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Theoretical Approach to Radicalization and Violent Extremism that leads to TERRORISM

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Abstract

As Korea is changing into a multi-racial and multicultural society, the number of immigrants has exceeded two million people, making heterogeneous members in Korea society increase. The changes in Korean society are similar to those of the international migration phenomenon that occurs globally.

The phenomenon that individuals of diverse nationalities leave their origin country affects the various institutions of origin and destination countries, playing a key role in social transformation. However, not everyone agrees with this change. There is also a movement to resist social change derived from international migration, which usually appears in the form of fundamentalism. In addition, social and economic instability is presented as a key link in the process of transforming this fundamentalism into violent extremism.

It is argued that radicalization and violent extremism are root cause of recent terrorist attacks in Europe as a form of lone wolf terrorism. Even though political and religious motives are different from each case, it is remarkable to focus that radicalism and violent extremism are commonly observed in these cases as the underlying causes.

Republic of Korea is not free from violent extremism spreading to Asia, making it urgent to homegrown terrorism and lone wolf terrorism. In order to prevent violent extremism, all aspects of social efforts are required. Therefore, it is appropriate to prevent violence from the economic, social and educational level as well as the law enforcement related to police activities.

That is, the response to radicalism is characterized by a social and economic response to the improvement of the environment that promotes radicalization and the spread of violent extremism, in which not only the government but also religion, education, business, and civil society participate. In particular, it is pointed out that the social integration of social minority groups and vulnerable groups, which can be transformed into violent extremism with radicalism, is the most important.

This article is an exploratory research for the prevention of violent extremism in the context of Korea Peninsula, reviewing on the explanatory models on violent extremism.

[Keywords] Radicalization, Violent Extremism, Terrorism, Counterterrorism, Countering Violent Extremism

1. Introduction

As Korea is changing into a multi-racial and multicultural society, the number of immigrants has exceeded two million people, making heterogeneous members in Korea society increase. The changes in Korean so-

ciety are similar to those of the international migration phenomenon that occurs globally.

The phenomenon that individuals of diverse nationalities leave their origin country affects the various institutions of origin and destination countries[1], being a key role in

social transformation[2]. However, not everyone agrees with this change. There is also a movement to resist social change derived from international migration, which usually appears in the form of fundamentalism[3]. In addition, social and economic instability is presented as a key link in the process of transforming this fundamentalism into violent extremism[4].

It is argued that radicalization and violent extremism are root cause of recent terrorist attacks in Europe as a form of lone wolf terrorism. Even though political and religious motives are different from each case, it is remarkable to focus that radicalism and violent extremism are commonly observed in these cases as the underlying causes.

Republic of Korea is not free from violent extremism spreading to Asia, making it urgent to homegrown terrorism and lone wolf terrorism. In order to prevent violent extremism, all aspects of social efforts are required. Therefore, it is appropriate to prevent violence from the economic, social and educational level as well as the law enforcement related to police activities.

This article is an exploratory research for the prevention of violent extremism in the context of Korea Peninsula, reviewing on the explanatory models on violent extremism.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Definition of violent extremism

Extremism means “an attitude in which all thoughts or actions are overly biased” in the dictionary. Thus, extremism is not found only in certain fields such as religion, but in all fields of a society. According to Neuman(2010), the term, extremism, is “a political ideology that opposes the core values and principles of a society”[5]. In democracies, extremism is defined as “the ideology of certain racialism and religious supremacy, as well as an ideology against the principle of democracy and universal human rights”. Following by this definition, an extremist is a person who aims to achieve its purpose by

means of violating to life, liberty and human rights of others[6].

In order to explain the root causes of homegrown terrorism and lone wolf terrorism emerging as a new type of terrorist threat in recent years, the conception of radicalization should be examined together with extremism. Radicalization implies a radical change in the current social system and political system practices in order to realize social ideals. As can be seen from the dictionary definition of radicalization, radicalization itself is not perceived as a social threat if it is not associated with violence or illegal behavior. Rather, it can serve as a driving force for socially beneficial changes[7].

When radicalization is combined with violence and illegal activities and transformed into radicalization for terrorism, it becomes extremism. In particular, extremism in this case is violent extremism, and violent extremism not only allows an individual to acknowledge violence, such as terrorism, as one of the available means of action, but also acts as a justifying mechanism for such violence. Furthermore, violent extremism does not stop radicalized individuals from advocating terrorism, but rather enables them to support or carry out direct acts of terrorism. In light of these points, radicalization is intended to change the existing political and social structure, while extremism embraces a certain ideology and, according to its ideology, uses violence against the governance of a society and the dominant group[8]. Taking these differences into account, extremism as a cause of terrorism is described as violent extremism.

