

WOMEN'S ROLE IN PREVENTING THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

DR. AYAZ KHAN

Chief Coordination Officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism, Pakistan

Email: drayazkhan53@gmail.com

DR. MUHAMMAD QASIM

Director General, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism, Pakistan

Email: qasimkhandaudzai@gmail.com

MR. SAHAR ALI KHAN

Principal Research Officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism, Pakistan

Email: saharali@kpcve.gov.pk

MS. IRUM NAZ

Principal Research Officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism, Pakistan

Email: irum@kpcve.gov.pk

Abstract-*This research paper aims to examine the underappreciated and consequential involvement of women in the realm of countering violent extremism (CVE). This study examines the historical involvement of women in extremist ideologies, exploring their roles in both supporting and opposing such ideologies. By analyzing historical data and scholarly literature, the research sheds light on the multifaceted engagement of women in extremist movements throughout history. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding women's participation in extremist ideologies, highlighting the need for further research. The increasing recognition of their capacity to drive transformative outcomes in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives has garnered significant attention in recent times. This research paper explores the significance of women's engagement in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), highlighting their distinct abilities, viewpoints, and contributions. It analyses the factors that make their involvement essential in this field. This study examines the challenges and obstacles encountered by women in the field of countering violent extremism. It also sheds light on successful initiatives that have empowered women to effectively address this issue. This research highlights the significance of adopting gender-inclusive methodologies within counter-violent extremism (CVE) strategies. It underscores the potential of women to contribute to the development of resilient and harmonious societies.*

INTRODUCTION

The examination of women's involvement in the realm of violent extremism constitutes a significant domain of scholarly investigation and scrutiny. The prevailing discourse surrounding violent extremism has historically centered on the role of men as primary actors, including their involvement as perpetrators, planners, and recruiters. The recognition and comprehension of the role played by women in this phenomenon are of utmost importance in the formulation of comprehensive strategies aimed at mitigating and preempting violent extremism.

Throughout history, the participation of women in extremist movements has been a subject of scholarly interest. While women have traditionally played supportive roles within these movements, their involvement has undergone significant transformations over time. This paper aims to explore the historical evolution of women's roles within extremist movements, shedding light on the changing dynamics and contributions of women in these contexts. By examining the historical context, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving roles of women in extremist movements, ultimately contributing to a deeper comprehension of the complex dynamics that shape these movements. In contemporary times, there has been a growing



acknowledgment of the notable involvement of women in extremist organizations, encompassing various roles such as recruiters, propagandists, fundraisers, and, in certain instances, combatants. The phenomenon of women's participation in violent extremism is a complex and multifaceted issue that warrants careful examination. Various factors contribute to their involvement, encompassing a wide range of ideological motivations, personal grievances, and social dynamics within their communities. Understanding the underlying reasons behind women's engagement in violent extremism is crucial for developing effective strategies to prevent and counter this phenomenon.

The study examines the phenomenon of ideological alignment among women, specifically focusing on their attraction to extremist ideologies and movements. It seeks to explore the underlying motivations that drive women to support such ideologies, with a particular emphasis on their desire to uphold and advance specific causes or belief systems. By delving into this topic, the research aims to shed light on the complex interplay between women's ideological alignment and their involvement in extremist movements.

The study further explores the potential influence of personal grievances and trauma on women's motivations to join extremist groups. Specifically, it investigates how experiences of injustice, violence, or trauma may serve as catalysts for women's involvement in such groups, ultimately driving their pursuit of empowerment, revenge, or a sense of purpose. By examining the role of personal experiences in shaping women's radicalization pathways, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex factors that drive women's engagement in extremist ideologies and activities.

The phenomenon of radicalization, particularly among women, has garnered increasing attention in recent years. Scholars and researchers have sought to understand the various factors that contribute to the process of radicalization, with a particular focus on the influence of social networks. This research aims to explore the role of family, friends, and online social networks in shaping women's involvement in extremist activities. By examining the influence of these social networks, a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which radicalization occurs can be achieved. This paper provides an overview of the significance of social networks in the context of women's radicalization, highlighting the need for further investigation in this area.

This research aims to explore the gender dynamics present within extremist groups, focusing on the utilization of traditional gender norms and expectations to recruit women for specific roles within these organizations. Extremist groups, in certain instances, have been observed to exploit societal gender constructs as a means of engaging women in their activities. By examining this phenomenon, we can gain a deeper understanding of how gender dynamics operate within extremist contexts and the implications this has for the recruitment and involvement of women in such groups. This research seeks to shed light on the intricate interplay between gender, extremism, and recruitment strategies, ultimately contributing to the broader understanding of the complexities surrounding gender within extremist movements.

