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ROAD TO SUPPORTING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE BOAT OF SELF-SACRIFICE, DEVIANT ASSOCIATION AND RADICALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how self-sacrifice for religion, deviant associations, and radical beliefs impact people's support for political violence. A diverse group of 354 participants—including prisoners, drug addicts, university students, and online respondents—was examined using standardized psychological scales. Results show that radicalization was the primary predictor of support for political violence, followed by deviant associations and religious self-sacrifice. These insights shed light on compound psychological and social dynamics leading individuals to believe that political violence is justified. The study shows that it's important to understand people's need to feel accepted and to know who they are and what gives their life meaning, mainly for those who are most in danger. The study uplifts advanced support through circle efforts and schooling to prevent radical ideas from rolling out. All over, research participants' rights were valued, with direct permission and full secrecy secured at every step.
Keywords: *Self-Sacrifice for Religion, Deviant Association, Radicalization, Political Violence, Extremism, Behavioral Predictors,.*

INTRODUCTION

The London 7/7 attack happened on 7th July 2005, where 4 suicide bombers executed a radical attack on the London public transport system during peak hour. The attack killed 52 people, and over 700 were injured. The aggressors were British-born men influenced by radical Islamist ideology. They claimed they attacked because Britain was involved in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was the worst attack in the UK since World War 2. The 7/7 attack was shocking not because of the level of violence, but because the attackers were British-born men, who targeted a society they were part of. The incident forced the world to confront an unsettling question: How does someone go from being an ordinary member of society to committing such extraordinary violence?

The answers are not simple. These questions continue to trouble researchers, policymakers, and everyday people alike: What causes a person to support or carry out political violence? What psychological needs or social forces push them in that direction? And most importantly, how can we recognize and intervene in these processes before tragedy strikes?

Political violence, broadly defined, is the use of force by individuals or groups to achieve political goals (Goodwin, 2006). This can take many forms—terrorism, violent protest, armed insurgency, or even state-sponsored aggression. While such acts might appear spontaneous or irrational from the outside, they often follow a deeper, more gradual path. They tend to be the result of accumulated personal experiences, ideological exposure, and the influence of one's social environment. Among the many factors involved, three pathways have emerged as especially significant in the literature: self-sacrifice, deviant associations, and radicalization.

Self-sacrifice, in this context, goes beyond selflessness. It often reflects a personal need for meaning, recognition, or redemption. According to Kruglanski and colleagues (2014), some individuals are drawn to the idea of dying for a cause not simply because they believe in it, but because it gives them a sense of value and belonging. In many extremist narratives, martyrdom is portrayed as the highest form of honor—turning individual suffering into something glorified, even celebrated. When framed this way, self-sacrifice becomes not just acceptable, but desirable.

Another critical pathway is deviant association—the process of being socially influenced by those who hold extremist views. These influences might come from close friends, religious or ideological mentors, or even strangers in online spaces. As Sageman (2004) explains, radical ideas are often introduced gradually, in trusted environments where questioning is discouraged and loyalty is rewarded. These communities—real or virtual—don't just spread ideologies; they provide emotional connection, identity, and validation to those who feel marginalized or invisible.

Radicalization, the third and perhaps most complex factor, refers to the internal transformation through which someone begins to view violence as justified, even necessary. It is not a sudden event, but a process shaped by personal grievances, feelings of injustice, social alienation, or perceived threats to identity and belonging (Horgan, 2008). What begins as a passive belief can, over time, harden into a readiness to act. And because this shift often happens silently—in homes, schools, prayer spaces, or social media feeds—it can be difficult to detect until it's too late.

While these processes have been examined extensively in Western contexts, there is still much to learn about how they unfold in societies like Pakistan, where political instability, ideological divides, and socioeconomic inequality are deeply interwoven. Pakistan has experienced its share of extremist violence, yet psychological research on the root causes—especially through the lens of individual motivations and social environments—remains relatively limited.

