Stages of Indoctrination and a Pathway into Terrorism: A perspective from Bangladesh

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Abstract

In a time and age of identities, violent extremism fueled by identity-based ideology comes as no surprise. Terrorist attacks from numerous groups take place globally, and Bangladesh has also encountered decades of terrorist violence since its independence particularly from groups that include Jamaat Ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, Harkat Ul-Jihad Al-Islami Bangladesh, among others. An aspect that requires deeper understanding is the process of how individuals make their way into terrorist organizations. This paper examines the stages of indoctrination experienced by individuals who were recruited into Bangladeshi terrorist outfits. The research was conducted with grounded theory methodology, using the bottom to up inductive process, for construction of an explanatory framework. Primary data was collected from in depth semi-structured interviews of individuals who had been recruited into Bangladeshi terrorist outfits and law enforcement officials. Findings have identified stages of indoctrination inspired by Sageman's model of radicalization, Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism and the New York Police Department's four factors.

Keywords: Indoctrination, Violent Extremism, Process, Terrorism

1. Introduction

The emergence of the Islamic State and Levant in the year 2014 set off an unfathomable series of recruits and involvement with terrorist outfits marking a global crisis as youth from all over the world made their way to conflict ridden zones such as Syria or carried out lone-wolf attacks in countries such as

France, the United States of America, Belgium, Australia among many others. Bangladesh was not left an exception to the influence and saw increasing numbers of youth engage with groups such as the Jamat-Ul-Mujahideen, Ansar Al-Islam, Hefazat-e-Islam, etc. that preached the narrative of violent extremism in furtherance of the establishment of the caliphate. Stark examples of the incidents that were planned to achieve their political goals include the tragic Holey Artisan attack, the Sholakia bombing and the Atia Mahal hide out among many more on Bangladeshi soil.

The increasing incidence of terrorism globally has given rise to dedicated fields attempting to understand the reasons for involvement in extremist groups centered around religions and establishment of systems to be governed under religious doctrines (Berrebi, 2005; Hegghammer, 2006; Newman, 2006; Tilly, 1978). Literature dedicated to understanding the behaviour of violent extremism, however emphasizes primarily on the recruit or the potential recruits who join terrorist organizations (Crenshaw, 1986; Dornhof, 2009; Gill, 2008). In depth studies have been and are being conducted to shed light on why individuals develop active support for the terrorist cause, how they are able to participate and what they derive from the experiences stretching from economic, psychological to social realms (Hegghammer, 2006; Lemieux, 2009; Pisoiu, 2007). Another side, though not as large in comparison, focuses on the popular religious preachers, considered motivational leaders, who are able to influence numerous to join through a mere piece of writing or a video screened on social media networks (Ilies, Judge & Wagner, 2006; Dierendonck, 2010; Ingram, 2016; Tucker, 1968;).

However, an area that needs more emphasis is the process of indoctrination experienced by individuals. With little attention given to the stages of indoctrination undergone by said vulnerable youth, there is much room in literature which needs to be addressed to understand the impact created as a result of interaction with a recruiter and the dynamics of the recruiter-recruit relationship. This work is thus a small attempt to address the gap in literature and bring forth the process of indoctrination that was experienced by Bangladeshi youth. The findings in this paper may shed light on this very process within the context of Bangladesh. With semi-structured in-depth interviews taken of 12 respondents purposively sampled for their involvement in terrorist outfits such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, Jamaat-Ul-Mujahideen and Al-Qaeda inspired groups after 2008 and analysis of personal documents such as newspaper reports and blogs which had available content regarding the research matter of processes of interaction, materials used to recruit, researchers were able to identify four stages in the process of indoctrination experienced by the selected respondents which have been elaborated in the findings.