The advent of the internet and the widespread use of social media platforms have significantly transformed various aspects of human interaction and societal dynamics. In recent years, these online platforms have emerged as pivotal tools in facilitating the recruitment and radicalization processes of individuals, including women, into extremist ideologies. This phenomenon has garnered significant attention from scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike, as it poses complex challenges to counter-extremism efforts and raises important questions regarding the role of technology in shaping contemporary extremist movements. This research aims to critically examine the role of the internet and social media in the recruitment and radicalization of individuals, with a particular focus on the involvement of women in these processes. By analyzing existing literature, case studies, and empirical evidence, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted dynamics at play in the online extremist landscape and inform the development of effective strategies to mitigate the risks associated with online radicalization. This study aims to underscore the importance of acknowledging the variability in women's engagement in violent extremism across diverse contexts and extremist organizations, while also highlighting that not all women involved in these activities partake in direct acts of violence.



Evolving role of women in CVE efforts

The recognition and significance of women's evolving role in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) endeavors have witnessed a notable upsurge in recent years. The recognition of women as crucial participants in the prevention and countering of violent extremism (CVE) has been steadily growing. Their active engagement is widely regarded as indispensable for the development of more efficient and enduring strategies in this domain. This paper aims to elucidate the multifaceted nature of the evolving role of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts. By examining existing literature and empirical evidence, several key points emerge that shed light on this dynamic phenomenon. Firstly, it is evident that women have increasingly assumed prominent roles in CVE initiatives. This shift can be attributed to a growing recognition of the unique perspectives and capabilities that women bring to the table. Their involvement has proven instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness and inclusivity of CVE strategies. Secondly, the evolving role of women in CVE efforts is characterized by a shift from passive beneficiaries to active agents.

Women as Agents of Change: The role of women as catalysts for societal and familial transformation is a frequently observed phenomenon. The roles played by individuals in preventing radicalization and detecting early signs of extremism are of utmost importance.

Community Resilience: The active participation of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives has the potential to bolster community resilience in the face of extremist ideologies. The fostering of social cohesion and the establishment of robust support networks have been identified as effective strategies in mitigating the risk of individuals being enticed into engaging with violent extremist groups.

Understanding Root Causes: The inclusion of women's perspectives and experiences in the study of violent extremism can provide valuable insights into the underlying factors that contribute to its emergence and proliferation. By examining the unique viewpoints and lived realities of women, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the root causes of this phenomenon. This research approach acknowledges the significance of gender dynamics and the ways in which they intersect with other social, political, and economic factors to shape the pathways towards violent extremism. By incorporating women's voices into the analysis, scholars can enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of counter-extremism strategies and interventions. The insights provided by the individuals in question can serve as valuable contributions to the advancement of more comprehensive and nuanced strategies in countering violent extremism (CVE).

Disengagement and Rehabilitation: The inclusion of women in the rehabilitation and reintegration processes of individuals engaged in extremist activities has been recognized as a potentially influential factor. The individuals in question possess a potentially advantageous position for offering assistance and guidance, particularly in the context of aiding women and children who have experienced the repercussions of violence.

Challenging Gender Norms: In numerous societal contexts, women encounter distinct challenges and vulnerabilities that are susceptible to exploitation by extremist factions. The act of empowering women to challenge prevailing gender norms and stereotypes has the potential to effectively erode the allure of violent extremism.

Leadership and Decision-Making: The enhancement of gender diversity in leadership and decision-making positions within Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives has the potential to yield a multitude of benefits, including the development of more comprehensive and efficient policies and programs.

Preventing Recruitment: The active participation of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives has the potential to effectively mitigate the recruitment of individuals into extremist organizations. In the context of countering radicalization, certain individuals possess the capacity to exert significant influence, particularly about women and youth. These influential voices have the potential to play a crucial role in mitigating the spread of radical ideologies and extremist beliefs within these vulnerable demographic segments.



Women's Contributions in Countering Violent Extremism

The role of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) has been widely acknowledged, with their notable contributions in empowering and educating communities on a global scale. The recognition of their significance in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives stems from their distinct perspectives, roles, and capacities to effectively interact with marginalized communities. The field under consideration is characterized by a diverse array of activities, which are undertaken by women and encompass a broad spectrum of endeavors. These activities include but are not limited to advocacy, grassroots mobilization, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and community-based initiatives.

