CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Department of Security Studies

Master's Thesis

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Deradicalization Programs in the MENA Region Countries: A Comparative Study of Libya and Saudi Arabia

Master's thesis

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Study programme: International Security Studies

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Year of the defence: 2023

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on   Elizaveta Gribanova

References

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Abstract

This study investigates deradicalization programs in Libya and Saudi Arabia. The main goal of the research is to examine and assess deradicalization programs' impact on MENA region security. The research provides with an opportunity to understand the complex nature of deradicalization programs in both countries, prerequisites for their emergence, as well as the uniqueness of each of the programs, taking into account the historical background. The MENA region has always been at the center of discussions, scientific research and debate due to its instability and the rapid spread of terrorism, which has turned the problem of ensuring security into a challenge for the entire world community. The comparative case study with the help of the interpretation method help design and further develop recommendations that were created based on the information collected about deradicalization programs. The thesis also helps to understand the uniqueness of the programs, their complexity and proves that deradicalization programs are an effective measure within the framework of the counter-terrorism strategy. The thesis highlights four main criteria for comparing the deradicalization programs of Saudi Arabia and Libya, thanks to which a comparative analysis was carried out. The thesis consists of theoretical and empirical parts, as well as a conclusion, which summarizes the entire study.

Abstrakt

Tato studie zkoumá deradikalizační programy v Libyi a Saúdské Arábii. Hlavním cílem výzkumu je prozkoumat a posoudit dopad deradikalizačních programů na bezpečnost regionu MENA. Výzkum dává příležitost porozumět komplexní povaze deradikalizačních programů v obou zemích, předpokladům jejich vzniku i jedinečnosti každého z programů s přihlédnutím k historickému pozadí. Region MENA byl vždy středem diskusí, vědeckého výzkumu a debat kvůli své nestabilitě a rychlému šíření terorismu, což z problému zajištění bezpečnosti udělalo výzvu pro celé světové společenství. Komparativní případová studie pomocí interpretativní metody pomáhá navrhovat a dále rozvíjet doporučení, která byla vytvořena na základě shromážděných informací o deradikalizačních programech. Práce také pomáhá pochopit jedinečnost programů, jejich komplexnost a dokazuje, že

deradikalizační programy jsou účinným opatřením v rámci strategie boje proti terorismu. Práce zdůrazňuje čtyři hlavní kritéria pro srovnání deradikalizačních programů Saúdské Arábie a Libye, díky nimž byla provedena srovnávací analýza. Práce se skládá z teoretické a empirické části a také závěru, který shrnuje celou studii.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Mgr. Markéta Kocmanová for her patience and assistance with my thesis. I am sincerely grateful for all the advice, help in choosing a topic, in creating the structure of the work and in everything you helped me with.

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Introduction

Nowadays, the world community is actively discussing modern global challenges that require immediate intervention and prompt resolution. Terrorism has become an actual threat in the 21st century, especially with the development of high technologies. Thanks to the complexities of controlling big data, the increase in the number of problems in the field of politics and economics, as well as other challenges of our time, it has become easier for terrorists to recruit their followers and find like-minded people around the world using the Internet. Thanks to new technologies and rapid global progress, terrorists easily find vulnerabilities in the system and try to maximize the benefit of all possible resources.

Where recruitment used to cost a lot of effort, now it has begun to take place through the spread of viral videos, propaganda and social media posts. Recruitment also began to be promoted by personal reasons of a person (dissatisfaction with work, family problems, financial crisis, distrust of the authorities, religious claims).

All these challenges lead to an increase in the number of radicalized individuals, the number of terrorist attacks and the destruction of state, public and private property with weapons, violence and harm. However, one remains certain that some former prisoners and former members of terrorist groups are rethinking their lives and want to return to society, realizing the full horror of terrorist activities. Thus, the world and scientific community faced the task of finding ways to prevent the process of radicalization, as well as the rehabilitation of former followers of radical groups.

It is noted that it is rather difficult to deradicalize individuals if they have no desire. However, deradicalization programs set as their main goal education aimed at changing radical views in favour of normal social life within society.

Deradicalization programs are an effective step for mankind towards the development of a perfect tool for the prevention of terrorism. Despite their relatively recent appearance (Horgan and Altier (2012) noticed that deradicalization programs were actively developed and spread after 2008), the concept itself is quite promising and has all chances to become the most effective tool for ex-followers or imprisoned

people to become of the society again. Furthermore, despite some shortcomings of the programs that will be discussed in the future, the programs include the most necessary tools for deradicalization: counselling, family psychotherapy, improving the level of education of program participants, as well as the opportunity to learn a new profession and become part of society again (Porges, 2010).

The paper will focus on two empirical cases: deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia and Libya. Boucek (2008) claims that the deradicalization program in Saudi Arabia is recognized by the scientific community as a success, while in Libya the program is not so well-known, but also includes ways to work with former followers of radical groups. This thesis focuses on the study of programs, their content, and the prerequisites for creation. Moreover, the thesis will provide a comparative analysis of programs that will identify strengths and weaknesses.

To conduct a comparative analysis in the thesis, it is necessary to separately formulate a research question on the basis of which data will be collected, information will be analyzed, the main advantages and disadvantages will be identified, and within the framework of this question it will be possible to evaluate the effectiveness of deradicalization programs. Thus the research question of the thesis is: what is the effect of current deradicalization programs in the MENA region to ensure stability and security in these countries?

To provide an integrated approach to the analysis of the research question, the work includes theoretical and analytical parts. In the theoretical part, the focus is on studying the definition of the concepts of radicalization, models of radicalization, deradicalization and programs of deradicalization. The literature review is aimed at studying existing studies, projects, scientific articles and discussions related to the subject of the master's thesis. The analysis section examines two case studies of deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia and Libya in order to gain an overview of the content of the programs, and the analysis includes a comparison of the two programs within the selected criteria: the main focus of the program, deradicalization methods, program assessment, limitations and further perspectives.

At the end of the thesis, the conclusion will summarize all information and answer the research question. The main purpose of the thesis is to prove the need for further

scientific research on the topic of deradicalization, as well as to draw attention to the fact that the example of Saudi Arabia is not the only one in the framework of deradicalization programs, other countries that in one way or another faced the need to create or conduct deradicalization programs also need theoretical analytics. Thus, the case of Libya will be an example for such evidence.

Theoretical section

The theoretical section of the master's thesis will analyze the main concepts and notions from a scientific point of view. This section will consider the various definitions of radicalization, deradicalization and deradicalization programs. The literature review that is also included in this part will focus on the study of available sources of information, various projects, scientific articles, and reports. It will help to summarize all available resources that can be useful during the empirical part and developing of recommendations. The theoretical section will create a scientific basis for empirical analysis in the second part of the thesis. There are many information sources that use the theoretical and empirical experience of current findings in radicalization, deradicalization and deradicalization programs. The main idea of the literature review is to observe sources that will be actively used in the thesis to make a comprehensive comparative analysis of both cases.

1.1 Radicalization, Deradicalization and Deradicalization Programs as Scientific Concepts

Before starting the analysis, it should be noted that there is no single concept of the terms radicalization (Neumann, 2013) and deradicalization (Rabasa, Pettyjohn, 2010). The scientific community examines these phenomena from different angles and approaches, so definitions may vary depending on the context. Such a trend may indicate that scientific experience about these concepts is still in the process of accumulation. Perhaps in the future, it will be possible to develop a single definition for each of the basic concepts if scientists continue to explore this topic and strengthen the theoretical base.

1.1.1 Radicalization

From a theoretical point of view, radicalization is not an absolute concept, since its definition depends solely on the context (Ahmed, Obaidi, 2010). According to Devon Children and Families Partnership report (2020) radicalization is understood as the process of changing the consciousness of a person, when he begins to believe and support extremist views, and eventually becomes a direct participant in terrorist acts. Moreover, radicalization can be considered as a change in feelings and attitudes towards the environment to support intergroup conflicts (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008). The process of radicalization aims to justify their violent actions by changing people's perception of the world around them (Trip, Bora, 2019). There is no definite psychological portrait of a radicalized individual. Radicalization can affect completely different people within the framework of social classes, race, gender, level of education, political views, and financial situation (CVE report, 2020).

Kkienerm (2018) supposes radicalization can be described as a process that may also include a willingness to use violence to further the goals of the radical group (political, social, economic, or religious). The author claims that radicalization is a prerequisite for the emergence of terrorism because it is not limited by the passive faith of its followers. After the radicalization of personal consciousness, the individual runs the risk of becoming part of a jihadist soldier, a lone-wolf terrorist, or starting to conduct other methods of struggle, committing acts of violence and harming those around him (Chiluwa, 2019).

1.1.2 Deradicalization

The definition of deradicalization is a rather complicated process since this concept is relatively new and constantly causes discussions and disputes within the scientific community. This term emerged in the Arab World at the end of 20 century (El-Said, 2017). Rabasa, Pettyjohn (2010) highlight the fact that deradicalization is important to understand the process of rejection of extremist views and ideology, as well as awareness of the harm of the use of violent actions. However, this definition has been criticized. Some scientists explain deradicalization as a process of only a relative change, where a radical group has the opportunity to change its perception

and ideology in favour of a gradual acceptance of the social, economic and political norms of modern society (Ashour, 2018).

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security report (2018) defines deradicalization as the process of change in ideology and efforts to deradicalize can be made more on an individual basis after the number of criminal acts committed by the person. Clutterbuck (2015) argues that the term deradicalization is imperfect since it implies a linear approach to the definition within the framework of changing beliefs, but such an approach does not make it possible to consider the term more comprehensively, including prerequisites and other factors. The author also adds that deradicalization can be understood as the number of methods and techniques trying to decrease society's risk from terrorism. The main difference between deradicalization and counter-radicalization is the fact that the first term is more about already radicalized people while the second one tries to prevent potential radical followers in advance (International Peace Institute report, 2010).

1.1.3 Deradicalization Programs

Currently, there are a large number of deradicalization programs, most of which have their own unique methods and approaches. Deradicalization programs also include individual approaches to take into account the territorial, cultural and social characteristics of each program participant (GIWPS report, 2015). The primary goal of all deradicalization programs is to ensure that ex-radicalized people do not return to extremism (Center of Excellence, 2016). However, evaluating the effectiveness of a deradicalization program is very difficult, since many of them do not publicly share their exact methods, statistics, and results (Horgan, Altier, 2012).

The emergence of deradicalization programs is the answer of most states to two serious challenges: many states are not interested in keeping prisoners in prison indefinitely, and prisons are places where the process of radicalization is actively taking place (Rabasa, Pettyjohn, 2010). Authors also note that the program cannot be viewed as successful if initially, the participant of the program did not severe ties with radicalized people or members of terrorist groups. The International Peace Institute report (2010) highlights the importance of further analysis of deradicalization aspects

and the need to exchange theoretical and empirical knowledge to improve deradicalization programs to work more effectively with individuals.

Schmid (2013) analyzes types of deradicalization programs and highlights two primary types: individual ideological deradicalization and collective deradicalization. Webber and Chernikova, (2017) agree with the previous author and add that many deradicalization programs include religious dialogues between prisoners and programs' representatives to raise awareness on the Quran understanding and realizing that radical extremists use its postulates in the wrong manner.

El-Said and Harrigan (2011) emphasize the importance of deradicalization programs and also call them a soft tool of state policy in the framework of countering terrorism and radicalization. Moreover, the authors note that the more states invest in the development of deradicalization programs, the more likely it is that this measure can be the most effective way to eliminate terrorism and violence not only at the individual but also at the national and global levels.

When it comes to deradicalization program typologies, sources are very limited, and this field needs more research. Popp (2020) supposes that developing a typology of deradicalization programs is quite a controversial thing because it is very difficult to find necessary data and such programs lack transparency a lot. However, Koehler (2016) managed to create the typology of deradicalization programs. He claims that such programs have seven types: non-governmental passive with ideology, non-governmental passive without ideology, non-governmental active with or without ideology, governmental active with ideology, without ideology, governmental passive with or without ideology, public-private partnerships passive, with and without ideology. According to his article, the main distinction between programs is always the potential target group (from the low level of radicalized people to those types that include all levels of radicalization). Thus, Koehler's typology can be suitable for the thesis. Empirical part will concentrate on the target groups of both programs to make the clear and detailed comparison between programs.