1.1 Research Question:

1. What are the stages in the indoctrination process experienced by Bangladeshi youth?

1.2 Research objectives

1. To understand the various stages of indoctrination experienced by Bangladeshi youth

2. To add to the literature on indoctrination experiences, with a southern perspective based in Bangladesh

2. A Review of Literature

The research attempts to identify the particular stages in the process of indoctrination within the context of Bangladesh. This section will shed light on existing literature highlighting the concept of radicalization to comprehend in its entirety what the term entails, the multifaceted perspectives held on motivations behind involvement in such outfits and most importantly to assess the processes identified by other works to assist in the answering of this paper's research questions.

Throughout the years, a number of definitions have stemmed stressing on perceptions of what may be called "radicalization". While there is yet to be a universally accepted definition in the realms of academia, government and overall institutions, there are commonalities within more popular understandings of the word which share the idea that radicalization is a process by which one adopts an extreme ideology.

The Expert Group on Violent Radicalization established by the European Commission in 2006, tasked to analyze the state of academic research on radicalization to violence, in particular terrorism, noted in 2008 that radicalization is a context-bound phenomenon par excellence and that global, sociological and political drivers matter as much as ideological and psychological ones. This expert group utilized a concise working definition of violent radicalization, which expressed that socialization to extremism manifests itself in terrorism (Radicalization Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism. A concise Report prepared by the European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalization, 2008).

To add, Donatella della Porta and Gary La Free, guest editors of a special issue of the International Journal of Conflict and Violence (2011), explain that radicalization emerged to stress the interactive and processual dynamics in the formation of violent, often clandestine groups (Della Porta, 1995). In this

approach, radicalization referred to the actual use of violence, with escalation in terms of forms and intensity and was understood as a process leading towards the increased use of political violence.

Looking into the definition of the term with the lens of group dynamics, political radicalization is as a function, increased preparation for and commitment to inter-group conflict. While there is no universally accepted definition of radicalization leading to violence, the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV) defines it as follows: a process whereby people adopt extremist belief systems including the willingness to use, encourage or facilitate violence with the aim of promoting an ideology, political project or cause as a means of social transformation (CPRLV, 2008). At the heart of the process of radicalization leading to violence is a dynamic that involves individuals severing ties with those in their immediate environment (family, friends, colleagues, etc.), and progressing along a radical path that may eventually lead to violence. To explain their version in brief, violent radicalization entails the adoption of an ideology that becomes a way of life and a framework for meaningful action for the individual; belief in the use of violent means to promote a cause; and lastly the merging of ideology and violent action. (CPRLV, 2008)

To bring this part of the discussion to an end, it can be said that the content of the concept 'radical' has transformed dramatically in little more than a century. To illustrate, while in the 19th century, 'radical' referred primarily to liberal, anti-clerical, pro-democratic, progressive political positions, contemporary use of the term tends to point in the opposite direction embracing a new anti-liberal, fundamentalist, anti-democratic and regressive agenda (Schmid, 2013).

2.1 Models of indoctrination

Within the studies of religious extremism, with emphasis on the process of indoctrination followed by jihadist groups, a number of models have emerged but none based on the context of Bangladesh and the terrorist outfits based in the region. The review of literature has selectively assessed a number of notable models which go most in line with the process identified from the research findings after interviews with members of Bangladeshi terrorist outfits.

In the modern day, recent scholars argue that becoming radicalized is a gradual process and one that requires a progression through distinct stages and happens neither quickly nor easily (Horgan, 2005; Sibler & Bhatt, 2007). Therefore, a person does not become radical overnight, although the influence of an incident which may act as a 'catalyst event' or trigger (such as sudden economic loss, sudden death of a loved one, alienation) may accelerate the

process. This holds true for the case even with the respondents interviewed with many of them experiencing the death of a loved one, which acted as the trigger for their involvement though they are unaware of the phenomenon.