This study aims to help bridge that gap. It explores how self-sacrifice, deviant associations, and radicalization interact to shape support for political violence among individuals in Pakistan. Using a diverse sample of 354 participants—including university students, prison inmates, recovering addicts, and online respondents—the research seeks to understand not just the "what" of political violence, but the "why" behind it. Ultimately, the goal is to shed light on the underlying dynamics that lead people down this dangerous path, and more importantly, to offer insights that can inform real-world prevention, rehabilitation, and deradicalization strategies.

Because at the heart of every act of political violence is a person—someone with a story, with needs unmet, and choices influenced by forces larger than themselves. Understanding those stories is the first step toward stopping the cycle.

Literature Review

The expanding research on political violence and radicalization highlights the complex interaction of psychological needs, social networks, and ideology. Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski (2017) used the Quest for Significance Theory to study how rejection, humiliation, or social invisibility may lead to violent extremism to restore self-worth.

Knowing that McCauley and Moskalenko's theoretical model sheds light on radicalization pathways, its lack of experimental backing limits its practical utility (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017). Since most of their study uses anecdotal and biographical sources, it can be difficult to determine the most important processes or statistical relationships. The approach is sophisticated but lacks a quantitative basis for policymaking or action (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017).

The current research uses a quantitative approach to examine major social and psychological predictors of political violence in a varied sample of Pakistanis, including self-sacrifice, radicalization, and deviant connections. This study provides more precise, quantitative, and culturally appropriate radicalization findings by statistically evaluating these qualities. Clear empirical data may improve practical and theoretical skills.

In a meta-analysis of 42 quantitative studies, Da Silva et al. (2023) assessed the whole 3N model of the Quest for Significance Theory, which has three main components: Need (losing meaning

or respect), Narrative (finding a purpose or belief system), and Network (connecting with people who share this view). This model explains how people who feel worthless and need a story and a group can lead to extreme acts.

The pursuit of importance was the strongest predictor of violent extremism, followed by peer pressure and ideological narratives, according to the random-effects modelling and PRISMA study. Notably, importance alone has no predictive effect without narrative framing and social validation. The study also showed how technique, particularly variable operationalization, affected effect sizes.

Chuang and D'Orsogna (2019) studied algorithms and math models that simulate radicalization. Agent-based simulations, compartment models, and contagion models were tested. These models explain how exposure and peer pressure disseminate radical ideas quickly in close-knit social networks. They excelled at characterizing group-level phenomena, including tipping moments, ideological clustering, and extremism in varied social and environmental contexts (Chuang & D'Orsogna, 2019).

Although these models shed light on structural and network dynamics, they have many shortcomings. They also limited diverse human behavior to mechanical phases, ignoring emotional, cognitive, and cultural aspects that influence radicalization. The absence of identity crises, moral defense, and personal importance was notable. These models were difficult to apply to preventive or rehab actions since they ignored de-radicalization (Chuang & D'Orsogna, 2019).

These gaps support the current work, which goes beyond computer abstractions to empirically study psychosocial processes that radicalize. This study integrates psychological radicalization, deviant connections, and faith-based sacrifice into an everyday, culturally specific population—Pakistani students, drug users, and prisoners—to highlight social influences and individual psychological needs that mathematical models often ignore. It also helps build solutions by studying the affective factors that lead to the acceptability of political violence.

Swann and his colleagues (2021) conducted five studies with over 2,000 volunteers from Spain and the US to determine why certain people are willing to fight or die for a cause. They studied strong individual values including morality, religion, and—most importantly—identity fusion. When a person becomes so committed to their group that their personal and group identities blend (Swann et al., 2021).

Identity fusion was the main source of aggression in all five studies. It's intriguing that moral or religious convictions only predicted this behavior when significantly tied to group emotional bonds. People sacrificed because of their convictions and emotional ties to the community. The findings show that emotional group affiliation promotes excessive behavior. They show how strong internal group linkages might drive people to sacrifice for a common goal (Swann et al., 2021).

These constraints motivate the current study's focus on non-Western behavioral and ideological variables of political violence support. This research provides cultural uniqueness and practical significance by examining how self-sacrificial views (particularly religiously framed), deviant associations, and psychological radicalization co-occur in Pakistani students, substance users, and inmates. It also incorporates contextualized risk factors beyond self-report, revealing how identity-based motivations intersect with real-world social effects in extremism pathways.

