ONLINE NARRATIVES FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

A Thesis

presented to

the Faculty of Humanities

at Notre Dame University-Louaize

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Media Studies – Electronic Journalism and Public Relations

by

Dalia Al Mokdad

Spring, 2019

© COPYRIGHT
By

Dalia Al Mokdad

2019

All Rights Reserved

Notre Dame University - Louaize

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Media Studies

We hereby approve the thesis of

Dalia Al Mokdad

Candidate for the degree of Electronic Journalism and Public Relations

Dr. Maria Bou Zeid — Supervisor

Dr. Jessica El-Khoury — Committee Member

Dr. Christy Mady — Committee Member

CHAIRPERSON MEDIA STUDIES

Dr. Maria Bou Zeid — Chair

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Maria Bou Zeid for all her guidance and support. Her office was always open whenever I had any question or concern. In addition to the academic skills that I obtained, I learned from her how to be always patient and peaceful.

I would also like to thank my readers, Dr. Jessica El-Khoury for helping me in the methodology even during the holidays and for the continuous support, and Dr .Christy Mady for challenging me to keep developing the paper until the last minute. Moreover, special thank you for every person working in NDU to keep us satisfied, comfortable and happy.

I would also like to acknowledge, Prof. Father Fadi Daou as the external coder in the study. Additionally I owe a great deal of thanks to Adyan Foundation for giving me a long study leave to finalize the thesis, and for supporting me in all the adventures that I experience.

Additionally, I would like to thank KAAD for giving me a scholarship to purse higher studies that help me enriching my experience in the media role for countering sectarianism and violent extremism.

Finally, thank God for everything.

Table of Contents

Approval Page ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Acknowledgment iv
Table of Contents 1
Abstract 2
Introduction 4
Literature Review 7
The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes 7
The Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism 8
Understanding Online CVE Programs 10
Undermining Violent Extremist Narratives in the MENA 12
CVE through Communication Strategies 13
CVE Conceptual Framework 16
Narrative Theory 17
Theoretical Framework 30
Framing 30
Hypotheses and Research Questions 34
Methodology 35
Research Method and Sample 35
Variables 39
Procedure 43
Results 48
Discussion 60
Limitations and Further Suggestions 74
Conclusion 75
References 77
Appendix A: Codebook 81
Appendix B: Screenshots 87

Abstract

Social media has played a key role in the rise of extremism. Extremists took advantage of these open and free platforms to promote their propaganda. At the same time, this was an opportunity for governments, religious institutions and civil society to create counter extremism narrative. Based on the framing theory, this study examines the way in which Sawab, Al-Azhar Observatory, and Taadudiya Facebook pages present their narratives, with the aim of developing characteristics for each of the narratives.

This study adopts a quantitative research methodology through the content analysis of three campaigns conducted by the three senders. The analysis of the results highlights the similarities and the differences in the narratives and framing patterns of the three Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) campaigns under study.

The findings show many similarities between the three types of narratives, but with important differences based on the ideology of the sender rather than the type of the narrative. Women role was missed in the frames of Al Azhar campaign, and the majority of Sawab content. They all used a formal tone but the threatening mood was visible in the governmental posts of Sawab. The youth actor is present in the civil society campaigns of Taadudiya, more than the religious institution campaigns of Al Azhar.

These results clarify how the ideology of each sender affects the framing and the narrative. The type of the narratives answers the “What”, but the content analysis of the campaigns clarifies “How” each sender is delivering the message regardless of the type of the narrative.

The small size of the sample affects the ability to generalize the results of the study. Moreover, the paid promotions on Facebook should be taken into consideration

while evaluating the engagement rate of the posts. The researcher had no access to pages insights, this is why there was no separation between the paid reach and the organic one. On the other hand, the absence of the content analysis studies of the CVE campaigns affected the richness of the literature review of the study.

Keywords:

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)

Violent Extremism (VE)

Sawab Centre

Al-Azhar Observatory

Taadudiya

Facebook

Strategies

Online Narratives for Countering Violent Extremism on Facebook: Characteristics and specifications

Introduction

The mainstream media, television, radio and newspapers used to be the only powerful tools for setting the public agenda and shaping public opinion accordingly. But after the Arab spring, during which the revolutions that started on social media led to many political, social and economic changes, the new media became a prominent tool in people's hands especially since these free platforms are accessible to professional and non-professional journalists.

In their article "The Role of Social Media in the Arab Upspring,", Mitchell, Brown & Guskin (2012) confirmed that the "civil society leaders emphasized the role of the internet, mobile phones, and social media in the protests." It is more than that; these media are not only accessible to civil society leaders – they are open and/or accessible to anybody, including extremists. Extremists took advantage of these online platforms to promote their propaganda that included the recruitment of members, fundraising, hacking accounts and spreading specific messages to increase fear among the targeted communities (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012).

The rise of such narratives led to the creation of counter narratives promoted by local and international organizations and think tanks. Their aim is to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Daesh narrative on social media by promoting different Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) narratives.

Yet most of the studies done by the United Nations and other international organizations such as The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes (UNDOC, 2012) and The Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism (United Nations, 2016), focus on the recommendations and strategies to Counter Violent Extremism with very few

studies done on the assessment and evaluation of the content of these programs and narratives..

Many articles and academic papers (Ferguson, 2015; Davies, G., Neudecker, G., Ouellet, M., Bouchard, M., and Ducol, B, 2016) also discussed the usage and influence of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in the presence of the violent extremism narrative, yet none has studied message content based on the media strategies of these concepts and their different approaches especially on social media.

Several CVE reports mention Daesh directly as an extremist groups promoting violent extremism, therefore it is important to define Daesh from the beginning. Daesh originated as an independent entity following a split with its parent organization, Al Qaeda during the Syrian War that started in March 2011. As cited on the European Institute for Peace website, Daesh was "Originally operating under Jabhat al Nusra (which remains an Al Qaeda affiliate), current Nusra and Al Qaeda leaders Abu Mohammad al-Julani and Ayman al-Zawahiri rejected a merger in 2013 that would have united Al Qaeda, Nusra and ISI (Islamic State in Iraq)". Daesh became a Wahhabi Salafist splinter group operating under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi,

This thesis fills this gap in the scholarly literature by investigating the characteristics of different CVE narratives, and how each sender is framing the narrative in relation to the strategies of governmental institutions, religious authorities and civil society organizations. Based on the framing theory, the thesis will examine three Facebook campaigns, launched in 2017 by three organizations, namely, Sawab Center, who was found by the US department of states to defeat the deception of Daesh, Al Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism, that was founded after the rise of

extremism by Daesh, and Taadudiya that launched a lot of CVE campaigns. The three of them represent the governmental counter narrative, the religious narrative, and the existential narrative respectively. Three successful campaigns will be selected by each one of these organizations to compare their narrative characteristics in relation to their type of sender the organization is.

Literature Review

This section deals with the literature review in relation to the concepts of radicalization, and counter religious and existential narratives. It provides detailed descriptions of the concepts and their use in countering terrorism. It also provides an overview of the Sawab, Al Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya Facebook pages and the purposes for which these platforms were launched.

The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes

Due to the importance of the internet and technology in delivering messages that reach numerous and diverse segments of people, terrorists are taking advantage of this technology to spread their word and influence people.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) produced, in collaboration with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, a report titled "The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes" (2012). In this report, the UNODC provides the policy makers and governments with an overview of the current challenges which they can use as a baseline for projects dealing with counter narratives. This paper defines counter narrative as "A message that offers a positive alternative to extremist propaganda, or alternatively aims to deconstruct or delegitimize extremist narratives" (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2016).

The UNODC points out that the purposes of terrorists are wide and varied ranging from propaganda, recruitment, financing, training and incitement to committing acts of terrorism and getting the needed database of people. According to the report "The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes" (2012), terrorists use the internet to promote their ideology through violent content and encourage their target audience to counter violent acts.

In addition, UNODC (2012) notes that the terrorists' propaganda aims to recruit and influence potential supporters by reaching vulnerable and marginalized groups in society and inciting them to do acts of terrorism. This changing of actors from non-violent to violent is called radicalization. In a different module for UNODC published under thetitle "Radicalization and Violent Extremism" (2018), radicalization is defined as " a process through which an individual adopts an increasingly extremist set of beliefs and aspirations." .

