams, 2017). Terrorist recruits might have high standard of education and wealth. Inasmuch when terror groups intimidate developed countries, it is the well-educated elements who conduct the aggression acts (Kruger & Maleckova, 2002). Alternatively, as mentioned in the previous chapter, radical organizations favor to mobilize youth. To elaborate more about the recruitment process among the radical groups, researchers reported that almost all the newcomers were mobilized in a conventional way, specifically through friends and family (Borum, 2011). The recruitment process is considered as a step in the mutation mechanism facilitated by others where radical groups endorse the mobilization intentions.

Many studies tried to identify the racialization process which is composed of several phases as explained and demonstrated below.

Radicalization process models

The model of Association of Chief Police Officers to address intervention

The model of association of chief police officers (ACPO) states that radicalization can start from the base of any community moving its way through vulnerable individuals

leading them to extremism and finally to breaching laws and norms (Preventing Violent Extremism, 2008). The top belongs to the few terrorists who break the law comparing to the rest who might believe in their values but do not actually engage in the group.

With this intention, it was never easy to figure out the reasons that push individuals to join radical groups. The individual psychological attitude, environment, sense of discrimination or deprivation should always be considered even though these factors are variables resting on the case. To shed light on why people are opted to join radical groups, sociological and psychological theories and approaches are to be examined (Christman, 2008).

The prevent pyramid shows the progressive pathway of radicalization. The highest phase in the pyramid represents a high level of radicalization. The model was developed by the association of chief police officers and demonstrated in the figure below.

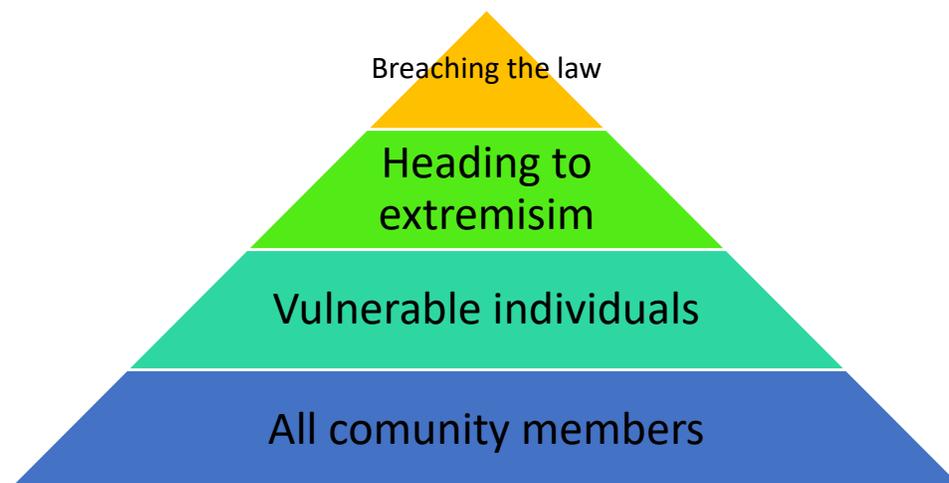


Figure 2: ACPO Model to address intervention

MacCauly and Moskalenko mechanism of political radicalization

This model was established in 2008 and its main points are to be examined as follows. To begin with, the individual pathway to radicalization refers to personal experience which

plays a major role in the process. Other players are the political events which directly affect an individual's way of thinking. In addition to that, joining a radical group will go through gradual hierarchy where through the group mechanism process, there is tendency to show a high level of unity and cohesion_which will lead to an increase in pressure for behavioral compliance. Moreover, the competition with state powers includes a certain commitment to violence by the radicals to deter the state power.

Moving to the mass mechanism where the hate for the "other" would lead to violence by dehumanization this "other" making them look less than casual humans. The final stage of the mass radicalization process leads to martyrdom, noting that the impact of martyrs on mass populations is still under-theorized (Christman, 2008). The below figure demonstrates the MacCauly and Moskalenko mechanism of political radicalization.

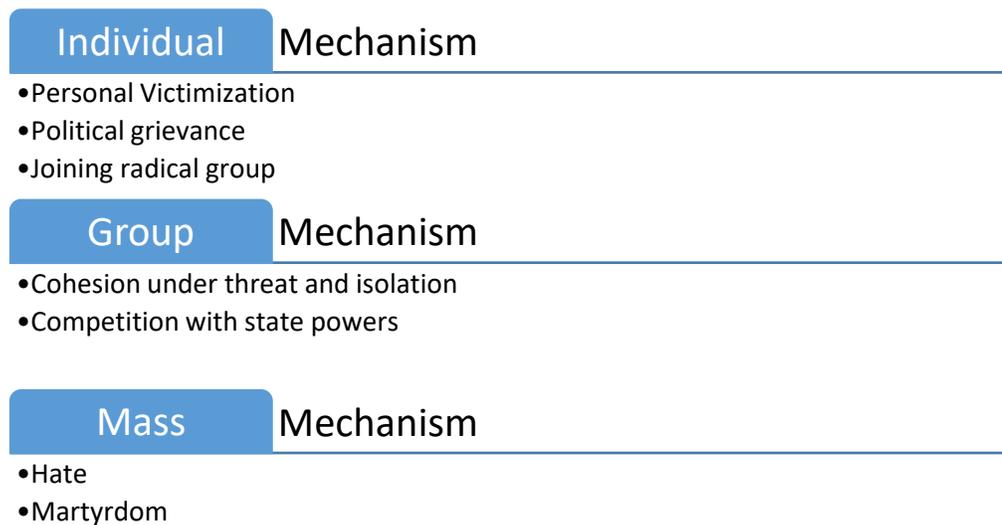


Figure 3: MacCauly and Moskalenko mechanism of political radicalization

Theories

In this section, the Relative deprivation theory, the Social Movement theory, rational choice theory, and psychological traits are explored so we can understand more how social, economic, and personal factors can encourage youth to radicalize. Those theories were selected based on their relevancy to the Palestinian displacement.

Relative Deprivation theory

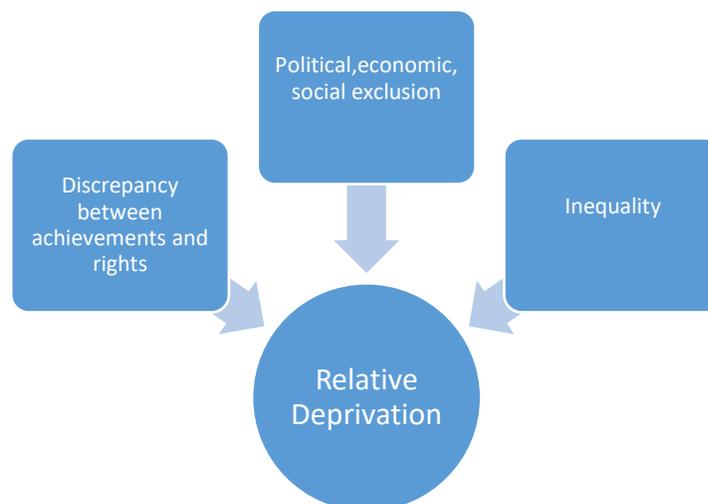


Figure 4: Most important drivers of Relative deprivation Theory

Many Scholars supported the theory of relative deprivation regarding its ramifications in triggering violence. As we delve into this part, Gurr was the most outstanding researchers that contributed insightful ideas supporting this theory. He defines the theory as where the individual sense the discrepancy between what s/he is expecting to earn and what s/he is rightful to have (Gurr, 2008). This instinct will endorse the individual's resentment that will be delivered later with violence (Gurr, 2008). As a matter of fact, Davies's theory aligns with Gur's reflection and it adds the evidence that

deprivation can be experienced when individuals make themselves as an example or standard for expectations especially if they previously achieved a success (Davies, 1962). Further, the frustration feeling will implicate social unrest and disseminate revolutionary moods (Davies, 1962). Likewise, Both Gurr and Davies tackled the aggression-frustration hypothesis, Davies also added the time element that can coerce more violence in case expectations are not reached (Davies, 1962). In this research paper, the Relative Deprivation theory is expanded to include deprivation of civil and political rights affecting the socio-economic level.

In fact, the main idea in this theory is to high spot the individual or the mutual sensation of deprivation experience in terms of social, political, economic status compared skeptically to others (Journey & Tierney, 1982). When analyzing the causes of radicalization, discontent from the expected or achieved goals, whether economic or social, can lead to non-avoidable violence. The literature review of “Relative Deprivation Theory” point to the exclusion fact and grants an improving insight on youth disconnection.

Let alone, the blend of economic disparity with the social elimination will force the rise of discontent feelings, and the feelings of injustice (Gurr, 2011). The most essential hypothesis in this theory is that the focus on the inequality existing within a society is vital. Even though not all disparities could lead to aggression, the social deprivation theory points that inequalities may lead to unpredictable actions such as radicalization.

As a matter of fact, there are growing proofs that youth unemployment, weak governance, lack of political participation and marginalization can lead the youth to develop feelings of cut off serving as a mover for radicalization (Frazer, 2009). For example, in Ain el Helwe Camp, educated youth who did not have access to labor market can experience the relative deprivation when they compare their situation to similar or less educated youth living outside the camp.