In a longitudinal study of 892 Swedish adolescents, Or, (2023) examined the link between peer harassment and political radicalism over five data waves. The study found that teenagers who experienced more social rejection were more likely to adopt radical political views, especially early on. However, many people organically detached from extremist views over time. This process was moderated by supporting adults, particularly parents and teachers, who lessened the link between harassment and radicalization. The study supported the Quest for Significance Theory by showing how exclusion and humiliation can feed ideological extremism to restore self-worth.

The study has gaps despite its contributions. It measured attitudinal radicalization but not behavioral effects like violence. It also ignored the psychological or social dynamics of ideological disengagement—why and how people abandon radical viewpoints. The Swedish

cultural setting may further limit the application of findings to societies with different political conflict, religiosity, or social cohesion.

These constraints support the present study, which examines underrepresented, high-risk populations in Pakistan, such as students, substance users, and inmates. This research examines the relationship between cognitive radicalization and behavioral support for political violence, focusing on how social exclusion, deviant peer affiliations, and self-sacrificial views interact, unlike Ör's concentration on attitudinal changes. The study provides a more contextualized and intervention-relevant knowledge of radicalization pathways by focusing on non-Western and volatile sociopolitical environments and long-term behavioral effects.

Buhrmester et al. (2020) studied identity fusion—how people develop an emotional bond with their organization. They focused on how group experiences can foster strong emotional ties and selflessness. In their study of Indonesian Muslims, they found that personal transformation—the moment when a group experience profoundly changed one's self-perception—was the biggest factor in strong identity fusion. Emotional ties and shared intensity were also important. These findings show how life-changing experiences can inspire people to sacrifice for their communities. It implies that profound experiences often radicalize people.

The study had some flaws. Memory errors or the desire to give socially acceptable answers may have influenced most of the self-reported data. Its cross-sectional design prevented showing how identity fusion develops or changes over time. How people stop having radical ideas and what elements contribute to de-radicalization and long-term behavioral change were not studied.

These gaps highlight the need for more research on how radical identities interact with social and psychological variables over time, rather than just how they are formed. For example, future research could examine what weakens emotionally intense identities in different situations and how emotional discomfort, deviant social groups, and ongoing ideological reinforcement affect this process. Such research may reveal a more dynamic and comprehensive picture of radicalization and how to prevent it.

Based on these findings, Nivot et al. (2021) conducted a longitudinal study in Zurich with approximately 900 17–20-year-olds to assess violent extremism support over time. Poor emotional regulation, lack of self-control, and relationships with deviant peers were more likely to hang onto or expand radical beliefs, even if many young people either dropped or maintained modest support for extremist ideas throughout time. It identified developmental and psychological risk characteristics that predicted persistent radicalization during adolescence, making this study important.

Many severe errors were found in the study. No consideration was given to school-based learning, religious counseling, or social occurrences that could change ideological ideas. The study also didn't examine how political or cultural norms affect emotional dysregulation or peer pressure. The study ignored the complicated role of ideological, cultural, and social reinforcement in radical attitudes by focusing on personal attributes.

Such limitations suggest more research on how social environments and peer networks promote or inhibit extreme thinking. Examining how aberrant connections generate radical narratives and how emotional vulnerability and ideological message are linked across sociocultural contexts may help us understand long-term radicalization.

Habib, Srinivasan, and Nithyanand (2022) studied how people are radicalized online, especially in toxic settings like Reddit's "manosphere." Linguistic patterns and behavioral monitoring were used to analyze over a million Reddit postings to understand user behavior. Their findings demonstrated that many neutral persons became hostile and radical after using these forums, especially when associating with prominent or elite users. Social dynamics and online algorithms can subtly develop radical worldviews and influence people, according to the study.

Although the study was good at network and computational analysis, it had many severe problems. Psychological profiling, which may explain why some people are more radicalized online, was not included. Since users who resisted or left radicalization were not evaluated, resilience and protective characteristics were unclear. The study also neglected emotional,

motivational, and identification factors that might make people more likely to embrace extremist ideologies online.

These gaps underline the need of psychological, social, and emotional perspectives in online radicalization research. Understanding how exposure to extreme information, personal weaknesses, and digital peer influence cause radicalization and how some people recover may help explain it.