For the author in this typology, three main features of the deradicalization program are important: active or passive form of contact, how important the ideology

plays, and which stakeholders were involved in the process of the deradicalization program (state / non-state). Depending on these three parameters, seven main types of deradicalization programs are distinguished. For example, the author believes that in Saudi Arabia the program is governmental active with ideology because it is a fairly complex structure that involves not only scientists and medical professionals, but also politicians and religious representatives. Religious reeducation is a major component of programs that puts the role of ideology and religion at the center. The author refers to the passive type of programs those where non-state organizations do not take a special part, this is typical for Western countries.

Thus, the Koehler typology has a fairly complex structure. To conduct an analysis according to the typology, it is important to study the influence of the state, the role of ideology and religion, and other components. In the empirical part of the thesis, the cases of Saudi Arabia and Libya will also be analyzed according to the typology.

1.2   Literature Review on Radicalization Models

In the literature review, there is a need to consider existing models of radicalization, since this process is a prerequisite for the emergence of radical cells, violence and terrorism, as well as deradicalization and deradicalization programs are in some cases a logical continuation of the process. To understand the reasons for the deradicalization programs' emergence, the reasons for radicalization and the overall process should also be discussed.

The social-developmental model of radicalization by Beelmann (2020) combines theory and empirical findings. Radicalization in this model is considered as a deviant behaviour of society and a reaction to unfavourable processes of state development within the framework of politics or religion. The model includes three main steps: ontogenetic developmental processes, proximal radicalization processes and extremist behaviour or views. While the first step is more about the interaction between risks and protective factors, the second is closely connected to psychological factors that had an impact on an individual earlier. This theory lacks other researchers' opinions on this matter, but the author of the model underpins one important limitation

– the need for more studies to be able to develop more causal mechanisms between the first two steps of the model.

The four-stage model that was offered by Borum (2011), tries to observe the impact of grievances on the development of a radical mindset. The model consists of four stages: grievance, injustice, target attribution and distancing. At the first stage of the model, the individual has a disagreement with the events taking place around him, that is, he begins to understand that something is wrong. Further, the second stage includes the realization that the individual is acutely aware of a sense of injustice, which passes into the third stage, where the individual believes that the blame and responsibility for the events lie with representatives of the authorities, the church, and other persons. During the last stage, the individual begins to justify his radical views and committed terrorist or violent actions by blaming the side with which he is dissatisfied.

There is one more the 3N model by Webber and Kruglanski (2017) that includes three main components of radicalization: needs, networks and narratives. This model implies that individual motivation creates incentives for radical actions. The society in which each individual is located is a complex network that introduces him to a specific narrative, which subsequently serves as a justification for the violence committed. The three elements are closely related to each other and emphasize the need to study the phenomenon of radicalization comprehensively.

The fourth radicalization model was created for the Intelligence Division of the New York Police Department (NYPD) by Silber and Bhatt (2007). This model describes stages and the process of radicalization starts from the first stage called "pre-radicalization". This stage means the normal life of each person. The second stage "self-radicalization" means the beginning of the process. This stage is specified by personal crisis and the desire to find like-minded people. As the result, he turns to Islam. The third stage is indoctrination" when the individual fully accepts the radical mindset and starts committing violence. The final stage is about the fact that the person becomes a follower of violent jihad.

Finally, the "Staircase to Terrorism" was created by Moghaddam (2005) where each "floor" is a new step towards radicalization. The ground floor consists of a

sense of injustice and deprivation. According to the author of the model, gradually a desire arises in people to improve their situation and get rid of problems. All this marks the beginning of the process of radicalization. The greater the escalation of the situation, the higher the individual rises up the ladder of the model. The author notes that a minority reaches the very top. But this minority on the fifth "floor" commits terrorist acts and justifies the commission of violence.

It is obvious that terrorists are the result of radicalization, and many theoretical theories were created because of the detailed analysis on circumstances and prerequisites that radicalize people and make them terrorists or followers of radical ideas. Thus, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) developed twelve main mechanisms that are active on three radicalization levels: group, individual and mass levels. These mechanisms put every effort to result in terrorism and violence in the end: grievances, hate, martyrdom, competition, etc. Taarnaby (2005) also developed an eight-stage recruitment process that starts from individual alienation and results in violent acceptance and going operational. He puts the radicalization process as the third step because prior to it the individual should have overcome his personal grievances and start to find something that will support him. Doosje (2016) has the shortest model of radicalization that includes only three phases: sensitivity, group membership and action. The last model can be viewed more generally in comparison with others mentioned above.

Thus, there are a lot of radicalization models created by modern scientists. All researchers view radicalization through various approaches and angles. Some of them create detailed models trying to include as many factors as possible (Beelmann, Borum, etc.). Other researchers can be too broad (Doosje) or view radicalization as a part of the recruitment process (Taarnaby).

1.3 Literature Review on Deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia and Libya

Currently, the program of Saudi Arabia is considered to be the well-known and successful program in the Middle East region if we evaluate the number of studies, reseraches and projects in which the program is mentioned (Al-Khatti, 2019). Boucek

(2008) claims that the deradicalization program in Saudi Arabia is one of the most effective programs due to the uniqueness of its deradicalization methods. Capstack (2015) agrees with Boucek and highlights the fact that it will be quite difficult for other countries to repeat the successful experience of Saudi Arabia since the program requires huge resources, support and investment.

However, Libya's experience in deradicalization cannot be underestimated. Researchers of the Libyan case also argue that the deradicalization program of Libya deserves special attention from the point of view of its theoretical analysis. For instance, Brzuszkiewicz (2017) highlights that the Libyan program is considered to be effective and unique in terms of measures and actions taken to deradicalize the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group in Libya. Ashour (2010) also noted that it is important to examine Libyan case, because the program has become an example of how the state can join forces in order to decide.

The scope of the literature review on Saudi Arabia program is not limited, while Libyan case has some limitations in terms of available sources. The reason for it is the fact that the Saudi Arabian government put every effort into making this program well-known worldwide (Ezzarqui, 2010). At the same time, Libyan government did not have aim to be recognized across the world, thus it is important to note that the country managed to overcome the challenge successfully (Denoeux, 2013).

Saudi Arabian program is well-known for its concept of counselling and the idea of further assistance after finishing the program (Khan, 2015). As for Libya, the path of deradicalization and the restoration of security within the country has been quite a long one (Schwartz, 2007).

The case of Libya has quite controversial opinions. The Rand report (2010) notes that some of the approaches of the Libyan deradicalization program could have been better developed or otherwise implemented within an empirical approach. Ashour (2011) agrees with the report and adds that despite downsides of the program, the uniqueness of Libya is the fact that the experience of the program is based on the process of deradicalization of a large-scale Islamic movement in Libya - an Islamic Fighting group. Koehler (2016) supposes that the Libyan case of deradicalization could

not be considered successful due to the fact that it looks more like a truce being reached rather than a completed deradicalization program.

After summarizing main sources of the literature review, it is becoming obvious that two completely different experiences are needed to be compared and analyzed. The empirical part of the thesis will be focused on the previously highlighted criteria to make a comprehensive review and analysis.

2.1 Methodology

The master's thesis goal is to examine two deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia and Libya, conduct comparative research and discuss their impact on the MENA security. In order to make a comprehensive study, there is a need to determine methodological approach including data collection, data analysis, case selection and conceptualization.

2.1.1 Methodological Approach

Due to the fact that thesis concentrates on two deradicalization programs, it is obvious that a comparative case study should be chosen as the primary method for this specific research. This method was chosen for use in the thesis because the research work aims to study the impact of deradicalization programs on security in the MENA region. Studying the features of programs, methods, as well as historical background will help to analyze and identify the main trends.

The comparative case study focuses on the process by which initial conditions and premises are transformed into consequences and results (Kaarbo, Beasley, 2002). In the thesis, comparative case study is useful for identifying the main characteristics of each of the programs individually, and then comparing programs according to four main criteria.

The purpose of this study is to examine deradicalization programs on the example of two case studies in order to answer the research question about the impact of programs on the effectiveness of security in the MENA region. Pickvance (2005) supposes that a comparative analysis will help to establish cause-and-effect

relationships for the emergence of deradicalization programs in each specific country. Thus, the consideration of specific cases will provide a more concrete idea of deradicalization programs in general, and the interpretation of the data obtained will help to give an objective assessment of the effectiveness of their application.

Esser and Vliegenthart (2017) claim that a comparative case study is effective when the objects of study are compared on one specific theoretical basis. Thus, the thesis highlights the specific structure of the empirical part, which allows for a comprehensive analysis. Moreover, Esser and Vliegenthart (2017) also note that in a comparative case study, it is important that the results of the research create an incentive for further extended or comprehensive study of a case or phenomenon. In the case of a thesis, the work focuses on two cases of Saudi Arabia and Libya. While most scientists and researchers single out Saudi Arabia, in the case of the Libyan case, the literature and research base is significantly limited. Thus, the thesis can become a seminal study that will contribute and form the basis for the study of other deradicalization programs (except Saudi Arabia) on a more comprehensive and in-depth scale.

Deradicalization programs will not only be considered from the point of view of the historical background and prerequisites for their creation, but a comparative case study will also be carried out according to several selected criteria. The criteria will help evaluate the effectiveness of the programs, as well as highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each of them. In total, four criteria were identified for the analysis: the main focus of the program (it will help to analyze what exactly the program is focused on: working with individual participants or groups of people), deradicalization methods, program assessment (in this criterion it will be quite difficult to find a lot of information, but some researchers some numbers are still being examined), program limitations and further prospects (this criterion is based on a generalization of previous data obtained).

The master's thesis will use several methods that are important for conducting in-depth study and analysis of the previously highlighted cases. It is worth noting that for this thesis it is necessary to apply qualitative research methods that will help to collect all possible data, analyze, and interpret. The case study method is

obvious in the use of the work since the thesis is based on two main deradicalization programs (Saudi Arabia and Libya).

2.1.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The paper will be based on primarily on secondary sources due to the fact that it will be helpful to examine scientific articles, analytical media reviews and compare various existing data on this issue. Furthermore, the use of primary data will have a huge impact on establishing causal chains while doing the analysis. The primary data will help to lay the foundation for the in-depth analysis and gain insights on the topic of deradicalization programs directly. The thesis will actively use such sources as statistical data, research reports and projects. In the thesis will be actively used and analyzed reports by Devon Children and Families Partnership (2020), CVE (2020), Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (2018), International Peace Institute (2010), Center of Excellence (2016), The RAND report (2010), Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia (2015), the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (2016), the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (2017), Country report on terrorism (2020-2021). As for statistical data, it will be taken from articles and reports by Grander (2007), Capstack (2015), Wagner (2010), Peroux (2021) and so on.

To use primary sources in more effective way, the document-based strategy will help to collect all the necessary information and then interpret it. This means that interpretive approach will be also used to cover all theories, views, and perspectives to provide the objective assessment at the end of analysis.

The deductive method will be used in the work in order to use generalizations to analyze the deradicalization program within the framework of four comparison criteria in order to prove or disprove their effectiveness within the framework of the security strategy in the MENA region. These criteria are: the main focus of the program, deradicalization methods, program assessment, limitations and further perspectives as it was mentioned at the beginning of the thesis.

While making data collection, there the problem of lack of analytics or analytical data can appear. Most of the sources on deradicalization programs are quite

descriptive, so the uniqueness of this master's work will be the assessment of information and the development of recommendations for improving the effective operation of programs. The analytical part will be based on the information received.