The youth will most likely feel relatively deprived when they see the controversies between their worth expectations and value capacities. The deprivation will drive to a social discontent cherishing the frustration, rage, alienation, and the displeasure effects linked to the psychological factors’ examination (Gurr, 2011). Because of the relative

deprivation's causes, both individuals and groups feel deprived when their social, economic status look worse than other components of their bigger society. Groups that feel that way tend to be more susceptible to radicalization. (La Free,2010) Thus, when a group of individuals retain less money, or have less contact to services comparing to other groups, they may test relative deprivation leading to radicalization, most likely in the Muslim communities (La Free, 2010). The people outside this isolated group are perceived as the enemy and to achieve a change, violence should be the mean to accomplish it (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2010). So, the control of a group of individuals becomes much easier when they feel isolated, and radical groups can easily have the upper hand in this situation.

In other words, when an individual self-identifies himself as an active member of a larger group of people because of a failure effect, she can sense a growing significance and power (Kruglanski et al, 2014). The radicalizers promote a common identity for the deprived group of people encouraging the collective voice based on a common ideology, providing the individual with a sentiment of attachment, or belonging.

Social Movement Theory

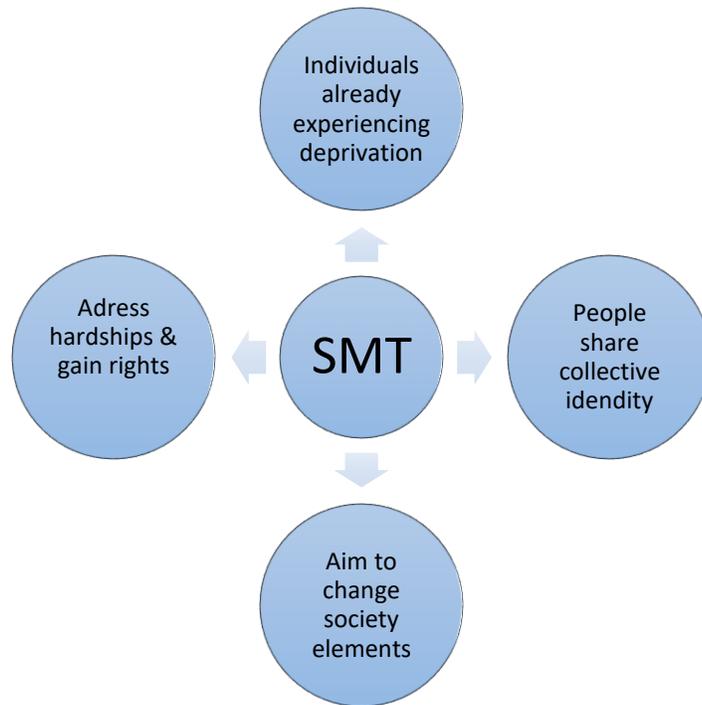


Figure 5: Main components of the SMT

As mentioned earlier, a collective identity will be shared among a group of individuals who share the same discontent feeling. This identity will fund solidarity and makes the group look similar (Diani, 1992). The social movement is described as a network of non-formal interactions between a group of individuals and other groups engaged in a political or cultural conflict and sharing a common identity (Diani, 1992).

The social movement is a set of opinions and beliefs within a group of people willing to change elements of a society's structure. It began in 1940's where mass populations were feeling a discontent towards pressured social forces (Borum, 2011). Scholars currently claim that the social movement priority is to maintain a body of sympathizers to survive. New members should always join the social movement for it to grow and expand. Several tasks should be considered to facilitate the sustainability of the movement such as identifying clear causes for participation, creating and endorsing recruitment networks, and the presence of constant productivity to serve a certain cause (Borum, 2011).

A social movement can evolve with the aim of pointing at grievances and gaining more rights (Crenshaw, 1981). It is one of most promising frameworks to explain the radicalization process.

This theory is about involving mobilizing resources, political chances, and trying to explain the causes and aspects of the movement's rise (McAdam, 1996). For western perspectives, this theory includes a grievance vision as it incorporates a collective action and goes further than relative deprivation (McAdam, 1996). For example, The Arab Spring included mass populations that felt a collective deprivation and have taken a major action to show up and make their grievance public to the world. It is important to highlight that in sociology, relative deprivation is linked to a group of individuals who lived with economic and social deprivation, whether in employment, education, or political participation, and are determined to find social movements and engage in the social action. The group action through mobilization and ideology is essential to this theory. The coming chapters discuss how Palestinian youth in Ain El Helwe camp took a collective action, where rage and frustration are expressed.

The Rational Choice Theory



Figure 6: Rational choice pathway

Individuals adhere radicalism for several reasons such as ideological, political motivations, or following a specific identity that reflects their aspirations. Researchers often question if radicalism is a result of a rational choice, where individuals are well informed about their decision (Gurr, 2008). Crenshaw indicates that the decision to engage in terrorism is a rational political choice that is affected by psychological factors and benefits (Crenshaw, 1981).

As mentioned earlier, terrorism and radicalization two different aspects. The fact of participation in a terror activity implements having a clear and conscious determination while on the other hand, radicalization is a mechanism where the individual's behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions are changed (Gurr, 2008).

The rational choice theory also known as choice theory or rational action theory is a school of thoughts that suggests that individuals choose a path of action that aligns with their preferences (Amadae, 2007). This theory was used initially to frame human decision making in economics but was later applied on politics and wars (Amadae, 2007). Either way, history and culture are not relevant to analyzing a certain political behavior, it is enough to identify the actor's interests and assume s/he is pursuing it in a rational way.

However, radicalization can be the outcome of a rational choice, and this factor should not be neglected in the rational choice research. Clark and Cornish, prominent scholars of the rational choice theory argue that some individuals are aiming to be rational assuming that their engagement in radicalization pathway is eventually rational (Rahimulah, et al, 2013). The risks, the costs, and the incentives that nourish the individual's motives to join the radical groups is to be addressed in the next chapters so they can be linked and analyzed.

It is important to mention that even though the rational choice theory tackles the terrorism or radicalization mechanism, but it cannot provide explanations to radicalization.

Psychological factors

There are many psychological factors that may affect the individual radicalization process. Cognitive dissonance can take part in the reinforcement of radical ideologies, it refers to mental discomfort faced when behavior does not align with beliefs or attitudes (Festinger, 1957). It also explains that the more an individual sacrifices for a belief with his attitude, the more he will be linked to that belief. Some researchers have claimed that the feeling of humiliation can also drive to radicalization, others claim that a proxy humiliation can also lead to it, as well as oppressed or mistreated fellow individuals from the same religious group (Rahimullah, 2013). Radicals are sensitive to humiliation or oppression and influenced by culture, where some of them are more violent than others and lack self-control.

Frustration is also linked to radicalization. The frustration theory implicates that an individual can become aggressive and violent when his actual status does not match his ideal status (McCormick, 2003). The process of radicalization that pushes some individuals to adopt violence from a psychological point of view is divided into three stages. The first stage is the crisis of confidence, the second stage is the conflict of legitimacy, and the final stage is the crisis of legitimacy (Crenshaw, 2000). During the process, a collective identity will rise among the individuals who share the same mindset. Initially, they believe that the political system can be reformed from within, but eventually perceive the use of force as the only way for change (McCormick, 2003).

The strongest psychological factors that lead to radicalization are the lack of sense of identity and sometimes lack of self-esteem. Thus, the greeting and valuation from others and the need to join a cause becomes significant (Krugalanksi et al, 2014). As said before, joining a cause will increase the self-worth sentiment, intensifying the importance of the group belonged to (Silverman, 2017).

The most common causes to join a radical group according to a study with former terrorists are the rage and anger feeling, the lack of political association to make a change, social injustice, and the need to take action (Horgan & Bjorjo, 2009). So, joining efforts with others can establish a social movement that reflects a sense of

collective identity and companionship (Horgan & BJORJO, 2009). While other researchers found that sharing religious objectives, searching for economic gain, and intimidation by the peers or the community are more relative motives for radicalization (Carter & Denoeux, 2009).

Other researchers highlight the effect of personal experience that leads to radicalization and divides it into two categories, emotional and cognitive (Sajjar, 2002). Cognitions refer to thoughts and knowledge that affects individual's views and actions, while emotions such as feelings of shame and guilt can also affect individual's perception of radicalization (Sajjar, 2002). For example, terror leaders took advantage of the marginalization against Islam and called for revenge to restore dignity. Here, the personal emotional experience was manipulated to attract individuals toward radicalization.

But it is important to note that till now there is no a verified pathology profile that justifies the conversion for some individuals to become radical ((Horgan & BJORJO, 2009). All these previous classifications give a clearer understanding on the reasons behind joining the radical groups, noting that not all motivations can fall into these categories.

Youth Disconnection

The disconnected youth englobe youth from the age of 16-24. They are presented as not having equal social, educational, or economic opportunities as other youth in the society (Graham & Pettinato, 2002). Any individual who does not have access to education, employment, or broader society is a vulnerable target of radicalization (Graham & Pettinato, 2002). Youth employment is important because it reinforce the materialistic independence, the identity and the stability. It also assists them in learning a variety of skills on a personal and professional level where they carry into adulthood (Abrahams, 2017). In addition, it promotes feeling of connection to a community, and boosts economic mobility that assists in reaching life's goals and objectives. On the contrary, when the youth feel disconnected from a community, it forms a challenge for the

political order in the country by making them a fragile entity for radicalization (Gurr, 2011).