Kristinsdottir, Ebner, and Whitehouse (2025) constructed a model termed as the **Extreme Overvalued Beliefs and Identities (EOBI) framework** to clarify why certain individuals become so politically active that they stoop to brutality. Their model combines three key ideas: **Identity fusion** – when someone feels deeply connected to their group, **Existential Threat** – when they feel their values, religion, or way of life is under attack, and **Psychological Rigidity** – when they refuse to accept different views or change their beliefs

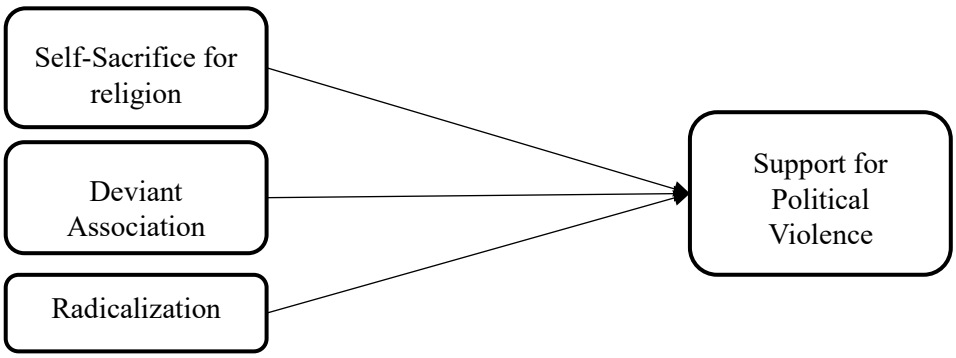
The model suggests that radicalization becomes especially dangerous when people see their extreme beliefs as part of who they are (ego-syntonic) and closely link them to their group's moral or religious mission. In other words, the line between personal identity and the group's cause disappears.

They developed this framework by analyzing psychological case studies, the backgrounds of lone-actor terrorists, and computer-based data. The model brings together insights from **psychology, sociology, and political science**, making it a unique and interdisciplinary approach.

However, despite its depth, the EOBI model has some **important limitations**. Most of the research behind it comes from **Western countries** and **clinical settings**, which makes it hard to say if the model applies to different cultures or situations. Also, while the model explains how beliefs can become intense and deeply held, it doesn't clearly show **how these beliefs develop over time** or under what conditions they lead to violence. There's also **very little discussion** on what factors can **protect people from radicalization** or help them move away from it once they're involved.

These gaps highlight the need for **cross-cultural, long-term studies** to test the EOBI framework in real-world settings. Studying how strongly held beliefs interact with political and emotional experiences in different environments can help us better understand why some people become radicalized—and how others manage to turn away from violence.

Conceptual Model



Hypothesis

H1: Self-sacrifice for religion, Deviant Association and Radicalization will higher the Support for Political Violence.

Method

Population and Sample

The study included 354 individuals from a wide range of setting and life situations. Participants were selected from four different sources to capture a wide picture. These included people in prison (33.1%), individuals who are drug addict (13.8%), college students (24.9%) and those who responded online (28.2%). In terms of gender, most participants were male (79.7%), where a smaller portion were female (20.3%). In terms of educational background, 23.4% (n = 83) were pursuing a Bachelor's degree, 70.6% (n = 250) had completed their FSc (pre-university level), 5.1% (n = 18) had completed Matric, and 0.8% (n = 3) held a Master's degree. Marital status data indicated that 34.7% (n = 123) were married, while 65.3% (n = 231) were unmarried. A subset of 105 participants were prisoners. Only 2.5% (n = 9) reported having any diagnosed mental illness. All research procedures adhered to strict ethical standards, ensuring respectful treatment of participants, informed and voluntary consent, and complete confidentiality of personal data. Participants were selected through purposive sampling.

Measures

Self-Sacrifice for Religion

To understand religious self-sacrifice, the study used a slightly adapted version of the Self Sacrifice Scale originally created by Bélanger et al. (2014), tailored to reflect religious contexts. The scale included 10 items (e.g., "I would be willing to sacrifice my life for my religious beliefs"; "Spiritual causes are worth personal suffering, even death"), rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not agree at all) to 7 (Very strongly agree). In the recent study, the modified scale displayed adequate internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .81).