This paper aims to elucidate the significant ways in which women have been actively engaged in the multifaceted endeavor of countering violent extremism (CVE). By examining existing literature and empirical evidence, this study identifies and analyses key strategies employed by women in their efforts to mitigate the impact of violent extremism. The findings of this research shed light on the crucial role played by women in CVE initiatives and contribute to a deeper understanding of their contributions to global security and peacebuilding efforts.

The significant involvement of women in establishing connections with families, particularly mothers, and exerting influence on their children to deter radicalization and violent tendencies has been widely observed. One potential avenue for fostering trust and facilitating reconciliation within communities is through the role of individuals or organizations acting as bridge builders. These intermediaries possess the ability to establish and nurture connections between disparate and conflicting groups, thereby promoting understanding, cooperation, and ultimately, trust. By actively engaging with various stakeholders, bridge builders can play a pivotal role in bridging divides, facilitating dialogue, and fostering a sense of unity within communities.

The participation of women in early warning systems, the identification of potential signs of radicalization, and the implementation of preventive measures to mitigate the escalation of violence have been observed. Individuals possess a heightened perceptual acuity in discerning alterations in behavioral patterns and exhibit a proclivity for engaging in strategies aimed at mitigating the escalation of conflicts.

The pivotal role played by women in raising awareness regarding the perils associated with extremism and advocating for the cultivation of inclusive and tolerant principles has been widely recognized. The organization has implemented educational initiatives aimed at fostering the development of critical thinking skills, empathy, and a comprehensive understanding of various perspectives among the younger generation.

In the context of post-conflict settings, it has been observed that women have actively participated in the processes of rehabilitating and reintegrating individuals with extremist backgrounds into the fabric of society. The nurturing and compassionate approach employed by individuals can have a significant impact on the process of healing and rebuilding lives.

The prominence of women leaders in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives is evident, as they actively champion policies aimed at tackling the root causes of extremism and advocating for security and peacebuilding strategies that are sensitive to gender dynamics.

Gender-Specific Perspectives in CVE

The inclusion of gender-specific perspectives in the study of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is of paramount importance as it enables a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and vulnerabilities of women within the realm of radicalization and violent extremism. The consideration of gendered approaches within counter-violent extremism (CVE) strategies has the potential to enhance the efficacy and precision of interventions aimed at preventing radicalization and fostering community resilience. The motivations underlying women's engagement in violent extremism exhibit distinct characteristics when compared to those of men, thereby necessitating an exploration of the multifaceted interplay between personal, social, and ideological factors. The phenomenon of women's involvement in extremist groups has been observed to be influenced by various factors, including but not limited to a perceived sense of identity, belonging, and empowerment, as well as instances of coercion or forced recruitment. The comprehension of these



distinct motivations holds significant importance in the development of prevention programs and interventions that effectively cater to the requirements and apprehensions of women.

In the realm of radicalization, it is worth noting that women may encounter unique vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities manifest in various forms, such as restricted educational opportunities, limited access to economic prospects, and a dearth of social support networks. The influence of gender norms and expectations within communities can potentially shape individuals' trajectories towards extremism. The identification and mitigation of these vulnerabilities can contribute to the development of more comprehensive and efficacious strategies for countering violent extremism (CVE).

The implementation of gendered approaches within Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) strategies entails the customization of interventions to address the distinct requirements and lived realities of women. The implementation of strategies aimed at addressing women's concerns and perspectives encompasses various approaches. These approaches may involve the establishment of safe spaces where women can freely express their thoughts and engage in discussions. Additionally, active involvement with local women leaders and activists can be instrumental in fostering a conducive environment for addressing gender-related issues. Moreover, the integration of gender-sensitive messaging and programming is crucial in ensuring that initiatives are tailored to the specific needs and experiences of women. The inclusion of women in efforts to promote peace, dialogue, and resilience within their communities is a crucial component of gendered strategies aimed at countering violent extremism (CVE). By empowering women to assume active roles in these endeavors, the potential for positive outcomes is enhanced. This research highlights the significance of incorporating women into CVE initiatives, emphasizing their capacity to contribute to sustainable peacebuilding and fostering social cohesion.