To begin the review of processes with the Prevent pyramid[3] created by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), radicalization is seen as a progressive movement up a pyramidal-type model, where higher levels in the pyramid are associated with increased levels of radicalization but decreased numbers of those involved. At the apex of the pyramid are active terrorists breaking the law who remain relatively few in number when considered in relation to all those who may sympathize with their beliefs and feelings. This larger group occupy the next level, those who are moving towards extremism. While not committing any violent acts themselves, they may provide tacit support to those sitting at the top of the pyramid and act to inspire others from below. At the second level, there sits a far larger grouping which constitutes all those that are considered 'vulnerable' to being influenced by these messages. One such group is young people within the criminal justice system. At the very bottom of the pyramid is the 'wider community'.

From this pyramid perspective, what is assumed is an implicit and linear relationship between the process of radicalization and ultimately, for some, participation in terrorism. Moreover, it is hard to understand how one progresses from the levels and which factors are involved. This model is therefore not used in our research for analysis of the terror suspects and their journey towards violent extremism.

The New York Police Department's four-stage radicalization process is one that stands relevant to the research enquiry for the similarities it shares with the experience of the terror suspects as they were recruited into terrorist outfits. The New York Police Department (NYPD) report which systematically examined 11 in-depth case studies of Al Qaeda-influenced radicalization and terrorism conducted in the West identified four phases: pre-radicalization, self-identification, indoctrination, and Jihadization (NYPD 2007: 4). The stages are as follows;

1. Pre-radicalization: this initial stage describes the person's life situation before radicalization and prior to exposure and adoption of Jihadi-Salafi Islam ideology.

2. Self-identification: this stage encompasses the person's early exploration of Salafi Islam, and a gradual gravitation away from their old identity, the

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[3] This model was developed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), in response to the United Kingdom's Labour government's Prevent Strategy, which was launched in 2007. This strategy aimed to stop radicalization, reduce support for terrorism and violent extremism, and discourage people from becoming terrorists.

beginning of association with like-minded individuals and adoption of this ideology as their own. A "cognitive opening" provides the catalyst for this, where religious seeking is a cognitive opening, or crisis, which shakes an individual's certitude in previously held beliefs and leaves them receptive to new world views.

3. Indoctrination: this third phase sees an individual progressively intensifying their beliefs, and finally wholly adopting the Jihadi-Salafi ideology. This leads to a conviction that the conditions and circumstances exist where action is required to support and further the cause of militant Jihad. We are told that this phase is typically facilitated and driven by a "spiritual sanctioner". Important to this phase is the association with like-minded people in order to 'deepen' the indoctrination.

4. Jihadization: this is the final operational phase in the radicalization process, where members of the cluster accept an individual duty to participate in Jihad, "self-designating themselves as holy warriors or mujahidin". Ultimately, this sees the group carrying out a terrorist attack, including planning, preparation and execution. There is no inevitability to this process, however. Not all who begin the process progress through all the stages, and they may either stop or abandon the radicalization process at different points (NYPD, 2008: 19).

Coming next to Sageman's work (2004, 2007, 2008), his model argues that the process of Al Qaeda-influenced radicalization to violence has four factors which include; a sense of 'moral outrage' (i.e., a reaction to perceived "major moral violations"; a specific interpretation of the world (for instance where moral violations are seen as representing a "war against Islam" (2007: 3); resonance with personal experiences and finally; mobilization through networks (Sageman, 2007).

While the first two stages and the last one can be aligned greatly with the experience of the Bangladeshi terrorist recruits, it is hard to measure the level of discrimination. Moreover, recruitment into such outfits is not always influenced by unemployment and boredom as many top recruits were engaged with jobs and had an active lifestyle.

With analysis of suicide bombers, Gill (2007) offers a pathway model which charts the trajectory of individuals who become suicide bombers. The model proposes that individuals experience four key stages on their path to a suicide bombing which are;

1. A broad socialization process and exposure to propaganda which tends to predispose the audience towards violence

2. The experience of a 'catalyst event' which can motivate joining a terrorist organization

3. Some pre-existing familial or friendship ties which facilitate the recruitment process, and finally 4. In-group radicalization through internalization and polarization of the group's norms and values.