2.2. Theories in violent extremism

Since violent extremism is pointed out as a process that is affected by various structural and psychosocial factors[9], this article focus on psychological causes.

2.2.1. Social movement theory

Social movement theory(SMT) is a theory developed by paying attention to collective complaints arising from the illogical process of collective action that takes place under

oppressed environmental conditions. According to SMT, an individual thinks that the reason why one participates in a specific social movement is passively subdued to an overwhelming social atmosphere or social power. For its survival as an organization, it has objectives to form a potential group of potential members, network for recruiting members, motivation for the participation of the members, and elimination of obstacles to participation in the exercise[10].

In addition, SMT explores two-way methods of the process of recruiting potential members, informing them about the opportunities they can gain from participation in the group, and using the incentive[11]. Later, SMT has evolved into Resource mobilization theory(RMT), focusing on the process of participating in specific contexts such as group dynamics[6].

2.2.2. Framing theory

Framing theory focuses on the process by which specific social movements and social aggregates constitute, produce, and disseminate their meanings. Framing theory deals with the process of repeatedly presenting specific frames of messages about beliefs, attitudes and beliefs of supporters so as to generate the most repercussions of potential support for a particular social movement or group. According to the framing theory, as individuals acquire frames of reference from a particular social movement, they gradually find their identity in collective action. This means that specific social movements are motivated to diagnose problems that individuals perceive vaguely, ask for their responsibilities, and provide solutions and tactics and strategies for those problems so that potential participants can actively participate in the exercise. It is in providing the framework. A key element in the participation of the members through the framing process is how 'reality' presented by the exercise provokes repercussions from those potential participants[12].

Based on the theory of social movements and the framing theory, four models of the development of the armed Islamic group

have been proposed. This model is based on the assumption that individuals who are subjected to violent extremism are first exposed to a new worldview(cognitive openness), religion is recognized as a path to pursue meaning(religious pursuit), narrative and ethos(frame adjustment), and finally the step of introducing into the group through socialization process(injection of social movement)[13].

2.2.3. Social psychology theory

Violent extremism is most frequently seen in collective phenomena. Therefore, socio-psychological explanations of group dynamics will help understand the behavior of terrorist groups that make ordinary individuals more violent extremist. The social psychology theory(SPT) explains that the context of the group develops extreme attitudes. The opinions and attitudes of the group are more extreme than the opinions and attitudes of the individual, which means group polarization.

This makes group decisions more biased and irrational than personal decision making. This phenomenon, called so-called groupthink, occurs when members of a group are overly consensual, which occurs when the means of consensus among members has evolved the goal of making the most appropriate decision. It also recognizes the group on the basis of a more favorable prejudice to the group members, which in turn has a negative perception and attitude toward the outsider. One of the important socio-psychological explanations that extremism develops is that individuals feel less responsive to group behavior. Individuals are more likely to be receptive to violence if violent behavior is to be grouped.

Finally, an individual joins a certain group because there are perceived incentives and rewards, and a group has internal norms and disciplines to control its actions. If the individual is highly cohesive and isolated from society, and if the individual has a high price to refuse the instructions, the compliance of the group will increase and the degree of obedience will increase. Therefore, extreme attitudes must be developed[14].

3. Review on Models for Violent Extremism

Although factors influencing violent extremism are presented as aspiration and exclusion factors, the process of transition from radicalism to violent extremism is not the same process as a single formula[7].

In Europe, where violent extremism has been the cause of lone wolf terrorist attacks in recent years, in order to understand the process of turning an individual into a violent extremism, it is regarded as a process by which an individual is transformed into radicalization and violent extremism is not a process of a single formula, and it is suggested that it is not a one-way linear one.

3.1. Staircase to terrorism model

Although factors influencing violent extremism are presented as aspiration and exclusion factors, the process of transition from radicalism to violent extremism is not the same process as a single formula[7].

Moghaddam(2005) presented a model of “Staircase to Terrorism” to illustrate the process of transition to extremism and personalization using various psychological components. Moghaddam’s model saw gradual progression of individuals to radicalization and violent extremism, such as climbing stairs from one level to five. Individuals’ perceived grievances and current pitfalls lead to perceptions of deprivation, and they are seen as the basic rationale and fuel for the path to terrorism. However, not every individual develops to a higher level than he or she recognizes. Individuals who are radicalized at each stage gradually decrease in number as they move up to the higher level, and individuals who emerge to the level of violent extremism associated with actual terrorist acts are relatively few in number compared to the initial stage of rapid evolution[15].