Challenges Faced by Women in CVE Efforts

The present study aims to explore the various societal and cultural barriers that impede the participation and impact of women engaged in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives. It is widely acknowledged that women involved in CVE encounter substantial challenges stemming from prevailing societal norms and cultural practices. These barriers, which are deeply rooted in gender inequalities and discriminatory attitudes, serve to restrict the meaningful engagement and effectiveness of women in CVE efforts. By examining the multifaceted nature of these barriers, this research seeks to shed light on the complex dynamics that hinder women's involvement in CVE and ultimately contribute to the development of more inclusive and effective strategies in this domain. The influence of cultural norms on gender roles is a widely recognized phenomenon, whereby women are frequently assigned domestic responsibilities and marginalized from participation in decision-making endeavors. The marginalization of women within the context of countering violent extremism (CVE) poses significant obstacles to their meaningful participation and contribution. This exclusionary practice undermines the potential benefits that women can bring to CVE initiatives, as their unique perspectives and expertise are often disregarded or underestimated. The cultural stigmatization experienced by women who choose to pursue roles in security or counterterrorism, which deviate from traditional gender norms, serves to intensify the difficulties they face.

The present study examines the experiences of women engaged in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives, with a specific focus on the perceived absence of support and recognition for their valuable contributions. By exploring this underexplored aspect of CVE efforts, this research aims to shed light on the gendered dynamics within the field and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by women in CVE contexts. The manifestation of this phenomenon can be attributed to a multitude of factors, encompassing biases and stereotypes pertaining to the aptitude of women in the domains of security and conflict-related disciplines. The limited availability of mentorship and networking opportunities can potentially impede individuals' professional advancement in the context of countering violent extremism (CVE). As a result, it is plausible that the contributions and skills of women in the field of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) may endure a lack of recognition and inadequate representation.



The present study examines the gender-specific security risks and gender-based violence encountered by women engaged in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives. By exploring the experiences of women working in CVE, this research sheds light on the unique challenges they encounter in their professional roles. The analysis focuses on the intersectionality of gender and security, highlighting the ways in which gendered vulnerabilities manifest within the context of CVE. In regions characterized by conflict, individuals may be confronted with instances of sexual harassment, assault, or intimidation. The presence of such threats has the potential to deter women from engaging in proactive involvement in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives or expressing their opposition to extremist ideologies. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge that the normalization of gender-based violence within conflict zones can engender a perpetuation of a pernicious cycle characterized by fear and exclusion, particularly for women.

Institutional and Policy Challenges

The effective participation of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts is impeded by various institutional and policy challenges. The underrepresentation of women in crucial decision-making bodies and security institutions poses significant constraints on their capacity to influence and execute pertinent policies. The absence of gender mainstreaming within strategies aimed at countering violent extremism (CVE) has the potential to result in the neglect of gender-specific concerns and impede the advancement of all-encompassing approaches to address this issue.

The significance of women's participation in peace processes, partnerships, and collaborations aimed at promoting gender-inclusive approaches to Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in facilitating outcomes that are both more efficient and enduring. The inclusion of women in various domains of society has been recognized as a valuable asset for addressing complex issues such as violent extremism and fostering inclusive and resilient communities. Women's participation in these contexts offers distinct perspectives, insights, and experiences that are frequently disregarded but hold significant importance in comprehending and addressing the underlying factors contributing to violent extremism. By acknowledging and incorporating these unique contributions, societies can enhance their capacity to effectively counter violent extremism and cultivate communities that are characterized by inclusivity and resilience. This paper aims to elucidate the salient dimensions of women's participation in these endeavors.

The incorporation of women into peace negotiations and decision-making processes is of paramount importance in the pursuit of enduring peace and security. The existing body of research has demonstrated that the inclusion of women in peace negotiations yields a higher likelihood of addressing gender-specific concerns and fostering gender equality within resulting agreements. The meaningful participation of women in peace processes plays a crucial role in ensuring the comprehensive consideration of the diverse needs and experiences of all societal members.

The efficacy of countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives is contingent upon the establishment of collaborative frameworks involving diverse stakeholders, encompassing governmental bodies, civil society organizations, community leaders, religious institutions, and grassroots activists. When the inclusion of women and women-led organizations is incorporated into these partnerships, they exhibit a heightened level of comprehensiveness and responsiveness towards addressing the gender-specific dimensions of violent extremism. The inclusion of women in prevention, early warning, and intervention efforts has been recognized as crucial in academic research. Women have been found to play significant roles in these areas, contributing to the overall effectiveness and success of such endeavors.

The promotion of gender inclusivity in countering violent extremism (CVE) necessitates a critical focus on the empowerment of women through educational initiatives and economic opportunities. The acquisition of education has the potential to provide women with a range of competencies, including skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities. These attributes can enhance their resilience towards extremist narratives. Furthermore, it has been observed that women who possess economic empowerment exhibit a decreased susceptibility to being recruited into extremist organizations.