Interpretation method will be the foundation of the thesis. Such method will help identify the main trends and systematize all the information collected. Data collection and further interpretation of all collected sources will help answer the research question and assess the current state of deradicalization programs, as well as analyze their impact on security in the MENA region. However, an important barrier to data collection will be the lack of transparency in deradicalization programs. Due to their secrecy, not much quantitative or primary data can be found. Moreover, there is a risk of subjectivity in the data since numerous studies of deradicalization programs are based on the use of secondary data due to the lack of the required amount of primary data.

2.1.3 Conceptualization

To make the comparative analysis, it is important to define primary concepts that will be actively used. Radicalization will be considered as the process when people accept radical views, change their minds, personal beliefs, behavior and can be involved in the extremist ideology that results in committing violence.

Deradicalization is the concept that is about the process of rejecting radical ideology and the use of violence to achieve goals. Furthermore, deradicalization programs should be understood as a soft tool of every government trying to ensure a rehabilitation process for those who want to deradicalize and become part of modern society.

2.1.4 Case Selection

The choice of cases for research is due to different approaches to the process of deradicalization, as well as the opportunity to compare two programs in two regions of the Middle East and North Africa. Similar initial conditions combine two cases (an unstable historical past and an increase in the number of radicalization and

terrorist attacks). For example, Saudi Arabia faces the Iranian, Yemeni threats, Daesh threat and so on (Guzansky, Barak, 2021).

At the same time, Libya has long been considered an active sponsor of terrorism since about the 1980s, and it took the country a long time to restore its status (Schwartz, 2007). The author also claims that countries were forced to take urgent measures to prevent these tendencies and solve all issues. Both Saudi Arabia and Libya managed to get an experience in terms of deradicalization that helped them to recover the security system. However, the main difference lies in the approaches to deradicalization (group or individual).

The rest of the comparison factors will be presented to study the effectiveness of the two programs, as well as to analyze the impact on the MENA region. If Saudi Arabia is the undisputed leader in deradicalization programs in the Muslim world, in the case of Libya, the work will need to explore the main factors or shortcomings that affect the fact that the scientific community has not yet recognized the country's program as effective.

The empirical part of the study will be built on the basis of methodology mentioned above. The historical background and prerequisites will be proof of the creation of a deradicalization program in the designated countries. After an analytical review of the historical background, a general overview of deradicalization programs will be created. Further, based on these data, a comparative analysis of the programs will be carried out, their strengths and weaknesses will be determined. Some of the recommendations developed will be based on the empirical data obtained. In conclusion, it will be concluded about the impact of the deradicalization program on the effective provision of security in the region.

EMPIRICAL PART

In this section of the analysis, two case studies will be discussed. Each chapter will collect all the necessary details to summarize the background, highlight main tendencies of programs' development and observe programs' structure. The main purpose of the empirical part is not only to conduct a comparative analysis and collect data for each of the cases, but also to prove that it is necessary to continue further theoretical research not only in Saudi Arabia, but also in Libya.

3.1 LIBYA

3.1.1 Libya: security background, prerequisites for establishing deradicalization programs

The historical background of Libya is quite unstable. Back in the 7th century AD, the Arabs conquered Libya and therefore from that moment a period began when the population began to adopt the language, culture, and religion from the conquerors. Further in 1911, Libya was under the rule of Italy and its rulers. However, it is important to note that Libya was the first country to declare its independence in 1951 with the help of the United Nations. (Mundy, 2021)

Martin (2020) describes Libya as "a failed state, victim of chaos and civil war". Fasanotti (2017) called Libya "the country of sharp contrasts". When it comes to comparison of deradicalization programs, the Libyan experience is also often compared to Egypt and Algeria, as the country was also heavily influenced by The Muslim Brotherhood from 1950 to 1960 (Wehrey, 2012).

Wehrey (2012) also suggests that high religiosity, economic problems, and political instability are the result of a new trend that has led people to accept jihad as the norm. According to the author, all this resulted from thousands of people joining the war in Afghanistan (1980s) and Iraq (after 2003). However, it is important to understand specific historical examples and the reasons that became the prerequisites for the emergence of jihadist movements in Libya.

Bell and Witter (2011) claim that it is believed that since 1959, popular discontent has been growing in Libya within the framework of the internal policy of the state. This is justified by many historians and researchers by the fact that at that time large oil reserves were discovered in Libya and in a short period of time the country, which was previously one of the poorest countries in the world, normalized its GDP. However, authors also claim that all power, all resources began to be concentrated in the hands of the elite, which led to an increase in the discontent of the ordinary population, which received practically nothing from the rapidly growing changes.

Terry (2015) claims that the main event that significantly undermined internal security and stability in the country was the 1969 revolution, or rather the military coup, which brought Gaddafi to power for 42 years. Moreover, under the leadership of Gaddafi, Libya began to actively participate and claim leadership of the Arab and African revolutionary forces, trying to win power and might among these states. The main course of Gaddafi was the desire to rid Libya of the influence of other countries, and therefore in 1970 an order was issued to close the British air base, which was located inside the country. Already in 1973, Gaddafi announced a cultural revolution by forming "people's committees" while in 1977 a people's revolution took place that legitimized the use of violence and chaos (Terry, 2015). The result of both revolutions was the radicalization of the civilian population, economic decline and constant terrorist attacks. Gaddafi's rule is marked by quite aggressive revolutionary politics and terrorism, which severely undermined diplomatic relations with the West in the 1980s (Wright, 2022).

Due to the constant outbreaks of violence and terrorism, Western countries, with the participation of the United States, publicly showed dissatisfaction with Libya. In 1979, the United States compiled a list of countries that actively supported and sponsored terrorism in every possible way. It is important to note that Libya was included in the list of countries. From 1981 to 1990, there were over 100 attacks, bombings, acts of violence and terrorist acts in Libya as well. (Collins, 2010)

Libya has a rather difficult path of development, especially in terms of creating security within the country (Schwartz, 2007). Since the 1980s, there have been fluctuations in Libya, expressed in conflicts, strikes, acts of violence, as well as widespread radicalization. For example, in 1986, there were airstrikes by the US

against Libya. The US was highly dissatisfied with the state of affairs and the fact that Libya is the main sponsor of terrorism. It is also known that from 1970-1980, Qaddafi's government actively supported and provided financial assistance to various Muslim and anti-imperial groups worldwide. In response, the US has repeatedly imposed sanctions on Libya in an attempt to complicate or delay the process. (Blanchard, Humud, 2017)

Nephew (2018) describes the 1990s period of Libya's political isolation as Gaddafi-led actions led to the UN imposing sanctions on Libya in 1992, aligning itself with the US position. The author also adds that the end of the 1990s can be characterized as a period when Gaddafi made an attempt to restore Libya's reputation in the international arena. For example, in 1999, Libya began to comply with the requirements of the UN and make direct contact with the United States, Great Britain and other countries. This cooperation resulted in the lifting of UN sanctions in 2003 and the renewal of partnerships with Western countries (Wright, 2022).

Nevertheless, despite disagreements with the US on some issues, Qaddafi was the first Arab head of state to publicly condemn al-Qaeda's actions since 9/11 (Rabasa & Pettyjohn, 2010). In general, the country can be noted that it is characterized by extreme instability. For example, in February 2011 (the events of the civil revolution in Libya), there were riots and many protests against the Qaddafi regime. The result of the revolution was the emergence of the radical group Ansar al-Sharia (AAS), whose goal was to establish Sharia and eliminate the presence and influence of the United States and Western countries in Libya. For a more effective result, the group actively tried to cooperate with local extremist groups to carry out attacks. (Barmin, 2022)

This chapter will examine the general situation in Libya in terms of security. The part about deradicalization experience will be devoted to the case of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). It was on the example of a specific extremist group that the Libyan authorities managed to deradicalize. The main prerequisites that prompted the Libyan authorities to develop a deradicalization strategy include constant terrorist and violent acts and dissatisfaction with the Libyan political regime (Ashour, 2011). Moreover, the main goal of the thesis chapter is to prove that the case of Libya really needs the attention of researchers and scientists. At present, Saudi Arabia's

deradicalization program is receiving much more attention, while the literature and the number of available sources on the Libyan case is somewhat limited.

Mostly the thesis chapter will focus on the deradicalization of the terrorist cell the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). However, the chapter will also consider other terrorist groups, as well as the methods that were used by the Libyan authorities to eliminate them.

Counter Extremism Project claims that Libya has always been a center of attraction and activity for terrorist groups. For example, ISIS appeared in Libya in 2014 and became one of the most dangerous groups for the country. Unfortunately, due to the instability of the political course of Libya, it was impossible for the state to quickly respond to security challenges. By 2022, ISIS has ceased to be a threat to Libya, but the risks of the emergence and spread of new terrorist cells still remain.

The report also analyzes Ansar al-Sharia in Libya, Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islami and Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade. The first group sought to spread Sharia law throughout Libya, and the emergence of the group is a direct consequence of the 2011 revolution. The group's main competitor was ISIS. However, Ansar al-Sharia in Libya was disbanded already in 2017 due to heavy losses in the membership over the past three years and a strong opposition in the face of Libyan civilians and military forces. The group preferred to seize territories, in view of which discontent grew on the part of civilians, who also used their own measures to expel the group from their territories (McGregor, 2014).

As for ISIS, the group has set up its training camps in Libya. Members from Europe and the UK began to actively recruit to Libya (Townsend, 2015). Kube and Windrem (2015) claim that there were about 5,000 ISIS followers in Libya in 2016. In 2022, ISIS maintains a weak presence on the territory of the country, terrorist attacks are periodically carried out, but they are of a less global scale. In order to reduce the influence of ISIS on the territory, the Libyan National Army carried out a series of operations that helped to liberate some territories of Libya, which is a positive trend in the fight against the terrorist group (Trauthig, 2020). According to the author, the LNA focused primarily on the south of the country, where ISIS carried out its attacks.

The terrorist group Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islami is known for being the first to declare its support for ISIS. The group became part of ISIS and helped the latter carry out terrorist attacks. The majority of the group consisted of those who returned from Syria and Algeria (Zelin, 2014).

As for the Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade, the group aimed to create an Islamic state within the country. The group also tried to introduce strict laws within society in its areas of influence (Hauslohner, 2012). It is known that other terrorist groups (ISIS and Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islami) failed to maintain neutral relations with the group. The Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade refused to cooperate and make contact with ISIS, resulting in several armed conflicts between the groups (Wehrey, 2012).

Despite the fact that Libya lacks a well-developed legal framework that could effectively regulate internal security issues, however, the Libyan Criminal Code criminalizes various actions that could potentially be a threat to national security. (Asmar, 2019)

Wintour (2020) suggests that there are currently several major shortcomings in the Libyan government that prevent improvements in internal security. For example, the author also states that despite the GNA's attempts to develop a strategy to combat terrorism, legal documents for 2018 have not yet been enshrined in the legislative level. Moreover, the author points out that the legislation still does not provide for measures that could effectively and timely monitor the situation, as well as engage in preventive measures. As noted by some researchers, Libya lacks the resources and manpower to develop an effective counterterrorism strategy (Wehrey, 2014).

However, despite all the shortcomings in the political course, Libya has made several attempts to counter terrorism. For example, the Libyan National Army (LNA) was created to deal with active terrorist cells (El-Ghobashy, 2016).

Browne (2017) states that in addition to preventive domestic policy efforts, there have also been a number of activities in the framework of Libya's cooperation with some countries. For example, the United States conducted a number of operations that were aimed at destroying terrorist groups that emerged or began their

active activities during the civil war in 2011. For example, one of the most important events was the airstrikes in 2015 against the representation of ISIS in Libya.

However, ISIS in the period 2014-2017 actively expanded, seized territories, attracted new followers and carried out terrorist attacks. The US military decided to reduce the number of ISIS fighters as much as possible, and therefore the US began to conduct various types of military operations (with the help of drones, aircraft and other resources) in order to eradicate terrorism and its spread.