These four stages are considered prerequisites that all suicide bombers experience, although Gill argues that the order with which different suicide bombers experience these stages changes from bomber to bomber. Together, the stages mutually reinforce one another. However, since the analysis was based on suicide bombers, it will not come to much use of the analysis drawn from the research undertaken for Bangladeshi terrorists as few are of that typology.

A very interesting and detailed model is given by Moghaddam (2007) who provides a more sophisticated multi-causal approach to understanding suicide terrorism, one which forgoes the pathway metaphor in favour of the analogy of a narrowing "staircase to terrorism". This involves three levels at the individual (dispositional factors), organizational (situational factors) and environmental (socio-cultural, economic and political forces).

Moghaddam's metaphor is of a staircase housed in a building where everyone lives on the ground floor, but where an increasingly small number of people ascend up the higher floors, and a very few reach the top of the building, being the point, at which one is led to carry out a terrorist act, there are obvious parallels with the Prevent pyramid model. We are told that the movement up each floor is characterized by a particular psychological process and as one ascends the staircase, so it narrows, reflecting one's narrowing choices (as in a decision tree) thereby making it that much more difficult to disengage and (following the metaphor), descend. This model fits relatively well with the experience of the Bangladeshi terrorist recruits especially with its distinct phases.

Empirical work done in the context of Bangladesh includes Rahman & Islam's work that brings forth distinct stages in the process of indoctrination experienced by Bangladeshi individuals. It highlights similar phases of moral outrage, mobilization, association and adoption of violence (Rahman & Islam, 2023) on part of the individuals but also stresses on the existence of triggers. The process elaborated in this study shares similar stages and draws extensively from four of the phases explained in Rahman & Islam's model but could not identify the stage of catalysts or triggers.

3. Methodology

The research undertook the qualitative method, adopting grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as an inductive process for the creation of theory dependent on collection of data on field. The inductive approach guided the researcher in a bottom to top direction where by collection of data was conducted initially and then there was movement towards the construction of an explanatory framework or theory through methodic gathering and analysis of data.

Techniques of data collection

Data collection was pursued through the most popularly used methods of interviewing and analysis of data from personal documents and physical evidence. Details on the techniques used are as follows;

- In-depth semi-structured interviews:

A total of 12 in-depth semi-structured interviews were undertaken of members of terrorist outfits of Bangladesh, and 5 members of Law Enforcement Agencies with a pre-prepared questionnaire with underlying guidance from the research question. Respondents were asked about their upbringing, childhood, how they got recruited into terrorist outfits, among other aspects.

- Analysis of personal documents:

The research also looked into newspaper reports and blogs which had available content regarding the research matter of processes of interaction, materials used to radicalize, etc.

- Analysis of physical evidence:

Physical evidence namely training materials used by terrorist outfits were also assessed to gather data regarding underlying categories or themes to help with construction of an explanatory framework.

Sampling

The research used the purposive sampling approach by which pre-determined selected participants were interviewed on basis of their experiences with the topic concerned. The interviewees were on average within the ages of 18 to 30 years and came from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

Data analysis

The data collected was analyzed through the traditional methods used in grounded theory which include data coding, in specific open coding and

constant comparative analysis. Data was coded in the line-by-line procedure to reach more descriptive themes or categories and compensate for use of the abbreviated version of grounded theory.

The construction of primary themes or categories was a result of the initially constructed sub themes or low order categories. It should be mentioned that throughout the process of theory formulation, memo writing was engaged in by use of diaries helping with the research process and substantive results found.

Validity and Reliability

With regard to validity of the research, the research process was conducted with checks of personal bias and expectations so as to not contaminate data on part of the researcher. The interviewees and their backgrounds were confirmed to assure their representativeness of the group.