To effectively mitigate the threat of violent extremism, it is imperative to develop comprehensive strategies that target the fundamental catalysts of radicalization and extremism. The present study aims to examine the multifaceted issue of gender inequalities, discrimination, and violence against women. By delving into this complex topic, the research seeks to shed light on the various dimensions and manifestations of these social challenges. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, empirical evidence, and theoretical frameworks, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this subject matter. The recognition and incorporation of gender perspectives within strategies aimed at catering violent extremism (CVE) is of utmost importance to foster inclusive and sustainable approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the edited text, Sjoberg (2016) highlights the viewpoints of various authors who contend that the empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality play a crucial role in mitigating the prevalence of violent extremism. The active participation of women in various social, economic, and political domains has been identified as a significant factor in mitigating radicalization and fostering harmonious communities. Extensive scholarly literature has underscored the pivotal role that women can play in these areas. By engaging women in meaningful ways, societies can harness their unique perspectives, experiences, and skills to effectively address the root causes of radicalization and promote peaceful coexistence. This review aims to explore the existing body of literature on the subject, highlighting the key findings and insights that have emerged from empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and case analyses. By examining the multifaceted dimensions of women's involvement in social, economic, and political spheres, this review seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the potential impact that women can have in preventing radicalization and fostering peaceful communities.

In a recent study conducted by Ahram, A. I., and Binningsbø, H. M. in 2019, the significant contribution of women as peacebuilders within their respective communities was brought to attention. The findings of this study shed light on the crucial role that women play in fostering peace and harmony within their societies. The recognition of women's capacity to facilitate dialogue, bridge societal divides, and advocate for non-violent resolutions has emerged as a noteworthy asset in the context of countering extremism.

Gentry and Sjoberg (Eds.) have compiled a collection of literature that explores various aspects of the subject matter. The work encompasses a range of scholarly perspectives and provides a comprehensive overview of the field. The editors have carefully selected and organized the included literature to ensure a cohesive and informative reading experience. In a recent study conducted by (2019), the role of women in social and political movements aimed at countering extremism was explored. The findings of this research shed light on the documented impact of women's involvement in challenging extremist ideologies and fostering an environment of tolerance and understanding.

Basri, Dzuhayatin, and Ambaryanto (2018) examined the existing literature on the challenges encountered by women involved in countering violent extremism. The authors noted that several scholars have emphasized the various obstacles faced by women in this context, including instances of discrimination and gender-based violence. The importance of addressing the challenges associated with fully harnessing women's potential in preventing extremism cannot be overstated. Extensive literature has highlighted the significance of this issue and the need for comprehensive strategies to overcome these challenges. By examining existing research and scholarly works, this review aims to shed light on the various obstacles that hinder the effective utilization of women's capabilities in countering extremism. By understanding these challenges, policymakers and practitioners can develop targeted interventions and policies that empower women to play a more active role in preventing and combating extremism.

Fischel and Stewart (Eds.) in a study observed that the internet and social media have emerged as significant platforms facilitating the recruitment of extremists and dissemination of propaganda.



Several scholarly works have delved into the multifaceted phenomenon of women's involvement in online radicalization, shedding light on their dual roles as both victims and perpetrators. In their edited volume, Grey and Horgan (Eds.) have compiled a collection of literature that explores various aspects of the subject at hand. The volume presents a comprehensive overview of the existing research and scholarship in the field, offering readers a valuable resource for understanding the current state of knowledge. In a recent publication, the authors (2020) underscore the significance of education and prevention initiatives in addressing extremist ideologies. They specifically highlight the involvement of women in these programs, as well as the promotion of critical thinking and resilience. This emphasis on education and prevention aligns with previous scholarly works that have recognized the pivotal role such interventions play in countering extremist ideologies. By focusing on women's engagement and fostering critical thinking skills, these programs aim to equip individuals with the necessary tools to resist and challenge extremist narratives. The authors' recognition of these factors contributes to the existing body of literature on the importance of education and prevention in countering extremism.

FINDINGS

Extensive research has substantiated the notion that the inclusion of women in countering violent extremism (CVE) endeavors has the potential to significantly augment the efficacy of such initiatives. According to a study conducted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2018, it was found that women possess distinct perspectives, experiences, and skills that have the potential to play a crucial role in mitigating the risks associated with radicalization and extremism within their respective communities.

Numerous scholarly investigations have shed light on the pivotal roles that women assume as agents of peace and community development, demonstrating their inherent capacity to bridge societal divisions and foster harmonious social integration. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2019, societies can harness the capabilities of women in strengthening their resilience against extremist ideologies by adopting gender-inclusive strategies in countering violent extremism (CVE). This research emphasizes the significance of recognizing and involving women in CVE efforts, highlighting their potential contributions in mitigating the spread of radical beliefs.