Already in 2016, the United States and Libya joined forces and held a number of joint activities that focused on the ISIS group. Thanks to such actions, the country managed to significantly reduce the number of militants of the terrorist cell and reduce terrorist attacks. (Staff, 2016)

Since the end of the Gaddafi regime, Libya has seen an increase in terrorism, an economic downturn, a lack of resources, and a host of other problems. According to researchers, there is still a shortage of qualified personnel in Libya and there is also a need to improve the monitoring of financial flows in order to control and prevent possible financing of terrorism (Wehrey, 2014).

It is known that LIFG appeared first in Pakistan in 1990 (Ashour, 2011). The vast majority of the participants and creators of the group were Libyan veterans of the Afghan conflicts of 1979-1992. To achieve their goals, the group tried to make a military confrontation. Moreover, LIFG had enough connections with Al-Qaeda, which made this group necessary for the Libyan government to deradicalize. (Ashour, 2010)

The development of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group can be divided into several stages. Firstly. The group took time to establish itself, recruit members and followers, and organize special training courses and camps during which recruitment was carried out. It is noted that the formation period of the group falls from 1990-1995 (Ashour, 2011).

Secondly, in October 1990, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group publicly declared their existence to indicate its goals and objectives. From 1995-1998, a series of uprisings and other unrest began to take place in eastern Libya (Ashour, 2010). The

periods of 1996-1997 are distinguished by significant losses, especially among the civilian population. It was only in 2005 that a new phase of active negotiations with the Libyan regime began (Ashour, 2015).

In conclusion, the historical background of Libya within the security sphere shows that the country has a rather difficult development, full of constant fluctuations, the development of terrorism and the military coup led by Gaddafi, which led to radical changes and laid the foundation for the emergence of radicalization, terrorist cells and the prosperity of chaos inside countries.

Libya has overcome a difficult path in order to restore its reputation in the international arena and remove the status of a country that sponsors terrorism. It is the historical course of events in Libya that is the main prerequisite for the fact that the Libyan authorities were forced to develop a detailed plan of action in order to resolve the situation in the country in the fight against terrorism, deradicalization and active work on preventive measures. The next chapter will analyze in detail the deradicalization program within the framework of the Libyan experience.

Thus, the purpose of the chapter is to prove that the situation in Libya, as well as the prerequisites, are of a more complex origin. Despite the fact that the Libyan authorities formally carried out a deradicalization program once, the country was looking for its own approaches for other terrorist groups in order to reduce influence and minimize threats. However, the methods are not perfect. Now the state faces the main challenge - to revise the political course and organize the policy in such a way that the country can quickly respond to all incoming challenges and successfully overcome all obstacles.

3.1.2 Libya Deradicalization Program: General Overview

The deradicalization program in Libya is very different from the case in Saudi Arabia. The Libyan authorities had to develop a unique approach to deradicalize and help rehabilitate representatives of the Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), one of the most significant extremist movements in Libya (Bandeira, 2017).

If in Saudi Arabia, the program is distinguished by work based on an individual approach and constant support not only of the program participants but also of their relatives. Then in Libya, the hallmark is the work with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) leaders. The Libyan authorities realized that radicalizing the group would be more effective if they worked with the lower classes (employees, recruiters, cell members) and the group's leaders. The Libyan case can be called an example of collective deradicalization (Rabasa, Pettyjohn, 2010). The deradicalization process is sometimes compared to the experience of Egypt and Algeria.

The deradicalization plan began with developing a series of reforms that detailed the measures, tools and basic strategy for deradicalization. Researchers, politicians and all those involved in the development of reforms actively took into account theoretical knowledge and scientific background and exchanged data with other countries and collected empirical experience (Ashour, 2015). It was evident that the group would not agree to voluntarily start negotiations and look for compromises. The first step in the deradicalization of the LIFG was to submerge the group under the pressure of circumstances: the significant losses of group members due to military pressure from the Libyan government forced the leaders of the LIFG to reconsider their views. The first phase, in which the group was forced to change its mind under military pressure, resulted in a negotiation phase that began in 2005. (Watanabe, 2018)

At that time, Islamic teachings began actively developing and gaining popularity in the MENA region (Blanchard, 2011). Thanks to interaction, pressure from external circumstances and a phase of negotiations, the Libyan government managed to find a consensus with representatives of the group. Moreover, Islamic teachings have pushed leaders to change their views on Islam as a religion and understand its true purpose. The scientific article concludes that the leaders of such radical groups (not only the LIFG but the vast majority of others) have very little knowledge of religion. They have never had enough religious education training to study in-depth Islamic doctrine. (Pargeter, 2018)

Fitzerald and Badi (2020) suppose that after the leaders were ready to accept that violence, insurrection and chaos were unacceptable, they were actively recruited to work with prisoners (former followers of the LIFG). For example, the Libyan

authorities hired Noman Benotman (a former leader of the group) to secretly visit the prisoners and build interaction with them in order to convince them that military action is terrible and that there is no jihad in honest Islam. The authors of the article also claimed that the former leader of the group actively discussed with his followers, they discussed religion and had open dialogues, and this became one of the most effective measures in the fight against the extremist group.

In this paper, it is essential to emphasize that the state, for its part, also took active steps in the framework of the deradicalization program. For example, after conducting religious conversations with prisoners, they were given a chance to get out of prison, and the Libyan government provided support for the integration of a person into society.

In addition to Noman Benotman, who actively conducted religious debates and dialogues with prisoners, Saif-al-Islam became the main sponsor of the deradicalization and reconciliation of sides (Blanchard, 2011).

Of course, it is evident that not all of the group's followers were arrested. Therefore, the next step of the Libyan authorities was to agitate through the former LIFG leaders to urge them to return home and start an everyday life. Thus, the Libyan government focused not only on prisoners and former leaders but also took into account those who could not be caught, who were hiding from the authorities and continued extremist activities. (Rabasa & Pettyjohn, 2010)

Moreover, in 2009, LIFG even managed to publish a book, the main idea of which was that people do not need to change the structure of the countries of the Muslim world through violence and extremism (Blanchard, 2011).

It is of high importance to describe the reasons why the former leaders of the groups somehow assisted in matters of radicalization. It is essential to note that the group's leaders were convinced of their ideology's failure and that it would not be able to lead the group to the expected results.

Thus, the beginning of the deradicalization program was that the group was forced to change its strategy and views due to numerous losses in the composition

and severe pressure from the Libyan authorities. Further, the program included working with the leaders of the groups, who later had a strong influence on their former followers, helping them to deradicalize and re-integrate into society.

Rabasa and Pettyjohn (2010) described in detail the Libyan deradicalization model in their scientific article. They begin the model by saying that a trigger occurred for the group to begin the process of deradicalization, which prompted the leaders to reconsider their views on the current strategy. The authors further point out that the second phase consists of comparing the advantages and disadvantages of continuing violent actions. Finally, the third phase is when the leaders realize that their actions are wrong and will not bring success. After the third phase, the leaders are ready to cooperate and can assist in the deradicalization of their former followers.

If the first three phases are the initial stage of the model, the authors further distinguish four more stages, including the second stage of deradicalization. The second part's first stage consists of group negotiations, where leaders openly declare their desire to move away from radical and extremist views. The second stage is the presence of respected leaders (on both sides of the government and the group) whose opinions the participants are ready to listen to. Then, in the third step, leaders enter into an open dialogue (and even debate) with former followers, persuading them to abandon their radical views. Finally, the fourth stage includes the final stage, when the grouping is completely deradicalized, and the process is completed.

Thus, the example of the Livia case showed that deradicalization followed the theoretical model described by Rabasa and Pettyjohn (2010). In the following chapters, a comparative analysis of the two cases will be carried out, and the effectiveness of both deradicalization programs will be assessed.

4.1 SAUDI ARABIA

4.1.1 Saudi Arabia: security background, prerequisites for establishing deradicalization programs

Saudi Arabia has always been characterized by instability in the region. It is known that Saudi Arabia has become the main target of terrorists and radical groups.

It is important to note that, at first, there were exclusively sporadic terrors in Saudi Arabia since the 1960s. Further, since 2003 terrorist attacks have been characterized as a series of attacks inside the country. (Capstack, 2015)

Moreover, Saudi Arabia has also historically been the centre of propaganda, the global threat of terrorism and radical Islamism (Bryson, 2013). Thus, Saudi Arabia has had a large number of fluctuations in the security of the region, which forced the local government to find a way out and develop special measures to restore security in the region. Even during the 9/11 period, there were a large number of followers of terrorism and radical ideology in this country. During the heyday of al-Qaeda, terrorists used all their means to increase the number of their followers, especially in Saudi Arabia. (Qurtuby, Aldamer, 2021)

In this thesis, it is of particular importance to emphasize that in Saudi Arabia, religion has a very strong influence on all events taking place in society. Thus, when developing the deradicalization program, as well as the entire counterterrorism strategy, it was important for the government of the country to take into account this trend. Therefore, the country's leadership decided that the Saudi Arabian Ideological Advisory Program will include two important aspects: social and religious. Thus, the authorities began to work not only with the consequences of radicalization, but also projects were created aimed at preventing potential threats. The scientific article clarifies that the organization of educational lectures, religious debates, private visits of high-ranking officials to prisoners in order to conduct an open dialogue between the parties were singled out as preventive measures. (Bryson, 2013)

Separately, it is essential to emphasize the flourishing of woman jihad in Saudi Arabia. It was important for terrorists to recruit and accept women into their ranks. In order for the brainwashing tools to work effectively, the terrorists promised women a rich life and also convinced them that they would play a vital role within the terrorist cell since their task was to procreate. However, in 2004, the responsibilities of women in radical groups were expanded, and they were engaged in logistics, recruiting and financial support. (Alsudairy, 2022)

Matthias von Hein conducted research in 2017, where the main idea was that the spread of extremist ideas from Saudi Arabis started after the Islamic revolution

in Iran in 1979. The author highlights the fact that the revolution greatly influenced the local population of Saudi Arabia, especially at a time when Iran began to promote Shiite ideology actively. In response, Saudi Arabia began promoting Wahhabism by spreading the ideology through intermediaries, European countries, and the Muslim World League. The author claims that this trend has dramatically influenced the spread of radicalism within and throughout the country.

Hegghammer (2008) identifies three main theoretical paradigms that aim to explain the emergence and spread of radicalism, violence and terrorism in Saudi Arabia. First, the author states that the theories about the Wahhabist religious tradition have left a considerable mark on this. These theories explain the violence due to the religiosity of Saudi society or "internal extremism" within Wahhabism. Secondly, the author highlights the structural-functionalist approach, which interprets violence as a consequence of a structural strain (political, economic or social). At the same time, the author declares a contradiction within this approach's framework. It lies in the fact that isolated outbreaks of violence in 1970-2003 are difficult to connect with any specific circumstances or crises occurring at that time. In the third approach, the author emphasizes that Saudi Islamism is understood as a social movement in which it was challenging to balance society and government. However, the author did not explain the connection between radicalism and this approach.

Since 1990, there have been a series of terrorist and violent attacks in Saudi Arabia, such as the November 1995 Riyadh bombing. Further, the terrorists and their followers began to endanger the local population by killing civilians, assassinating government officials (the 2009 attack on Prince Mohammad bin Magef), and blowing up buildings, consulates, and cars. (Qurtuby, Aldamer, 2021)

Thus, the constant instability in the country has become a challenge within the domestic politics of Saudi Arabia. To solve this problem, the government came up with a counterterrorism strategy, which was based on a soft approach. The strategy consists of three main steps: prevention, rehabilitation and post-release care. This strategy, known as the PRAC strategy, aims to identify ways and methods to combat the spread of extremist ideology. (Boucek, 2008)

In order to conduct an in-depth analysis of the deradicalization program, it is necessary to emphasize in this chapter the full complexity of the counterterrorism strategy. This is of great importance in the study, since the Saudi experience is unique and it is important to show the role of each of the points of the strategy. This will make it easier to analyze the deradicalization experience in Saudi Arabia, given the structure of the reforms and the historical background.