Moreover, the report notes that terrorists use the internet to get funds and request donations. "Approximately 1,400 credit cards were used to generate approximately 1.6 million of illicit funds to finance terrorist activity" (UNODC, 2016). The online platforms are used as virtual training camps; the online magazine published by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) "Inspire" is an example. It offers how-to-guides for building bombs and staging terrorist attacks, as cited on the Foreign Policy website (Observation Desk, 2015)

Later, these online platforms became main planning tools to communicate and exchange data related to terrorists' action plans and the execution of these plans. The platforms were also used for hacking purposes, either to disenable the systems of the targets or access and acquire important data from their computers and servers.

After studying the ways that the extremists use to recruit people and fund their work, the UN set a strategy for a prevention plan that could protect the world from extremism.

The Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism

The former general secretary of the UN, Ban Ki-moon presented The "UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" to the general assembly on January 2016 and it was officially adopted on February 2016, as mentioned on the United Nations

Office of Counter Terrorism website. The plan presented the official shift from the Counter Violent Extremism narrative to Prevent Violent Extremism. The plan confirms that violent extremism threat "requires actions beyond law enforcement, military or security measures to address development, good governance, human rights and humanitarian concerns" (The United Nations, 2016).

The objective of this plan is to address the drivers of violent extremism on the global, national and regional fronts and to set adequate policies according to each context with the aim of taking action in seven priority areas. The areas are:

1- Dialogue and conflict prevention
2- Strengthening good governance
3- Human rights and rule of law
4- Engaging communities
5- Youth empowerment
6- Gender equality and empowering women, education, skill development and employment facilitation
7- Strategic communications, the Internet and Social Media.

In setting the policy framework, the UN plan points out that each member state should develop a national plan of action to prevent violent extremism by addressing its local drivers and this is made visible through the different types of the CVE narratives developed by governments, religious institutions and civil society organizations.

As this paper deals with the counter narrative in the framework of CVE, it will address the 7th area of the recommendations which is: Strategic Communications, the Internet and Social Media. Under this area, six different points were mentioned in the plan :

1- Increase partnership between different sectors to develop national communication strategies
2- Increase the research and studies on negative use of the mainstream and social media by violent extremist
3- Highlight the grass-roots initiatives to promote positive values
4- Foster law based protection for the freedoms that are related to media; opinion, expression and others
5- Give a voice to the victims to share their stories with the aim of preventing violent extremism
6- Provide the journalists with the needed protection when they deal with sensitive issues and raise awareness among them about positive values

The recommendations start from setting the communication strategy and end with the content of the messages. This makes these recommendations applicable and practical. The weakness of this plan and its recommendations is on the content level as there is no mention of the content of messages and the strategic ways to address CVE in mainstream and social media.

Keeping that in mind, Davies, Neudecker, Ouellet, Bouchard and Benjamin (2016) studied the content of eight different CVE campaigns to measure their impact on the audience. The following section contains the details of the study along with its findings.

Understanding Online CVE Programs

Davies, Neudecker, Ouellet, Bouchard and Benjamin's study (2016) "Toward a Framework Understanding of Online Programs for Countering Violent Extremism" aims at understanding the Counter Violent Extremism narrative by identifying the

concepts of extremism and countering violent extremism while focusing on the role of exposure in increasing the influence of Violent Extremism (VE) content.

Unlike what was mentioned in other studies, the authors of the study confirm the relation between VE content and VE activities of individuals. They assessed eight online CVE programs such as the Campaign Against Violent Extremism (CAVE), EXIT White Power, and Open Letter to Our Sons and Daughters in Syria and Iraq that were selected based on: their objectives and target audience, presence of online component, diverse approaches to Counter Violent Extremism, and elements associated with the good practices model that consists of:

- Contextual Factors: identifying the ideology, the target, and social processes involved in radicalization and the driver
- Messenger Credibility
- Type of Medium
- CVE Measurement: positive (engagement based) or negative (remove and block users and content).

The main findings of their study showed that there was a strong correlation between the wideness of approach and the effectiveness of the CVE efforts and between credibility of the sender or messenger and the impact of the program. There was less impact in case of governments as message senders.

Before assessing the programs, the writers suggested studying if these programs were based on solid theoretical foundations since . knowing the drivers and contextual framework is essential to creating effective and relevant messages that speak and answer the needs of people especially on the psychological level. On the individual level, radical people may not have been influenced by an ideology, but by a discourse

that talks to their psychological needs like identity, belonging, and respect (Davies et al., 2016).

Moreover, one of the main results is that providing diverse and alternative resources for the internet users is needed to prevent them from being exposed to extremist discourse and biased content.

The article's strength lies in presenting a framework for the analysis of the existing online CVE programs. However, the study does not present findings related to the content of the messages being produced by these online programs. ISIS and other extremists give much attention to the production of multimedia or the language of delivered message and this presents a challenge to the role of CVE to create content that can grab the attention of the internet users.

Undermining Violent Extremist Narratives in the MENA

The Hedayah Center for countering violent extremism contributed to the understanding of the content of the CVE campaigns through several publications. The center was launched in December 2012 and it is considered the first-ever international center of excellence for CVE, as mentioned on their website (About us - History). The center was founded as a response to the desire of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GTCF) members that represent 29 countries and the Europian Union, to establish an independent center that works on CVE through programs, policymaking, research and analysis services. During the GTCF forrum the United Arab Emirates governments representatives offered to host the center in the capital Abu Dhabi. Hedayah is the most active Think-Tank working on CVE in the Arab countries and internationally. The variety of expertise of the center allowed Hedayah to be among the top publishers in the CVE sector and to found an online CVE library for the first time in the Arab world.

The word Hedayah means guidane, and this presents the "center's aspiration to provide inner guidance away from VE through a cohesive community of CVE actors" (Hedayah website – Brand).

Their most recent publication about the content of the CVE campaign was under the title *Undermining Violent Extremist Narratives in The Middle East and North Africa* (Hedayah, 2017). This publication confirms that "determining effective messengers is crucial to how the message is delivered, and to whether the message will resonate with the target audience in the way it is intended." (p.17)

This is why they present a guide in which they list the different types of messengers that could be influencers depending on the goal of the message. These messengers may include families who had experience with Daesh in Syria and Iraq, victims and survivors, former violent extremists, religious leaders, youth, grassroots and civil society activists, and governments and international organizations.

This guide provided the media practitioners in the CVE field with details about creating effective CVE messages. Yet this guide contradicts a few points mentioned by Davies et al. (2016). The governmental messenger, for instance, is considered as an effective messenger while the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" (2016) considered the governmental messenger as a negative actor because they do not have high credibility among the audience. This contradiction is very normal, as Hedayah is a governmental institution while the UN is an independent entity.

The factors that were mentioned in Hedayah guide (2016) will be an added value for the analysis of this study, especially that we have three types of narratives: Religious, Governmental Counter, and Existential narratives.

CVE through Communication Strategies

In her report on *Countering Violent Extremism through Media and Communication Strategies* (2016), Ferguson aimed to "help improve the understanding of current and future global security challenges" (p. 1) by answering the question of how media and communication can be used to counter Identity–Based Violence (IBV) or Violent Extremism (VE). In this report, Ferguson (2016) collected several studies to answer three main assumptions-developing each assumption through its own theoretical framework and methodology.

The first assumption which was that violent extremism (VE) lead to violent deeds was studied through persuasion theory using a survey. However, while it was evident that there is a relation between the media narrative and the VE actions, academics continue to disagree over the degree to which the media can be considered as a casual factor of the violence, for instance, systematic identity-based violence in Yugoslavia and Rwanda in 1990 shows correlation between VE content and activities, and the study of data from 2004 to 2013 shows a correlation between anti-Muslim hate speech content and anti-Muslim hate crime.

The second assumption is that "if propaganda is crucial to Violent Extremism (VE), counter narratives are crucial to CVE" (p.12). In this case, the researchers used theories of propaganda, framing and persuasion. The authors' results were inconclusive as they found that not all types of message propagated by VE narratives can be countered by counter narratives.

