

Mentoring: A Faith Based Relational Leadership Approach in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Kenya.

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Abstract

The article examines the role that mentoring, a critical relational leadership process would have in preventing and countering violent extremism by first examining the contexts of radicalization into violent extremism and past violent extremist attacks. Youths and adolescents in Kenya have been radicalized into violent extremism with resultant acts of terror that have resulted in; mass fatalities, casualties, destruction of facilities, disruption of livelihoods and business, and creation of immense fear within the public. The first major attack that seemed to have opened this cycle of al Qaeda and al Shabaab-led Jihadist attacks was the August, 1998 twin-bombing of the USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Since then, we have had the advent of; al Qaeda, its affiliate al Shabaab, and ISIS attacks rising within the African continent with heavy impacts of death trails, casualties, and destruction. This year, Kenya has suffered a number of attacks targeting both soft and hard targets. Among the soft targets was the attack targeting Dusit Hotel in the upmarket 14 Riverside Complex, which left 21 Kenyans and foreigners dead. By extension there have been a number of IED attacks targeting the security services of Kenya many fatalities and casualties. All these attacks have been executed by violent extremists among who are Kenyan youth who have been recruited and radicalized into violent extremism as an ideology that is leveraged on the Islam religion. This ideology of Jihadism is skewed but uses narratives that easily appeal to those targeted for radicalization. Consequently there is an urgent need to have in place relevant mentoring leadership practice to enhance worldviews and perspectives among youth and adolescents which are in tandem with what a sane world subscribes to. It then becomes imperative to have a faith-based mentoring approach that is devoid of extremism and which gives the pool of those targeted a leadership component. This deliver a countering and preventive relational leadership model enhancing resilience of individuals and communities, while countering narratives and propaganda inherent in the recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism. Following literature review and conceptualization of the variables, this article concludes that preventive and countering violent extremism measures are best deployed first amongst the youth, who form the largest and most vulnerable pool of those targeted for radicalization due to; their crave for an identity, promises of a utopian caliphate on earth and life upon death, poverty, joblessness, presence of ungoverned spaces such as the complex cyber space, and dysfunctional social systems including families.

Keywords: Leadership, mentoring, youths, radicalization, adolescents, faith based organizations, women, collaboration, violent extremism, terrorism, Jihadism.

Introduction

Terrorism has been one of the most dehumanizing, fear-instilling, disruptive, sadistic, destructive, and exploitive manifestation of violent extremism based on skewed irrational Islamic worldviews of Jihadist leaders and their followers (Goepner, 2016; Haki Kenya, 2014). Kenya has borne the full blunt of both AQ and its affiliate Al Shabaab's terror attacks as witnessed in the attacks on; US embassy, West Gate, Garissa university, churches, bus stages, buses on transit, Mandera quarry workers who were Christians, Safaricom Masts, dispensaries, foreign workers, and IED attacks targeting security services (Akwiri, 2014; Mohamed, 2014; Njoku et al., 2018).

Following the 9/11 debilitating attacks by Al Qaeda on America, a number of strategic interventions involving collaboration across; agencies in nations, regions, and global actors of security have been initiated, with successful implementation (Goepner, 2016; Goodrich, 2002). Within the implementation frameworks has been the formulation of coalitions focusing on dynamic approaches towards the global war on terror (GWOt) as witnessed in; Somalia, Mali, Iraq, and Syria. By extension nations have formulated national strategies on countering violent extremism (NSCVE) as seen in Kenya, under the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), and the National Strategy for Counterterrorism of USA (NSCT-USA, 2018).

In spite of the many counter terrorism (CT) knowledge packages developed through a wide spectrum of researchers and other actors, as seen in the outcomes under; criminology, sociology, communication, anthropologists, and economists, there has been minimal footprints of leadership researchers in regard to; terrorism, counter terrorism, preventing and countering violent extremism (Braddock, 2017). Further research vacuum is in the leadership role of faith based organizations in CT and PCVE, besides the glaring gaps of the same organizations for they lack proactive participation in research towards understanding their leadership roles in the GWOt.

It is further observed by the authors that the role of leadership has not been singled out by the many researchers including (Alkaff & Siyech, 2017; Finn & Hafez, 2016; Goepner, 2016, Nyaga, 2018), who have to the contrary, only focused on the rhymes of the different contextual push and pull factors into radicalization. Empirical evidence makes the scenario more complex by showing that religious beliefs and practices have not been integrated into the managing and mitigating disasters (Gianisa & De, 2018). This is despite the fact that terrorism delivers disasters in different faith based contexts as observed in incidents such as the atrocious bomb attacks on churches during Easter festivities in April 21st, 2019 in Sri Lanka. Every terror attack negatively affects; civil, business, and national continuity with an inherent need for the Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) to understand this and hence have in place resilience strategies. Such strategies should include business continuity plans.