Bryson (2013) divides counterterrorism strategy can be divided into two main types of measures. Firstly, these are prevention measures, which include work with government officials, civilians, educational centers and key opinion leaders who can also be potential victims of deradicalization process.

The author also adds that direct and indirect measures primarily are about deradicalization program. The program is aimed at rehabilitating former followers of terrorist groups, those who committed violence, were radicalized, or actively promoted the ideas of radical Islam. The next chapter will provide a detailed overview of the deradicalization program.

Soft approach includes special soft measures such as "training, education, feedback from citizens, the use of technology". It is obvious that such measures create "an unwelcome environment to terrorists and extremists" (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia report, 2015).

The counter-terrorism strategy is a comprehensive approach of the authorities to the problem of security within the country. Boucek (2008) states that the strategy includes several programs that are being actively implemented in practice. For example, the Sakinah Campaign is aimed at online interactions with users who are interested in religious issues and go online to learn something about religion. The program involves consultations between experts and users. The main goal of creating the project was to protect users from the propaganda of terrorists who spread the ideas of radical Islam through social networks, books, videos, films and other possible means. Thanks to the educational project, the government manages to prevent all kinds of risks and consequences.

Boucek (2008) also claims that it is historically known that the internet first appeared in Saudi Arabia in 1999. From that moment on, the number of users began to increase every year, which prompted the terrorists to finance the dissemination of information via the Internet from that moment on. It is worth noting that the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) project was also created in Saudi Arabia, which monitors the security of the local Internet. Also in Saudi Arabia, "The Internet Services Unit" is actively working, which is engaged in "web-filtering" and shares the data with the Ministry of Interior. However, Saudi Arabia faces a major challenge within the framework of the Internet fight against terrorism and its prevention: servers with propaganda materials are located in Europe, the USA and in many other countries.

While analyzing internet security strategy in Saudi Arabia, Boucek (2008) concludes that this trend complicates the process of preventing terrorism, restricting material from viewing by local users, and blocking content, since the country needs time to establish cooperation with each country (where the server and resource are hosted) in order to join forces and eliminate the source of propaganda.

Since 2001, Saudi Arabia has been one of Washington's most essential partners in the fight against terrorism. Moreover, 2001 is considered to be the starting point because it was during this period that the government of Saudi Arabia began to take serious steps to eradicate terrorism (Qurtuby, Aldamer, 2021). However, despite all the government's attempts to improve its strategy to combat terrorism and radicalization, there is still a risk for civilians to fall under the influence of propaganda from terrorist groups. Until now, the terrorists have been trying to use all sorts of financing methods that will help to attract as many followers as possible. (Boucek, 2011)

However, in contrast to this, Saudi Arabia has created another project as part of the counter-terrorism strategy. The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia published the report (2015) that is dedicated to the new reform created in 2003, according to which the control of financial flows that could potentially sponsor terrorism was established. Thus, thanks to the increased control of the financial sector, the authorities and security services have the opportunity to monitor financial flows and prevent suspicious transactions in time.

The report also highlights the fact that the Saudi Arabian Monetarian Agency (SAMA) has created several programs that aim to provide continuing education programs for bank employees, judges, prosecutors and various professions to explain the main methods of influence of terrorists. Moreover, it is important to note that the programs explain money laundering methods and tools, how to detect suspicious bank transfers, how to improve financial security within a particular organization, and what methods are used by terrorist cells to exchange information not only within the financial sector, but also in all other areas of human life.

Boucek (2011) also praised the effectiveness of Saudi Arabia's partnership with Washington, calling this collaboration one of the best security solutions. Both sides are trying to improve cooperation: countries share information and experience, which helps to develop effective practical measures and improve the current strategy.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia has a lot of events that have undermined the security in the country, so the government was forced to develop a special strategy that would help to successfully overcome all modern challenges. Historically, the country has been a center of attraction for terrorists who have tried to make the most of it by wreaking havoc and radicalizing the local population.

The government has succeeded in creating a strategy based on a soft approach, which includes preventive measures and special measures aimed at working with former followers of radical ideas. It is important to note that the deradicalization program is only a small part of the strategy developed in Saudi Arabia. However, the next chapter will focus on the program and provide a detailed analysis of the main components of the program.

4.1.2 Saudi Arabia Deradicalization Program: General Overview

The deradicalization program in Saudi Arabia is part of the counterterrorism strategy of the state's domestic policy. Aslam (2020) claims that the program is part of a strategy called the "al-Hair". The program aims to help prisoners adapt to society and minimize the number of possible relapses. In the scientific article the author also highlights that the deradicalization program lasts about six months. It is also important

to note that the program seeks to rehabilitate and reeducate ex-followers of terrorist cells and radical Islam movements.

The program includes several important elements that are used during the rehabilitation. These elements are important to ensure the effective outcome of the program. Art therapy (Cascone, 2015), psychological and social support are important factors that make Saudi Arabian program unique (Bruton, 2015). Separately, Aslam (2020) notes three main elements of the deradicalization program that helped Saudi Arabia gain a regional reputation and attract world attention: psychological, religious, and social rehabilitations. During the program, all participants undergo a full rehabilitation, being under the constant supervision of specialists who develop an individual approach and create a deradicalization strategy based on the background and current state of the ward.

It is important to note that the uniqueness of the program also lies in the fact that initially the deradicalization method is based on the fact that program participants are treated not as terrorists, but as ordinary people who are given the opportunity to work out their mistakes themselves and with the help of specialists and a special reeducation program understand the foundations of Islam as a religion and again be able to become part of society. (Bryson, 2013)

The complete deradicalization and demobilization of the individual are considered an effective program outcome. As mentioned in the article, Saudi Arabia developed a soft approach, within which the deradicalization program appeared in 2004. The program is known to be overseen by the Advisory Committee and is run under the auspices of the Home Affairs. (Boucek, 2008)

As for the administrative structure of the program, it is essential to note that the Saudi Arabian authorities are actively recruiting scientists, university professors, clerics, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, psychologists and other researchers and specialists. This recruitment of specialists is essential to ensure the effective operation of the program (Boucek, 2008). Specialists in medicine (psychologists, psychotherapists, etc.) collect theoretical information and analyze participants' mental and emotional states throughout the program, make diagnoses, and monitor changes. If needed, they also provide and immediate help for participants. As for the clerics,

they conduct religious dialogues and debates with program participants. The main principle of the program is not to arrange long lectures but to involve participants in a friendly dialogue that provides closer contact with the program participant since this is the measure that is more effective in ensuring the correct religious perception of Islam as a religion. Dialogues are conducted one-on-one, and each participant's individual approach is applied based on his background. (El-Said, Barrett, 2013)

Boucek (2008) highlights several phases that people go through as part of the program. The first stage is organized for prisoners and takes place inside the prison. At this stage, active work is being carried out with prisoners, which consists of counselling and religious reeducation. The main task of the stage is to establish contact with the prisoners and explain the real essence of Islam as a religion (peace and tolerance). Prisoners are allowed to understand that radical cells randomly use the postulates of the Quran and interpret it in their favour, actively brainwashing their potential followers. Saudi Arabia is considered a country that provides the best Islamic reeducation under the deradicalization program due to many specialists and scientists in this field (Styszynski, 2018).

Further, to ensure that the participants have successfully passed the program's first stage, it is necessary to pass a particular final exam. The exam aims to test the prisoner that he no longer supports radical Islam and terrorist ideas and is no longer a threat to society. (Stern, 2017)

Stern (2017) and Boucek (2008) describe in their scientific articles that the next phase of the deradicalization program lasts 8-12 weeks and takes place in a unique facility that resembles a hostel. In this rehab centre, program participants live together, cook food and continue their rehabilitation. It is important to note that all participants are divided into three main groups based on their history. The first group is those who violated internal security. The second group includes those who returned from Iraq.

In contrast, the third group includes those who returned from Guantanamo Bay. The members of the three groups live in three different houses and do not overlap with each other. At this stage, participants undergo art therapy and learn new professions by taking specialized courses. This stage is aimed at facilitating the

socialization of prisoners after graduation from the program. Courses will help them to integrate more easily into society, and therapy will consolidate the results of the first stage and stabilize their mental and emotional state.

After the end of the program, graduates are not left without attention because the program provides further counselling, support and necessary support in various matters (for example, job search). The deradicalization program also helps with personal life arrangements and can help young people find a wife or husband (Capstack, 2015). An individual approach is always used to provide assistance without fail. Specialists evaluate the current social and financial status of the prisoner and his entire family. Based on the data obtained and the analysis, a particular plan of assistance and support from the program managers is drawn up. This measure to provide the necessary assistance is a preventive measure against possible relapses. If a person does not receive the necessary social benefits for everyday life, he will again have to return to the ranks of radical groups. (Porges, 2010)

It is important to emphasize that the program also actively interacts with the prisoner's relatives, involving them in rehabilitation. The active program takes care of them, providing all necessary assistance. After graduation from the program, participants continue to interact with the program's administration, periodically undergoing checks in one of the committees and meeting with representatives of the authorities and clerics. (Boucek, 2008)

To conclude the chapter, it is important to note that Saudi Arabia's deradicalization program is truly unique. Firstly, during the program, participants are constantly under the control of specialists who monitor their changes and current state. Secondly, an individual approach is developed for everyone based on the background, financial condition and many other factors. Thirdly, the program is aimed at reeducation and rehabilitation, which helps prisoners understand their mistakes and reintegrate into society. The uniqueness of the Saudi experience is that the program organizes an open dialogue, which is necessary and very important for the rehabilitation of prisoners. They are given the opportunity to openly discuss issues, problems and understand that Islam is a good religion in which there is no place for radical ideas. Further, it is important to note that the program provides for financial assistance and any assistance after the completion of the program.

5.1 Comparative analysis of deradicalization programs and MENA region: security assessment

In this part, a detailed analysis will be carried out on the basis of the information received, which was collected in the previous chapters. This chapter focuses on several criteria that will help compare deradicalization programs in Libya and Saudi Arabia, highlight strengths and weaknesses, and analyze the effectiveness of each. The main goal of the chapter is to conduct a comparative analysis of deradicalization programs based on the identified criteria.

Thus, the main criteria for analysis are the main focus of the program, deradicalization methods, program assessment, limitations and further perspectives. It is these criteria that cover the most important aspects of programs, and therefore their analysis can be considered comprehensive. Moreover, in addition to the analysis, this chapter will also answer a research question about the impact of deradicalization programs in the MENA region.

5.1.1 The main focus of the program

In this subparagraph, it is essential to compare the main focus of deradicalization programs since each of them has its own uniqueness and background. If, in Saudi Arabia, the emphasis is on the individuality of a person, then Libya has focused on the deradicalization of the entire group. Libya's strategy was to first, with the help of external pressure and circumstances, force the leaders of the group to come into contact, who later helped to deradicalize the central part of the group.

Saudi Arabia develops an individual approach to each member of the group, taking into account their psychological state, history, financial and marital status, as well as other factors. In this case, it cannot be said for sure that the approach of one program is more effective than another. First, Saudi Arabia's programs have been operating since 2004 to the present, constantly improving and adapting to modern trends. At the same time, Libya conducted a deradicalization program only once on a specific group. Secondly, in this case, it makes sense to give an estimate based on

statistics. Statistical data is challenging to obtain because deradicalization programs are not transparent, and much data can only be obtained from a limited number of information sources. For the current study, it makes sense not only to evaluate the effectiveness of measures but also to trace them in the dynamics of development. Further, in one of the subparagraphs of the chapter, reports on countering terrorism on the main ideas of the countries' security policy will be considered.

As for the Libyan case, Benotman (2010) claimed that Libya, of course, made attempts to deradicalize the group, but in general, the situation in the country remained just as unstable. Ashour (2011) claims that the strong point of Libya's deradicalization agenda is the dialogue between the group's followers and government officials, as well as former LIFG leaders.