In the third assumption, "the real world VE threat can be addressed, in part, by deploying counter-narratives" (p. 15) the theory used was persuasion. Through a survey, the study measured the outcomes of the counter narratives and their efficiency at reducing the VE threat by affecting individual attitudes.

The result of these studies confirm that responding to VE messages using the counter narrative "fails to address why the VE narrative may be appealing in the first place" (p. 13) and the reason behind this remains unsubstantiated. All the studies stress on the importance of credibility to make an impact on the target audience of the VE and counter narratives.

In addition to the above, Ferguson (2016) reports on the role of media in CVE. Her studies focused on the television and radio programs with development goals to find out that such programs have succeeded in influencing behavior especially in vulnerable areas through educational programs, drama and opera such as The British Broadcasting Corporation BBC (2014) programs that are designed to promote positive values.

The key finding of these studies is that trust and credibility are crucial to making an impact, besides the effectiveness of the media in changing the public behavior and contributing to the international development especially in times of conflicts. Moreover, the studies showed that CVE can succeed better with the support of trust communities such as "citizen journalists" (Ferguson 2016, p. 22). Another finding reveals that successful strategies are comprehensive ones that aim at raising discussions and awareness, and tackling hate speech especially that the presence of the online media and mainly social media requires strategies for rapid response in some cases.

The main findings collected from the reports help provide a rich background and reference for the current study on Sawab, Al Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya Facebook pages. What is mainly missing in these studies is a detailed analysis of social media, which is being used as the tool by terrorists and extremists to promote their ideology. Although Ferguson's report was produced in March 2016, she

mentions the role of social media without presenting an analysis on how it is being used and its impact.

In addition, most of the examples given in the studies focused on development or political evidences. The answer about counter violent extremism communication strategies through social media remain unproven.

CVE Conceptual Framework

Terrorist or violent narratives have led to the formation of counter narratives with many approaches. In the article "The Concept of Countering Violent Extremism," Frazer and Nunlist (2015) present the conceptual framework of countering extremism, starting from the first time it was introduced after Madrid attacks in 2014, where it was "in response to the fear of homegrown Islamists terrorism" (p. 2) to its establishment as an official political jargon in 2015 in the White House's CVE summit. Following this, the UN held a general assembly where Ban Ki-moon announced a "UN action to prevent violent extremism" (p. 1).

Frazer and Nunlist (2015) confirm in their paper that the concept of CVE is related to political discourse and has no unified definition, but it refers to the "soft side of counter terrorism strategies that tackle the drivers which lead people to engage in politically or ideologically motivated violence" (p. 7).

The writers state the challenges and at times the threats of the counter terrorism discourse, which include governmental interventions under the umbrella of national security, the stereotyping of Muslim communities that make them treated as potential terrorists, the link between the political points of views and the promotion of CVE..

The researchers conclude that the strategies should include programs that have studied the drivers of violence and that should be customized according to each

country's context and needs. There should be a partnership between the public and private sectors in developing the strategies, and a need for conceptual distinction between programs that are CVE and that aim to prevent violent extremism and those that are related to VE and might have another approach in their narrative, the violent and military one for example.

The article's strength lies in the fact that the analysis takes into account the importance of context. The weakness of the article is that it did not include the other point of view, that of Muslims and/or Arab people who are mostly affected by this phenomenon. The writers did not clearly distinguish between the different CVE strategies, while the recent studies done by UNDOC, and Hedayah for example, distinguish between these strategies.

Many political events and terrorist attacks have led to the rise of the countering extremism concept. This shows the importance of the political context while studying any phenomenon related to violent extremism. Therefore, the context is an important factor in the CVE studies, and this factor will be taken into consideration in the analysis of the result of this study.

The importance of CVE work may be traced back to after the 9/11 attacks (2001) or the attacks in Madrid (2014), but that was not the date of birth of the narrative theory, which predates the mentioned attacks. The following part discusses the CVE theory based on several studies conducted by governmental institutions, civil society and religious entities.

Narrative Theory

Many theorists and experts have studied media narratives and given different definitions of the narrative theory. Chatman (1928) defines narrative as a structure which is made up of narrative statements, while the theorist Bal (1946) defines narrative

text as one in "which an agent related ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, building or a combination thereof" (p 5).

In his book *Story and Discourse* Chatman (1978) mentions the different aspects of the narrative: a story which is "consisting of events, action, time and a location and a discourse which is how the narrative is told; the arrangement, emphasis / de-emphasis, magnification / diminution of any of the elements of the content'" as cited in Ismail S Talib (2014).

Few years later, Fisher (1987) & Gerrig (1993) started studying the structure of the narrative that operates in all forms of human communication. The new understanding of narrative was based on the work of Fisher (1987). Fisher claims that humans are "storytelling animals" and they understand their life experiences as narration (p. 58).

This thesis adopts Cohen's (1999) definition of narrative which states that narratives are "a series of statements that deal with a casually related sequence of events that concern human (or human-like) beings" (p.169). In the case of CVE work, the related sequence is combating the violent messages of the extremists based on the type of the narrative.

Moyer-Guse (2008) who focuses on the relation between entertainment and the impact of the narratives, notes that "narrative structure, entertainment-education facilitates an emotional experience of being swept up into the narrative itself and becoming involved with the characters therein" (p. 408).

The distinction between discourse and narrative is important. In "*The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality"* White, H. (1980) clarifies that the subjectivity of the discourse is given by the presence of the ego of the narrator, while the objectivity of the narrative is defined by the absence of all references to the narrator.

Taleb, I. (2014) points out that the narrative includes the story and discourse. The two are different from each other. The story presents What narratives is; its content, consisting of events, actions, time, and location. Where the discourse is How the narrative is told; arrangement, emphasis / de-emphasis, magnification / diminution, of any of the elements of the content.

These second aspect of the narrative, or the discourse, represent the aim of this thesis. While most of the CVE practitioners focus on the story of the narrative by emphasizing the different types of narratives, this study aims to examine the How of the narrativee to see how different senders deliver their narratives.

The Counter Narrative

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and the narrative itself are the main concepts that have been developed in the last 10 years as counter-narratives against AL-Qaeda and similar groups and recently against Daesh as cited in the "International Approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism" module published on The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC).

It is difficult to find an exact date of birth for the concepts related to CVE and PVE since most of the international organizations and think tanks in the world relate the creation of these concepts to Al Qaeda media propaganda especially after September 11. On the conceptual level, the UN adopted the term terrorism and established its Counter Terrorism Commission after September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center buildings in New York (Security Council Subsidiary Bodies). After this and progressively, several terms were adopted to describe violent extremism and to identify counter and/or prevention narratives. 18 years have passed and yet this phenomenon and its concepts are still under their development phases. "Issues relating

to PVE/CVE have been high on the international agenda for some time, especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, reflected in the engagement with these issues of many United Nations organs and other entities" (UNDOC).

The research and analysis unit at the Arab Center in Washington DC (ACW) confirm this on their website under an article titled, "Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in the United States: An Assessment of Domestic and International Efforts" (December 1, 2016) by stating that following September 11 attacks, George W. Bush launched the "Global War on Terror" which was the base for several campaigns. According to the center, with the post Bush administration this campaign reached another level of "global struggle against violent extremism," after knowing that the military work is not enough to combat extremism.

The CVE is a "soft side of counter terrorism strategies that tackle the drivers which lead people to engage in politically or ideologically motivated violence" (Frazer & Nunlist, 2015, p. 7). The Institute for Strategic dialogue (2016) define the counter narratives "messages that offer a positive alternative to extremist propaganda, or deconstruct or delegitimize extremist narratives and challenge extremist ideologies" (p. 4).

By the end of 2015, the UN adopted the PVE new concept which "requires actions beyond law enforcement, military or security measures to address development, good governance, human rights and humanitarian concerns" (The United Nations, 2016). As mentioned in the literature review, the objective of this study is to address the drivers of violent extremism on the global, national and regional fronts to set the policies according to each context with the aim of taking actions in several areas.