Moreover, the tools and processes of the research were adhered to with no change or unsystematic events. The researcher clearly conceptualized and specified the constructs during the studies. Reliability of the data was ensured by selecting only confirmed respondents, personal documents such as newspapers and physical evidence of confirmed sources.

Ethical considerations

The researcher maintained an ethical approach throughout. Proper consent was obtained from the interviewees who were explicitly informed of the purpose of the interviews and opinions were not forced upon while noting points. The confidentiality of the interviewees has been upheld with use of pseudonyms to protect identity.

4. Findings

Analysis of the data point to a number of stages experienced by individuals as they transition from the initial concept of being persecuted as an in-group to the final stage of violence adoption. The stages are elaborated below along with a brief outlook on the demographics of the respondents.

4.1 Demographics of the Respondents

The research mainly used in-depth semi-structured interviews of 12 terror suspects who were involved with JMB and Ansar Al-Islam. On average, they were mostly within the youth age group with ages that range from 18 to 30 years, most in their mid-twenties. Portraying the different socio-economic

backgrounds, most were from middle income families while the least were of the affluent group. To categorize the different types of positions or activities they were engaged in, one of them was a direct funder of JMB, 6 of them were recruiters, 1 was an IS returnee, 1 was a translator while the rest engaged in activities ranging from logistical support to assisting with transportation of recruits and resources.

4.2 Process of Indoctrination experienced by Respondents

A synthesis of three main models that include Marc Sageman's 4 factors (Sageman, 2007), the New York Police Department model (NYPD, 2007) and finally of Moghaddam's "Staircase to Terrorism" (Moghaddam, 2007) came forth from the analysis. The process also found similarity with the model proposed by Rahman & Islam in their analysis of recruitment experiences by Bangladeshis (Rahman & Islam, 2023). The model that was identified from the data also adds in some new stages, outside the three established models mentioned, based on the data collected. The stages identified are as follows;

Feelings of injustice and discrimination

Slightly imilar to the stages brought forward by Rahman & Islam, 2023, the first stage of the model is inspired by the first factor of Sageman's Model namely when there is a sense of moral outrage (Sageman, 2007) and Moghaddam's Ground Floor namely subjective perceptions of deprivation, injustice and restricted social mobility (Moghaddam, 2007) of the in-group. Commonalities are found within the theme and point to a sense of perceived victmization (Rahman & Islam, 2023)

Respondents strongly expressed that they felt part of the larger Sunni-Muslim community and the identity was a result of their childhood experiences, dialogue that they engaged in throughout their lives and the leadership that they looked up to within their networks and peers; it should be stressed that this adoption of violence would not have occurred had they not had such strong sense of the collective identity resulting in in-group favoritism. However, it has little to do with the actual Sunni-Muslim community, but more the tendecy of engaging in in-group favoritism.

"Muslims are being killed everywhere with no one to support them", mentioned by suspect number 12 was a sentence we heard in almost each of the interviews followed by lengthy explanations of how the world was at war with Islam. Conversations took place over the chaos and ongoing conflict in the regions of Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Myanmar among others where men, women and children were being mercilessly killed at the hands of enemies ranging

from the United States of America, Russia, other religious communities, etc. Emotionally expressing, suspect number 4 mentioned the need to protect the Muslim communities being attacked;

> "Muslims are being tortured in different countries like Iraq, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan and Palestine. America and his allies are torturing them. They are killing the Muslims, raping and torturing them, destroying their property." (Suspect number 4)

Similar expressions were recorded from the interviews that stressed on how they felt as if they were under constant attack;

"The world only waits and watches as Muslims are killed everywhere", says suspect number 6 as he discusses on the Rohingya community (he refers to them as Rohingya Muslims singularly) and expresses his frustration over the loss of rights of a complete population.