5.1.2 Deradicalization methods

As follows from the previous parts of the thesis, Saudi Arabia and Libya are two completely different examples of the use, creation and implementation of deradicalization programs. The countries are united only by the desire to eradicate terrorism through a soft method of deradicalization and historical fluctuations, thanks to which programs have appeared within the framework of domestic security policy.

In this paragraph, it is important to compare the main focus of the programs as well as their most important components. For example, the basis of programs is an individual (Saudi Arabia) or group approach (Libya). As for specific tools that helped prisoners to deradicalize, for example, in the case of Saudi Arabia, this is a method of various therapies (art therapy, psychological therapy, family therapy). In more detail, in Saudi Arabia the program was divided into several stages, which allowed specialists to track the progress of the program and note the internal and external changes of each participant.

5.1.3 Deradicalization Methods in Saudi Arabia

Financing. The program not only receives good funding from local authorities, but also program participants and their families can receive financial

support. This measure is aimed at creating incentives for prisoners to socialize and avoid possible relapses.

Exams. This tool is used as an intermediate check of the current changes of program participants. Such a measure helps to monitor the condition of the participants and, if necessary, request the help of specialists.

Expert supervision. Throughout the program and also after it, the participants are looked after by psychologists, medical staff, teachers. All this is aimed at showing the participant how important he is to society and that the state is interested in him as a civilian who is a direct part of society. Also, the supervision of specialists is a good measure to provide immediate assistance or support during the program.

Teaching and religious reeducation. Getting an education and mastering a new specialty that will help participants quickly integrate into society is an effective measure of the program. Religious dialogues, rethinking Islam as a religion, as well as obtaining the necessary qualifications help program participants change their worldview and move away from supporting radical movements.

Post-release support. This method is one of the most important in the case of the Saudi Arabia program. The program understands that ex-prisoners will have to face an unaccustomed lifestyle at the very beginning, so participants and their families are provided with additional support in the form of counseling and funding, as needed, aimed not only at stimulation, but also at ensuring a comfortable lifestyle after release. from the program.

5.1.4 Deradicalization Methods in Libya

As for the deradicalization program in Libya, the method of the program was based on first deradicalizing the leaders of the group, who then worked closely with local authorities and helped to deradicalize their former followers.

Military strength and pressure. At the very beginning of the LIFG, the state showed its military strength and, through pressure, made it clear to the terrorist group that the state was ready to fight back. Thanks to military pressure, the Libyan

authorities managed to sow doubts among the leaders of the group, as well as force them to enter into a dialogue with government officials.

Deradicalization of group leaders. After the leaders of the group came into direct contact with the authorities, they managed to convince them through negotiations to take their side and assist in the deradicalization of the entire group.

Deradicalization of the remaining composition of the LIFG group. Of course, it is obvious that the prisoners were not immediately ready to openly make contact with the authorities. Therefore, open dialogues and debates with the former leaders of the group helped most of the participants to deradicalize and move away from radical views. It was these three parts of deradicalization in Libya that helped turn the radical group into a social-political movement, which eventually began to resemble a political party.

In conclusion of this part, the cases of Saudi Arabia and Libya show by their example that with entirely different methods, it is possible to achieve the most critical goal - to ensure deradicalization with a minimum number of relapses. However, the central paradox is now noticeable - the program of Saudi Arabia is attracting the attention of not only researchers but also political leaders from around the world. It is important to note here that researchers are currently facing the main challenge – to prove from a theoretical point of view that in the case of Libya, the method of group deradicalization is also worthy of attention. Indeed, the Libyan security policy as a whole can be found to have a large number of shortcomings (which will be explored a little later), but it is important to note here the unique methodology that helped de-radicalize the terrorist cell, which over time transformed into a more socio-political movement.

5.1.5 Program assessment

"Program assessment" criterion is devoted to analyzing the effectiveness of deradicalization programs. In this part, statistical indicators will be collected, as well as the general perception of deradicalization programs that appears in the main sources of literature.

The analysis of the available statistical literature in more detail shows that it is evident that in the case of Saudi Arabia, in almost every research, there are figures of 5-7% were rearrested, as well as mentions that the deradicalization program in Saudi Arabia has the highest percentage of successful cases (the vast majority graduates successfully completed the program and was able to adapt to society). Grander (2007) mentions this statistic in his article, claiming that Saudi Arabia is the leader in its region in terms of success rate and relapse rate.

Capstack (2015), in its study, notes that about 3,200 people were imprisoned in Saudi Arabia, and 1,500 of them became participants in the deradicalization program. The author also adds that 90% of the 1500 people successfully moved away from radical views and re-integrated into society. Moreover, the author separately mentions that 10% is an indicator that this percentage has not changed its views and continues to be a threat not only to the civilian population but also to the security of the country as a whole.

The Italian Institute for International Political Studies (2017) published data showing that the 1500 participants who underwent the deradicalization program were predominantly 26-30 years of age. The The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism report (2016) states that in Saudi Arabia's deradicalization program, the success rate is 80-90%, while 1-2% is the recidivism rate. The report also mentions data on 3,000 prisoners and a high rate of program effectiveness.

However, Wagner (2010) mentions different data in his article. The author states that 9,000 were produced in Saudi Arabia between 2003 and 2007, of which 3,000 took part in the deradicalization programme. Moreover, of the 120 prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, 25 returned to recidivism and violence. However, the author notes that Saudi Arabia is unique in its low recidivism rate (only 10%) compared to the US and UK, where recidivism rates are as high as 60-70%. The author argues that the course of Saudi Arabia is the right policy of the government, aimed at containing Islamic militancy and the use of a soft approach.

However, not all authors are optimistic about the success of the deradicalization program despite positive statistics. For example, Dechesnt (2011)

states that deradicalization programs are not a soft approach tool but only a counterterrorism strategy that, if used correctly, can change a person's behaviour. Nevertheless, it also cannot give any guarantees because if deradicalization can change behaviour, then it is complicated to change the worldview and thoughts of a person.

As for Libya, in this case, it is very difficult to track specific quantitative data. It seems possible to trace the security situation only in its dynamics as a whole. Such a restriction does not accurately measure the total number of participants in the program, the number of those who participated in direct dialogues with former leaders or government officials, the number of those who continued to engage in extremism or, on the contrary, became a full-fledged part of society. Therefore, in the thesis, an analysis of the security of Libya was carried out in the last part, where the dynamics of the development of events showed that, at present, the situation in the country remains quite tense, which does not imply any optimistic forecasts in the foreseeable future. In the case of Libya, it is essential to note here that the state is currently no longer making any attempts to create a unified deradicalization program within the country and also does not work with each group separately, as was the case with LIFG.

Peroux (2021) notes that there are several problems in Libya, not only due to the political environment but also social and economic challenges. Moreover, the author states that Libya has severe shortcomings in the education system, which does not allow it to take a more comprehensive approach to the issue of security. If Saudi Arabia gives priority not only to funding but also to education in all its manifestations (prisoners can learn new professions, a compulsory religious education course and much more). In the case of Libya, this is currently not yet possible. The high level of corruption, the growth of discontent among the people and other unresolved problems contribute to the growth of the emergence of new terrorist groups and the flourishing of violence. The author also claims that since 2011 there has been an increase in the number of rallies, acts of violence and other radical methods of expressing dissatisfaction with the current situation inside the country.

As for the general assessment of Saudi Arabian case, Boucek (2011) notes in an article that there are pretty effective measures in Saudi Arabia to deradicalize

prisoners. However, the author, in his article, notes the case of 11 terrorists who were attached to the deradicalization program, after the successful completion of which they later joined terrorist cells again, but in other countries. The author cites this case as an example of the fact that at the beginning of its creation, the deradicalization program was not perfect and was just beginning its development path. Therefore, in the beginning, there were a large number of precedents when, after completing the program, there were relapses or former followers of radical groups who could not find themselves in society and become an integral part of society.

Moreove, the author also notes that Saudi-US cooperation is one of the most successful and effective partnerships between countries on security issues. Also, the author separately notes that the government had made a sufficient amount of effort to combat the spread of violence, which had a positive impact on the security of the country, especially after the period of 2003-2006, when a large number of acts of violence took place in the country. It is important to note that in his study, the author emphasizes the fact that until 2003, Saudi Arabia made attempts to develop methods to combat terrorism, but they were not so successful. The period since 2003 has been more successful, but the country still has work to do.

5.1.6 Limitations and further perspectives

In this part of the thesis, the focus is on the main restrictions that are the main obstacle not only within the framework of deradicalization programs but also within the security policy of each country. In addition to criticizing and highlighting the main shortcomings, this part will review the main perspectives and offer recommendations for improving the situation.

As for Saudi Arabia, one can immediately note the lack of statistical data in the framework of deradicalization programs. The authors of scientific articles use some data from interviews and official statements from the authorities, but statistics in the format of reports or charts, where specialists and scientists can track the dynamics of the program's effectiveness, are practically absent. There are only a few quantitative data that form the basis of almost all scientific work that is related to deradicalization in Saudi Arabia.

The primary security situation in the country can be seen through the data of various reports, but at present, it is difficult to assess precisely the deradicalization programs. On the one hand, the country has an undeniable status as a regional leader, which leaves no doubt about the success of the program. On the other hand, the authorities need to provide opportunities for scientists, researchers and other members of the scientific community to obtain statistical data for research in this area. It is a comprehensive scientific base that will provide an opportunity for the government of the country to improve further its practical approach based on theoretical studies and recommendations.

In the case of Libya, it is tough to trace any dynamics of development. Perhaps this trend is due to the fact that the state is not particularly interested in making attempts to eliminate the threat of terrorism quickly. It follows from the previous chapters of the study that the deradicalization program was carried out only once on the only terrorist group LIFG, and then the state did not make any attempts against other terrorist groups.

Ashour (2011) states that it is not as effective for Libya to use soft methods as a counterterrorism strategy as it works well in the case of Saudi Arabia. The author is sure that a more innovative approach would suit the country, or rather a combination of soft and hard measures, as was the case with the deradicalization of LIFG. The author states that more than an individual approach to deradicalization is needed for the country. In Libya, group deradicalization programs can be effectively used which can successfully use a smart approach, where first the state provides military resistance and drives the terrorist group to a standstill, then work with the leaders of the group, who then cooperate with the local government and conduct direct dialogues with by their former followers.

As for the recommendations, it is vital for Saudi Arabia to continue developing the deradicalization program, to combine theoretical and empirical knowledge. Cooperation with the United States also favourably affects the internal situation in the country. With a good track record of deradicalization experience, the country is well-positioned to obtain additional funding from allies when needed to improve its practices further.

In the case of Libya, it is crucial for the government to develop a conceptual framework for terrorism, security and deradicalization. Theoretical research, debate and study not only of the program but also of the country as a whole will help to develop the best strategy to reduce the growth of terrorism within the country. It is significant for representatives of the authorities to develop normative legal acts that will initiate the process of combating terrorism. Since the situation in Libya is quite tense, it is vital for the government to develop criteria for evaluating work in the field of security, as well as to train employees at different levels (not only political representatives but also representatives of business, finance, etc.). It is also essential for the country to establish an education system and possibly engage in attracting qualified personnel. This measure will be a preventive tool that can be used to prevent people from becoming victims of terrorist groups so quickly. Perhaps it is also crucial for the country to involve representatives of religion in debates and open dialogues with the population, which will help civilians to understand religion better and realize that terrorists use the Quran for their own purposes, distorting its true meaning. Furthermore, finally, it is essential for the authorities to take feedback from the population, identify the needs of the population in time, monitor the dynamics of progress, and, if necessary, be ready to take emergency measures to resolve issues.

In order to analyze and answer the research question, it is also important to consider the current state of countries now in the framework of security and the fight against terrorism prevention.

Country report on terrorism: Libya (2020) states that Libya is still unstable in terms of domestic security policy. Despite the fact that terrorist cells (ISIS, Al-Qaeda and others) do not control the territory of Libya, the political dynamics are still quite unstable since the groups still pose a potential threat to the country. The Libyan government has created the Libyan National Army (LNA), which is making attempts to counter terrorist acts, but, unfortunately, the report notes that this organization is effective in combating terrorism only in territories that it has controlled for a long time. According to the statistics of the report, in 2020 alone, about eight terrorist bomb attacks were carried out, mainly in the southern part of Libya, where a large number of civilians became victims.