The major demographic pools targeted for recruitment and consequent radicalization into violent extremism in Kenya, one of the countries heavily affected by terror activities, are adolescents and youth (Nyaga, 2018), including girls and women. The research further cites dysfunctional families characterized by abdication of parents and politicians from their duties, with suggestions for government, parents, and society to play their critical roles of enhancing the psychological wellbeing of adolescents and youth. Psychological fortification of children, adolescents, and youth is a pivotal facet in the creation of resilience against violent extremism approaches and strategies.

There are far reaching ramifications on demographic dividends core towards community and national growth emanating from radicalization and consequent violent extremism. Among these ramifications are the; fatalities, casualties, trauma, destruction, and disruption of livelihoods caused by the attacks, untold suffering to the families of such youth, definite loss of life for such youths. There is use of a substantial amount of the national resources towards the GWOt to the tune of 13% of the gross domestic product (GDP) which would have been used for the much needed national growth activities (Mark, 2015).

This then places an inescapable role on the shoulders of leadership researchers into coming up with methodologies of enhancing the PCVE leadership practices and processes. This should permeate across the many youth and adolescents, who are the main targets across demographics and various spaces. Such a leadership-based strategy is a definite intervention resonating with the PCVE approaches as anticipated within the ambit of national countering violent extremism strategies as seen in the NSCVE of Kenyan whose pillars of; religion and ideology, psychosocial, education, legislation and policy, and security resonate with leadership-based approaches.

Captured at the node of faith based organizations it then becomes an important inclusive leadership model core towards involving families, FBOs, adolescent, and youth in charting thought processes and engagements that are not only rational but of utmost significance; thoughts, worldviews, and engagements devoid of extremism ideologies. By extension it cultivates a culture of collaborative leadership through bringing on board; linkages among; FBOs, families, adolescents, youth, leadership researchers, and governments. No wonder then that after the attack on Dusit in Kenya a number of religious leaders called on all faiths to ensure that they develop the practice of accounting for their youth (Nzwili, 2019).

Terrorism

Since the advent of Al Qaeda as a Jihadist group, there have been many terror attacks on both soft and hard targets targeting a plethora of states and nations having relationships with the West, premised on the ideology of al Qaeda as well as its affiliates on one hand. On the other hand, other emerging twenty-first century Jihadist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) together with a number of its affiliates, who have pledged allegiance to ISIS leadership, have left a heavy trail of; fatalities, casualties, destruction, disruption, and fear across the; facilities, communities, and nations that they have attacked.

Despite the long-awaited killing of Osama Bin Laden, the elusive AQ leader who authored the deadly 9/11 attack on US, AQ showed unique; survival, agility, and flexibility abilities after his death. This resilience had not been factored into the counterterrorism strategies by the actors of the global war on terror (GWOt). Instead, the main leadership of the GWOt was majorly focusing on the emerging and extremely violent major Jihadist group, ISIS, following the announcement of its caliphate, United States Institute of Peace, (USIP, 2017). This blindsiding of the actors of GWOt led to the unprecedented global proliferation of AQ, and complex mutation of Jihadism, resulting in a new form of complexity in the GWOt.

Among the camouflage, win-win strategies and diversionary techniques deployed by AQ includes capitalising on spaces that were either ungoverned or under-governed. This is achieved by; supplying essential needs for locals such as governance models, health services, food, forging strategic alliance with local militias, and withdrawal from some of their operational areas (Alkaff & Siyech, 2017; Finn & Hafez,

2016). In Syria, Nusra Front an AQ affiliate rebranded into Jabhat Fateh al-Sham in 2016, as a strategic move towards acceptance and avoidance of inter-Jihadist conflicts (USIP, 2017).

For Jihadist groups to maintain their murderous activities, presence and essence, they use elaborate contextual methods towards targeting vulnerable members of communities and in particular the; youth, women, adolescents, and children upon which such groups are recruited and then radicalized through skewed radical ideological propaganda. Fertile grounds for recruitment include unstable states and nations as seen in the ecosystem provided by the current Yemen conflict which resulted in the formation of the al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), an affiliate of AQ (The Soufan Group, 2016). Within the unstable states and nations are the spaces across the informal sectors, while for stable states the spaces are within the formal public spaces including; family, learning, religious, business, and cyber spaces.

Al Shabaab

In Africa, AQ has affiliates that include the al Shabaab whose base, Somalia, is yet another ecosystem characterized by both under- and un-governed spaces and territories, with a characteristic trend of waging its Jihadism towards having an AS –led Somali government. Al Shabaab pledged its allegiance to AQ in 2008 and has been the greatest terror threat to East African region and in particular to Somalia and Kenya (Warner & Chapin, 2018).

Another Al Qaeda affiliate Jihadist group in Africa is Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimi (JNIM) of Mali, an affiliate of Al Qaeda in Maghreb (AQIM), whose estimated number of fighters by April, 2018 was 800 (Warner & Hulme, 2018). Mali has borne the full blunt of the different Jihadist groups that are within its boundaries where some have bases in the Wagadou woodlands ecosystem, and those from the surrounding nations that include; Boko Haram who have pledged allegiance to ISIS, those from Niger and Southern Libya, and AQIM (USIP, 2017).