Interaction with likeminded groups

The second stage is when respondents began seeking for answers regarding the conflicts and perceptions of injustice. This stage stands similar to Sageman's stage of mobilization through networks and amplified grievances (Sageman, 2007). It should be mentioned here that there are both instances of where members themselves seek out terrorist groups via the internet or through peer networks; and also, where recruiters identify vulnerable individuals and begin the process of mentoring them assessing radical readiness which was a more common phenomenon in the respondent base of extremists who had recruiters to lead them. Out of the respondents, 7 of them had been indoctrinated through online materials while 5 had been actively recruited via peer networks or family members.

Interaction takes place both online and offline. Offline locations mentioned were places of worship, the market, coaching centers and even on the playing fields. As respondent 8 mentions, "I asked a man who seemed very pious and regular at our neighborhood mosque about the ongoing conflicts in Syria since we had met many times before for prayer. He gave me more detailed explanations than most others which is why I was interested in his views."

Initiation can also take place online as mentioned by respondents who would often look to groups and pages that discussed on issues of conflicts in the Middle East, the Rohingya crisis or other issues that the respondents sympathized. Expressed by respondent 4, "I would often share videos and pictures of the atrocities in Iraq or Syria. I would get these videos and content from pages that focused on such issues. People would like my posts and even messaged

me about the events. That is how I met the man who was a recruiter. He would converse online with me and give me detailed explanations with documents as well about the wars and foreign forced involved."

Respondent 9, who had been recruited from a coaching center, expresses, "I liked reading about global politics online and would also discuss about these issues with peers. The coaching center I studied at had other boys who also talked about these global concerns, mainly about how Muslims are being persecuted everywhere. One day a friend of mine introduced me to an older brother of his and told me that he knew a lot about these matters. I didn't realize then that my friend's acquaintance was working for an organization that recruited young males."

The data above explains how the second stage encompasses an active engagement in dialogue on issues of injustice and discrimination; which then leads to the respondent seeking for people who share the same interests and dialogue. We see how this relates to the aspect of networking and then sharing "amplified grievance" as mentioned by Sageman (Sageman, 2007). In the case of the respondents above, such a search led them to recruiters of terrorist organizations actively seeking young vulnerable minds.

Association through Recruiters

The third stage encompasses how association is enhanced through interaction with the recruiter. After interaction, recruiters provide documents, audio tapes, videos and other materials. This is similar to the phase of the NYPD (2007) model of indoctrination wherein a "spiritual sanctioner" (NYPD, 2007) influences the recruit, and impacts his moral compass through close engagement.

"After my introduction with him, we would sit regularly and he would give me many reading materials as well as audio recordings which I had to go through for the next discussion", expresses respondent 9. "It was very exciting for me as I got to learn a lot and I also liked sitting in those discussions where politics, global affairs and other aspects would be covered."

Respondent 4 also shares a similar account, "After I met the recruiter, he gave detailed explanations of why conflicts were happening with the Muslim communities globally. He explained how mainly it was for our identity; and also emphasized that it was hatred for Muslims fueled by non-Muslim communities."

Based on the accounts from the respondents, we see how increased interaction with the recruiter enhanced association and also led to the adoption of certain, albeit distorted, lens that gave meaning to atrocities taking place globally. Such

association takes place over time, and respondents mentioned how they slowly but eventually adopted the moral lens of their recruiter, based on continuous engagement.

Law Enforcement Official 3 shares, "Most recruits are vulnerable especially when young. Recruiters are able to create a bond with them, and this has an impact on their impressionable minds. The youth seek answers, and the recruiters give them these We see how events are thus given meaning as recruiter and recruit engage closely in dialogue, exchange materials and develop a moral lens that sees global affairs from a singular point of view – a point of view that is characterized by an "Us vs them" dynamic.

The reasons that can be seen for the easy acceptance of the content and speeches is the lack of knowledge which goes in depth about geo politics and also religious world affairs, which drive these individuals looking for answers from extremists themselves. Besides this, the recruit is enchanted by the characteristics of the recruiter or the perceived spiritual leader namely personal attributes (friendliness, punctuality, dedication, helpfulness); and the charismatic method of communication (bi-lingual abilities, expertise in English as well as Arabic and Bangla; in depth knowledge on religious and world affairs) (Iqbal, 2021).