In brief, Palestinian youth are subjected to several factors that can be considered as pull factors for radicalization. For example, the discrimination imposed by the Lebanese laws, such as those related to the limitation of engagement in the labor market, can be directly linked to the relative deprivation theory. Applying this theory to the Palestinian where they acknowledge the difference between what they are expecting and what they are rightful to have, they become more disconnected from the Lebanese society viewing them as “others”. According to the Social Movement Theory, Palestinian youth in camps share the same political, economic, and social conflict that forms a common identity when compared to the Lebanese society. Finally, considering the psychological factors of discrimination and deprivation and evaluating the benefits, young Palestinians may rationalize joining armed groups thus applying the Rational Choice theory.

Clearly, there is no consensus on explaining radicalization although multiple theories and models explained its causes. The radicalization process is indeed complicated and influenced by many factors, such as networks and external groups. Noting that some factors are more effective than others, there is not a single psychological or economical profile that defines a radical individual. Youth with identity issues, economic challenges, political participation, and deprivation provide an easy target for radicalization. On an ideological level, the effect of ideology on radicalization is not certain because many radicals are not violent, and terrorists are not devoutly religious (Hardy, 2018).

In other words, the social level is a relevant component that permits the radical groups to manipulate and endorse individuals to adapt extremist thoughts. The psychological level deploys factors that consider a sense of identity and self-esteem. Finally, on the political level, is characterized by the abuse of major events to recruit new individuals and to disseminate a propaganda against the external enemy (Hardy,2018).

Chapter 3

The Radicalization of Palestinian Youth

This chapter suggests that to test the different radicalization hypotheses as they relate to the Palestinian cause, the study takes Ain El Helwe refugee camp as a case study. Its various interviews are conducted and tabulate responses. Gathered data is handled with high autonomy and discretion conduct content analysis along the different theoretical propositions. Furthermore, expert interviews were carried out to confirm different findings. Finally, references and background reviews of literature aided in triangulating our analysis.

The Palestinian Economic and Political Status in Lebanon

It is important to highlight that the Palestinian's vulnerability is the outcome of a violent relation with the Lebanese host society. The violence's history is a symbol of the complicated link between the two components. For some Lebanese, nothing can make them forget nor forgive the PLO's role in the civil war that occurred between the 1975 and the 1990. While for others, Palestinians were witnesses and victims of the war (Allan, 2004). In 1982, the period of political dominance and institution building for Palestinians in Lebanon ended (Brynen, 1990). As we mentioned earlier, the arrival of the armed Palestinian resistance in the 1970's has contained the excluded and poor Palestinian communities in an active economy due to what was called the revolution known also as "Al-Thawra" (Allan, 2014). The major transformation made the refugees the new influencers of the political and economic aspect of the Lebanese society (Allan, 2014). They became a state within a state and destabilized the fragile sectarian balance in Lebanon.

Back then, 65 % of the Palestinian workforce was originally linked to the Palestinian revolution (Sayigh, 1994). The productive institutions established by the PLO offered influence, wealth, and protection. With the withdrawal of Yaser Arafat' factions after

the Israeli invasion in 1982, the Palestinian power vanished and the economic sector was dismantled (Sayigh, 1994). As a result, Palestinian refugees became vulnerable, exposed, and weak. A valid example is the Sabra and Chatila massacres that took place in Beirut in 1982 by Lebanese Christian militias under the passive watch of the Israeli Army that invaded Beirut (Allan, 2014). Although PLO's withdrawing from Lebanon was on the condition to provide international protection for the Palestinian communities (Allan, 2014).

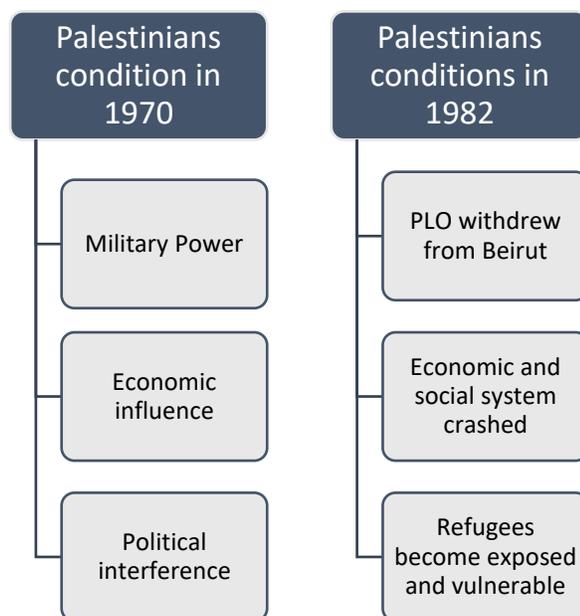


Figure 7: Palestinians conditions in 1970 and 1982

As a summary, the PLO loss in Lebanon have put the Palestinians refugees in a challenging situation. It marked a turning point and a new Era of political, economic deprivation. This situation became more complicated after the Oslo Agreements in 1993 where their right to return was not tackled (Chaaban et al, 2010).

On the other hand, the trending policies towards the Palestinian refugees reflected the real tendency of the Lebanese authorities to end the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. The Lebanese authorities blamed the international community on the deterioration of the Palestinian refugee's conditions considering the failure of respecting the right of

return makes the international community responsible of the consequences (Roberts, 2011). Additionally, Lebanon ensures sending nonstop messages to the western world regarding the presence of refugees on its land. One of their main arguments is that the Palestinians cause threat to stability in Lebanon (Roberts, 2011). In addition, Lebanese authorities claim that these restrictions will endorse the Palestinian community's right of return because most likely, if Palestinians were to guarantee the Lebanese citizenship, the international community could not lobby anymore in favor of implementing the UN resolution 194 "the right to return" (Roberts, 2011).

Equally important, if Palestinians were given the Lebanese nationality, it would cause instability to the demographic and confessional status in the country (Crisis group, 2009). Merging Palestinians, who are mostly Sunnis, would destabilize the demographic and sectarian balance in Lebanon. Therefore, the anti-nationalization or anti implantation positions are shared by all the Lebanese components. The collective stance regarding this matter would encourage the Lebanese authorities to adopt stricter regulations and laws against Palestinians such as property ownership outside the camps and engaging in the labor market. Seeing that, unemployment levels in all camps are at the highest rates, two thirds of the Palestinian refugees live with less than 6 \$ a day (Chaaban et al, 2010).

So, as fighting Israel; the historic enemy; has become too complicated, some radical groups have started to focus on the regional arena. This was characterized by the US presence in Iraq that became the new target for the jihadists in 2003 and fighting Bashar el Asad forces in Syria became the center of the jihadi's struggle in the world after 2011 (Crisis group, 2009).

Several jihadi groups took advantage of the political and security gap after the PLO's withdrawal from Lebanon to develop bases specially in Ain el Helwe. Some groups such as Fatah el Islam pointed at PLO's defeats, compromises, and corruption as the main reason behind the Palestinian cause's betrayal which marked a way to attract those refugees into their groups (Crisis group, 2009).

Ain el Helwe Camp and Radical Fertilization



Figure 8: Ain el Helwe characteristics

Ain el Helwe camp is the most habituated and largest refugee camp in Lebanon. Its geographic location is in Saida Southern Lebanon with more than 80,000 refugees in 1,5km² and was established in 1984 (OCHA, 2017).

Starting 2011 and right after the Syrian civil war started, 6000 Palestinian refugees from Syria started to take refuge in the camp (Anera, 2020). The initial residents who were already facing serious challenges regarding their wellbeing, are now facing more major difficulties with the refugee incursion from the Palestinian camps in Syria. The deteriorating living conditions and high rates of unemployment affected the youth's rates of attending schools and living in decent shelters that became more populated than ever with a very weak infrastructure (Anera, 2020).

Although UNRWA and other organizations provide services depending on external funds, they do not rule the camp. As mentioned earlier, the camp's residents, of both

Palestinian-Syrian refugees and Palestinian-Lebanese refugees, are experiencing poverty and tough living conditions due to the strict legal regulations, such as on work permits, from the Lebanese authorities (Anera, 2020).

On the other hand, the camp reflects the Palestinian and regional political sphere. Many factions compete for gaining power and influence in the camp for example the PLO, factions linked to Syria, and many Islamists organizations. This has led to many clashes that severely affected the security situation leading to further deterioration in living conditions (Anera, 2020). Whenever an armed clash occurs, children cannot access schools, residents cannot open their shops, and patients cannot access UNRWA health clinics.

In the recent years, dozens of armed clashes between extremist groups and Fatah joint security division took place on several occasions. Dozens of civilians were killed, and hundreds were injured, in addition to the destruction of infrastructures and shelters (Anera, 2020). Fatah and many factions are trying to impose order in the camp with the help of moderate factions from one side, and the Lebanese authorities and political parties on the other side. It is worth mentioning that although the Lebanese security forces tighten their security measures around the camp through check points; affecting the civilians' freedom of movement as well; it still lacks control on the inside security situation.

Focused Group Discussion in Ain el Helwe

Focused group discussion was performed to highlight the push factors that encouraged youth to pursue a radicalized path rather than pursuing a socially acceptable career and lifestyle.

Ein El Helwe camp was chosen due to its condensed population, having the highest number of radicalized individuals among the five official Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and the high frequency of armed conflicts occurring within. As a result, this

camp was chosen due to its inclusiveness of various radicalized groups which would aid in answering our research question.

Methodology

One focused group discussion was conducted with seven young men who have joined radicalized armed groups having an age range between 18 and 24 to highlight the reasons behind joining those groups in their own perspective. The FGD was performed on the 29th of November 2020 via a phone call. It was performed through my personal phone to an inside civil source who is in contact with the seven participants who agreed to take part in this discussion. Questions asked in the discussion had focused on the socioeconomic, political, and civil status of the radicalized youth.