Within the ranks of Al-Shabaab are hundreds of foreign Jihadists, its transnational signature, including; Kenyan youths, Americans, Yemenis, Syrian–Americans, Saudi–Arabians, Pakistanis, and Sudanese, playing critical strategic roles such as; funding, recruitment, training, and cyber terrorism by preparing and disseminating online; propaganda, training, sourcing for funding and attack materials (ICG, 2010; Michael, 2017; Weber, 2015).

ISIS

Following the announcement of the ISIS physical caliphate on June 30th, 2014, there was an array of activities across the globe from three main fronts; actors of GWOt, al Qaeda, and thousands of ISIS followers from across over 100 countries. This strategic statement by ISIS created a global complexity that saw mass movement involving; families, professionals, girls and boys, youths, former members of other Jihadist groups, to Syria through a firm belief in the utopian caliphate nature that was promised (USIP, 2017). During a Wajir county focus group discussion on radicalization, a critical CVE exercise in Kenya, a participant narrated how the son got radicalized and finally joined ISIS, one of the many indicators of ISIS presence in Kenya (United Nations Development Program, UNDP, 2017).

A major bioterror attack targeting mass fatalities organized by Mohammed Abdi Ali, a Kenyan medical intern and a member of ISIS was thwarted in 2016 (Mwangi, 2016 May 14; Zadock, 2016 May 3). Ali belonged to an affiliate group of ISIS known as Jabha East Africa which is part of the ISIS presence in the East Africa region with other affiliate groups being; Islamic State of Somalia (ISS), and Islamic State in Somalia Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda (Warner & Hulme, 2018). The instruction to ISIS fighters and sympathizers in December 2017 to hunt Christians and kill them further shows the threat ISIS, its affiliates, and supporters pose to the region and in particular to targeted non-Muslims.

Radicalization

Radicalization is a process that involves indoctrination of an individual through the use of skewed Islamic based beliefs and values, into violent extremism and terrorism with such individuals either becoming operatives of violent extremism in terror attacks or playing other roles in terrorism such as; recruitment, financing, radicalization, intelligence gathering, and assembling of IEDs (Rahimullah, Larmar, & Abdalla, 2013). The social space that is part of the radicalization spectrum, in which individuals are recruited and radicalised into violent extremism, is highly complex with continuous change. Some of its parameters are; narratives on national wealth and its skewed distribution, social exclusion relationships in a diffuse society, cultural diversity, and normative perspectives (Cooney & Bigman, 2015).

The drivers towards one becoming radicalized then vary in line with the many contexts that an individual is exposed to within different environments which include; family, faith, organizational, cyber, legal, political, and socio-economic ecosystems. Among these drivers include the need for a national identity in the youth (USIP, 2016), and particularly for those who lack exposure to relevant dialogues that capture their worldviews as well as those of others.

Wanderlust serves as another driver towards radicalization of the youth (USIP, 2016), together with readily available online Jihadist propaganda captured through the cyber radicalization platforms (Hamm & Spaaj, 2017). It is worth noting that some youth want to be celebrities, wanderlust, and thus join violent extremists with that motive in mind.

By extension research has shown that religion can be a key factor towards radicalization into violent extremism with some cultural components including beliefs that are fatalistic, adding to violent behaviors in the radicalized (Schmid, 2014). Radical Muslim figures with prominent justifications for Jihad premised on well thought out misinterpretation of Islam, as witnessed in the utterances of radicalization and Jihad by bin Laden and al al-Awlaki (Rahimullah et al., 2013), have played a major (mis-)leadership role in shaping tragic misguided global Jihadism. No wonder then some mosques and their firebrand clerics have been involved in the recruitment and consequent radicalization of Muslim youth as witnessed in the case of Sheikh Aboud Rogo in Kenya (Ndzovu, 2014).

Radicalization and use of children

As observed by Bloom, Horgan, & Winter, (2018), between 2015 and 2016 Jihadist groups such as ISIS had normalized the use of children and youth in serving the same roles as adult operatives. On May 13th, 2018, in Surabaya, Indonesia, a family within which were two teenagers and two children, simultaneously

attacked three churches through suicide bombing resulting in 13 fatalities and 41 casualties (Schulze, 2018). These family borne attacks were a response from an extremist ideology calling for the targeted attack of idolaters, unbelievers, and those showing deviance to the words of Allah (Schulze, 2018).

Recruitment and consequent radicalization of children has been on the rise with the United Nation verifying 274 cases in 2015, involving the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, with other children being recruited in Kenya and Somalia by AS, a case repeated by Jihadists in Mali, Nigeria, and Philippines (UNODC, 2017). The report further outlines that, such children pose future threats to humanity not just from the lens of terrorism but also from those of plausible war crimes as well as crimes against humanity such as genocide.