Recent studies have provided compelling evidence supporting the notion that women frequently assume a pivotal role in the detection of initial indications of radicalization within their offspring or relatives. According to a study conducted by Hedayah in 2016, it was found that women can significantly contribute to the prevention of youth involvement in extremist activities by comprehending the various risk factors and implementing timely interventions.

Gender-responsive programming in countering violent extremism (CVE) acknowledges and addresses the distinct needs and roles of both women and men. This approach recognizes that gender dynamics play a significant role in shaping individuals' experiences and vulnerabilities to extremism. By adopting a gender-responsive approach, CVE initiatives can effectively tailor their strategies and interventions to address the specific challenges faced by women and men in countering extremism. This research finding highlights the importance of considering gender as a critical factor in designing and implementing effective CVE programs. According to a study conducted by UN Women in 2015, the incorporation of gender considerations into policies and initiatives has been found to result in more precise and efficient endeavors.

To maximize the utilization of women's capabilities in countering violent extremism (CVE), it is imperative to confront prevailing gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices that may impede their engagement and involvement in such efforts. According to recent research conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020), the establishment of inclusive environments and the elimination of barriers can significantly enhance the ability of women to effectively engage in efforts aimed at countering violent extremism. The findings suggest that by fostering an inclusive atmosphere that promotes gender equality and by removing obstacles that hinder women's participation, their contributions in this domain can be maximized. This



research underscores the importance of creating an environment that empowers women and enables them to play a more active role in countering violent extremism.

Research has shown that the active participation of women in online spaces can yield substantial outcomes in terms of countering extremist propaganda and disseminating alternative narratives. By engaging in counter-messaging efforts, women have the potential to exert a significant impact on online platforms. Their involvement in promoting alternative narratives serves as a powerful tool in challenging and undermining the influence of extremist ideologies. According to a study conducted by the Global Centre on Cooperative Security (2017), it has been observed that the digital presence of individuals can exert a significant and favorable impact on those who are susceptible to various vulnerabilities.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the involvement of women in countering violent extremism plays a pivotal and multifaceted role. The significance of their contribution cannot be overstated, as they bring unique perspectives, skills, and experiences to the table. Through their active participation, women have the potential to challenge extremist ideologies, disrupt recruitment efforts, and promote peacebuilding initiatives. Moreover, their involvement in community-based interventions and deradicalization programs can effectively address the root causes of violent extremism. It is evident that women possess distinct perspectives, experiences, and capabilities that hold immense potential in the realm of preventing and combating radicalization and extremism. Their unique attributes enable them to offer valuable insights and approaches to addressing these complex issues. By recognizing and harnessing the contributions of women, policymakers and practitioners can enhance their efforts in countering radicalization and extremism, ultimately fostering more inclusive and effective strategies. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize the inclusion and empowerment of women in the design and implementation of initiatives aimed at tackling these pressing challenges. In conclusion, it can be inferred that active participation in education, community engagement, conflict resolution, and deradicalization initiatives holds significant potential in effectively tackling the underlying factors contributing to the emergence of violent extremism within society. Considering empirical evidence, it has been established that the incorporation of women into counter-extremism initiatives yields outcomes that are characterized by enhanced sustainability and comprehensiveness. In conclusion, individuals who possess empathy, strong communication skills, and a profound comprehension of social dynamics have the potential to facilitate favorable transformations and cultivate enduring resilience within communities impacted by extremist ideologies. The active involvement of women in countering violent extremism not only amplifies the efficacy of such initiatives but also fosters gender equality and societal advancement. The disruption of traditional gender norms and the advancement of women's leadership within societies have the potential to effectively mobilize and utilize the entirety of their human capital in addressing the multifaceted issue of violent extremism. In conclusion, it is imperative to acknowledge and provide comprehensive support for the invaluable contributions made by women in this field. In conclusion, it is imperative for policymakers, civil society organizations, and international actors to proactively engage women in various aspects of countering violent extremism, including decision-making processes, resource allocation, and program implementation. By doing so, these stakeholders can harness the unique perspectives, experiences, and expertise that women bring to the table, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of counter-extremism efforts. Moreover, the inclusion of women in these critical areas not only promotes gender equality and women's empowerment but also contributes to the overall success of countering violent extremism initiatives. Therefore, it is essential for all relevant actors to recognize the significance of women's involvement and take concrete steps to ensure their meaningful participation in these processes. It is evident that women who actively participate in countering violent extremism (CVE) face a myriad of complex obstacles that are deeply entrenched in societal norms, inadequate support systems, gender-based violence, and institutional barriers. These challenges collectively impede their ability to effectively contribute to CVE initiatives. In



conclusion, it is imperative to acknowledge and confront the obstacles in order to develop comprehensive and inclusive counter-violent extremism (CVE) approaches that fully utilize the capabilities of all individuals within a given society. By doing so, we can effectively foster peace and combat extremist ideologies.