Although PVE is a recent narrative, CVE is still the mainstream narrative in this field; this is why the main focus in this paper is on counter narratives. As previously

mentioned, this paper adopts the definition of the counter narrative mentioned in glossary of The Counter Narrative Handbook (2016) prepared by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue. The institute states that counter narrative is "A message that offers a positive alternative to extremist propaganda, or alternatively aims to deconstruct or delegitimize extremist narratives" (The Institute for Strategic dialogue, 2016, p. 4). The reason behind adopting this definition is that it is comprehensive and encompasses the different aims of the CVE messaging strategies.

Types of Counter Narratives

The presence of online and offline extremism lead to the development of different types of counter narratives such as the alternative narrative, sarcastic narrative, humorous narrative and exposing myths and misinformation narrative and many others. This thesis examines the characteristics of three main types of narratives, namely the governmental counter narrative (e.g. Sawab Center), the existential and religious counter narrative (e.g Al Azhar Observatory) and the existential counter narrative (e.g. Taadudiya). These three types of narratives have been chosen because the aim of the study is to show how the governmental, religious and the civil society organizations framing their CVE narratives; the governmental counter narrative, the religious narratives and the existential narrative. These three types of organizations are playing a significant role in most of the current issues that affects the public opinion and the public sphere. In the Arab countries, the religious organizations are still playing a role in politics or in the social life. As for the civil society, their role increase with the Arab spring that started in December 2010 with anti-government protests and pro-democracy uprisings. Therefore, it is significant to study the characteristics of the framing of the CVE narratives related to these three organizations that have an impact on the public opinion.

The first two types of narrative or the governmental counter narrative and the religious narrative will be discussed according to the "*Developing Effective Counter-Narrative Frameworks for Countering Violent Extremism*" report that was recently published by Hedayah and The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT)-The Hague.

Hedayah is a "think and do" tank. It is the premier international hub for CVE policy makers, practitioners and researchers to enhance understanding and share good practices to build the capacity of CVE actors across the globe to promote tolerance, stability and security.

International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT)-The Hague is an independent knowledge center that aims at focusing on creating, collating and disseminating information related to the prevention and international legal aspects of Counter-Terrorism. In addition to the policy brief of The Institute of Strategic Dialogue titled *Countering the Appeal of Extremism Online* (June, 2013), the institute notes in the profile section of their website that they work on providing solutions to extremism and polarization.

The third type of narrative or the existential narrative was recently developed by Adyan, foundation for Diversity, Solidarity and Human Dignity, which is based in Lebanon and works on four different levels, the Institute of Citizenship and Diversity Management, The Community with different youth networks in Lebanon and Iraq, the Media Department and Rashad Center for Cultural Governance. Below is a detailed discussion of the three types of narratives examined in this thesis along with the actor chosen as representatives of each type of narrative. This narrative was founded by Adyan Foundation who launched Taadudiya platform and mentioned in its editorial policy that the platform adopts the existential narratives in their CVE approach.daesh

A. Governmental Counter-Narrative

This narrative might be useful for the government and it is considered as "a necessary response to a crisis or an attack" (Hedaya & International Center for Counter-Terrorism, 2014, p. 2). It aims to directly respond to extremist messages to show their deception and break their heroic image. The research paper "Responding to Cyber Jihad: Towards an Effective Counter Narrative" developed by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism- ICCT - The Hauge asserts that this type of narrative could include "debunking myths, responding to misrepresentations of facts, showing the atrocities committed, and piercing the aura of heroism and camaraderie" (March 2015, p. 6). An example of this narrative is the campaign of Sawab Center under the hashtag #خديعة_داعش (The Deception of Daesh).

This narrative calls for action by getting the message out about what the government is doing, including public awareness activities, forging relationships with key constituencies, audiences, and correcting misinformation (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2016).

In the guide *Undermining Violent Extremist Narratives in the Middle East and North Africa* (Hedayah, 2017), they considered the government and the international organizations as effective messengers against violent extremism. "In some contexts, citizens look to their political leaders also for leadership on religion, as politics and religion are often intertwined in the MENA context" (P. 21). Moreover, the guide notes that since the governments in the MENA have access to resources and funding, they can be successful if these resources are utilized properly.

Consequently, many governments created new units for combating violent extremism. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London, which is called the Foreign and Common Wealth Office (FCO) created the CVE office that deals with CVE issues. In addition, the Global Coalition Against Daesh was formed in September 2014 and it gathers 79 countries representatives. The Coalition works on the military dimension, and its communication unit works on the media aspect of CVE.

Example of Actor: Sawab Center

Sawab Center (*The Arabic word "Sawab," means "right" or "correct" as in "the right path") "aims to use direct online engagement to counter terrorist propaganda" It was launched by the US Department of State, in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates government. Its objective is "to amplify the voices of moderation against Daesh by using social media platforms and allowing the silent majority to express their opinions" (7days-UAE, 2015). The center posts its narratives on Facebook, Twitter and a YouTube Channel but they do not have a website.

The reason behind selecting Sawab is that they are the only governmental entity that works on the regional level and not only in a specific country. The other governmental entities are related to local governments in the Arab world, for example: Etisal in KSA, Al Rabita Al Muhamedyya of Muslim Scholars in Morocco.

B. Ideological and Religious Counter Narrative

Religious figures and authorities are the main messengers in this case; This type of narrative relies on the religious text as the main source of messages so the religious sources are used to combat the extremist narrative. In most cases the official religious authorities are part of the government; this is why the credibility is a crucial point in

this narrative, since the governmental senders have low credibility among the audience, as discussed in the literature review.

Berghof Foundation's handbook titled *Alternative Approaches to Transforming Violent Extremism* points out that the lack of "sincere engagement with or even denial of religion and its identity components has been a programmatic limitation of many CVE/PVE initiatives... The lack of engagement with faith-based organizations (FBOs) has been documented not only in CVE/PVE but also with programs on peacebuilding, democracy, post-conflict reconstruction" (Muhammed Abu Nimer, Berghof Foundation, 2018 p. 7).

The Muslim for Progressive Values (MPV), the non-profit organization based in Washington, Dc notes in their report *Best Practices and Lessons Learned on Protecting and Promoting Human Rights to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism* that violent extremists are violating the human rights in the name of Islam by using a bastardized interpretation of Quran. "Daesh has condoned sexual slavery in the name of Islam capturing primarily Yazidi women, while Boko Haram kidnaps schoolgirls and forcibly pushes for their conversion into Islam." (p. 2).

The MPV recommends in this report to have more projects that works on youth empowerment, engaging men and women religious leaders, and to be inclusive to religious, cultural, gender and sexual diversity.

The United States Institute of Peace's report titled *Engaging Religion and Religious Actors in Countering Violent Extremism* (August 2017) claims that the understanding of religion should go beyond formal religious authorities and official institutions. It should use and address women, younger religious leaders, and traditionalist faith practices as key players in the religious landscape, and they

considered them even more influential than their formal and titled religious counter parts.

Example of Actor: Al Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism

Al-Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism or Al Azhar Observatory for short is part of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif that has been serving the Islamic World for more than 1,000 years. Al Azhar Al Sharif was "built in Cairo in 971 AD by Johar Al-Siqilli on the order of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'iz, and named in the honor of Fatima Al-Zahraa, daughter of the Prophet Mohammad". As mentioned on King Faisal prize website (KFP Prize for Service to Islam, 2000). Al Azhar became the focus of Muslim scholars and students from around the world. Over the centuries, it played a key "role in teaching Islam and preserving Islamic culture".

Al Azhar is a main religious reference for the Sunni Muslims. It is the foremost center of Sunni religious learning in the Muslim world. It has an important religious and political role in Egypt and abroad. this thesis, therefore, selected Al Azhar to represent the religious narratives, since it plays a central role religious teaching.

Al-Azhar Al-Sharif started out as a mosque; it was the first mosque built in 971 AD in Cairo, Egypt. The Islamic teaching started in the mosque and as its teachings spread, the mosque became the main reference for Sunni Muslims all over the Arab world. The post of the grand mufti of Al-Azhar was established in late of 11th century, in Hijri. Al-Azhar University is associated with Al Azhar Mosque and it is the third oldest university in the world and the biggest Islamic teaching university in the world (Al-Azhar University website, Profile section).

