

How to Destroy the Ideology of Jihadism

A Whitepaper by East Africa Counter Terrorism Database (<https://www.eactdatabase.com>).

Published on SEPTEMBER 2021.

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The Jihadists' greatest weapon and tool is that the overall ideologies and principles that guide them are rooted in the sanctity of the Islamic values and teachings of the Quran and other religious texts. The righteousness of the movement and the simple nature of their operating principles is both their greatest strength and weakness. Therefore, the weakest point in their ideology is also the strongest which means by attacking their interpretations of the religious stands to nullify the simplistic message is the most fundamental aspect in dismantling the movements.

Exposing flaws and contradictions in their use and interpretation of the Islamic Values.

The whole ideology of Jihadism takes very aggressive aspects of religious subtexts and other Islamic values that are crafted into the propaganda that is preached to target audiences. Most texts and values have been used, repeated, and been incited by the use of pompous language in propaganda videos and teachings to only fit the narrative that prompts the protection of the Muslims from others. Instead countering the narrative by using the same texts but with moderate interpretations has proven effective. Attacking the foundation of the entire ideology implants doubts in the minds of people and as such reducing blind loyalty and radicalization.

Exploit Rivalries between opposing Jihadism ideologies.

As there have been rivalries between groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda such can be exploited to undermine the legitimacy of the other. Such strategies will allow for doubt and the possibility of the creation of a less radical and extreme narrative to be undermined especially among the youth who are easily swayed.

Reform and re-evaluate the role of education systems, mentors, and influential figures in fighting against radicalization and extremism

Jihadist groups have been historically known to use Madrasa and the education system to further their ideology and as such the education systems ought to be instrumental in destroying Jihadism. The systems should incorporate a more rational and simple narrative that socializes and educates the children and youth using a curriculum that deviates from extremism. Pop culture, celebrities, musicians, athletes, and role models, religious figures should be at the forefront to debunk the propaganda peddled by the jihadists. More effort if not directly proportional to the Jihadists' like the use of social media and other channels accessible to the youth should be put in play to present an opposing narrative to the jihadists' propaganda.

Religious leaders

Religious leaders who are the pillar of most Muslim Communities should work to disrupt the influence of religious literalism, by promoting the application of interpretations that encourage the existence of a utopian Islamic State. They should also discourage the interpretation that suggests that alternative forms of government and instead work with democratically installed governments to increase representation and inoculate against extremist movements and ideologies.

They should strive to work with civil societies to ensure that CT responses are not exclusively tailored to young men, in an effort to address the growing phenomenon of women and families who are radicalized and travel to Jihadi-territories.

Technology Companies

Tech companies rather than simply removing extremist content and propaganda, which can play into jihadist' dualistic depiction of 'nonbelievers' censoring the sole truth, platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Google could use expert guidance to promote credible religious sharable material that invalidates the jihadi message. Search engines, social media, and video-sharing websites could use algorithms and positive flagging systems to ensure this content is as visible as possible, as well as providing warnings that certain search terms might lead to extremist material. While it is not foolproof, this will ensure that impressionable people have access to material rebuts extremism.

Identify, empower and send out trained imams and psychologists

This can be done with the creation of youth centers that are run by people from the community who are active on the streets, intervene in recruitment, and work with those at risk. The centers can also be used to de-radicalize, rehabilitate and convert those who have already committed such acts and use them to dissuade vulnerable populations.

Government response

Democratically elected governments should be aware that the reason that most jihadists are attracted to the utopian Islamic state is the failing nature of most governments and the desertion of certain people and regions. Thus, governments should strive to offer their civilians relatively proportionally attention in addressing historical injustices, social, economic, and political rows that in turn push people towards the need to wage Jihad. The employment creation process should be synonymous with the improvement of the education system which equates to the capping of the unemployment gap. Empowerment should be a fundamental citizen right to ensure that anger, hopelessness, and desperation are not avenues exploited by recruiters for terror organizations.

Additionally, the governments should seek out de-escalation strategies that will prevent military intervention as the default response to any form of unrest and dissent. This is true as violence begets violence as history has shown which means strategies should be healing and restorative instead of violent and offensive which have indirectly fueled and fostered most jihadi movements that have turned violent.