Taking into consideration the sensitivity of the topic, selective wording was used where terminologies as radicalization was omitted from the discussion and replaced with words such as “joining armed groups”. Also, to encourage participants to express their thoughts freely, confidentiality was frequently assured among them and they were given the option not to give their names or even use fake names. This was done in coordination with IRB where the questions in appendix page 8 were reviewed and approved before implementation of the FDG.

Key findings

The main findings from the data collected through the focused group discussion are briefed below. The conversation has highlighted important factors regarding the causes that push youth to joining radicalized armed groups.

Educational, civil, and social status

Regarding the socio-economic level, 7 out of 7 participants come from a poor background as they stated. 5 of the participants explained that they shared one room with their family member that range between 5 to 6 people. They explained that education was not meant for Palestinians as they are rejected from the outside (referring to the Lebanese community outside the camp). They expressed inferiority no matter how educated they become. One participant said that he had graduated from school and gained a university scholarship, but after the scholarship was deducted due to the USA aid cut to UNRWA, he could not afford tuition fees, so he quit schooling. He said that after the Lebanese Ministry of Labor's latest decision regarding foreign labor, it was impossible for him to find any job despite his educational level, so he joined the armed group to maintain an income to aid his family in the current harsh economic circumstances.

The 18 years old participant claimed that he quit school after the Lebanese Ministry of education tentative decision to cease accepting Palestinian students in Lebanese public school due to the huge shift of Lebanese students from private to public schools after the economic crisis the country is going through. It's worth mentioning that after intensive negotiation between the Palestinian joint forces and representatives and the Lebanese politician, this decision was not put to action. As a result, he felt the urge to join an armed group where he is accepted as a Palestinian and would be able to aid his family with a modest income.

One of the participants had explained that he was enrolled in school, but eventually decided to quit as he realized that his brother could not get a decent job for being Palestinian. Another applicant explained that his sister is a college graduate and

currently working in a grocery shop, as a result, and due to the career opportunity limitation he decided to join the armed group he currently belong to as he is paid the same wage as his sister. Most of the men viewed education as a waste of money that can be used for daily life necessary expenses like food since chances of development and competition are pre-limited by the Lebanese government. They explained that most of their educated friends ended up unemployed or with low wage jobs that give them the same salary as they currently earn.

Political background

Participants explained that as they were rejected from the community for no specific reason other than their nationality, they feel that they are repressed and discriminated. They constantly repeated “what did we do, we did nothing”. They explained that they have been repressed and unequally treated for being born Palestinian. One of the participants said he doesn’t care about the cause his group calls for, he only cares that his family gets food on the table by the end of the day and this is the only reason he joined their forces. Another added that he craves a normal life, he said he dreams about waking up in the morning and going to an office and coming back home as any person his age. However, he was forced to join this path because it is the only way he can be employed and earn money.

One of the men claimed that he joined his group as a response to the discrimination he was subjected to. He said he used to work as a waiter in a coffee shop outside the camp. He claims that he was the only one whose items were checked by the owner in fear that he would steal money or property. In addition, he described that he had always felt inferior and criminalized for being a refugee, so he decided to join a group that would give him power to feel equal to others and accepted.

When asked about political status, there was a generalized agreement regarding political marginalization where they expressed subjectivity to decisions imposed by the government. They expressed frustration of not taking part of any choice that directly

affect their status and their future, while by joining those groups they believe that they might be able to often pressure the government in minor arbitruments.

Regarding marginalization, participants had brought up the separation wall that was built around the camp in 2016. They stated that it was an inhumane and cruel way of separation between the Palestinian and Lebanese societies. They compared this wall to the Israeli separation wall that was built on the occupied land to separate the Palestinians from the Israeli's. They also complained about the three checkpoint that surround the camp and the act of surveillance that is done to the people and vehicles passing. One of them explained that he always felt confined to the camp where he was investigated upon entering and exiting. He clarified that he felt criminalized without performing any crime, so there was no reason for him not to join a radicalized institution and benefit from an income.

Conclusion

From the above data we can conclude that education is viewed as a key to obtain a future career. And since career is not accessible due to rules and regulations imposed by the Lebanese government, this key is no longer valued. We can indicate from above input that when educated people are equitable to the uneducated, youth view education as a waste of time and money.

In addition, most of the men highlighted that due to their need for financial support, and the lack of other choices, they needed to join those groups in order to maintain a source of income for them and their family.

We can also identify that the lack of opportunities in the labor market has pushed youth into joining radicalized groups to guarantee a monthly income to assist their families. This is directly linked to the low economic backgrounds they come from. This also plays a push factor to search for odd means to provide for their families.

Moreover, we can notice that rejection and rebellion against the political status has pushed participants to join the line of radicalization to promote their empowerment.

Expression of feeling of involvement in decision making through imposing a pressure has dominated the discussion.

Chapter 4

Analyzing the Radicalization of Palestinian Youth

Based on the research conducted and the data gathered, the different radicalization theories are re-examined and analyzed to reveal relevancy to Palestinian radicalization with the assistance of experts' opinions that were obtained through interviews.

Experts interviews

When asked about the main reasons for radicalization, Dr Nachabe, a specialist in forensic science and human rights, stated the presence of several causes that encourage youth to join radical groups. He highlighted peer pressure and subcultural groups and the tendency of the youth to associate themselves with these groups can play a major cause in radicalization.

Not to mention that radical groups can have important resources thus they can be supportive and possess influence under big slogans of honor promoting themselves a good reputation while being present in a difficult environment. Thus, by joining radicalized groups, Dr Nachabe explains that the youth tend to gain a social status.

Equally, when international law fails in guaranteeing the people's rights, youth tend to join radical groups. Identically, when the education level is not very high and there is challenges in accessing education and economic hardship, youth will seek other alternatives by joining radical groups.

When asked about how can radicalization be minimized or diminished, he said: "well the answer is very simple. It is human rights!". He explained that when you ensure people's fundamental human rights, you can start talking about de-radicalization. When you give people their basic necessities for preserving their human dignity, when u give

them access to education, to health, to a standard of living that allows them to develop and learn and bring up children in a safe environment, that would decrease any possibility of them joining radicalized groups. He added, if you create a kind of involvement in community activities, attachment, and belief in certain value systems that are more related to preserving fundamental human rights, then you can also minimize radicalization.

He explains that de-radicalization programs cannot be implemented successfully without addressing the legal and circumstantial conditions. He gave an example about his professional experience in criminal justice and prison reforms where a lot of programs on de-radicalization are present. He believes that those programs fail if basic human rights are not present. He claims that if prisoners do not have access to “fair” trial, then de-radicalization programs will not be effective, especially if these people are living in a very inhuman condition behind bars. He said that the UN “The Mandela Rules” for men and “The Bangkok rules” for women prisoners’ protection have to be respected first.

Finally, when asked about whether there was a relation between the civil and political status and the radicalization in Palestinian youth, he answered yes. He elaborated that the link is based on the fact that when these Palestinian youths grow up in refugee camps being deprived from a nationality; a fundamental basic human right; and basic necessities of dignity, education, and an opportunity to develop like other young men or women in the Lebanese society, they tend to move to a more radical stand because they have nothing to lose. He said that when anyone has a political status that is not only a refugee, but also as someone completely disenchanted by the government, the international community, and the United Nations, then you tend to actually look for other ways to protect your existence.

In another interview with Dr Kreidie, who acquired a Ph.D. in Political Science with Political Psychology concentration, she explained that after the fall of the Soviet Union, the world’s focus was on Islam. She explained that religion, being a higher power that man has no control over, was manipulated by institutions where it dominates nationalism and political ideologies. Thus, when youth tend to lack a purpose or a goal,

they become an easy target to radicalization through mosques, schools, or even snowballing from other groups or friends.

She highlighted the importance of “existential identity” and how it can lead to radicalization by giving an example. She explained that during her professional experience in Saida she met with the parents of a radicalized 29-year-old, coming from an upper middle class, married with kids, who became a suicide bomber that was killed in Iraq. She linked this to an existential threat that can have a great impact on the individual’s perception and fear. She describes it as “if I don’t kill them, they will kill me” where killing is not necessarily physical, but a matter of dominating the “other’s” place. Dr Kreidie generalized that the existential threat in addition to the marginalization will lead to an identity crisis. She elaborated on identity crisis as the gap between expectation and the real ability of achievement. This was linked to the ability of Palestinian refugees to acquire education but having a limited job market afterwards because of their status. At the same time, not having a country to go back to, being born in Lebanon, educated in Lebanon, but cannot claim Lebanon as their country creates a dilemma regarding the right of return. At the same time, Lebanon as the host country, is not giving them civil rights, job opportunities, and is confining them to a camp (whether they are living inside or outside the camp). This puts them in a psychological status of imprisonment, promoting recruiters a space to proclaim acquisition of a solution to the situation. And as the living circumstances worsened, radicalization become easier by putting death as the next worst thing to happen, which is better than the current circumstances. She quoted a Palestinian prisoner that was interviewed by Jerry Post saying, “why won’t I do it if heaven is closer than the grocery store”.

Thus, she was highlighting the existential threat, identity crisis, marginalization, and their consequences such as the massacre that happened between the Lebanese and the Palestinians in Sabra and Shatilla and Tal El Zaatar. She also focused on the dehumanization of “the other” where the groups who recruit tend to use terms to undervalue and dehumanize the other to portray them as an easy target.