In 2020, it was also noted that Libya had not developed any legal acts that would be aimed at resolving the situation in the field of internal security. The report also highlights the main weakness of Libya's security policy at present, the fact that the country lacks a comprehensive counterterrorism law. However, from time to time the Libyan government organizes special events that are aimed at dividing terrorist groups. For example, according to the report, in 2020, Libyan forces killed the head of the ISIS group in Libya and also carried out a number of arrests. However, despite such measures on the part of the government, deradicalization programs have not been carried out in the country after the experience with LIFG. Therefore, the internal policy of the state in the field of security is rather vague and inaccurate.

For comparison, this thesis also analyzed the report called Country Reports on Terrorism (2021), which notes that the country continues to cooperate with the United States in the field of security, terrorists still do not control anything inside the country, and there are also no changes in the field of law and local legislation. This suggests that, at present, the Libyan government does not show much interest in combating and countering terrorism within the country. However, the report notes that one of Libya's most important measures in the fight against terrorism is the measures of the Libyan central bank, which began to strictly monitor all financial transactions for preventive measures and the elimination of possible sponsorship of terrorism. In December 2021, the central bank began developing special instructions not only for employees but also for representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities on how terrorist transactions can be distinguished and how government officials and ordinary employees can help in the timely recognition and reporting of such financial transactions, illegal flows and possible money laundering.

Thus, two reports for 2020 and 2021 show that the situation in Libya remains at the same level. The country lacks concrete action from the authorities and more comprehensive measures that will cover something more than just training personnel to control and prevent suspicious financial flows.

Regarding the situation in Saudi Arabia, the country reports on terrorism (2020) show that the country has experienced a large number of cross-border attacks, terrorist attacks by ISIS, ballistic missile attacks and other types of acts of violence and terrorism. As for the 2021 report, it notes that Saudi Arabia has continued to

actively cooperate with the United States, especially in the framework of the policy of preventing radicalization attempts. Cooperation between the two countries also aims to develop more effective overall security measures, control of financial flows and other measures that can help prevent potential terrorist attacks. However, despite the fact that the country reports on terrorism (2021) notes strong cooperation and a large number of projects in the security sector, there were twice as many terrorist attacks in 2021 compared to 2020. The study showed that in Saudi Arabia, mainly missile attacks are taking place, which not only worsen the statistical success rates of the measures taken but also damage local infrastructure and increase the death rate of the population.

The 2021 report also indicates that Saudi Arabia continues to actively work to improve deradicalization programs, and despite the fact that the threat to security within the country is still an urgent challenge for local authorities, it is recognized that Saudi Arabia is currently the absolute regional leader in the development of deradicalization programs and counterterrorism financing.

Since there is not much information in the reports on the current state of security, reports from 2016-2019 were also used in this study. If we consider Saudi Arabia in the dynamics of development, then it is worth noting the enormous progress in the field of security. For example, the 2016 report focuses primarily on ISIS, the main countermeasures against the terrorist group, and resolving issues related to the reduction of territorial control by the terrorist group.

Reports from 2017 and 2018 show that the Saudi authorities have chosen the right course of internal security policy, as ISIS has lost its influence and sources of funding over time and also caused less harm to the country as a whole.

The 2019 report notes the tremendous contribution of the United States to security not only in Saudi Arabia but in the Middle East as a whole. A large number of terrorist groups were suppressed and divided, and under the influence of external forces, the number of terrorist acts decreased. One of the most important events was the victory over the prominent leader of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was successfully eliminated by US forces.

Thus, despite the fact that Saudi Arabia has seen an increase in terrorist attacks in the last two current reports, it is essential to note that the country continues to work actively not only in the development of general measures but also focuses on preventive measures and a deradicalization program. Perhaps it is thanks to such comprehensive work, covering all the most critical aspects of security, that the country manages to remain a regional leader, maintain global recognition and remain at the centre of scientific debate.

In the theoretical block of the thesis, the classifications of deradicalization programs were also analyzed. According to Koehler (2016), both programs are governmental active with ideology. In both programs, the states took an active part in supporting the program. Also, ideology was a key point in each of the programs. In the case of Libya, the former leaders of the terrorist group went into direct contact with the prisoners, helping to change their worldview and perception of the situation. As for Saudi Arabia, the program includes religious reeducation, which changes the perception and behavior of program participants. Through direct dialogues with religious representatives, participants are made to understand the whole essence of religion and the main idea of real Islam. Thus, the programs are active, with the involvement of the maximum amount of resources and the support of the authorities.

Thus, a detailed analysis of the report shows that fluctuations persist in countries, however, Saudi Arabia and its political course in the framework of preventing terrorism has more positive results, unlike Libya. The Libyan case is more complex and complex, as the country has a shortage of resources, personnel, and there is also uncertainty in the political course. However, despite this, the countries have great potential for further development in the field of security.

With regard to the MENA region and security, it is Saudi Arabia and Libya that play a key role. If earlier there were sanctions against Libya from Western countries, the United States and the UN, then later the country managed to change its reputation, as well as resume cooperation with other countries.

At present, it can be accurately stated that the experience of deradicalization of Saudi Arabia is an example for other countries. Such a technique, based on an individual approach, taking into account all sorts of factors, can be called one of the

most successful and effective. But in order to reduce the influence of the security threat in the region, it is necessary to continue theoretical research and exchange scientific knowledge.

Despite the lack of statistical data, as well as various analytical articles or scientific studies in the case of Libya, it can be definitely argued that studying the experience of deradicalization will help to collect all the theoretical and empirical experience that can help in the development or improvement of current deradicalization programs around the world.

This thesis focuses on the idea that the experience of both countries in the framework of deradicalization programs has a positive impact on the security of the MENA region due to its unique background and completely opposite approaches and tools for deradicalization.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the thesis, a research question was developed which consisted in determining the impact of deradicalization programs on the process of ensuring stability and security in the MENA region. The purpose of the thesis was to study deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia and Libya, study the main methods of deradicalization and compare the two cases with each other according to the main four identified criteria. The following criteria were identified in the work: the main focus of the program, deradicalization methods, program assessment, limitations and further perspectives. The main method in the study was the interpretation of the data obtained to identify the main trends and comparative case study that was used in the empirical part in the analysis of the cases of Libya and Saudi Arabia. Also, in the empirical part of the case, the historical background of both countries was touched upon, and at the end, the main advantages and disadvantages of the programs were highlighted, on the basis of which recommendations were formulated.

This research paper is unique in that it combines the main scientific sources on deradicalization programs, emphasizes the need for research on deradicalization in Libya, and also shows the need for an integrated approach to the development of deradicalization programs. Furthermore, this research includes all the basic information from reports, scientific articles and projects, and a comparative analysis was carried out according to four main criteria, the strengths and weaknesses of the programs were identified, and recommendations were developed.

The theoretical part of the study was devoted to the definition of basic concepts such as radicalization, deradicalization, deradicalization programs. Moreover, in the theoretical part, a literary review of the main models of radicalization was carried out, thanks to which the foundation of the study was laid. With the help of models of radicalization, not only the prerequisites and causes become obvious, but also the very process of radicalization of individuals. Comparative case study became the main method that was used in the study. Through the study of available sources of information, the method of data interpretation helped to structure the material. Thus, qualitative research methods laid the foundation for creating a detailed analysis.

As for the empirical part, it examined in detail the data regarding the historical background of each of the countries, as well as the prerequisites for the creation of deradicalization programs. Further, a comparative analysis was carried out according to the selected criteria listed above.

According to the results of the study, the historical past of both countries was quite unstable and had a large number of fluctuations that led to the rise of terrorism, the emergence of terrorist groups and the need to create a counter-terrorism strategy that would include not only preventive measures, but also measures to using a soft approach that would help the former followers of radical groups to change their worldview and become an integral part of society back.

In the empirical part, the main limitations moreover, several recommendations were developed were also considered. The main disadvantage of deradicalization programs is the lack of transparency of data, as well as the minimum amount of statistical information. In terms of recommendations, further research could lay a strong foundation for the development of more effective deradicalization methods for all countries that are interested in doing so.

Furthermore, it is important to note the need for further research on the Libyan case, since Saudi Arabia is receiving much more attention from the scientific community. However, countries practiced two completely different approaches (individual or group deradicalization).

Deradicalization programs were also analyzed within the typology of deradicalization by Koehler (2016), where the results of the empirical part showed that programs can be characterized as governmental active with ideology. In both programs, the ideology and the role of the state were in a key position, which had a significant impact on the positive effects. However, the security threat still remains in the countries, but in general, each of the countries has its own unique historical and political experience, which can help to further improve its current course and current methods of combating terrorism in general.

As for the research question about the effectiveness of deradicalization program and their impact on MENA region security, here we need to focus on the fact

that Saudi Arabia and Libya, due not only to the size of their territories but also to their historical background, have a significant impact on the MENA region. Libya has already been recognized as a sponsor of terrorism and even for some time was subject to sanctions by the UN and the US. In Saudi Arabia, the ISIS group was quite active, especially in terms of radicalizing the local population, which later took part in terrorist acts (explosions, chaos, destruction of local infrastructure and attacks on civilians). Thus, instability in the region, in one way or another, depends on the internal situation of both countries.

It is evident that various conflicts (territorial, economic, and others) also occur in other countries of the region. For example, conflicts in Iran, Iraq, Israel and other countries. However, the thesis focuses on terrorist groups and deradicalization programs, which are essential tools in the counterterrorism strategy.

When answering a research question regarding effectiveness of deradicalization programs, it is worth taking into account the dynamics of developments in the field of security in countries. As the last parts of the chapter have shown, Saudi Arabia is showing a positive result, despite the lack of quantitative data and the lack of transparency in the program. However, in Libya, the situation has a large number of fluctuations. Despite the fact that the terrorists do not control part of Libya, they still remain a significant threat. Given Libya's historically very rapid pace of radicalization, the risk of a repeat of the situation remains high. Despite this, the state does not make any apparent attempts to resolve the situation.

Thus, deradicalization programs are a modern, practical measure that requires constant improvement. It is impossible to accurately answer the question of how beneficial the programs are for the whole region since the situation in terms of internal security is very different. However, it can be argued that the creation and further development of such programs throughout the region can help reduce the level of security threat by dozens of times. As already noted in the thesis, each country needs to choose its own method of deradicalization, taking into account the historical past, cultural characteristics and the current state of the country. Libya and Saudi Arabia are two completely different cases that aim at the same outcome. Both countries within the framework of deradicalization have shown their effectiveness, which only needs to be strengthened and further developed.

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Master's Thesis Summary

This summary (master's thesis proposal) is the last version that was previously approved. However, during writing, master's thesis there were several changes in terms of format, sources and analysis itself. This thesis proposal reflects the main idea of the thesis.

Title: Deradicalization Programs in the MENA Region Countries: A Comparative Study of Libya and Saudi Arabia

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Motivation

Nowadays, the problem of the spread of terrorism has become a global threat in the 21st century. The world community is faced with the need to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and consolidated search for solutions to global challenges and problems of our time. The main task of states, their representative offices and international organizations is to combine scientific and practical approaches in order to seek consensus on various issues. Concerning the threat of terrorism and its spread, one of the solutions to this problem was the creation of special deradicalization programs aimed at reducing terrorist acts and rehabilitating terrorists or former followers of radical organizations. However, this method is at the very beginning of its development since deradicalization programs do not guarantee that the individual will completely change his worldview and will not take actions that may threaten society.