Deviant Association

To evaluate **deviant associations**, the research used the **Deviant Behavior Variety Scale (DBVS)** developed by **Sanches et al. (2016)**. This instrument served to record how frequently volunteers engaged with or were encountered by those who participated in harmful or unlawful conduct. Various kinds of social factors that people experienced were clarified. A list of acts was questioned by respondents on a one-to-one scale: Deception, Conflict, or theft over the preceding 12 months. A greater score suggested being exposed to more kinds of disruptive activities. The scale showed greater internal consistency (Cronbach's α =.86), providing an accurate means to assess these correlations.

Radicalization

Radicalization was assessed by the BRAVE scale, which stands for (Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism). It examines an individual's readiness to adhere to extremist beliefs or commit an act of violence, alongside their capacity to withstand such forces. This method helps assess a candidate's probable sensitivity to radicalization while offering details regarding how closely they match extremist views (Aly et al., 2014).

Support for Political Violence

An array of framed sentences aimed to find out participants' permission for using of physical force in pursuing political or faith-related objectives was used to assess sympathy for violence in politics. In situations such as these statements, respondents were asked if they thought political assault may appear fair or justifiable. To assess the degree of empathy or acceptance for violence in politics, their viewpoints were studied (e.g., Jasko et al., 2017).

Procedure

In the first, each member entity or body had a formal contract with the leadership. Volunteers were selected from a specific target population, including undergraduate students, imprisoned individuals and those seeking rehabilitation from drug addiction, adopting a method called purposeful sampling. I notified everyone who volunteered that there would be no financial, academic, or personal benefits and that the membership remained entirely voluntary. A survey, which lasted between 15 and 20 minutes for completion, was subsequently sent to each and every participant. Once all responses were collected, they were **carefully checked** for accuracy and completeness. The data was then entered into **statistical analysis software (SPSS and AMOS)** for further examination and interpretation.

Analytic Approach

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS and AMOS software. Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. To test the research hypothesis, multiple regression analyses were performed to assess whether self-sacrifice, deviant association, and radicalization significantly predicted support for political violence. The reliability of all measurement scales was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and found to be satisfactory.

Participants were thoroughly informed about the aims and nature of the research, and informed consent was obtained prior to their participation. Although a formal ethics committee was not present within the institution, the study strictly adhered to established ethical guidelines. These included ensuring participant confidentiality, respecting voluntary participation, and safeguarding the privacy and dignity of all respondents throughout the research process.

Ethical Approval

Study's Result

Table 1. Regression Analysis between Self-Sacrifice for religion, Deviant association, radicalization and Support for political violence.

Variables	*B*	95%CI LB	UB	*SE B*	β	R^2	ΔR^2
						.615	.615***
Constant	-63.33	[-92.45	-34.92]	14.55			
Self-Sacrifice for Religion	.837***	[.439	1.23]	.201	.249***		
Deviant Association	.727***	[.452	1.01]	.139	.345***		
Radicalization	1.91***	[1.26	2.57]	.329	.375***		

Note. CI = Confidence Interval
***P<.001.

Table 2 - Evaluation Table of Correlation among Variables of the study model (N=354)

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Sacrifice for Religion	40.26	8.51	-	-	-	-	-
Deviant Association	33.14	9.46	-.208**	-	-	-	-
Radicalization	48.54	3.72	.398**	.553**	-	-	-
Support for Political Violence	88.77	18.84	.261**	.490**	.664**	-	-

p<.001 *. Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (2-tailed).

General discussion

By concentrating on three main elements—radicalization, aberrant associations, and self-sacrifice for religion—this study aimed to investigate the psychological and social causes of why some people condone political violence. This research sought to understand how such behaviour evolves in many groups of people,

including convicts, drug addicts, university students, and internet participants. It was inspired by real-life incidents such as the 7/7 London bombings, where seemingly ordinary people committed acts of extreme violence.

