

## Countering Violent Extremism – October 2022

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This summary is prepared for the three-month trial of the Forward Project of the Social Change Lab - Susilo Wibisono & Winnifred R. Louis – details of the methodology and all summaries available here: <http://www.socialchangelab.net/forward.html> and via subscription/email at <https://socialchangelab.substack.com/>. Feedback welcome, to [w.louis@psy.uq.edu.au](mailto:w.louis@psy.uq.edu.au).

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Month/Year	October 2022
Key term	“countering violent extremism” <i>and</i> countering violent extremism
Database	Google Scholar
Link to database	<a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17p2fFHcyHQ0-hhlzNb2ZV-nzAUPxBPYs1fXsVC1_IRY/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17p2fFHcyHQ0-hhlzNb2ZV-nzAUPxBPYs1fXsVC1_IRY/edit?usp=sharing</a>

### Overview

Overall, there were 23 publications for the keyword “countering violent extremism” and countering violent extremism (without quotation marks) on Google Scholar in October 2022. After sorting the documents based on the relevance, 19 documents that consisted of ten journal articles, four book chapters, two books, two theses, and one editorial were reviewed. The publications on this month marked violent extremism as a global problem as the research were based on different geographical settings and political contexts. Three studies were developed based on the African context (NATO Strategic Direction-South Hub, 2022; Itse & Ojih, 2022), four studies were from the USA and Canada (Abu-Nimer, 2022; Dixit, 2022; Katherine Lacasse & Maggie Campbell-Obaid, 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022), five studies were from Asia and the Middle East countries (Juline Beaujouan & Amjed Rasheed, 2022; Eltayeb et al., 2022; Gohar et al., 2022; Kakar, 2022; Natarajan, 2022), and five studies were from European countries (Bolsinger, 2022; de Galembert, 2022; Frischlich, 2022; White, 2022), and the rest did not specify their population of interest (i.e., more theoretical papers). There was also a wide age range of participants, with both youth and adults investigated. However, the most common age of investigation was for youths. Authors’ areas of interest or

expertise were also vast, with the most common areas including criminology, psychology, religious studies and political studies.

The approaches involved in the publications include quantitative and qualitative approaches with some different methods, such as surveys, interviews, and text analysis. The empirical studies were built with a range number of participants from 59 to 604 individuals. The findings from the publications are further engaged and discussed in this report below.

## **Findings**

The findings from the listed publications revealed the association of violent extremism with several contexts namely politics, government, and religious life. The focus of the studies was ranging from the strategies to prevent extreme narratives (Abu-Nimer, 2022; Katherine Lacasse & Maggie Campbell-Obaid, 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022) to the intervention to counter extremism and terrorism (Gohar et al., 2022; White, 2022).

A series of literature reviews and interviews highlighted that while the intensity of terrorism and violent extremism has significantly decreased in the last decade, it has not vanished (Gohar et al., 2022; Hörster, 2022). Reductions in violent extremism and terrorism in Pakistan for example (Gohar et al., 2022), are attributed to a better law and order situation from the federal government and the constructive feedback of the main opposition party. However, the rise of extreme narratives were related to the situations where some groups of people experience discrimination either from the society or the government (Nagra & Maurutto, 2022). This finding has enriched the point of view that the root cause of extremism is not just individual psychological circumstances, but also societal or governmental discrimination, social media exposure and socio-economic problems (Haque et al., 2022; Itse & Ojih, 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022). Therefore, the attempts to counter violent extremism on a government level, interventions should focus on income or economic growth (Itse & Ojih, 2022), and regulating and coordinating prevention strategies (Beaujouan & Rasheed, 2022).

Discussion of possible interventions was prevalent in the publications from this range of time. The findings from some papers showed that people were generally less supportive of interventions aimed at terrorism compared to gang membership, and that individuals engaging with conservative ideology tend to be less supportive of both types of intervention compared to those engaging with liberal values (Lacasse & Campbell-Obaid, 2022). However, the policies aimed to build collective resilience to violent extremism through existing values or beliefs were reported to be meaningful intervention against violent extremism (Hörster, 2022; Itse & Ojih, 2022). Disengagement and deradicalization programs

that rebuild individuals' psychological inhibitions for violence are an essential component to reverse their trajectory towards violent extremism (Hörster, 2022). However, focusing on rehabilitating the psychological factors is not enough as interventions of counter-extremism are long-term processes that require community involvement political commitment to fairly govern and enforce the law (Hörster, 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022; White, 2022). The intervention programs may face barriers concerning public support, though perspective taking practice may assist with this issue (Lacasse & Campbell-Obaid, 2022). Additionally, early intervention before the "radicalisation" process occurs is essential to identify those at risk of being swayed by radical political or religious ideologies (Nagra & Maurutto, 2022).

Scholars also discussed the role of religion, some suggesting that while the legitimacy of particular religious institutions is sometimes questionable, they are essential in countering and preventing violent extremism and should be involved in intervention processes (Beaujouan & Rasheed, 2022). Others noted that some religions are both targets and actors of violent extremism, depending on the context (Gohar et al., 2022; Haque et al., 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022). While it is argued that assimilation of cultures and religions may work well for countering violent extremism (Eltayeb et al., 2022), others suggest that this is a difficult process that neither party desires (Dixit, 2022; Nagra & Maurutto, 2022).

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