Direct involvement into the terrorist outfits and adoption of violence

After the three stages, data points to the final stage of violence adoption. This, however, does not mean that all respondents engaged in violence themselves; but rather a justification of the use of violence and firm belief that violence was the only way to stop the persecution of Muslims globally, bring back the Caliphate and "restore order" to the world. With continued engagement and exchange of materials and resources, the recruit comes to a point where he/she believes and justifies the use of violent to meet political goals. Individuals are assigned tasks and roles based on their strengths that are assessed by members of the terrorist outfits.

Respondent 2 shares, "At the time, I thought the only way to be part of the larger purpose was to join the group. I wanted to see Muslims around the world leading.". Similarly, Respondent 5 expresses, "It is our moral responsibility to ensure that there is justice for all Muslims. There is blood being shed of our people globally as it is, so why are we labelled as the villains when the same happens with the enemy?".

As elaborated above, towards the end of the process, individuals experience a heightened sense of singular identity and the out-group is considered the main

enemy. There is also a sense of purpose that results from the previous stages mentioned. Respondent 3 expresses, "I joined and then was given training for a period of two to three months. It made me feel like I was finally contributing to my community and working for their advancement. Since I was good in both English and Bangla, I was given the role of a translator of content that the group needed."

At this list stage, the moral compass of the individuals shifts and the use of violence is justified for meeting the larger goals of the groups. Similar to Moghaddam's fourth stage, the recruits are assimilated into the organizations and a process of increased interaction further facilitates (Moghaddam, 2007).

5. Conclusion

The attempt to identify the stages of indoctrination was mainly undertaken with the objective of personally understanding the lived experiences of individuals who were vulnerable and thus had fallen in a way, victim to terrorist outfits. We also aimed to add to literature focused on the Bangladeshi reality of the phenomenon.

Overall, the research has been able to answer the research question and has found interesting results which can possibly be used to develop policy to counter violent extremism. As a final summary and concluding note, the key findings of the research constitute the stages of indoctrination experienced by respondents which are as follows;

   I.   Feelings of injustice and discrimination
  II.   Interaction with likeminded groups
 III.   Association through Recruiters
 IV.   Adoption of Violence

Limitations and Suggestions for future research

The research was conducted within considerable confinements as will be briefly mentioned as limitations in areas of methodology and findings;

Limitations of findings

- There is acknowledgement of the integral impact of cultural settings in the construction of the explanatory framework. Therefore, the findings with end product of the theory constructed are limited to their cultural and temporal settings.
- The restricted sample size is a reflection of the constraints of time and resource which have limited the findings within the small respondent

group and content gathered. There is scope for further theoretical sampling to add to the theory constructed.

- Findings are limited to the sample which lacks the reflection and experiences of female recruits and female recruiters since it was difficult to find female respondents for the research.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the research and keeping in mind the context in which it was framed, the following are some suggestions for future researchers and stakeholders;

- One of the primary objectives of the research to shed light on a dynamic not explored before in the field of terrorism studied within the context of Bangladesh. A suggestion to future researchers would be to emphasize more on the stages or phases experienced by the recruit as he/she moves towards indoctrination.

- There needs to be more focus on how elements of vulnerability are defined in the context of Bangladesh. More emphasis needs to be placed by stakeholders such as government, civil society and law enforcement on the healthy building of society so as to not leave a vacuum which recruiters of terrorist outfits are able to take advantage of.

- There needs to be more emphasis on the building of cultures which set standards for non-violent and inclusive behavior; valued based on the perception of the followers, would be redefined to behavior that promotes wellbeing of all and not one particular group

- Focused on researchers, including a range of age groups and genders within the sample would help reflect more descriptive explanatory frameworks

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