Analysis of the data revealed a substantial correlation between support for political violence and all three factors: radicalization, deviant associations, and self-sacrifice. This supported the initial hypotheses of the researchers. The best predictor among these was determined to be radicalization. Previous research by Jasko et al. (2017) and Da Silva et al. (2023) highlighted that violent extremism is more than just views, and our conclusion is consistent with their findings. It is frequently impacted by unfulfilled psychological demands, social pressures, and personal grievances.

The close connection between political violence and radicalization emphasizes the potency of ideological dedication. It bolsters the notion that when people are lured to narratives or ideologies that provide them with identity, meaning, and a sense of purpose—particularly when they simultaneously experience injustice or exclusion—they frequently resort to violence. This study contributes to international research and broadens our understanding of radicalization beyond Western or merely ideological perspectives by utilizing actual data from a socially and culturally diverse group.

The study also found that **deviant associations**—being involved with the wrong crowd or negative influences—had a clear and positive link with **both radicalization and support for political violence**.

This finding aligns with the work of Sageman (2004) and Nivette et al. (2021), who emphasized the influence of deviant peer groups in normalizing extremist beliefs. Within our sample, individuals with greater involvement in deviant behaviors also reported stronger endorsement of violent ideologies, suggesting that radicalization may be reinforced within environments where social norms already permit or glorify violence.

Although self-sacrifice for religion was also a significant predictor, its effect size was comparatively smaller. This partially supports the work of Swann et al. (2021), who found that willingness to die for a cause gains intensity mainly when there is identity fusion and emotional bonding with a group. In the current study, religious self-sacrifice likely operated as a contributing factor, but its predictive power was limited unless it was embedded within a broader context of radical beliefs and deviant affiliations.

Correlational analyses further validated the regression findings, revealing strong positive associations between all three predictors and support for political violence. Particularly noteworthy were the correlations between radicalization and deviant association ($r = .553^{**}$) and between radicalization and support for political violence ($r = .664^{**}$), indicating that these pathways are not isolated but deeply interconnected. This supports the idea that ideological commitment and deviant social influence often co-occur, amplifying the likelihood of extremist behavior.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results strongly support the Significance Quest Theory (Kruglanski et al., 2014), which posits that individuals seek personal meaning and recognition through ideological commitment, especially under conditions of perceived humiliation, injustice, or marginalization. Many participants in the current study—particularly those from correctional or addiction recovery settings—may have experienced profound disruptions to their sense of identity, making them more susceptible to ideologies that promise restoration, dignity, or purpose.

However, this study adds crucial nuance to existing theory. While the quest for significance may initiate the vulnerability, it is the social and cognitive context—namely, exposure to radical narratives and deviant networks—that transforms latent need into violent intent. This observation echoes Da Silva et al. (2023) found that **the need for meaning alone is not enough** to lead someone toward extremism. It must be **combined with an ideology that justifies violence and a social environment that supports it**.

Although the study offers valuable insights, it does have some limitations. First, the reliance on self-report measures may have introduced social desirability bias, particularly given the sensitive nature of topics such as deviance and political violence. Second, because the study used a **cross-sectional design**, it limits our ability to say anything definite about **cause and effect**. We

can see that the variables are related, but we **can't be sure which one causes the other**.

Third, although the participants came from **different backgrounds**, the sample was **geographically limited**. This means the findings **may not apply to larger populations or people from different cultural settings**.

Implications

The results of this study have important implications for making policies and practical efforts in the areas of **counter-extremism, education, community psychology, and rehabilitation**. By identifying **self-sacrifice for religion, deviant associations, and radicalization** as key predictors of support for political violence, the research helps us understand the **deep psychological and social processes** behind violent extremism. These insights encourage a move from general assumptions to **evidence-based, context-sensitive strategies**.

The strong role of **radicalization** as a predictor highlights the urgent need for **early intervention**. Schools, religious centers, and online platforms should have trained people who can recognize early signs of ideological extremism. Programs that build **critical thinking, identity development, emotional regulation**, and **civic engagement** can act as protective shields—especially for individuals facing emotional or social difficulties.