Radicalization in Kenya

In Kenya, radicalization has focused on social exclusion narratives citing; marginalization based on lack of provision of basic services by government, mistreatment by security services including alleged extra judicial killings, negative ethnicity, perceived historical injustices and supremacy of Islam religion (BoC, 2017; Ndzovu, 2014). Other skewed and irrational cards played by the Jihadist groups include the entry of the Kenya Defence Forces into Somalia with alleged accusations of atrocities committed against the Muslims in Somalia (Haki Kenya, 2014; Ndzovu, 2014), statements bitterly used by attackers during the brutal terror attacks on West Gate and 14 Riverside Dusit. Recently al Shabaab leader, Ahmed Diriye, expressed al Shabaab's anger on Kenya in regard to the on-going maritime conflict between Kenya and Somalia defining it as a Christian hostility against Muslims (Daily Nation, 2019, September, 20).

Such comments and worldviews in an ecosystem of on-going AMISOM operations in Somalia which Kenya is a member have a possibility of being used as grounds for narratives on radicalization into violent extremism by AS. The card of religion needs to be viewed from the context of having relevant cultures of resilience within targeted groups through the nexus between faith-based organizations and resilience against radicalization of the society.

In January, 2019, two students from Narok County, aged 16 years, were arrested in Narok on their way for training in Somalia, with their recruiter escaping from being arrested (Kirui, 2019 January 24). In September, 2019, police officers in Transmara arrested a motor bike owner, aged 34 years and therefore a youth, who had gone to claim his bike while having fake bandages on his face. He had presented a letter from the national police headquarters for assistance in releasing the motor bike only for the police to realize that he was wanted for terrorism activities as well as other criminal acts (Kirui, 2019 September 22).

Youth are radicalized in; institutions of learning, work places, social places, religious places, cyber spaces, prisons, and gangster spaces. Particular youth targeted for radicalization by Jihadist groups in Kenya include; those with low levels of education, jobless, slum dwellers, criminal gangs, girls as wells as children from target rich families, college and university students (Hellsten, 2016). Among the planners and executers of the terror attack on Garissa University was a former student of the University of Nairobi, who had attended one of the private secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

By extension one of the leaders of Al Shabaab in Mogadishu, Ahmad Iman Al, who has been declared by US as a specially designated global terrorist, was an engineering graduate of Jomo Kenyatta University of

Agriculture and Technology (The East African, 2019, March, 27). He was involved in the; recruitment of youth from poor areas of Nairobi City County and universities, operating stalls in Gikomba, besides operating across the borders of the East African countries including; Burundi, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique.

In the same breadth, the alarming trend of recruitment of university students by AS has been identified (West, 2016, January, 7), with evidence including Abdirahim Mohammad Abdullahi, a former law student at the University of Nairobi, who was involved in the planning and attack of Garissa University, and Abdul Hajira, a bachelor of commerce graduate and a banker who was killed in an attempted terror attack on a police station. Mohamed Abdi the medical intern involved in the planning of a thwarted bioterror attack adds to the statistics of learned Kenyan youth recruited and radicalized, who even went ahead to also recruit and radicalize other students into violent extremism.

Women and girls' operatives

There has been a skewed focus on women as victim of conflict and violence thus blurring the need for elaborate CVE approaches targeting women in terrorism (Bigio & Vogelstein, 2019). Women have been used as tools for intimidation through sexual violence besides serving as wives, and in emerging traders as strategic actors in VE (Bigio & Vogelstein, 2019). Involvement of women in terrorism has seen the use of women as planners, couriers, and even suicide bombers owing to the less suspicion that women are treated with by security officers in facilities, spaces, and events (Ramachandran, 2019). In the ISIS, the use of women operatives was given a priority guideline through its newsletter, Al-Naba, calling upon women to join the Jihad when duty calls, a call that saw a woman carrying an infant a decoy, detonate herself against Iraq soldiers in July 2017 (Schulze, 2018). This was to be followed by a directive by ISIS for women to arm themselves and carry out terror attacks (Dearden, 2017).

During the attack on Dusit D2, in Nairobi, Kenya, in January, 2019, among the accomplices of the attackers was Veronica Kemunto, a former student in Journalism at Masinde Muliro University and an alleged wife of the master minder, Ali Salim Gichung'e. The wordings "Al Shabaab bride" on her Facebook page went ahead to indicate her daring nature, deep engagement and commitment to Al Shabaab. By extension a Kenyan woman by name, Halima Adan Ali, has been identified as an; Al Shabaab recruiter, ISIS facilitator, and fundraiser for both AS and ISIS by both the US and Kenyan governments (The East African, 2019).

Suffice it to say that in Kenya radicalization has exploited for maximum terrorism-based violent extremism the whole pool of diversity in relation to; gender, social status, age, level and type of education, ethnicity, race. This resonates with (Krueger, 2007; Vidino, 2011), assertions that the nature of radicalization is complex with a focus on the diversity within existing demographics and geographical lay outs to optimize on expected impact.