In the framework of spreading moderate Islamic views, Al Azhar has Launched Al-Al Azhar Observatory for Combating Violent Extremism.

Grand Imam of Al Azhar, Sheikh Ahmed Al Tayeb notes in an interview with Al Monitor website that this observatory aims "to monitor the erroneous ideas that terrorist groups promote on their websites in several languages and prepare academic responses to educate the youth about these destructive ideas" (Al Monitor, 2015, p. Egypt section). The Observatory operates in different languages: Arabic, English, French, German, Spanish, Urdu, Swahili and Persian.

It aims to monitor Daesh propaganda and rebuts extremists' religious interpretations (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace website, February, 2018) and they launched several campaigns to reply to terrorist ideologies. example: They Pretend and We Correct campaign.

The Ministry of Religious Endowments trained young imams and preachers to manage the online pages of the observatory. In the about section they state that the website aims to clarify the meaning of the Quran verses and Hadith. They use Facebook and Twitter platforms in addition to the website.

C. The Existential Narrative

It is the narrative of people. The aim of this narrative is to Counter Violent Extremism by showing the stories of people and promoting their positive interpretations, including those of the religious texts, and disseminating the positive initiatives of youth. The first official launching of this narrative was in the White Paper for Interreligious Collaboration and Policy Making in Addressing Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2017). The white paper notes:

> instead of having one orthodox counter-narrative issued by the formal religious authority, the existential narrative stimulates reflection within communities and

engages theologians, preachers and believers in an open reflection process, to offer adequate answers to identified challenges in coherence with human rights and values" (Rashad Center for Cultural Governance, 2017, p. 28) .

Example of Actor: Taadudiya

An online platform that uses the Arabic language, Taadudiya "works on fostering the culture of accepting difference and valuing diversity, with the aim of ensuring positive interaction, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between the different components of society" (Adyan Foundation). The platform is supported by Adyan Foundation and was launched in February 2017.

As per the about section on the website, Taadudiya's editorial policy is based on critical thinking and promotes the respect of the freedom of expression and freedom of religion and belief. The website's different sections aim at promoting an objective knowledge about the diverse cultural, spiritual, and religious heritage, and at "identifying the problematics related to it in the public sphere, on the Arab and international levels, in order to collaborate in the formation of a responsible public opinion, capable of facing extremism and obscurantism." Taadudiya has Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube pages in addition to its website.

Taadudiya was chosen, as it is the only online platforms that works on promoting the value of diversity, accepting the other and countering violent extremism ,launched by a non-profit organization in the Arab countries. Having such an entity in the study enriches the findings that will analyze the framing of the governmental, religious and civil society organizations in CVE campaigns.

Based on the framing theory, this study will show the characteristics of three different narratives used by the three different senders namely Sawab Center, Al-Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya are being used to target different groups, under the same

framework of countering violent extremism. Three campaigns will be analyzed based on the concepts of framing theory in order to come up with the characteristics and specifications of the most successful campaigns. The campaigns are selected by each sender as the most successful campaigns that were launched in 2017. This would contribute to the library of the CVE work which aims to help the media practitioners in their work on developing CVE strategies for social media campaigns.

Taadudiya is only website that declares their adoption of the existential narrative. It represents the civil society, and this type is rarely found among the CVE practitioners that target the Arab countries. All of these reason were behind choosing Taadudiya as an example of the Existential narrative.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks of the thesis, namely the framing theory. The theories will help investigate the online CVE campaigns as well as the Facebook pages of Sawab Center, Al Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism and Taadudiya .

Framing

The concept of framing was first introduced by Gregory Bateson in 1972. Bateson discussed the psychological frames as a "spatial and temporary bounding of set of interactive messages" (Bateson, 1972, p. 197).

In 1978, Tuchman went beyond Bateson's definition and said that the mass media set the frames of reference that the audience use to interpret and discuss public issues (Tuchman, 1978, p. ix). Neuman, Just, and Crigel (1992) believe that "mass media give the story a spin" which means that they give the news a twist and set it in a specific frame, "taking into consideration their organizational and modality constrains, professional judgments, and certain judgements about the audience" (p. 120).

The theory was first put forth by Goffman (1974), under the title of Frame Analysis. Framing is considered as the construction of social reality, where mass media have strong impact by "framing images of reality in a predictable and patterned way" (McQuail, 1994). This means that the strategic objectives developed in agenda setting are framed to influence the audience on different levels and can lead to behavioral, attitudinal, or cognitive outcomes.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) believe that journalists' framing of an issue is influenced by several social-structural or organizational variables and (Tuchman, 1978) added to this, by individual or ideological variables. They note that social norms and

values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and ideological or political orientations of journalists affect the choice of the journalist.

It is important here to distinguish between framing theory and agenda setting. According to Weaver, McCombs and Shaw (2004) agenda setting theory tells the audience what to think about by giving salience to an issue, while framing or second level agenda setting is how to think of an issue (Mccombs and Shaw, 2004).

In this framework, Entman (1993) believes that influencing the audience's perception about a certain reality could be done by "choosing and giving some part of noticed reality the elements in a message" (p. 52). Borah (2011) agrees with this idea that individuals might interpret issues differently according to highlighted or neglected frames. Therefore, the discussion moved from talking about the impact of the context of the audience to the impact of the presence or absence of some elements in the news.

Ghanem (1997) identifies the four dimensions of the framing theory: first is the topic of the news item, second is the size and placement of the news, the third is the cognitive attributes, details about what is included in the frame, and the fourth one is the effective attributes, which means the tone of the picture. These dimensions are important for the film medium and yet they may be applicable to other media including the web; this is why this study will be using these dimensions to analyze the frames of the three cases taken from Sawab, Al Azhar and Taadudiya Facebook campaigns.

In the analysis section of this thesis, we will see how each type of CVE narratives focuses on certain points and ignores others to achieve the goal of the actor, whether it is a governmental, religious, or civil society entity.

Entman (2003) conducted a study on the White House approach in framing especially after the 9 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Entman (2003) notes that the

president of the United States from 2001 until 2009, George W. Bush and the other officials like the vice-president Richard Cheney and former Secretary of State Collin Powell, used specific words in their speeches like war, terror and evil to set a framework for the attacks and unite the American public opinion behind one vision which was the war against terrorism. A quote from Bush's announcement shows how the American politicians were trying to rally public opinion by saying: "The deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried yesterday against our country, were more than acts of terror, they were acts of war…. This will require our country to unite in steadfast determination and resolve…" Entman (2003) asserts that the use of simple and emotional terms was part of the strategy of framing the September 11 attacks.

Other researchers examined framing in discourses between news media and audiences. Monroe, Colaresi and Quinn (2009) showed how the different political parties in the United States employed different frames in the framework of the anti-abortion protests. Republicans frame abortion by using words such as baby and procedure as they were supporting a specific abortion process, while the Democrats frame the same issue but with a different twist using words such as women and right. Thus, by using certain strategic words, the sender can influence the public opinion's choice and behaviors (Scheufule and Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing effects is essential in this context. Druckman (2001) defines the framing effects as the process of shaping the frame in mind, he says "frames in communication shapes the frames in thoughts" (p. 228).

Music is part of the framing process. In this thesis, the codebook contains a question about the presence of the music in videos and the type of music chose. Most scholars believe that music can have psychological and cognitive effects on audiences (Moore, 2010). Filmmakers used background music to keep the audience from

becoming distracted (Williams, 1974). Therefore, music can operate at a psychological level to influence individuals' interpretive meanings and experiences (Seidman, 1981, p. 22).

The tone and the mood of the messages are also important as they may affect the perception of the audience . For this purpose, we need to clarify two important concepts related to the effects of tone and mood. "A behavioral approach system (BAS) is believed to regulate appetitive motives, in which the goal is to move toward something desired. A behavioral avoidance (or inhibition) system (BIS) is said to regulate aversive motives, in which the goal is to move away from something unpleasant" as cited on Measurement Instrument Database for Social Science (MIDS) website.