As a solution, Dr Kreidie explained that in the field of human development, humanitarian aid is important, but it is not the solution. Education is not solely enough, rather it is developmental education that can promote a solution. She explains developmental education as civic education, inclusiveness, and respecting the other. She added, it is not only the process of education rather than the connection with the society and other Lebanese students.

Dr Kreidie also talked about stigma, xenophobia, and stereotyping which increase the gap between the refugee community and the Lebanese society, where the former is looked down at as a stranger. She explained that this increases their vulnerability and tendency to be easily recruited by groups that will grant them sense of power and belonging.

She added, people with power need to be addressed. However, if those people are benefiting from the problem, it is less likely to reach a solution. Also, humanitarian projects shall include people from all backgrounds to decrease bias, misconception, and exaggerated fears of xenophobia. As society opens up to each other, cognitive dissonance can be reached by breaching the gap and stigma. This can also be emphasized through inclusiveness where people can sense increase in profitability and productivity while working together.

Dr Kreidie confirmed that the solution needs to be political to increase fund to humanitarian developmental organizations, first to raise society awareness, and second to grant Palestinian refugees a legal status that would grant them civil rights.

Finally, she emphasized that the prison system in Lebanon enhances radicalization and the government needs to make sure that after prisoners end their detention, they need to be effectively integrated in the society to prohibit relapse. This shall be done through deradicalization programs that involve psychological counselling, correction of religious misconception, and targeting the incentives that lead to radicalization in the first place.

A third interview with Mr Radwan Mortada, a journalist and a film maker known for pursuing social justice through court reporting, and published a book under the name of

“Kaifa Arkhat Al Thawra Al Soureyyah Lehyataha” as “How did the Syrian Revolution Grew its Beard” where he talks about how fighters moved from one place to another and eventually joined Al Qaida troops.

He explained that there are various reasons behind people joining radicalized groups where poverty and ignorance are insignificant aspects while bitterness, revenge and desperation consist the main reasons. He elaborated that when Palestinians are being confined to a camp that lacks basic living conditions, and a group promises them martyrdom that will lead to heaven as a better place, they would probably join their troops. At the same time, the injustice present in the judiciary system where upon confiscation, a prisoner is confined for two or three years without a fair trial. This unfairness creates bitterness and the urge to revenge, leading to vulnerability to join radicalized groups. So, to limit radicalization we need to target its main reasons by applying justice, specifically social justice.

He explains that there is no specific solution, but the government could aid in limiting this phenomenon by monitoring the imams’ speeches delivered in mosques for example. He said that these speeches can be intellectually mobilizing for some people towards extremism and eventually radicalization. So, the government can aid in eliminating speeches that might contain strife leading to extremism.

Moreover, a fair judiciary system, and a fair labor market can also aid in minimizing the aspects of radicalization. He explained that Roumieh Prison, the largest and most notorious prison in Lebanon, is a factory that produces criminals and not a place for rehabilitation. This contradicts with the principle of prisons being an institution for punishment leading to qualification and rehabilitation, as Mr Radwan said. He gave an example about a prisoner called Naeem Abbas, who is the number one man responsible for explosions inside Lebanon. He was affiliated with “Al Jihad Al Islami” and was confiscated by the Lebanese army for throwing bombs on the occupied territories. After his confiscation he met “Abo Al Shahid” who belongs to AL Qaida where he was convinced that Hizbullah; a Lebanese armed group, and the Lebanese’s army and protector from Israel. Eventually Abbas was convinced to travel to Iraq to meet “Abo Mesaab Al Zarqawi”; who is affiliated to Al Qaida and ISIS; where he joined their

troops to come back to Lebanon and perform several blasts after connecting to ISIS, Jabah Al Nsra, and Kataeb Abdallah Azzam.

He elaborated that deradicalization can be successfully applied in prisons; however, not through the Saudi “Al Monasaha” program which is a program that uses intensive religious instruction by deconstructing extremists. Mr Radwan claims that through providing a better life circumstance, promoting goals and hope, and teaching prisoners’ skills you can promote health re-integration in society.

He proclaimed that the status of the Palestinian refugee camps is creating a rich environment for radicalization. The suppression of youth energy, lacking potential and chances to dream and plan a better life, in addition to the Lebanese racism, and the unjust judiciary system, produces a tendency for radicalization.

Theories and Palestinian Radicalization

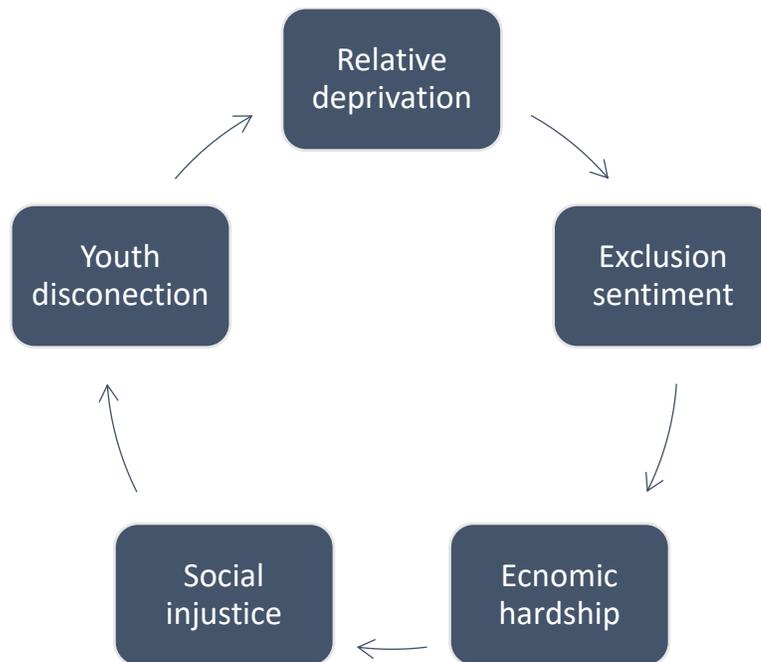


Figure 9: FGD data matches the Relative deprivation literature

As discussed in the previous chapters, the relative Deprivation theory is defined in the moment where an individual sense the difference between what he is expecting to have and what he is rightful for. The most important idea in this theory is that the individual is spotting the mutual sensation of experiencing deprivation in various life's aspects including social, political, and economic status. The examination of "Relative Deprivation Theory" points to the exclusion fact and gives an improving insight on youth disconnection. Moreover, the mixture of economic disparity with the social elimination will force the rise of feelings of injustice and discontent (Gurr, 2011). The most essential hypothesis in this theory is that the focus on the inequality existing within a society is vital.

As mentioned earlier, there are numerous proofs that youth unemployment, weak governance, lack of political participation and marginalization can lead the youth to develop feelings of disintegration serving as a catalyst for radicalization (Frazer, 2009). For example, according to the FGD in Ain el Helwe Camp, educated youth who did not have access to the labor market are sensing the relative deprivation when they compare their situation to similar or less educated youth living outside the camp.

To put it another way, the youth explained that education was not meant for them as they were rejected from the whole Lebanese system. They expressed inferiority no matter how educated they become. Moreover, one of the youths mentioned that he joined the radical group after he could not secure a job elsewhere to help his family financially. Almost all the young men viewed education as a waste of money that can be used for daily life necessary expenses like food since chances of development and competition is pre-determined by the Lebanese government.

One of the participants said he does not care about the cause his group called for where his only concern is that his family has food, and this is the only reason he joined radicalized forces.

To add more, personal experiences can lead to radicalization as we saw earlier when we discussed the psychological factors of joining the radical groups. It is worth mentioning

that one of the young men that was present in the FGD revealed that the main reason to join the radical group is as a response to the discrimination he was subjected to. He said he used to work as a waiter in a coffee shop outside Ain el Helwe camp. He claims that he was the only one whose items were checked by the owner in fear that he would steal money or property. In addition, he described that he always felt inferior and criminalized for being a refugee, so he decided to join a group to gain power and equality. The feeling of being equal and accepted by others also refers to the Social Movement theory where individuals join the same group that shares the same discontent feeling. Moreover, this group also share the same identity and is engaged in a cultural or political conflict. The social movement can point out at such grievances to gain more rights (Crenshaw, 1981).

Moving on to the theory of rational choice which can also be applied to the youth's choices. As previously discussed, the main reason that pushes most young men to join radical groups is the financial need. The decision was rational, and they had no other choices. The young men's preferences are to secure income and assist their families. The path of action as mentioned by Amadae (2007) did match the youth's preferences.

Chapter 5

Preventing the Radicalization of Palestinian Youth

De-radicalization

This chapter primarily focuses on the findings and meanings of any de-radicalization policy and programmatic interventions. It will make various generalizations while recognizing research limitation and further needed research investigation.

To start with, de-radicalization as a terminology has various explanations. It is a process where the social and psychological attitudes of a fanatic human being are reduced to a point there is no more potential of getting involved in violence. Moreover, de-radicalization can be a program, or a policy shaped by states, civil society groups and international organizations, and researchers in the domain. The objective for some analysts is to reverse the radicalization mechanism while others do not link its segments to the initial radicalization circumstances (Rabasa et al, 2010).