Unfortunately owing to the skewed lenses of the classical view of women as victims of conflict and violence leaving them either as unmapped or poorly mapped actors in the VE strands hence scuttling the efforts of NSCVE (Bigio & Vogelstein, 2019). Women have critical roles in nurturing families through the roles of enhancing family and community values, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors (de Leede, 2018). This role of women is leveraged on for indoctrination and nurturing of VE which places a critical

strategic need of relooking the role of women in using their place and role in families and communities in the PCVE ecosystem. The role of women in mentoring women formerly in radicalization, and young girls who are vulnerable serve as critical nexus points with diverse NSCVE pillars although unexploited.

Cyber radicalization

Cyber radicalization involves the adoption of innovative technologies to propagate jihadist related strategic activities including; recruitment, radicalization through online propaganda, sourcing for funds, planning and training on how to assemble IEDs and execution of different types of attacks (Avis, 2016). Of utmost attention and interest in cyber-radicalism is the large number of vulnerable youths who idle their time in the internet through a variety of cyber space activities, National Counter Terrorism Security Office, (NCTSO, 2015).

Cyber radicalization is seen as an efficient and effective ecosystem of radicalization owing to not only the large number of vulnerable youths accessing online spaces globally (Anne et al., 2017; NCTSO, 2015), but also to the decreased probabilities of detection and disruption (Ducol, 2015), due to assured anonymity through strategies such as use of encrypted messaging, Bureau of Counterterrorism (BoC, 2017).

Cyber Jihadists are systematic in identifying young social media users who are positively vocal towards Jihadist groups' deliberately drafted ideological narratives following which they guide such targeted users on how to use encrypted messaging via; Telegram, Kik, Whatsapp, and SureSpot. Some methodologies are involving use of identified diverse personalities (Meleagrou-Hitchens & Hughes, 2017), as a form of identity-driven radicalization as well as identity theft.

Jihadists have identified and consequently exploited the fact that radicalization is an antecedent to terrorism with increased use of social media adding to an exponentially increased number of those who are in the pool targeted for radicalization (Saltman & Smith, 2015). One mode of online radicalization is through the use of videos depicting extreme violence meted out, through beheading, on those who are deemed to be kaffirs by Jihadists, which triggers an emotional commitment from targeted recruits with a consequent worldview of the legitimacy of such Jihadist acts (Corcoba & Portilla, 2019).

The use of social media in recruitment has seen the leveling of the uneven ground where recruitment focused on males, with women being relegated to the secondary positions of; wives, mothers and daughters. Social media by Jihadists groups has seen women recruited and radicalized into *mujahidat* (female fighters), a strategic step towards bridging the radicalization to violent extremism gender gap that existed (Winter & Margolin, 2017).

It is worth noting that the use of mobile money lenders in the Kenyan finance space has been flagged by Central Bank of Kenya as a plausible conduit and infrastructure for money laundering, with three credit-only digital money lenders namely; Tala, Branch, & Okash, being named as likely avenues (Burger, 2019; Mutai, 2019 July, 11). With Kenya being not only the leading nation in Africa on mobile banking, but also having the largest number of youth in Sub-Saharan Africa who are actively involved in gambling (Burger, 2019), lack of elaborate legislation towards regulating such credit-only lenders and gambling pose a serious threat and vulnerability. The consequent risk is particularly to the huge number of youths entrapped within

the cyber spaces of accessing credit in which the loan services offered majorly target huge numbers of needy youth.

Part of the vulnerability would be towards elaborate credit-based terror networks geared towards cyber radicalization to violent extremism through the bait of quick riches in return for terror-related activities besides vulnerability of personal data. By extension emergent innovative financial technologies that have no legislative control and compliance such as cryptocurrency offer ungoverned cyberspaces. They offer spaces within which luring youths into violent extremism and financing of terrorism can be done discreetly (Irwin & Milad, 2016).

Violent Extremism

Violent extremism is the violent behavior and activities exhibited by radicalized individual or individuals geared towards achieving skewed and irrational; social, political, or ideological goals (Living Safe Together, 2015). There are different types of violent extremism as seen in the attacks by a lone wolf, Anders Behring Breivik in Oslo, resulting in 77 fatalities (Hamm & Spaaj, 2017). Breivik had been a participant in an online platform of AQ extremists which made his extremist political perceptions of exclusion by the main ruling party reach a crescendo of his lone wolf murderous attacks.

Boko Haram, now the Islamic State in West African Province, has carried out hundreds of attacks on different types of both soft and hard targets with thousands of both fatalities and casualties coupled with destruction of facilities. Among these includes the atrocious attack of February 2014 on a Federal Government secondary school in Yobe state where they massacred 59 students who were asleep in their Hostels (Chiluwa & Obedunmi, 2016). Two months later in April, Boko Haram had another daring attack on a bus station in Abuja that resulted in 70 fatalities, and a day later they attacked a girls' school in Chibok kidnapping 276 school girls, while razing the school down (Chiluwa & Obedunmi, 2016).