In the journal titled "The Effects of Mood, Message Framing, and Behavioral Advocacy on Persuasion", Yan, C. Dillard, J. & Shen, F (2010) approve the hypothesis that says "persons in the happy mood condition would report higher levels of BAS relative to the sad condition. And that persons in the sad condition would report higher levels of BIS than persons in the happy condition" (P. 348). Therefore, they note that mood manipulations may make individuals differentially sensitive to message features such as framing by activating either BIS or BAS prior to message exposure.

This paper will study the different CVE narratives and how the different actors frame their messages. In addition to understanding in what ways and how the messages are being portrayed to the audience, it is also significant to understand these perspectives in reference to the type of narrative structure, that is, the ways in which the narrative is framed.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

As previously cited in this paper, there is a need for research studies about the characteristics of different CVE narratives and how each actor is framing the narrative in relation to the strategies of governmental institutions, religious authorities and civil society organizations. Therefore, the following research questions and hypotheses will present answers about the characteristics of different narratives and their impact on the engagement rate of the posts. The finding of this study would help CVE actors develop effective and relevant online media strategies.

Considering the absence of the content analysis studies about the online CVE narratives until today, this thesis can be useful for the media practitioners and civil society organizations that aim to study or create online CVE campaigns by using its findings as a baseline for their social media strategies. The analysis of the results will shed the light on the similarities and the differences in the framing patterns of the CVE campaigns on Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya, and the correlation between the characteristics of the messages and rate of engagement of the users.

H1: Video content of the CVE campaigns gets higher engagement rate rather than the still photos

H2: Sawab Center campaigns and Taadudiya campaigns include an actor more than Al-Azhar campaigns

H3: Taadudiya's campaigns use youth actors more than Sawab Center

RQ1: What are the similarities and the differences in the framing patterns of the CVE campaigns in Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya?

RQ2: Does the religious narrative rely more on basic and simple visuals in their campaigns rather than the other types of narratives?

Methodology

This section deals with the methodology used in the study and the criteria for selection of the sample and the sub-sample. The different variables of the codebook and their connotations are followed with the procedure of the study that included the coder training.

Research Method and Sample

This study adopts a quantitative research methodology through a content analysis of three case studies from: Sawab, Al-Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya. The focus will be on one campaigns chosen from each of the organization. The campaigns chosen was the organizations' as most successful CVE campaign of 2017. This period was an opportunity for the CVE narratives to counter Daesh propaganda which was defeated in Mosul, Iraq during that year. The criteria of selection was based on the high engagement rate of the campaigns, as this rate is usually used in social media marketing as a metric to measure the performance of a piece of content.

Engagement rate is the number of interactions that includes the likes, shares and comments on any post, divided by number of users following the platform, as cited on Hopper website that is an Instagram planner and scheduling tool. Since the selected campaigns were launched in 2017 and it is not possible for the researcher to get the number of likes on that dates, the calculations of the engagement rate of the sample was based on the evaluation of each sender. As for the sub-sample, the selection was based on the search features on Facebook which automatically calculate the engagement rate of the posts and set them under the top posts.

The population of this study is the CVE campaigns of the three organization: Sawab, Al-Azhar Observatory and Taddudiya on Facebook. The campaigns total number, one for Sawab, one for Azhar, and one for Taddudiya.

Facebook was chosen because it is the most popular social media network worldwide with 2.27 billion monthly active users (The Statistics Portal October, 2018) This number shows the popularity of Facebook; this is why most CVE social media campaigns rely mainly on Facebook.

The type of the sampling is non-probability purposive sampling as the sample unit will be taken from three different campaigns launched by Sawab, Al Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya, as the most popular and engaging CVE campaign of 2017. What is common between these campaigns is the purpose, which is countering violent extremism, and the use of the same platform, which is Facebook to disseminate their messages.

The launch of the campaigns took place in 2017 when there was a war between the Iraqi soldiers and Daesh after Daesh's occupation of the Iraqi city of Mosul . Therefore, it was an occasion to counter the extremist narrative of Daesh on social media especially after the liberation of Mosul by the Iraqi soldiers in 2017.

The unit of analysis of this study is the top five engaging posts of each campaign, so the total would amount to fifteen Facebook posts. The content of the social media campaigns is varied between text, photos and videos. (See Appendix B for screenshots of the posts).

Taking the top five engaging posts from each page will ensure having different types of content with less repetition As for the language, Arabic is the common language between the three of them, so the selected content will be in Arabic as the non Arabic posts are very few on Sawab and Al Azhar, and with none on Taadudiya.

Most of the time, these platforms launch campaigns under specific hashtags so the researcher will take this into consideration. These platforms publish posts about several topics like charity, fraternity and falsehood of Daesh's Islamic education The campaign of Sawab, for instance, was under the hashtag (in Arabic) #DeludedFollowers (#أتباع_الضلال), while Al Azhar used: "Humanitarian Values" (#قيم_انسانية)and Taadudiya used: what is your story? (#شو_قصتك). All of these points prove more the need of the purposive sampling.

The units of analysis, comprised of the most successful communication campaigns, were taken from the three platforms. The medium used for the delivery of the chosen messages of these campaigns may be audio-visual, text, and visual. All of the messages were delivered in one language, which was Arabic.. The campaigns were selected by each sender as the most successful campaigns that were launched on their Facebook pages in 2017 according to their engagement rate. This paper studied the top five posts from each campaign based on the same criteria which is the engagement rate.

Sawab Facebook– Deluded Followers

1. Friendship
2. Daesh Caricature
3. Testimonial – Our Concerns
4. Former British Fighter
5. Church Bombing In Egypt
6. Nelson Mandella
7. Trucks of Daesh
8. Announcement of the campaign
9. The Bereaved women
10. Tolerance Bridge

Al Azhar– Humanitarian Values

1. Announcement of the campaign
2. Neighborhood
3. Respect the elderly
4. Mercy and Peace
5. Honoring parents
6. Good Call
7. Coexistence
8. Tolerance
9. Happiness
10. Human Dignity

Taadudiya - What is your story?

1. Sunni Shiaa girls - video
2. Syrian Refugee - video
3. Iraqi activist - video
4. Sameh and Hanaa - video
5. Basketball player - video
6. Tunisian Trainer
7. Teacher Hiba
8. Tunisian Activist
9. Omani Family
10. Salam and Zainab

Variables

(See codebook in Appendix A)

Narratives for this thesis, three narratives the governmental counter-religious and existential were chosen. Religious narrative is the discourse that comes from the religious institutions or authorities and aims at countering violent extremist discourse by using the holy text. This type of counter-narrative may be useful if the messenger has religious authority in the target community. In the case of Al-Qaeda, this includes Islamic scholars, imams and community-based religious leaders (Hedayah - *Developing Effective Counter-Narrative Frameworks*, 2014). This variable will be measured by studying the content (whether it is religious text or not), the sender of the message (religious authority – non-religious authority). In case of the religious narrative, the primary text will be measured by a nominal question with options about the source: Quran, Hadith, Sunna, Quotes of Imams, Bible, Religious teaching.

Existential narrative is the narrative that shows real positive stories as models of countering extremism without any direct reaction to the VE, as per the definition of Adyan Foundation that was published in Doufaf Magazine article about different types of CVE narratives (2017 Unlike the existential narrative, the governmental counter narrative takes the content of the extremist narrative and directly responds to it in a challenging tone and by showing the victories of the soldiers fighting Daesh.

. For the sake of this study, the following definitions of key concepts will be adopted based on the researcher's experience in the fields of CVE and PVE.

- **Sender:** Who is delivering the message, Al Azhar Facebook, Sawab Facebook, or Taadudiya Facebook.
- **Type of the message:** If the content is presented in text, photo, video or graphics.