According to Moghaddam’s model, radicalized individuals begin their actions with the desire to improve the plight of their current situation. However, if this attempt is unsuccessful, it leads to despair or aggression. The despair or aggression thus induced

is projected to the object which is regarded as the cause of his failure. These objects are regarded as so-called ‘enemies’ to individuals who feel desperation. Once the anger against the enemy is formed, some individuals become violent, extreme ideologies and sympathetic to the terrorist group. Some of these ideologically motivated and sympathetic individuals are finally joined by extremist groups or extremist movements, and then participate in actual acts of terrorism. Only individuals who are radicalized to the highest levels are able to overcome obstacles to terrorism and actually engage in terrorism[16].

3.2. Jihadization model

The jihadization model suggests that the process of accepting the Islamic fundamentalist ideology of the citizens of the Western countries as a linear process with four stages. The New York Police Agency’s jihadization model is similar to the terms and order used in the radicalization model proposed by the FBI. The first step in the NYPD’s jihadization model is the “pre-radicalization” phase. This stage corresponds to a situation before an individual is exposed to Islamic fundamentalism, such as Salafist Jihad.

In the second phase of the Self-Identification, individuals who are radicalized by studying Salafi Islam accept ideological doctrines, and associate with supporters of Islamic fundamentalism. In the third step, the ‘Indoctrination phase’, the strengthening of radicalization is reinforced by the radicalization beliefs of radicalized individuals and the commitment to radicalized ideology and their sympathizers. The final stage, the ‘Jihadization phase’, is characterized by accepting jihad practices and fulfilling personal obligations to perform jihad[17].

3.3. Typical radicalization pattern model

The Model of a “Typical” Radicalization Pattern, which studies European radicalization and violent extremism that lead to terrorism, consists of four stages similar to those of the FBI and the New York Police Department. The first stage of radicalization in

Precht's model is the "pre-radicalization stage", the second stage is "conversion and identification with radical Islam", the third stage is And the third is the stage of terrorism and planned plots. The second is the level of terrorism and terrorism. Precht(2007) found that the group dynamics and self-identification in small groups acted as a powerful force to devote to radicalization and extremist ideology.

He also analyzed factors affecting the process of radicalization and violent extremism of individuals living in Europe into Islamic fighters. He suggested that personal conflict against religious identity, background factors such as experience of being discriminated, and lack of social integration, trigger factors such mentors charismatic leaders who can induce radicalization and violent extremism, and opportunistic factors such as degree and accessibility to radicalization and violent extremism[18].

4. Conclusions

Taken together with the factors that influence violent extremism and the discussion of radical evolution models that are hardened by violent extremism, the response to extremism requires a comprehensive and multidimensional approach that can address both aspiration and exhalation factors .

The existing counter-terrorism activities are mainly government-led political, military, and economic responses. Therefore, the main contents of the counter-terrorism activities are terrorist group factors and hiding place, blocking terrorists' movement and strengthening border control, punishing terrorists, blocking terrorist financing and equipment provision, and stabilizing disputed areas where terrorism occurs.

On the other hand, the response to radicalism is characterized by a social and economic response to the improvement of the environment that promotes radicalization and the spread of violent extremism[19], in which not only the government but also religion, education, business, and civil society

participate. In particular, it is pointed out that the social integration of social minority groups and vulnerable groups, which can be transformed into violent extremism with radicalism, is the most important[20].

Therefore, the response to extremism is based on public-private partnership, and it is necessary to develop common values such as anti-extremism, early intervention in community-led initiative, social minority groups including Muslims And empowerment of vulnerable groups, building resources for extremist responses, promoting tolerance and multiculturalism through education, promoting citizens' awareness, and online anti-extremist activities[21].

In recent extreme terrorist attacks, there has been little use of precision explosive devices that require heavy equipment and advanced technology, and the use of explosives and rifles The use of a hardening machine and vehicles to spread the fear that soft-target terrorism at an individual level is possible at all times. In some countries experiencing terrorism due to Islamic extremism and experiencing anxiety due to the massive outbreak of refugees, a kind of 'compartmentalization' phenomenon and extreme right nationalism are also emerging. However, in order to solve the fundamental problem, it is necessary to build good governance based on international cooperation and to recognize diversity.

In other words, even if the forces of Islamic countries are weakened, there is a high possibility that the development and propagation of publicity and persuasion means related to terrorism will continue in the future, as many terrorists with expertise to construct various propaganda and narratives have participated. Extreme attention will be an important mechanism for proliferation. In countries where Islamic immigrant communities such as France, Belgium, and the United Kingdom have been activated, there have been reported cases of similar small groups receiving the ideology, ideology and violence tactics of the Islamic countries among the immigrant group. Taking this into account, it is believed that

blocking such movements will be the key to responding to terrorism.

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