The terror attacks on Garissa university that left 148 dead is one of the worst attacks targeting a Kenyan facility, and was executed by the al shabaab under the leadership of a former law student at the University of Nairobi. Other grisly and murderous attacks include those involving selective targeting of victims using a religious card in; Mpeketoni, Hindi, Mandera quarries, bus transport along Mandera to Nairobi and Malindi to Lamu routes (Akwiri, 2014; Mohamed, 2014; Njoku et al., 2018).

Lamu has hosted and facilitated the nationalization of Jihadists involved in major terror attacks such as; the US embassy attack Yemeni operative, Mohamed Sadiq Odeh who used the disguises of being a fisherman and teacher, Fazul Mohamed whose camouflage for penetration was through philanthropy, with Aboud Rogo, an extremist Sheikh hailing from Siu island of Lamu County, worked with other terrorists in both planning and execution of terror attacks (Shauri, 2017). Among those radicalized by Sheikh Aboud Rogo and Abubakar Sharif Makaburi is Mahir Khalid Riziki, an al Shabaab who undertook the suicide bombing at Dusit D2 in January, 2019 (Olingo, 2019, September).

Al Shabaab has had an increased preference and therefore trend in the methodology of suicide attacks whose average number of fatalities per attack being 14.3 deaths per operation, a tactic focusing on efficacy of attack (Warner & Chapin, 2018). No wonder Kenya witnessed the first suicide bomber and hence suicide

bombing attack during the attack in January, 2019, on Dusit D2 carried out by, Mahir Khalid Riziki, an al Shabaab of Kenyan origin, whose intent was to cause mass fatalities and damages.

It is worth noting that the multi-agency approach in countering terrorism in Kenya has had commendable success in detecting, disrupting and thus thwarting terror attacks. A case in point is a thwarted bioterror attack (BTA) targeting mass fatalities with *anthracis* by Mohammed Abdi Ali, a medical intern (Mwangi, 2016 May 14; Zadock, 2016 May 3). He was a member of ISIS under the affiliate group of Jabha East Africa (Warner & Hulme, 2018).

Church Attacks

The terror attacks in Sri Lanka on Catholic Churches and hotels that left 256 dead was carried out by violent extremists who had allegiance to the ISIS (Ely, 2019). The methodology used was multiple modal and target approach focusing on an event based high risk targets. This involved strategic timing on April 21, 2019, when the churches had the highest number of members since it was during April Easter Christian festivities (Ely, 2019). Among the attackers was a family who included an expectant wife who undertook suicide bombing upon confrontation by police resulting in the death of her son, the unborn foetus, herself, and security forces.

The attack executed by a family of six targeting three churches in Surabaya, Indonesia, with a resultant fatality 13, and 41 casualties saw the advent of use of attacks uniquely characterized by; use of family members including women, and children, and suicide bombing (Schulze, 2018). It brought into fore trends that had not been well factored by analysts of the modus operandi of Jihadists; those involving familial ties, use of women, and children with the two sisters Fadhila Sari and Famela Rizqita being 12 and 9 years respectively. The other actors of the middle family class were; their father, Dita Oepriarto, their mother, and two brothers aged 18 and 15 years.

On the same Sunday, another family of six was preparing to carry out a similar attack near the same city, a move aborted by the accidental explosion of the explosive device which resulted in the injury of two of Anton Febrianto's children aged 11 and 10 years, with Febrianto, their father, being shot dead by police officers (Schulze, 2018).

On 29th April 2012, the first violent extremist attack on churches in Kenya took place in Nairobi City County, executed by Al Shabaab, targeting God's House Miracles Church congregation of 600, with a resultant fatality of one and many injuries from the grenade hurled into the church (Omayio, 2015). The second church to be attacked in Nairobi was St. Polycarp Anglican Church Juja Road Pangani

In December, 2017, ISIS called on its affiliated fighters in Somalia to hunt for non-believers over the Christmas festivities and murder them, an indicator of the violent extremism intent and targeting on Christians by ISIS sympathizers and fighters in Somalia (Shay, 2018). On 17th December, 2017, Bethel Memorial Methodist Church located in the a Pakistani city of Quetta, suffered from multiple modal attacks by ISIS using a suicide bomber and an active shooter, resulting in nine fatalities, and over fifty casualties (Hashim, A. 2017, December 17).

The Roman Catholic Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Philippines was attacked by violent extremists using bombs on January 27th, 2019 with twenty fatalities and 102 casualties with the November

13th, 2016 bombing of Samarinda Church in Indonesia, which targeted toddlers, causing the death of one toddler and casualties to a few others.

Mentoring

A huge youth population can be viewed from the prisms of opportunities and/or challenges. It can provide a much-needed workforce for countries, continuity in various fields when engaged by different actors of the socio-economic value chain productively. On the other hand, when engaged by actors in the web of criminal world, the youth population can become not only destructive but as has been documented a threat to civil, business, and global continuity. Provision of meaningful sources; of income, career progression, mental health, and positive and socially acceptable identity, are just but a few critical issues of youth that require continuous strategic focus by the leadership of every society.