- **Aim of the message:** looks at whether the message governmental, humanitarian, religious or political. Even if the text is religious but it might have a non-religious aim (values like love, peace, friendship…).
- **Mood:** whether the message is joyful, serious, humorous, pessimistic, optimistic, or other
- **Tone:** the tone of message, whether it is formal or informal
- **Target of the message:** Which group is targeted in the message: religious people, potential extremists, extremists, women, parents, young adults or other. This variable was in the initial codebook but the researcher deleted it after the inter-coder reliability tested as (Kappa: 0.2632). Hence, this question was addressed to the senders to identify their target in the selected campaigns.
- **Source of the message:** from where did the sender get the message: Quran, Hadith, Sunna, quote of imams or other.
- **Actor:** who is delivering the message? This point is about the presence for any person in the visual
- **Type of main actor:** specify type of the actual character that is visible and delivering the message: children, youth, women, religious figure or governmental authority.
- **Colors of the image/scenes:** what are the colors used in the message: dark (black, dark grey, deep red, navy, dark brown, deep purple…), bright (baby blue, bright green, bright red, bright yellow…) or strong colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple)? For instance: we might see that with the faces of extremists there is always a dark color that indicates a mystery or a blinded or lost person.

- **Variety of colors:** is there one dominant color in the image or most of the scenes or many colors?
- **Angle of the camera:** what is the dominant angle of the image? Is the object or character taken from the eye level (regular angle), or the camera is higher than the object or the character in the image, or it is taken from a lower angel which make the object or the character look bigger or taller.
- **Motion of the camera:** movement of the camera including:
    - Camera moving from a certain point to the upper (tilt up)
    - Camera moving from a certain point to the lower (tilt down)
    - Camera moving from a point to the right side (pan right)
    - Camera moving from a certain point to the left (pan left). –

This variable took a lot of time in the training as the primary coder was not familiar with these technical terms.

- **Camera shot:** this is about the size of the scene:
    - Long shot means that the camera lens is far from the object and showing the whole scene (landscape, neighborhood…).
    - The medium shot means when we see the character from is waist and upper.
    - The close up shot is the one that shows details of the objects. –

For instance, in TV interviews, the interviewee is usually filmed from his shoulder to head only. In case the camera is closer to the object and we are seeing just the eyes of the character, then this is extreme close-up shot.

- **Effects used in the video messages:** what do we hear in the video? Music or a reporter describing the image (voice over), the characters speak in the video

(testimonial), or the natural sounds of the streets or machines or a school (ambiance). What do I see in the image?

- **Tone of music:** do we hear a calm and relaxing music (soft music) or a music that puts us in a thriller mood or there is no music?
- **The duration of the video:** is the time-code of the video.
- **Effects in stills photos:** what do we see in the images? Three dimensions effects (3D) which makes the objects look closer to us, or any changes in the colors like the vintage mood or black and white, or information is presented in info graphics style.
- **Gender of the characters:** coders should identify whether they see men or women.
- **Campaign name:** the name of the campaign written on the screen, which is in most of the cases the same as the hashtag of the campaign.
- **Slogan:** the big title or the main message written in a strategic way to show the aim of the sender in a short, simple and straightforward manner.
- **Caption description:** we study whether the caption is describing the content of the post. Example: if the photo shows two children sitting on the street, here the caption tells us what we are seeing with the background of the children if needed. The other option is whether the caption gives further information about the caption itself or not. Example: The caption on the photo of the children would be like information about the homeless children in the country and their mental health. The third option is the caption that contains a call for action or engagement.

- **Summarize the key idea:** In a few words, the coders here summarize the main idea of the visual in order to make sure if there is a common understanding of the visual between the coders.
- **Number of likes, comments, and share:** these form the engagement rate on Facebook. Therefore, the researcher will learn from these number what are the games that got higher engagement rate.

Procedure

The content of the posts was analyzed based on the above variables derived from the theoretical framework. Three coders in total analyzed the content. After putting the codebook, one coder other than the researcher analyzed the content based on the criteria/variables in the code book. The results of the two coders and the researcher are presented in the analysis part of the study.

An external coder studied the inter-coder reliability after getting the needed training on the codebook. Professor Fadi Daou, Chairperson of Adyan Foundation who contributed to the development of the national CVE plan in Lebanon, was the primary coder in this study as he had published several articles and policy papers about the topic, and the researcher of the study was the secondary coder.

The coding process began with training on the codebook. The researcher introduced the codebook components to the coders and defined the terms used in the codebook to test the variables of the study. The training session took more than an hour as coders discussed the variables and procedure. This helped avoid any misunderstanding related to the variables, especially technical variables like the camera shots and camera angel.

The inter-coder reliability always precedes the coding and analysis. Therefore, the independent coders, Prof. Fadi Daou the primary coder who tested the codebook by

applying it to two different posts on the Sawab, Al Azhar Observatory and Taadudiya Facebook Facebbok pages selected from one of their successful campaigns – campaigns other than the ones used for the study. The selection of the post was based on the engagement rate, Therefore, the top two engaging posts of each campaign were selected as sub-sample. The search engine of Facebook platform helped identify the most engaging posts, so the process of selection was automatically done using the Faceboon features.

Subsample 1

The researcher chose the sub-sample from the Facebook pages of the three organizations: Sawab, Al-Azhar Observatory, and Taadudiya. The selected campaigns were successful ones based on the high engagement rate they received. The researcher checked the most engaging posts from the profile section of the Facebook page by checking the posts that got big number of likes, comments and shares. The process was not complicated because the researcher has been following these Facebook pages for a few years, so she was familiar with their different Facebook campaigns. Since Taadudiya was launched at the beginning of 2017 and had launched only one campaign that year- that campaign was chosen since there was no other.. It is important to note here that the researcher works in Adyan Foundation, as the media manager, but this did not negatively affect any academic standard in the study and all the needed process was done with the supervision of three university professors.

The Sawab campaign was chosen was "The Deception of Daesh" (#خديعة_داعش), Al-Azhar Campaign was "Mercy to the World" (#رحمة_للعالمين), and Taadudiya was "We Can Talk About Religion" (#فينا_نحكي_دين).

Sawab 1: Document

Sawab 2: Jail

Al-Azhar 1: Prophet Birthday

Al-Azhar 2: The Importance of Love

Taadudiya 1: Fina Nehke Din 1

Taadudiya 2: Fina Nehke Din 2

The level of agreement between the two coders should be eighty percent or 0.8 to be able to proceed with the coding of the initial fifteen Facebook posts. The researcher measured the inter-coder reliability using Cohen's Kappa. 100% or 1 agreement. was reached between the two coders for all variables except four ones:

Variable number 5, which is the mood of the message reached no agreement (Kappa: 0.667), due to the fact that the mood is subjective so the two coders did not totally agree on this point. To ensure reliability, another test was done on another sub-sample which consisted of two posts from a different campaign for Sawab; the campaign was entitled "United Against Extremism." The agreement reached on the mood of the posts was Kappa: 1, which means that the disagreement on the first posts was related to a subjective point of view and the variable should not be re-defined.

Variable number 9, which is related to the main actor in the post, reached Kappa: 0.8696. During the training, this point was thoroughly discussed and it was decided that an actual presence of an actor in the campaign was required for the variable "actor in the post." What prompted this discussion was a quote by the Prophet Mohammad and whether or not that qualified as a presence – knowing that the Prophet cannot be featured as an image or an actor. In addition, the official and unofficial actor was decided upon based on the role of that actor in relation to the topic. For instance, a study about the university system will consider the administrative team as officials and the

visitor of the university as un-officials, as they have no authority or administrative role related to the case of study.

Variable number 23 that is about the caption of the post reached (Kappa: 0.7614). The difference between the coders was related to the call for action point. Coders did not agree on considering a descriptive caption that contains a call for action as an objective (written as an objective not an actual call); they did not agree whether it was simply a providing of further information about the campaign or an actual call for action. To esnure reliability , another test was done (same posts of the sub-sample mentioned under variable 5). The result was 100 % agreement between the two coders.

It is important to note that the researcher deleted one of the variables from the codebook as agreement was Kappa: 0.2632 which is below the minimum level 0.8. The variable was about the target of the post. This variable is important but at the same time it might not be easy for the coders to assess; this is why the researcher removed it from the codebook. The alternative was to ask each sender to identify their target and this was what the researcher opted for. So each sender was asked about the target audience they had in mind for their campaigns. For this study sample the target of Al-Azhar was mentioned on their page, the target of Taadudiya was taken from Adyan Foundation media team, and Sawab answered the question by email.