Indeed, the term de-radicalization is a process where an individual overlooks an extremist belief rule to rebuke the use of violence for the sake of attaining a turnaround (Achour, 2009). The change on a social, economic, and political level will occur in a standardized mechanism while implicating other components of the environment (Achour, 2009). Alternatively, while there are processes that encourage an individual to become a radical, there are other processes where the same radical can reconsider violence, adopt more moderate beliefs, and yet distinct himself from extremists' groups (Baker, 2015).

The main target of de-radicalization programs is obtaining a great deal of information about extremist's ideologies and bringing up alternative new ideologies to be able to disprove them (RAND, 2010). Finally, sharing negative experiences of radicalization

process and groups leads to weakening the ideology of extremism and eventually promoting the thoughts of moderate values (RAND, 2010).

Additionally, policies helping in preventing extremism and radicalization have become an important component of the national strategies worldwide. Countries like the United States, Canada and Australia applied counter violent extremism policies, meanwhile other countries like France, Spain, and Norway proposed policies' drafts to counter terrorism (Frazer et al, 2015). The main aim of those policies is to implement preventive methods against violence. After the terrorist attacks in 9/11, the organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe requested engaging the fundamental motives of terrorism in order to respond to it by various methods. These two methods of counter terrorism are the main pillars of de-radicalization programs available across the European countries, Middle East, and Southeast Asia (Rabasa et al, 2010).

Also, the European Union's counter terrorism policy relied on four components related to radicalization: to prevent, to protect, to pursue and to respond where the prevention aspect is directly linked to the social reasons leading to radicalization (Rabasa et al, 2010). In the event of radicalization that is growing widely, the world's security is affected, as a response de-radicalization is much needed. The questions related to its nature, processes, interactions, and the difference between radicalization and de-radicalization become essential (Rabasa et al, 2010).

In other words, preventing radicalization is the sum of Countering Violent extremism (CVE) and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE). Stephens et al (2019) discusses methods of tackling VE by concentrating on precautionary methods outside the security structure. As a result, by granting civil rights and promoting equality, the Lebanese government will be targeting the main drivers behind radicalization of Palestinian youth, thus preventing extremism. In other words, since those drivers are characterized by their social aspects, applying the European Union's counter terrorism policy of prevention of radicalization by targeting underlying causes to protect the youth engagement, where the Lebanese government needs to pursue the grounds and act accordingly.

By the same token, de-radicalization can be achievable on an individual level. We can cite three examples for former radicals who became experts in de-radicalization: David Ross, Noman Benotman, and Henry Robinson. David was an ex-worker in a Wahhabi charity, and is currently the director of the Foundation for the defense of democracies. Noman was former member of the Libyan Islamic fighting group who became a senior analyst at the British Quilliam Foundation. Henry was a member in the Irish Republican Army and is currently one of the co funders of the families against intimidation (Baker, 2015). Given that, as more former radicals are encouraged to speak up publicly against extremism based on their experience, radical groups' magnetism would be challenged in the recruitment process (Rabasa et al, 2010).

In addition to the individual level of de-radicalization, there are de-radicalization programs which includes religious and psychological counselling. These programs are directly linked to a battle of thoughts, ideas, and conceptions. To emphasize, a theological exchange of opinions take place with religious figures and in some cases with former radicals to change the wrong religion interpretation that is imprinted within radicals' mentality (RAND, 2010). As has been noted, sometimes the theological dialogue is considered inefficient because several radicals maintain their beliefs and others see the alternative model presented as a continuation for the extremist ideas (Maher, 2010).

The third type of programs is the collective de-radicalization which includes political negotiations, ceasefires, and decommissioning of arms. On one side, there is a compelling de-radicalization program model set for the right-wing parties in northern Europe. The model was used in Norway and Sweden and consisted of five phases: motivation, disengagement, settlement, reflection, and stabilization. On the other side, the same model used in Columbia lead the state to abandon the military trials of The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia "FARC" members to encourage the demobilization process (Maher, 2010).

On the other hand, in the Muslim world, such as in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia, individuals involved in terrorism are rehabilitated in prisons by having a moderate religious re-education and psychological support (Baker, 2015).

In the recent years, an increase in the number of studies and research on de-radicalization has been noticed although experts in this field claimed a lack of studies focusing on the de-radicalization mechanism (Baker, 2015). The field gained more insights, understandings, new ideas and questions regarding the programs.

It is important to highlight the fact that when an individual disengages from terrorist acts or groups, it does not necessarily imply that he became de-radicalized. Certainly, this idea is known as disengagement, where prevention programs ensure tackling disengagement for its behavioral benefits but not as an automatic shift in an individual's beliefs (Baker, 2015). To explain more, researchers like John Horgan acknowledges that not all programs are competent, where some individuals in the demobilization process can undergo a relapse pushing them to rejoin the extremist groups (Baker, 2015).

As mentioned, in the past years, de-radicalization debates are linked to its distinction from disengagement. However, disengagement stands for the discontinuation of active participation in violence meanwhile de-radicalization denotes a change in a set of beliefs and ideas that sympathizes with violence (Rabasa et al, 2010). In other words, it is a process by which radical beliefs are rejected and moderate values are adopted.

Thus, de-radicalization can be more essential than getting radicals to abandon terrorist activities. The debate around the de-radicalization goal exists nowadays where the major question is: should the counter radicalization programs focus on changing radical's behavior, known as disengagement or on their beliefs known as de-radicalization (RAND, 2010)? For some researchers like Angel Rabasa, the aim of the program should be changing the radical's beliefs system, embrace a new moderate ideology, and rebuff intolerance. In addition, it is important to highlight that convincing the radicals to renounce violence is just a part of the program (RAND, 2010).

A worldwide survey where dozens of cases were examined by the Institute for strategic dialogue has stated that de-radicalization programs are efficient. The recommendations of this survey stated that the personal participation of the individuals should be voluntary and should have a high commitment. It concluded that, an efficient de-radicalization program would affect the individual's behavior and beliefs, however; if

the behavior did change but the previous thoughts did not, it implies that the program is not 100% successful (Rabasa et al, 2010).

On the other hand, the field of PVE literature has emerged and reached several sectors such as psychiatry, education, social work, criminology, and public health. As it is known, the individual level aspects, of analysis can be linked to psychiatry or psychology, while the societal level aspect is linked to public health, education, or social work (Neumann, 2013).

Thus, agreeing on radicalization prevention and PVE is challenging due to the disagreement on the definition of both. The idea of violent extremism is linked to a behavioral definition, where it shows that violence is a mean rather than just holding extreme views (Neumann, 2013). It also shows that it is possible to have extreme views that miss match the core values of a society, but not to the extent of violent extremism. As radicalization and PVE is the subject of nonstop research, regardless of how they are defined and explained, prevention methods and processes are vital to be examined. The goal for the rehabilitation process is to offer alternatives for the radicals by introducing a new network of support, economic incentive, and direct assistance (RAND, 2010).

Resilience

Individuals can be trained to have capacities and skills that help them avoid being attracted by the extremist groups or individuals. The strong individuals are portrayed as resilient, in this matter, to implement a prevention process. The competent side must promote cognitive resources, then emphasize character traits, and enroot certain values (Stephan et al, 2019).

At the same time, individuals should have well evolved cognitive capacities so they can analyze and understand disinformation and subliminal messages (Stephan et al, 2019). Therefore, it is recommended for these individuals to have a solid defense mechanism against these messages. What is important in this phase is to focus on the ideology's messages that can drag individuals into violence by promoting certain ways of thinking as a natural reaction of the disseminated propaganda (Stephan et al, 2019).

In other words, there should be a focus on the way of assessing the message rather than the message itself. For some researchers, the whole idea is to make an individual value pluralism rather than addressing or attacking the ideology itself (Stephan et al, 2019).

Moving to critical thinking which is the most common cognitive capacity that facilitates receiving and analyzing messages and ideas' content (Ghosh et al, 2016). So, education can play an important role by teaching the youth how to develop their cognitive abilities to perceive and analyze various kinds of messages, including those with extremist views. It's worth mentioning that developing critical thinking for political identity and citizenship at a young age can also assist in preventing radicalization by developing analysis skills towards messages and contents.

Regarding the psychological and character traits, and through a longitudinal intervention study performed by Feddes, Mann, and Dooje, factors such as empathy and self-esteem were assessed in respect to joining radical groups (Stephan et al, 2019). It is explained that to practice violence against people, violent individuals experience a dehumanizing phase that would demolish their normal moral boundaries which usually prohibit them to performing violent acts. Therefore, by tackling the psychological aspects and character traits, individuals will develop empathy towards violence victims as well as a moral perception to identify violence as cruel and prejudicial (Stephan et al, 2019). Another psychological aspect that aid in developing resistance against radicalization is developing self-esteem at a young age. However, this has led to a counter effect, where some children could develop narcissism which showed positive stands towards ideological violence (Stephan et al, 2019).

In this matter, resilience can be applied to Palestinians in Lebanon by empowering their cognitive abilities through awarded programs that can be merged to the educational system. In addition, developing analytical skills towards extremist's messages can be achieved by promoting a political identity and a clear status.

Values promotion

To counter any attempt of attraction by radicalized and extremist ideologies, the youth are encouraged to have a stronger set of ideas and beliefs which falls under the

objective of building strong resilience. The concept of human rights and citizenship are pertinent to develop acceptance to an inclusive culture. Admittedly, these two concepts help in promoting diversity and values of citizenships. They can also assist in building moral development and equipping the youth to stand up against extremism (Ghosh et al, 2016). Researchers claim that promoting values of tolerance, community, and fellowship can deter extremism (McNair et al, 2017). In Addition, including tolerance in youth's education will implicate an acceptance for diversity in the world building resilience against radicalization (Davydov, 2015).