Part of these leadership processes should include mentoring, which Laiho and Brandt (2012) state is the transfer of tacit knowledge and experience from those who are older to younger colleagues, towards fostering their personnel development. Within a corporate setting, mentoring provides future potential deliverables that strengthens competences, self-esteem, self-concept, and enhancing of the organizational image.

For the youth, mentoring would provide direction, sound choices, and enable the youth to make the right choices for their lives. Young people, the authors note, may demand the use of social media alongside mentoring. With advancement in technology, further research could be carried out to find out how technology can be incorporated into mentoring without losing its relational aspects.

Mentoring has other diverse definitions, and a closer look at them enables us then to closely define what we really are referring to. Galbraith (2001) notes that mentoring is an activity by which older persons of higher rank, exceptional achievements and reputation instruct, counsel, guide and expedite the intellectual and personal development of persons who are identified as protégés. On the same breath, Merriam (1983) observes mentoring to be a powerful emotional interaction between an older and younger person in a relationship in which the older mentor is trusted, loving, and experienced in the guidance of the younger. Kram (1985) indicates that one who is a mentor needs to provide support, to guide, and counsel a younger adult as he or she accomplishes mastery of the adult world.

We also note the description given by Faure (2000) that mentoring reflects a relationship that meets a development need, that helps develop full potential, and benefits all partners; mentor, and mentee. In all these descriptions then, we note that there is a need for those who are older, to spend time imparting values and correct ethics to younger adults. It is instructive to note that young people will always emulate those who are older, an indicator of the importance of showing them the way, a way that is not destructive to society or indoctrination that is harmful to themselves and the wider communities.

Appreciative inquiry as a supportive tool of mentoring

FBOs have opportunities of interacting with not only the youth, children, and adolescents, but also with the key influencers of the same demographic categories. Among these actors of influencing the psychological, physical, intellectual, and social wellbeing of those targeted for radicalization include; mother and fathers

as parents, learning institutions, employees, government, law enforcers, and civil society organizations. This then gives the FBOs a wider spectrum of applying a complex matrix of mentors by bringing on board relevant mentoring programs that have a shared leadership model.

The mentoring process that is adapted by FBOs must be one that looks at the whole spectrum of change, both personal and institutional. This is because the issues of radicalization and CVE are perceived to be both personal and institutional, with under-governed and ungoverned spaces pointing fingers at failed government. Mentoring in regard to such a specific context then, must then be seen to be holistic by appreciating the gaps which include social exclusion by government and even by other sectors of society. The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is an approach to thinking that works from the propositions of affirmative action and visions of the possible, rather than problem solving, finding what is wrong and looking for difficulties (Cooperrider, 1998). The advantage of mentoring through Appreciative Inquiry is that it is based on dialogue, with initial steps being to collect opinions and observations of everyone involved through telling stories of what has been and is successful.

Within the context of CVE, the youth would begin from a point of narrating and appreciating the many strengths that they possess, skills that they know they are good in, as well as values that they wish to continue espousing. The method then progresses to the selection of the most important of these themes, which would then form a basis for building a series of provocative proposition that describes how the individual is. This guides the mentees and other participants towards relevant worldviews devoid of violent extremism.

By using successful examples in the past and present, Cooperrider (1998) indicates that we build a picture of the themes and ideas of what we know we can do, and that work. He also notes that we should develop an individual and collective mindset of what we are capable of, one that is grounded on realistic and authentic assessment of communities. He states that this is a significant shift from existing traditions of education, training, and institutions where the practice is focusing on diverse contexts of what is wrong.

It is worth mentioning that even cultural practices of dealing with issues of discipline or otherwise, stem from the angle of what is wrong that needs to be fixed. The author indicates that as we are dealing with AI and developing propositions and possibilities, AI envisages what might be (based on what is), and stimulates a dialogue on what should be, before finally focusing on what will be.

The AI format is divided into 4 stages that a mentor can use to adopt a mentoring process. Magruder and Cooperrider (1998) indicate that the Discover stage seeks to inquire into the best of the past and the present. We submit that the youth today, need to hear more of positive news than challenges and weaknesses that may be around us. From the discovery stage, the authors observe that the dream is the second stage, which uses the findings of compelling authentic stories, to create memorable and ambitious picture of the desired future. And we posit that with global recession, minimal job opportunities, corrupt leaders, homicides, and suicides, the youth need encouragement that the future is still bright in spite of the current challenges. In addition to these two stages, the authors name design as the third stage, that allows the mentor and mentee to agree on the rules that govern any action till the goals that have been set are realized. That should then be followed by the delivery stage, that makes commitment to what should happen next and who will do it.