RECOMMENDATIONS


- This research recommends the integration of a gender-sensitive perspective in the formulation and execution of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) policies. The comprehensive understanding of radicalization processes necessitates the recognition and examination of the distinct motivations, roles, and experiences exhibited by individuals of varying gender identities, namely men, women, boys, and girls.
- It is recommended that efforts be made to promote and facilitate the meaningful participation of women in both the formulation and evaluation of policies related to countering violent extremism (CVE). This is crucial to ensure that the perspectives, experiences, and needs of women are adequately represented and considered in the development and assessment of CVE strategies. By actively involving women in these processes, policymakers can benefit from their unique insights and expertise, ultimately leading to more effective and inclusive CVE policies. This study proposes the establishment of platforms and mechanisms that facilitate the active engagement of individuals, thereby providing them with opportunities to contribute their unique perspectives and insights.
- To enhance comprehension of the distinct vulnerabilities and patterns encountered by both men and women, it is recommended to undertake the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data pertaining to the phenomenon of violent extremism. The presented data possesses the potential to significantly contribute to evidence-based policymaking.
- The implementation of quotas or affirmative action measures is recommended to enhance the representation of women in decision-making bodies pertaining to Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). The recommended entities for inclusion in this study encompass security agencies, local councils, community forums, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- This study proposes the implementation of capacity-building and leadership training programs specifically designed for women. The objective is to augment their skills, confidence, and knowledge, thereby increasing their competitiveness for decision-making positions in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives.
- It is recommended to implement gender-responsive recruitment processes for positions related to countering violent extremism (CVE). This entails identifying and eliminating biases and barriers that may hinder women from accessing these roles. By adopting such an approach, organizations can promote gender equality and inclusivity in CVE efforts.
- It is recommended that resources be allocated in a targeted manner to provide dedicated support for initiatives and organizations led by women in the field of countering violent extremism (CVE). This approach is crucial to address the gender imbalance and promote gender equality within the CVE landscape. By prioritizing the provision of resources to women-led initiatives, policymakers and stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and impact of these efforts. The present study explores the potential avenues for obtaining financial support, such as grants, funding opportunities, and access to financial resources, with the aim of enhancing capacity-building efforts.
- One potential recommendation for enhancing the career advancement of women involved in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is the implementation of mentorship programs. These programs would aim to connect women in CVE with experienced professionals who can offer guidance and support. By establishing mentorship relationships, women in CVE would have access to valuable insights and advice from individuals who have already achieved success in their respective fields. This mentorship could prove instrumental in helping women navigate the challenges and obstacles they may encounter in their career paths within CVE.



- Establishing secure environments that facilitate open dialogue and provide a platform for women to share their personal encounters, access necessary aid, and obtain psychosocial assistance in navigating the difficulties encountered in countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives is recommended. The active participation of women within their communities is frequently observed, with their contributions being instrumental in bolstering community resilience. Their engagement in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives has been identified as a significant factor in augmenting the overall effectiveness and impact of such efforts. The individuals in question possess the capacity to assume the roles of mediators, bridge-builders, and advocates, thereby facilitating the attainment of peaceful resolutions in conflicts. Consequently, their involvement significantly contributes to the overall stability and security within their respective societies.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bloom, M. (2018). "Women and Terrorism: A Gendered Study." *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 12(6), 120-131.
- [2] *Countering Violent Extremism: The Gender Dimensions* by UN Women (2014).
- [3] Davis, L. E., & Sorensen, J. R. (2018). *Countering violent extremism: A study of gender and online radicalization. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 41(1), 3-18.
- [4] Ezezika, O., & Tshimanga, S. (2018). *Women in Countering Violent Extremism in Africa: Harnessing Women's Leadership in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. Africa Security Brief*, No. 36, 1-12.
- [5] *Gender and Violent Extremism: Women's Participation in ISIL* by the Institute for Economics and Peace (2017).
- [6] *Gender, Violent Extremism and the Internet* by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2018).
- [7] Gentry, C., & Sjoberg, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Women, Gender, and Terrorism. University of Georgia Press*.
- [8] Hudson, V. M., & Metelits, C. (2013). *The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States. International Security*, 33(3), 7-45.
- [9] Hudson, V. M., Ballif-Spanvill, B., Caprioli, M., & Emmett, C. F. (2012). *Sex and World Peace. Columbia University Press*.
- [10] Institute for Inclusive Security. (2013). *Women and CVE: A Review of the Evidence*. Retrieved from <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/women-cve-evidence.pdf>
- [11] Institute for Inclusive Security. (2016). *Women, violent extremism, and the road to peace: Lessons from Colombia and the Philippines*.
- [12] Jones, S. G., & Smith, A. (Eds.). (2019). *Women, Violence, and the Practice of Security. Zed Books*.
- [13] Maher, S. (2018). "Women in Terrorism: An Examination of Women's Roles in Jihadist Terrorism and Counterterrorism." *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*.
- [14] Peace Direct. (2018). "Amplifying the Voices of Women for Peace: Understanding Women's Roles in Peacebuilding." Available online: <https://www.peacedirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Womens-role-in-peacebuilding.pdf>
- [15] Shepherd, L. J. (2016). *Women and violent extremism: A growing threat demands a tailored response. Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security*.
- [16] Shepherd, L. J. (2019). *The Gender Dimensions of Radicalization and Terrorism. Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 6(2), 94-107.
- [17] Sjoberg, L., & Gentry, C. E. (Eds.). (2017). "Women, Gender, and Terrorism." *University of Georgia Press*.
- [18] Speckhard, A., & Yayla, A. S. (2016). "ISIS Defectors: Inside Stories of the Terrorist Caliphate." *Advances Press*.