The significant impact of **deviant associations** shows that a person's **social surroundings** play a big role in shaping extremist sympathies. **Rehabilitation programs** for prisoners or people recovering from substance use should include **positive peer support, community reintegration services**, and **structured social activities**. Also, **online spaces** should be managed to break extremist echo chambers and introduce **positive counter-narratives** that challenge radical ideologies.

Although **self-sacrifice for religion** had a weaker predictive power, it still shows how powerful belief systems can be—especially when connected with stories of heroic martyrdom. **Religious scholars, clerics, and community leaders** can help reshape these narratives by promoting peaceful meanings of sacrifice and showing spiritual fulfillment through **non-violent forms of service and activism**.

The sample included people from different backgrounds—**students, prisoners, and individuals with a history of substance use**—which shows the need for **tailored approaches**. One single model of intervention cannot fit everyone. Instead, strategies should reflect the **cultural, social, and psychological needs** of each population.

From a theoretical point of view, the findings support the **Significance Quest Theory** (Kruglanski et al., 2014), which suggests that the search for meaning—especially in situations of loss or social disruption—can open the door to extremist thinking. However, this study goes further by showing that the **search for personal meaning alone is not enough** to predict political violence. What matters more is how **a person's goals align with deviant social settings and radical ideologies**, which then **turn frustration into action**.

Conclusion

In today's world, if violent political behavior is frequently carried out by individuals who previously appeared very average, grasping the psychological or social shifts underlying acts of violence is of greater significance than before. The current research concentrates on a few strong factors: radicalization, deviant associations, and self-sacrifice for religion, which could lead anyone to back or rationalize violence in politics.

The results demonstrate that extremism typically fails to begin without just one notion or knowledge. Instead of being an exhausting and complete operation. It frequently starts with an individual's quest seeking meaning or significance, is molded through society as a whole, or develops as a reaction to deadly severe thoughts. Environments where people frequently go, like residences, educational institutions, jails and online forums, might gradually endure the change.

In addition to advancing scholarly knowledge, this research provides useful insights that can aid in the development of more effective preventative measures by examining a varied sample of participants. It emphasizes that many individuals attracted to extreme ideologies are not merely hostile or dangerous; rather, they are frequently looking for identity, purpose, or connection. Considering the human aspect of

radicalization is essential to creating effective solutions.

In the future, identifying risk alone will not be enough for prevention efforts. Unmet psychological and social requirements—the needs that initially expose people to extremist messages—must also be addressed. We provide a more humane and sustainable option if we can assist people in discovering a feeling of dignity, purpose, and belonging via amicable, social pathways.

Ultimately, this research advocates for a more compassionate and comprehensive approach to political violence—one that enhances safety while also fortifying society by fostering hope, resilience, and positive identities for people who are vulnerable (Kruglanski et al., 2014).

Limitations

Despite offering valuable insights into the psychological and social factors underlying support for political violence, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, because purposive sampling was used, the findings may not apply to the wider population. Although the sample was diverse—comprising students, prisoners, and individuals with substance use histories—it may not fully represent the broader population, especially those from different socio-political or cultural backgrounds.

Second, the **cross-sectional design** of the study prevents any causal interpretations. While regression analysis identified significant predictors of support for political violence, the directionality of these relationships cannot be definitively established. Longitudinal research would be needed to confirm whether self-sacrifice, deviant association, or radicalization precedes the development of such attitudes over time.

Third, the study relied entirely on **self-report measures**, which may be subject to **social desirability bias**, particularly on sensitive topics like radicalization and religious self-sacrifice. Participants might have under-reported or exaggerated their beliefs and behaviors to align with perceived social norms or to protect their image.

Fourth, while the research addressed important psychological and social predictors, it did not fully explore **external structural or political influences**, such as economic deprivation, discrimination, or exposure to violence, which may also play a crucial role in shaping extremist sympathies.

Finally, the absence of a formal **ethical review board**—due to institutional limitations—means that although ethical guidelines were carefully followed, an official external audit of procedures was not conducted. This may affect perceptions of ethical rigor, even if participant welfare was prioritized throughout the study.

Future studies should aim to address these limitations by employing probabilistic sampling methods, longitudinal designs, mixed-method approaches, and incorporating broader socio-political variables to offer a more comprehensive understanding of radicalization pathways.

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