By having innovative relational leadership approaches and practices FBOs can create dynamic mentoring programs that are characterized by shared leadership across the diverse members of any FBO. Within the echelons of FBOs leadership are members who have the; experiential narratives and encounters, skills and competences critical for effective mentoring. By extension within the membership are members who are willing to undertake mentoring as a patriotic duty as well as a duty of affiliation to the FBO.

Structuring mentoring as a relational leadership process for PCVE through the AI approach must focus on an FBO leadership that has a full understanding of the whole chain of; recruitment, radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism. The contexts identified for each FBO would then indicate the nature of mentoring approaches and even mentors core towards achieving a successful journey into the past, appreciating the current situations, and being courageous to dream and commit oneself to a great future. Due to the realization that mentoring the youth against radicalization and extreme violence is best achieved in FBOs, these stages can provide the safe environment that the youth need, to be affirmed, challenged, and appreciated as citizens of a country that means well and wants the best for them.

Discussions

With the physical ISIS caliphate in Syria seemingly vanquished, comes the threat of regrouping of its members among them being the foreign terrorist fighters who came from across over 100 countries. These fighters are well trained and through the cyber space caliphate they become easy actors of terror activities through not only recruiting and radicalizing locals and particularly youths into violent extremism, but also undertaking attacks. FBOs are high risk targets of such attacks besides having their members being casualties and fatalities from attacks targeting different spaces and facilities.

FBOs then have a leadership responsibility of enhancing the safety of its members through innovative approaches with mentoring, a relational leadership practice, being critical. This is from both a proactive as well as a responsive leadership practice. Similarly their role in the adoption and practice of safety leadership values in collaboration with critical actors of safety against violent extremists beckons.

They have a critical responsibility which seems not to have been mapped and profiled by the main actors of the global war on terror within many countries. One of their critical roles is in joining hands to come up with joint relational leadership models of enhancing reintegration of returnees besides their critical role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth who have been in criminal gangs. Among the returnees are; young mothers who are still youth, young families, and former foreign terrorist fighters that the communities and society would exclude from the norms and cultures with FBOs being part of the same.

This calls for close collaboration across; faith based organizations, other civil society organizations, county and national governments, and the private sector in order to have a whole of nation approach. Among the key sectors will be the departments directly in charge of the various youth agenda including the Youth Council at both national and county government levels, Ministry of Public Services Youth and Gender, and Youth Empowerment Centres.

An understanding of the nature of the families served by various faith based organizations through a family leadership model needs to be initiated across the faith based organizations, where none exist, in order to help in driving the key responsibilities, rights, and values that families should exemplify. Further to this

the emerging trend of familial attacks in which whole families are radicalised and consequently undertake atrocious terror attacks should be a cue to the role of vibrant mentoring programs through FBOs.

Of utmost significance is the focus on the responsibilities and rights of youth across the spectrum of their ecosystem spaces of; home, education-formal and informal-, social, political, economic, legal, technological, environmental, and posterity. Mentoring that elicits a great desire within youths towards espousing values such as; patience and hence delayed gratification, resilience, self-leadership, fairness, justice, effective conflict management, national service, and authenticity is critical.

Similarly the trend of radicalizing children, adolescents, girls, and women needs to be well understood by the FBOs in order for them to have the relevant mentoring approaches which in this case include psychosocial approaches. This delivers the need for a firm nexus between the FBOs and other actors for the FBOs to have relevant knowledge on the contents, contexts, skills, knowledge, and competences needed to tackle such challenges either proactively or as a responsive activity.

Research by faith based organizations focusing on the challenges afflicting society that add to the; formation of criminal gangs, lack of positive national identity, erosion of national ethos, social exclusivity, addictions to destructive cyber space behaviors, drugs abuse, and dysfunctional families is needed. This is to serve as a diagnostic tool core towards an evidence-based informative basis for appreciative inquiry and other types of mentoring approaches.

Across all these activities is the opportunity of the FBOs to play their pivotal social continuity role of prevention and countering of violent extremism, through a strategic partnership leadership approach. This resonates well with the sustainable development goal on partnership and permeates into other goals including; reduced inequalities, peace and justice, and partnerships for the goals.

By serving across different divides of society and hence impacting positively on different aspects and levels of society the FBOs will become more relevant with fundamental justifications through positive worldviews across youths, families, and organizations. This is a unique turning point towards PCVE premised on a faith based relational leadership model.

Conclusion

Relational practices right from; self, dyads, family, groups, teams, and organizations play a critical role in socializing members into accepting and practicing laid down norms, values, and beliefs. Similarly the same relational practices can play the opposite destructive role of socializing the same members into; vices, immoral behaviors, and unethical atrocious activities based on skewed worldviews. Such worldviews include those of violent extremism, and are ingrained through lack of relevant relational practices across the social places and spaces where individuals are socialized. With this understanding the faith based organizations have an inescapable role of having strategic and inclusive mentoring models whose outcomes will be youths, adolescents, and even adults, with acceptable worldviews, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. Such behaviors will be acceptable across different spectra of the human divide, a critical toolkit in the prevention and countering of the atrocious behavior of violent extremism.

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