As a result, by promoting human rights and providing a political status, the Lebanese government would be promoting diversity and inclusiveness. This would dramatically aid in changing the youth perspective towards the host community by building affection and stronger sense of responsibility to the host community.

Community

Communities can play an important role in protecting the youth from extremism by tackling the hardships that can be the trigger for their attraction. Two important concepts emphasize the role of the community: community engagement and community resilience (Cherny, 2016).

The concept of community engagement is well known in the PVE literature. It highlights the partnership between the citizen and the authorities, mainly the quality of the interaction between the security agencies and the civilians. It is recommended for police officials to invest more in understanding the communities they serve. It will gain them extensive cultural comprehension to its various groups including the most vulnerable community that might be susceptible to radicalization (Cherny, 2016).

Although the Lebanese government does not impose full authority over the camps, it acquires strict security bases resembled by check points at the entrance of every camp. Thus, by monitoring and guiding the interactions between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian refugee, the Lebanese government would address the vulnerability of the refugee community in respect to this security situation.

On the other hand, community groups and organizations can have a more familiar and influential role in the eyes of all community components. A preventive approach could be put in place as a risk reduction tool only if practitioners invest in this matter (Subedi, 2017). Therefore, there must be a clear understanding on the radicalization process and youth recruitment so preventive measures could be considered seriously to be developed and applied on a community level. This process can serve the role of an early warning system in the communities. Violent acts and conflicts are linked and have so much in the causal factors, such as social-economic vulnerabilities known as social and political exclusion, high rates of poverty, low levels education and so on. Community based early warning systems can be developed and benefit from lessons learned from previous experiences (Subedi, 2017).

The Resilient Community

The main idea of the resilient community resides on the fact that community members can prevent each other to engage in violent activities. The role is not limited to cooperate with the state only, but also to highlight the characteristics and the quality of social connections within the communities. The crucial component of the relations is the focus on the social bonding between the communities from one side, and between the communities and the state in what we call the social linking from the other side (Kruglanski et al, 2014).

This can only be achieved by promoting human rights to the Palestinian community. Granting civil rights emphasize cooperation between the Lebanese and Palestinian communities and minimize existential threats. Through this manner, community members develop sense of affection and responsibility towards the other community, where radicalization becomes unjustified among the refugee community.

As mentioned earlier, many states adopted programs that help the de-radicalization process in prisons, such as KSA, Indonesia, and Iraq. However, these efforts were led by a group of specialists (in social sciences and psychology) to assess and recommend the best practices (Kruglanski et al, 2014).

There is a difference between the implicit and the explicit de-radicalization attempts. The first aims to highlight the sentiment and need of integrating vocational education courses, increasing the chances of reintegrating in the society and affecting the feeling of personal significance for the individual, while the later aims to analyze and justify ideologies (Kruglanski et al, 2014). Moderate religious figures can help in leading on the de-radicalization attempts by enlightening the suspects on the need to focus on the internal struggles for the good, rather than using violence against people with counter believes. Muslim countries stated earlier have conducted this policy where they managed, in some programs, to denounce violence used by senior commanders in radical groups, such as the Muslim brotherhood and Jihad Group in Egypt in the 1990's (Kruglanski et al, 2014). It is worth mentioning that not all programs were clearly demanding the renouncement of violence; however, sometimes it was enough to

renounce the former radical group or radical leader instead of renouncing the wrong act (Horgan et al, 2012).

Moreover, in order to prevent a relapse in engaging terror activities, many risk reduction initiatives were launched specially after the story of Ibrahim el Rubaish and Abu hareth Mohamad El Awfi, the former detainees in Guantanamo who rejoined AL Qaida after they graduated from the rehabilitation program in KSA. This has raised many questions about the program's effectiveness, the data retrieved, and other radicalization indicators. Extremism relapse is still not specified. Individuals join terrorism for different reasons and quit it for other ones. Once the reasons become clear, scholars can evaluate the effectiveness of the risk reduction policies (Horgan, et al 2012).

In Saudi Arabia, only 45 radicals out of 1400 were re-radicalized after completing the de-radicalization program. This was considered as a successful model and an icon for other countries (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2009). The program was accompanied with media campaigns to influence the radical individual's mindset. Moreover, some of the detained individuals were in Guantanamo prison where 20% of the former detainees have re-engaged in terrorist plans (Mount, 2010). Meanwhile, one of radicals of Parson Green London attack in 2017 was participating in this preventive program that countered re-radicalization (Ward, 2019).

The Saudi de-radicalization program starts while the radical serves his time in prison and it extends to activities after his release (Bjorgo et al, 2008). The participants are trained to acquire critical thinking methods to retaliate the messages that they might receive after their release in an attempt of re-radicalization as previously mentioned in this chapter. This method will assist rehabilitated individuals to sustain their anti-extremism position (Horgan, et al 2012). The aim of this effort is to support the former radical with the means to reintegrate in the society. Scholars claim that lessons learnt from programs must be precise because each country has specifications, thus the programs cannot always be generalized or applied in different countries. Finally, unless metrics analysis and necessary data for a specific evaluation are applied, the

comparisons might not be enough to highlight a successful program as an implicit model that can be applied elsewhere (Horgan, et al 2012).

This study has revealed that most radicals came from poor areas, with almost poor education, low income, and were radicalized after the recruitment phase (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2009). De-radicalization can be important to reduce the direct threat imposed by radicals for a certain period; however, if radicals conditioned their seizure of violence to their freedom, then it is more likely that they would reengage in violent acts (RAND, 2010). In Lebanon, such cases of relapse were present where several radicals from “Naher el Bared” battles were released and then re-detained for terror convictions (Mussawi, 2020). That is why there is a wide debate in the research community about the efficiency of the de-radicalization programs, since for some it does not possess a feasible goal. It can be difficult when facing individuals with deep rooted ideology which the components are considered as to do tasks (Rabasa et al, 2010).

This emphasizes that de-radicalization programs are only effective when they directly target the underlying cause of radicalization. As a result, when Palestinian detainees undergo de-radicalization programs, social deprivation and rejection must be addressed. In other words, deradicalization programs for Palestinian refugees must tackle society reintegration. However, this is not possible without granting Palestinians human rights that allows them to be an effective part of the Lebanese society.

Prevention methods and rehabilitation programs complement each other. European states are trying to de-radicalize the extremists. ME and South east Asian countries are launching de-radicalization initiatives to prevent young individuals to engage in radical groups. On the other hand, radical groups provide support and assistance to its members along with their families such as basic needs, financial aids, and other types of interventions (Rabasa et al, 2010). Therefore, de-radicalization programs should encourage and train the rehabilitated members to find and identify new sources of income. Moreover, constant monitoring should take place to insure smoother society reintegration. Finally, to be able to evaluate a specific counter terrorism programs or prevention programs, effectiveness shall be monitored on the short and long term.

On another level, the struggle with CVE programs lies in tackling the radicalization factors, the use of force, and security which can take place undermining the efforts of de-radicalization (Subedi, 2017). Due to the complexity of the program, it is recommended to deal with ease and sensitivity in terms of security (Subedi, 2017). Dealing with the tight security grip including surveillance policies and applying strict counter terrorism laws in a context of social-economic and psychological grievances would probably cause more damage and resilience to the radicalized individuals (Subedi, 2017). The point is to understand the violence drivers in certain communities to better deal with the dynamics of extremism. For example, in Australia a community-based program was launched with an easy security approach. The program encouraged local partnership and aims to counter what is called home grown extremism by facilitating the re-integration in the society (Subedi, 2017). In short, to comprehend the youth radicalization, competent agencies should assess inequalities, exclusion, crimes, social justice, and its effects on extremism.

The last generation of the early warning and response systems rely on a local approach to collect and analyze data findings. The objective is to let those who have a better access to the affected community to get the most efficient information (Subedi, 2017). In this regard, local partners can help in evaluating the radicalization indicators and help in preventing the youth from engaging in violence extremism. The following two separate examples would support this argument. A Network of German mothers (who previously faced of a jihadist radicalization in their own families) have prevented many youths to join the radical groups by detecting early signs in their cultural context. The other example is in Indonesia where a network brought youth to discuss their differences and to accept the diversity among them. The sense of solidarity and empathy would encourage other partners to join these efforts to fight the youth recruitment into radical groups (Subedi, 2017). Of course, the risks are always present due to the political interaction with such programs, especially when the local partners are seeking protection and formal recognition. The lack of cooperation would demotivate the locals and the process would be in danger. Another challenge can be in place where locals are not enough trained and do not have always enough skills to collect and report on the needed information (Subedi, 2017).

Security measures should not be strict and political interventions should be positive. Programs must take into consideration that the individuals' interests change as circumstances change, thus the needs and preventions might change over time. Finally, the aim for any prevention method is to help individuals repel the radicalized mentality whether before engaging in groups or after disengagement and guide them through proper society re-engagement.

On the other hand, both collective and individual level de-radicalization processes do complement each other (Achour, 2009). Programs that combine these two types are the most efficient. It is important to note that collective de-radicalization attempts tend to reach bigger numbers of radicals at the same time. De-radicalization at the collective level within organizations and groups did not receive much attention comparing to individual de-radicalization (Achour, 2009). Several similarities exist between collective and individual de-radicalization such as the trigger event or moment that leads renounce violence, elaboration of the benefits and costs of affiliating to a radicalized organization and finally the turning point after the decision (Rabasa et al, 2010).