The study of this issue is necessary from a scientific point of view to accumulate a scientific knowledge base on this issue and further develop recommendations for improving deradicalization programs. The research will help in the study of the MENA region, as the main focus of the spread of terrorist cells, as well as on the example of two practical cases, the main trends will be shown, and practical measures proposed to improve effective work with former followers of radical groups, terrorists and prisoners in the framework of deradicalization programs. The study focuses on the MENA region, which is known for its security volatility. The case of Saudi Arabia will help study one of the most popular and successful deradicalization programs (Kamel

al-Khatti, 2019). As for the case of Libya, it will focus on identifying the main trends, advantages, and disadvantages. The comparison two cases of deradicalization programs in different countries will help to confirm or refute the success of Saudi Arabia in comparison with other countries. Moreover, the work is aimed at studying the impact of the de-radicalization program on the current struggle of the international community against the spread and prevention of terrorism and extremism.

Master's thesis main research question: What is the effect of current deradicalization programs in the MENA region to ensure stability and security in these countries?

Literature Review

Currently, the world is becoming more and more challenging. That is why one of the main dilemmas that needs to be resolved is the global terrorism threat and the spread of radicalized people who suppose they can use violence to change the current system. That is why the primary goal of the literature review is to explore radicalization and deradicalization topics that is really important to conduct comprehensive analysis in the thesis.

Moreover, the literature review emphasizes how many organizations and scientists have already paid attention to the current problem. This topic still needs humankind's attention in order to replenish scientific knowledge bases on this issue, as well as to attract public attention to this topic in order to prevent radicalization possibly. Moreover, the literature review of the phenomenon of deradicalization shows that many countries are puzzled by the socialization of former participants in radical movements and provide various assistance and support.

Thus, the literature review examines current available sources (reports, scientific articles and other data) and shows how important it is to draw attention to this topic and continue researching it.

The scope of the literature in terms of radicalization and deradicalization is not limited. Many international organizations (UN, OSCE), MENA governmental authorities and various scientists created many reports, projects and scientific articles aimed at examining such concepts as radicalization and deradicalization to explain them theoretically and then be able to produce practical tools that will be aimed at preventing radicalization at early stages and help prisoners and ex-radical-followers

deradicalize. The literature review consists of several parts that make the analysis more structured and detailed.

The literature review focuses on radicalization and deradicalization in general as basic theoretical concepts; MENA region security explanation, its historical background and current situation; and Saudi Arabia and Libya cases.

The concepts of radicalization, deradicalization and deradicalization programs

The concept of radicalization does not have a unified meaning. Many scholars examine this phenomenon from various sides and from different perspectives, trying to explore it more comprehensively. That is why radicalization is such a complex term that is difficult to define. However, it is essential to note that radicalization should be used in this thesis as a prerequisite for deradicalization. These two concepts are interconnected, and their close connection results in establishing deradicalization programs in several MENA countries and theoretical radicalization models aimed to explain how to help people, how to deradicalize them and what can cause radicalization.

Thus, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) emphasized that radicalization is a change in feelings, attitudes and attitudes towards the environment to support intergroup conflict. The article's authors also clarify that radicalization is characterized by an individual's commitment to extreme, radical views and beliefs to support violence and intergroup conflict.

The European Commission (2020) defines radicalization as a consistent and gradual process of changing the behaviour and worldview of an individual or a group of individuals toward radical views that, in one way or another, justify the commission of acts of violence in order to achieve any goals.

The radicalized individual differs significantly from the standards and norms of social behaviour. At the heart of the behaviour of a radicalized person is the desire to change the nature of society, state and government.

However, violent extremism differs from radicalization in that it is inherent in the practical use of fear, acts of terrorism and violence (Australian Government report, 2020).

Accordingly, radicalization implies a change in a person's attitude to specific political, social, and economic problems, where the only way to solve these problems is through radical methods (from violence to terrorism), as well as their widespread distribution in order to quickly introduce changes in the structure of the state and society (Muro, 2016).

As for the concept of deradicalization, it is a reasonably complex phenomenon that is currently being actively examined. However, there is still no unified definition of the concept.

Ashour (2015) suggests that deradicalization is an essential element of CVE, which refers to a process of the relative change of the individual when he begins to realize that the use of violence has dangerous consequences for society. However, this definition does not clarify how exactly the process of changing the mindset happens.

Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez, Boucek (2010) suppose that deradicalization covers the process when the individual understands that the use of violence is not an excellent tool to make changes in the state or society. They add that this is not a fast process but happens after the disengagement phase. They specify the latter concept as a trigger that provokes the emergence of a group to doubt the correct ideology and actions and a gradual desire to move away from committing acts of crime. In the usual case, deradicalization is an auxiliary aid that will help the individual to reintegrate into society.

Clutterbuck (2015) notes that the term deradicalization is often used as a too broad concept that tries to cover all aspects, but it is essential to examine the phenomenon sequentially from different aspects since it includes too many factors that cannot be taken into account in one definition.

As for deradicalization programs, they are expected to be peaceful tools to help individuals move away from violent extremism and reintegrate into society. The reports of the International Peace Institute (2010) showed that deradicalization programs differ in terms of goals, scope, and work methods. This report encourages the constant study of the aspect of deradicalization since the exchange of scientific and practical experience will help improve the programs of special centres for deradicalization to work more successfully with individuals.

These sources will be used in the thesis to structure the theoretical part. It is of high importance to note that deradicalization as a concept is too complex. That is why

it is pretty challenging to develop a unified definition. However, further theoretical research of this concept is helpful if it aims to clarify some specific trends or characteristics.

Saudi Arabia and Libya cases

Saudi Arabia is an example of one of the most successful cases in terms of deradicalization. The Counseling Program that was established by Saudi Arabian authorities is focused on working with prisoners to help them abandon radical terrorist ideologies (Boucek, 2007). The START report (2009) also analyzes the program's main goals and concludes that this program shows its effectiveness in practice. These sources should be used in writing the research paper, as they study the program in detail, its advantages, disadvantages and main ideas for working with prisoners in Saudi Arabia.

The RAND report (2010) compares Libya and Saudi Arabian cases. A distinctive feature of the Libyan deradicalization program is its focus on group radicalization, while the Saudi Arabian program focuses on the individual approach. It includes intragroup discussions, and Saudi Arabia provides counselling, sponsorship, family therapy and visits.

Moreover, one of the most important factors as postprogram control is highlighted by several sources (RAND, 2010; Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez, Boucek, 2010). While deradicalization program in Saudi Arabia includes monitoring after completing the program, Libyan case does not pay attention to it. Researchers highlight that the efficiency of postmonitoring remains unclear, but from the theoretical perspective, it provides authorities with an opportunity to examine ex-followers, their health, mental and current condition.

El Sagezli (2019) supposes that the most important deradicalization factor in Libyan case is political and socioeconomic inclusion. Köse and Öztürk (2020) consider in their work "The Bina Program" developed by government Libyan agencies. Their analysis shows that the program has strengths and weaknesses. The process of dialogue between the state and society in terms of security issues and measures is highlighted as weaknesses due to the lack of objectivity and effective results. The researchers highlight the need to improve control and accountability within the framework of the deradicalization program.

Conclusion

Thus, currently, there are many sources of information on the theoretical and practical experience of deradicalization programs. Separately, it is worth noting that, from the point of view of practical experience, the deradicalization programs in Libya and Saudi Arabia represent two different approaches. If the case of Saudi Arabia is focused on the study of group radicalization and deradicalization, then the Libyan case is focused on the individual. The example of Libya shows that the deradicalization program is not perfect enough and needs to be studied in order to identify its weaknesses, as well as develop recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis of the work consists of the concepts of radicalization, deradicalization, deradicalization programs, as well as models of radicalization.

Radicalization in work should be understood as a process in which people or groups of people become adherents of political, religious or other extremism. Deradicalization includes the rejection of the use of violence to achieve political goals without simultaneously delegitimizing violence ideologically.

As for the deradicalization program, their main goal is to provide first aid for the rehabilitation and reintegration into society of a former follower of radical groups. As a rule, this is working with former or current prisoners.

Radicalization models are theories that are designed to identify the main stages, triggers and factors that make a person follow radical theories.

The Social-Developmental model of radicalization (Beelmann,2020), 3N model (Milla,2022) and other radicalization theories will be explored and analysed as the theoretical radicalization concepts.

Content analysis requires a qualitative theoretical justification of the main concepts and theories, so these concepts will be considered and analyzed in detail.

Methodology

Paying attention to the fact that the research focuses on practical cases, such as Saudi Arabia and Libya, it is worth noticing that the research will include qualitative methods.

The case study method will be used since practical cases of the two countries

are involved in the analysis. The main idea behind this research is to assess the effect of current programs on MENA regional security. That is why a case study will be the primary method in this thesis.

Moreover, to conduct a more comprehensive comparative analysis, it is necessary to use the content analysis method, which focuses on identifying the main trends of specific deradicalization programs. For research, it is necessary to study in depth the materials of the content of the programs and find statistical data, projects, research and academic articles on this topic. Since there is a need to study a large amount of data, the content analysis method will help to summarize the material in one work.

The method will be used to develop criteria for a comparison of programs. Highlighting specific comparison criteria will provide an opportunity not only to compare the available data but also to highlight the main advantages and disadvantages of the programs.

Moreover, interpretivism will help explain all the data and highlight tendencies. Furthermore, all gathered information will be used to summarise and develop recommendations for future development.

Using the deductive method will help analyze the research question in particular cases and draw appropriate conclusions. Data compilation will help to use to build causal relationship and make conclusions when analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of data mining programs.

Data:

Since the scientific work is focused on a comparative analysis of the two deradicalization programs, the study of their historical context, and the main characteristics, it is worth emphasizing the need to study the primary sources of information collection. These include speeches by state officials, statistics on the effectiveness of programs, and statements by representatives, former participants or employees of programs. The Bina Program (the project developed by Libyan authorities), "Soft"counterterrorism stratedy by Saudi Arabia will be also analysed in detail in the thesis.

Secondary data will be necessary to analyze the reaction and opinions of the public. Scientific articles, analytical media reviews, and references to the scientists' opinions will help in delving into the examination of the arguments and reasons. That

is why a document-based strategy will compile all necessary data, and then it will be possible to interpret it.

The study of primary and secondary sources will help to highlight the leading causal chains of argumentation of various opinions and positions, which will help to study the issue of the deradicalization results.

Data Collection:

Since it is just a research outline, only the most essential and preliminary sources are highlighted in references. More sources will be found and added while conducting the research itself.

The current research suggests the use of social media monitoring and a document-based strategy that will provide the research with the opportunity to make a detailed insight into how the programs are developing.

Gathering information from various sources requires looking for any information with justified criticism or detailed analytical explanation. However, during the research, several challenges can appear—for instance, a large amount of descriptive data without detailed analytics or criticism. Furthermore, many scientific sources include links exclusively to secondary data, so there is a need to study primary data.

Almost all sources lack recommendations for improving regional security and deradicalization programs. However, this study within the framework of the master's thesis will help fill the current scientific gaps.

Data analysis:

The analysis of the received data will be done by generalization and interpretation of the data. The content analysis of the works forms the basis of the entire thesis. Content analysis will help to study all available sources for deradicalization programs in their social context, as well as to process, interpret and evaluate the data obtained.

Comparing the two programs according to the main criteria will also help to make the analysis more comprehensive. To implement this method, it is necessary to identify several criteria: the main focus of the program (on a group of people or individuals, financing of the program (the main sponsors of the programs, as well as

the possibility of financial support for the program participants), methods of deradicalization (training, psychological assistance, counselling, other methods), statistics performance (including the search for data on possible recurrences.) In the course of work, additional criteria may be further identified if necessary.

Suggested Thesis Structure

1.   Introduction (General information regarding current situation worldwide in terms of radicals, terrorism threat and political agenda. Highlighting the research question)

2.   Literature Review

3.   Theoretical Framework

4.   Methodology (qualitative methods primarily)

5.   Saudi Arabia case: historical background, current narratives, future development.

6.   Libya case: historical background, current narratives, future development.

7.   Discussion of Empirical Findings (Case's comparison: advantages, drawbacks and recommendations)

8.   Conclusions

9.   References

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