Preventing Terrorism: risk, rehabilitation and community

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2 Research Studies

- 'A Study exploring Questions relating to Partnership between Police and Muslim Communities in the Prevention of Violent Religio-Political Extremism amongst Muslim Youth' *Religion & Society Programme* 2009-2010

- 'An Examination of Partnership Approaches to Challenging Religiously-Endorsed Violence involving Muslim Groups and Police' *Religion & Society Programme* 2008-2009

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Community and Counter-Terrorism

- The notion of 'community' is problematic and highly contested.
- Community as consisting of shared meanings between individuals and groups (Lash, 1994; Hall, 1998; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2004).
- Community as subject and object of social policy.
- Community as a dynamic process, as a space of engagement, dialogue and conflict, a space that is subject to both micro and macro level fluctuations that link to wider political, social, economic and other factors.
- Community as the space within which identities reside and operate, as a space that influences and is influenced by iindividual and group identities, the space where individual and group collective identities are expressed and contested.
- Terrorism and counter-terrorism strategists and actors aim to influence the very construction of communities.

Community-Targeted vs. Community Focussed Approaches

Community Targeted

- place nation state security above that of the security and other needs of communities.
- ignores gaining the consent of those communities that are being targeted.
- value-driven - certain identities deemed dangerous are securitised.
- characterised by distrust between communities and security officials and practitioners.

Community Focussed

- characterised by community consent and participation in the actual governance of the various strategies that are applied.
- characterised by partnership between communities and state officials.
- embraces communities for their complexities in relation to ethnicity, religion, politics, emotions, grievances, locales, histories etc.
- trust existing between state officials and security practitioners and community members.

Community-Targeted vs. Community Focussed Approaches

- allows us to go beyond the rather simplistic binary in relation to 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to counter-terrorism.

- top-down approaches, whilst predominantly and traditionally being community-targeted, might, with appropriate community consent, be community-focussed.

- 'bottom-up' approaches can be community-targeted rather than community-focussed where community participation is not based on real partnerships but rather is used to instigate state-led agendas (e.g. use of informants, counter-subversion).

Risk and Rehabilitation

- Risk and pre-crime strategies (Zedner, 2000; Loader and Sparks, 2002; O'Malley, 2004; McCulloch and Pickering, 2009)

- Mentoring in relation to 'extremism'

- Mentoring as befriending and intervention

- Horgan (2009: 149), in a book called **Walking Away from Terrorism**, *'the effectiveness of any counter-narrative will rely heavily on the credibility and relevant expertise of the communicator.'* Garfinkel (2007)

- De-radicalisation – 'the social and psychological process whereby an individual's commitment to, and involvement in, violent radicalisation is reduced to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity' (Horgan: 2009: 141).

- Desistance from acts of violence is measurable, changes in identity may not be, or may need the specialist skills of mentors to assess. Whilst primary desistance is a temporary state, secondary desistance is more long-lasting, and may be possible to measure in terms of changes at the level of personal identity (Farrall & Maruna, 2004).

Evaluating Rehabilitation

- what are the experiences of individuals undergoing mentoring ?
- how might identity changes be mapped and evaluated? what are the behavioural changes in a person that can be examined to help shed light upon processes of change ?
- how is success being conceptualised – for example, in a reduction in the propensity for an individual to undertake violence, and over what period of time, is it personal transformation ? is it the extent to which individuals are leading positive and fulfilling lives? is it the extent to which individuals are no longer engaged in subversive activities? are we measuring primary or secondary desistance? is it the extent to which clients have been empowered in terms of them being able to cope constructively with negative processes in society?

Evaluating Rehabilitation: is it a community-focussed approach ?

- to what extent is the scheme consisting of equal partnerships between community members and state officials in terms of information sharing and gathering, measures of success?
- to what extent is the scheme characterised by community consent and participation ?
- to what extent is there community involvement in the governance of the scheme?
- to what extent is there community trust in the scheme ? How might the notion of community be conceptualised ? how might the notion of trust be conceptualised here and measured? how is the independence of the scheme to be conceptualised and measured?

Danger of Securitisation

- Securitisation - the instigation of emergency politics in that a particular social issue that becomes securitised is responded to above and beyond established rules and frameworks that exist within what might be termed 'normal politics' (Jutila, 2006).
- Muslim communities as 'suspect'.
- May add to existing societal prejudices of, and fears towards, those individual and group collective identities that are stigmatised.
- May help sustain wider social structures which enable hate crimes to flourish (Iganksi, 2008). Can potentially play into the hands of extreme right-wing groups.

Conclusions

- Within the notion that communities can defeat terrorism lie struggles between those state and non-state actors working from a community-targeted and those working from a community-focussed approach.
- The case for there being a more community-focussed approach to countering terrorism.
- Although the notion of community is complex, and is often marginalised from research, policy and practice in relation to terrorism and counter-terrorism, communities as spaces of belonging, consisting of one or more of a combination of geographical, imaginative, emotional, political, and other, ties, are important for terrorism and counter-terrorism.