Usually it starts with the elite rethinking their strategy and tactics on the organizational level (Achour, 2009). Radicals may start withdrawing from their extremist groups when they start having doubts regarding their capability of achieving goals. A radical group starts doubting the possibility of achieving its goals when the security grip becomes tighter and restrictions are being imposed on the radical group's members and activities (Achour, 2009). Moreover, having a religious theology exchange in prisons where radicals are prone to different ideologies from other individuals can promote a realization that they were previously misguided and would lead many radicals to start doubting their group's ideology (Achour, 2009).

In addition, radical groups start to de-radicalize when the official authorities start to provide incentives (Achour, 2009). Knowing that this event is rare, the afterlife bounty for radicals in return of their so-called Jihad is a real obstacle to renounce violence. This is illustrated in the below figure.

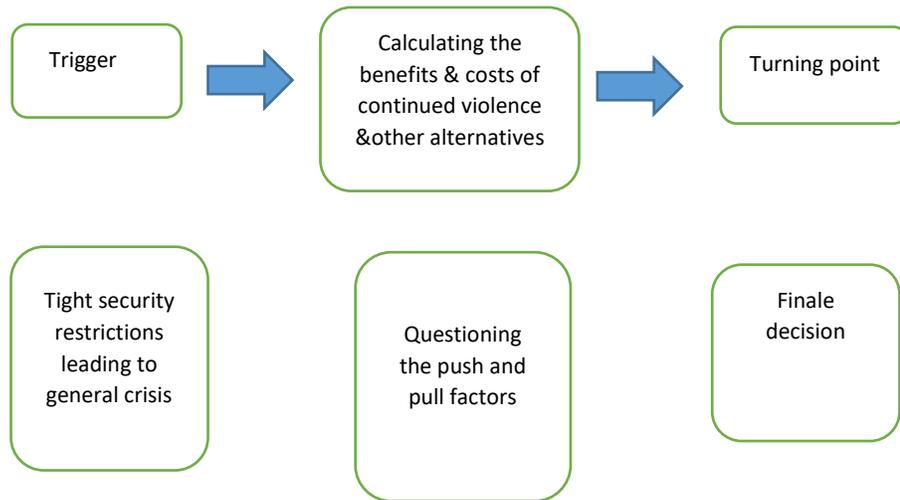


Figure 10: Stages of organization level de-radicalization

Moreover, just after the final decision, challenges can occur when the interaction with the rest of the group takes place. The moderate leaders will have to deal with all the organization knowing already that other figures may not accept the new status-quo. The implication would result in a division within the same organization. To promote such an important shift and decision, the moderate leaders need to have the support of their followers. Most likely, it will depend on their power, control, and means to have support for such a decision (Achour, 2009). In the end, de-radicalization occurs in the context of a bigger collective mechanism than when a single individual withdraws from a radical group. The justification should be religious, so that the trusted leaders of the group can convince the rest of the organization to renounce violence to avoid being labeled as traitors, or having some personal motivations or gain in return of renouncing violence (Achour, 2009). The collective de-radicalization program got lower rates of violence re-engagement because the behavior and the attitude changed (Rabansa et al 2010). In fact, it will be always difficult to identify and assess for now if the former radicals of a de-radicalized group have really been disengaged or de-radicalized.

To sum it all, de-radicalization can make a violence engagement relapse looks way tougher when it's linked to a disengagement policy (Rabasa et al, 2010). The program's aims should be obvious towards disengagement or de-radicalization. The first one aims

to a behavioral change, withdrawal from radical groups, while the other one targets a mutation in the belief system. An individual can be disengaged without radicalization but cannot be de-radicalized without disengagement. He can withdraw from a radical group, renounce violence but still holds a radical thinking.

In brief, and based on the above findings, addressing the deprivation of the Palestinian human rights in Lebanon would aid in diminishing radicalization. By attaining human rights, Palestinians would be lawfully able to integrate into the Lebanese society on various levels including the labor market. This would decrease feelings of rejection generated by the host community, and in return, will diminish resentment that promote vulnerability to radicalization.

Conclusion

To sum it all, there are not enough studies linking youth engagement with extremist groups in the Palestinian camps to the radicalization literature. However, this thesis has examined part of them and did confirm that the Relative Deprivation theory can be applied precisely to youth radicalization in the Palestinian camps. Moreover, as per the FGD's outputs, the SMT can be partially applied in the part where the youth join radical groups to search for a collective identity. Finally, Rational Choice theory was considered as secondary in importance due to the fact that displacement and civil rights tend to be collective issues where deprivation is an overwhelming condition rather than a matter of choice. The findings above reveal facts about the current situation of the Palestinian refugees and how vulnerable they are because of the Lebanese state regulations and the international community failure in applying the right of return.

It is also good to highlight that until today there is no unified definition for neither radicalization nor de-radicalization. The disunity also includes the allocation of causes of radicalization, and thus researchers have different opinions regarding possible solutions. Specifically, in Lebanon, and according to conducted interviews with experts, there is a lack of studies regarding the causes and solutions of radicalization among

Palestinian youth. Thus, this paper aims to provide a potential for a basic link between available literature and reality.

This research paper also emphasizes the processes of detention and imprisonment and how they can affect both radicalization and deradicalization processes. According to the literature, studies, and expert interviews conducted, the respect of human rights and society re-integration programs entail a vital role in the process of de-radicalization. On the other hand, it also highlights that the lack of those rights and disintegration from society subject prisoners to radicalization.

The most important part of the thesis was dedicated to link the radicalization literature to the Palestinian case in the camps to explain how their displacement and refugeehood are the main factors behind their radicalization. In other research, this topic lacked attention and solutions were poorly addressed. Various studies exclusively tackled the socio-economic status of the refugees without paying attention to other vital aspects of the problem. This thesis proposes several recommendations on how to better support the de-radicalization process to reduce youth engagement with radical groups. Further studies can be based on our hypothesis and recommendations by elaborating more on the de-radicalization programs in the Lebanese context.

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NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

To: Ms. Mona Saadi
Dr. Imad Salamey
Associate Professor
School of Arts & Sciences

NOTICE ISSUED: 27 November 2020
EXPIRATION DATE: 27 November 2021
REVIEW TYPE: EXPEDITED – Initial

Date: November 27, 2020

RE: **IRB #:** LAU.SAS.IS2.27/Nov/2020

Protocol Title: *Palestinian Youth Radicalization in Lebanese Camps: A Focus on the Link of Political and Civil Rights*

The above referenced research project has been approved by the Lebanese American University, Institutional Review Board (LAU IRB). This approval is limited to the activities described in the Approved Research Protocol and all submitted documents listed on page 2 of this letter. **Enclosed with this letter are the stamped approved documents that must be used.**

APPROVAL CONDITIONS FOR ALL LAU APPROVED HUMAN RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

LAU RESEARCH POLICIES & PROCEDURES: All individuals engaged in the research project must adhere to the approved protocol and all applicable LAU IRB Research Policies & Procedures. PARTICIPANTS must NOT be involved in any research related activity prior to IRB notice date or after the expiration date.

PROTOCOL EXPIRATION: The LAU IRB approval expiry date is listed above. The IRB Office will send an email at least 45 days prior to protocol approval expiry - Request for Continuing Review - in order to avoid any temporary hold on the initial protocol approval. It is your responsibility to apply for continuing review and receive continuing approval for the duration of the research project. Failure to send Request for Continuation before the expiry date will result in suspension of the approval of this research project on the expiration date.

MODIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS: All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

NOTIFICATION OF PROJECT COMPLETION: A notification of research project closure and a summary of findings must be sent to the IRB office upon completion. Study files must be retained for a period of 3 years from the date of notification of project completion.

IN THE EVENT OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ABOVE CONDITIONS, THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR SHOULD MEET WITH THE IRB ADMINISTRATORS IN ORDER TO RESOLVE SUCH CONDITIONS. IRB APPROVAL CANNOT BE GRANTED UNTIL NON-COMPLIANT ISSUES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact the IRB office by email at irb@lau.edu.lb

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The IRB operates in compliance with the national regulations pertaining to research under the Lebanese Minister of Public Health's Decision No.141 dated 27/1/2016 under LAU IRB Authorization reference 2016/3708, the international guidelines for Good Clinical Practice, the US Office of Human Research Protection (45CFR46) and the Food and Drug Administration (21CFR56). LAU IRB U.S. Identifier as an international institution: FWA00014723 and IRB Registration # IRB00006954 LAUIRB#1

Dr. Joseph Stephan
 Chair, Institutional Review Board



DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED:

LAU IRB Initial Protocol Application	Received 10 November 2020, amended 25 November 2020
Research Proposal	Received 10 November 2020, amended 25 November 2020
Consent Introduction to FGD	Received 10 November 2020
Informed Consent interviews (English)	Received 10 November 2020
Informed Consent interviews (Arabic)	Received 10 November 2020, amended 25 November 2020
FGD Tools	Received 10 November 2020
Interview tool	Received 10 November 2020
Comments sent by the IRB 16 November 2020 24 November 2020	Response received by the PI 19 November 2020 25 November 2020
CITI Training – Imad Salamey	Cert.# 39646330 Dated (15 November 2020)
CITI Training – Mona Saadi	Cert.# 38857767 Dated (14 November 2020)