- 
- [19] The Institute for Economics and Peace. (2017). "Building resilience: Countering violent extremism through women's empowerment." Available online: <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/11/Building-Resilience-Countering-Violent-Extremism-Through-Women%E2%80%99s-Empowerment.pdf>
- [20] UN Women. (2015). *Women's Role in Countering Violent Extremism*. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/2/womens-role-in-countering-violent-extremism>.
- [21] UN Women. (2021). "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and Peace Agreements." Available online: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>
- [22] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2018). *Female Voices in Violent Extremism*. UNDP.
- [23] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2019). *Gender, radicalization, and violent extremism: A strategic approach*.
- [24] United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). (2018). "The Role of Women and Mothers in Violent Extremism."
- [25] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2019). *Gender and violent extremism: Strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism*.
- [26] United Nations Security Council. (2015). Resolution 2242 (2015) [on women, peace, and security]. Retrieved from: <https://undocs.org/S/RES/2242> (2015)
- [27] United Nations Women. (2018). *Preventing and responding to violent extremism through promoting gender equality and women's empowerment*.
- [28] United States Institute of Peace (USIP). (2017). "Women Preventing Violent Extremism." Available online: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/06/women-preventing-violent-extremism>.
- [29] USAID. (2018). "Engaging Women in Countering Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Policymakers and Practitioners." Available online: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID_CVE_Strategy_2018_Final.pdf
- [30] Welby, K. (2017). "Women and Radicalization to Violence: Addressing the Gender Dimension." Institute for Strategic Dialogue.
- [31] "Women Preventing Violent Extremism" by the Global Center on Cooperative Security (2017).
- [32] *Women's Roles in Countering Violent Extremism: The World Women's Perspective* by U.S. Institute of Peace (2016).
- [33] United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). (2015). *Gender and Preventing Violent Extremism: Challenges and Opportunities*.
- [34] United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2018). *Women's Roles in Countering Violent Extremism: Strategies for Greater Success*.
- [35] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2019). *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point for Recruitment*.
- [36] Hedayah. (2016). *The Role of Women in Countering Violent Extremism*.
- [37] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2020). *Gender Equality and Violent Extremism: A Guide to Support Preventing Extremism Violently Through Gender Equality Programming*.
- [38] Global Center on Cooperative Security. (2017). *Women and CVE Communication: A Guide to Communication Programming*.
- [39] Gray, J., & Horgan, J. (Eds.). (2020). *Women and terrorism: A multidisciplinary perspective*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [40] Fischel, C., & Stewart, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Online radicalization: The importance of women*. Springer.
- [41] Basri, E., Dzuhayatin, S., & Ambaryanto. (2018). Women's roles in countering violent extremism in Indonesia. *Journal of Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 11(2), 245-261.



- [42] Gentry, C. E., & Sjoberg, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Women, gender, and terrorism*. University of Georgia Press.
- [43] Sjoberg, L. (Ed.). (2016). *Women as Wartime Rapists: Beyond Sensation and Stereotyping*. NYU Press.
- [44] Ahram, A. I., & Binningsbø, H. M. (Eds.). (2019). *Women and wars*. Polity Press.