Subsample 2

To re-measure two of the variables that reached Kappa < 0.8 for the first subsample, the two coders tested the variable 5 and Variable 23 again by using another sub-sample selected by the researcher. The criteria of selection was based on the most engaging posts on Sawab Facebook page dated in 2019. The campaign name chosen

was “United Against Extremism” (#متحدون_ضد_التطرف). The language of the posts was Arabic, and one of post was published in March and another in April 2019.

Sawab Post 1: We Should Be United

Sawab Post 2: In Solidarity with New Zealand

Results

This section presents the results of the data collection based on the variables under study . For the first hypothesis dealing with the correlation between the type of content and the engagement rate, the variables were the content namely, video and/or photo as nominal independent variable (IV) and the engagement rate as ratio dependent variable (DV). a T-Test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the two IVs.

The second hypothesis dealt with the correlation between the type of sender and the presence of actors in the posts. Thus, the senders namely Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya were the nominal independent variables the actor was the nominal dependent variable in the second hypothesis. The type of the test conducted to test this hypothesis was Chi-square to study if there was a significant relationship between the two categorical variables.

The Chi-Square test was also used to study the relationship between the variables of the third hypothesis. In this hypothesis which deals with the type of sender and the youth actor, Taadudiya (sender) is the independent variable and the type of actor (youth) is the dependent variable. Hence, both (IV) and (DV) are nominal variables.

The results of the study were analyzed according to the themes of the literature review and from the framing theory perspective. All statistical tests were conducted through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

H1: Video content of the CVE campaigns gets higher engagement rate rather than the still photos.

The T-Test used to study this hypothesis showed no significant difference between the number of likes of the video posts and the number of likes of the photo posts. The researcher studied the engagement rate by separating the number of likes, comments and shares on the photos and on the videos. However, studying the number of shares and number of comments between photos and videos had a significant difference.

For likes on photos, the mean was 4808.53 and for likes on videos, the mean was 6577.36. the mean of shares on photos was 32.89 and for videos 382.91 which is higher. As for the comments, the mean of likes on photos was 38.53 while the one of videos was 994.36.

Another point that proves the significant difference of shares and comments only is the P value which is the mean differences between the two variables. In the Levene's test for equality of variances, P of likes was more than 0.05 (0.635). It was not the same case for the P of shares that showed 0.000 value and for comments (.001), so both show a significant difference between shares and comments on photos and videos.

As for the t-test for the equality of means, the likes had no significant difference as well ($0.460 > 0.05$) but both shares and comments had significant difference ($0.001<0.05$) and ($0.003< 0.0$). The lower confidence of likes was -6605.713 and the upper 3068.39, for comments the lower percentage of confidence was -5510125 and the upper -148.904, and for comments the lower was -1568-278 and the upper -343-397.

For additional engagement rate results, the researcher grouped the likes and comments into groups to make three different tests for each one of them.

To study the likes, Group 1 was for likes totaling between 0 and 999, Group 2 for likes between 1000 to 9999, and Group 3 for 10.000 likes and above. Moreover, the photos were put in Group A and Videos in Group B. When the numbers of likes for each post were distributed accordingly, the result was as follows for 19 photos and 11 videos:

Group 1: includes 52.6 % of the photos and 9.1 % of the videos

Group 2: 26.3 % of the photos of the three actors and 63.6 % of the videos

Group 3: 21.1 % of the photos, and 27.3 % of the videos

Since the study was for two groups - the groups of likes and the type of post (video or video), the researcher studied this additional grouping using Chi-Square test and the result was P=0.046 which is less than 0.05%, so there was a significant difference between the grouped variables.

To study the comments on photos and on videos, the researcher grouped the data into three groups: Group 1, for the number of comments that is less than one hundred, group 2, for the number of comments between one hundred and one thousand, and group 3, for more than 1000 comments and Group A for photos and Group B for videos. The results were::

Group 1: 84.2% of the photos and 9.1% of the videos received less than one hundred comment

Group 2: 15.8% of the photos and 63.6% of the videos received between one hundred and less than 1000 comment

Group 3: 0% of the photos and 27.3% of the videos received more than 1000 comments.

A chi-square test was done and the results showed a significant difference between the number of comments on videos and number of comments on photos with $P=0.000 < 0.05$.

H2: Sawab Center campaigns and Taadudiya campaigns include an actor more than Al-Azhar campaigns.

The study findings had no significant difference between the presence or the absence of an actor with the type of the sender. However, the presence of an actor in Sawab and Al Azhar posts was the same (9 out of 10 posts). In addition, the analysis focused on differences of the presence of the actors according to the posts of each sender. Therefore, an actor was present in most of the posts. The type of the dominant actor was examined in H3.

H3: Taadudiya's campaigns use youth actors more than Sawab Center

The study showed a significant difference between the presence of youth actors in Taadudiya and Sawab campaigns. P was less than 0.05 ($P=0.049$). At the beginning, it is important to mention that Al Azhar had and Sawab, each had one past without the presence of an actor, while Taadudiya had actors in all of their posts. Therefore, the following numbers are for the 28 posts that included an actor.

For the presence of youth in each of the campaigns, Taadudiya had the biggest number with 7 youth actors in seven posts, which represents 70% of their posts. The second place goes to Al Azhar Observatory which had two youths in their posts, that means 20%. While Sawab Center just used youth for one of their posts, which represents 10% of their entire work.

To check whether the adult or youth actors were in the majority of the Sawab and Taadudiya posts, a cross tabulation was done by the researcher using SPSS. Results showed that Sawab gave more exposure to adults in their posts, as adults appeared in

80% of the posts. Taadudiya gave 30% exposure to adults and the rest were dedicated to youth.

RQ1: What are the similarities and the differences in the framing patterns of the CVE campaigns of Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya?

In order to summarize the characteristics of the campaigns conducted by Sawab, Al Azhar and Taadudiya, the researcher used the following 18 points to check the common and the different points between the different campaigns.

1. The Type of the Message

	Photo	Photo & Text	Video	Video & Text
Al Azhar	10%	90 %	0 %	0%
Sawab	40 %	50 %	10%	0%
Taadudiya	0%	0 %	0%	100%

Al Azhar is more likely to used photos with text. Sawab has almost a balance between the usage of photos and the usage of photos and text, while Taadudiya used only videos with text.

2. Aim of the Message

	Humanitarian	Political	Educational	Warning	Patriotic	Religious	Social (awareness & social cohesion)

Al Azhar	100%	0 %	0 %	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sawab	20 %	0 %	10%	20%	10%	0%	40%
Taadudiya	30%	10 %	30%	0%	0%	0%	30%

The humanitarian aim was the major target of Al Azhar Observatory, with 0% for the religious and patriotic goals. Sawab focused on the social dimension of the messages (40%). Sawab was the only sender that used the warning tone in their messaging with (20%). Taadudiya made a balance between the humanitarian, educational and social issues in their messages. Political messages were only present in the Taadudiya posts with 10 % , while their educational, humanitarian and social awareness messages each garnered 30%..

3. Mood of the Message

The results of the mood of the message will be reported here in numbers not in percentages, since this was a multiple-choice question in the codebook. For the accuracy of the findings, numbers are better than percentages.

Sawab:

There was a balance among the posts. Posts with threatening mood, serious mood, the combination of both, and the sad mood each had two posts. The remaining two posts were one with serious and sad mood and another with joyful and optimistic mood.

Al Azhar:

The mood in all the posts was serious.

Taadudiya:

Five posts were with joyful and optimistic mood. Three posts were with serious and optimistic mood, and the last two were optimistic.

4. Tone of the Message

Sawab, Al Azhar and Taadudiya used the formal tone in all their posts. None of the pages used an informal tone to deliver their messages.

5. Source/Base of the Message

None of Sawab's posts was from Quran, Sunna or any religious book. Half of the posts (5 posts) were with sentences without any source or reference. The source of three posts were from former extremists and family of one of Daesh victim. The last post was a Nelson Mandela's quote about accepting the other (check appendix B).

Al Azhar had another source for their messages. (70%) were from Quran and (30%) were messages with quotes from anonymous authors.

The case in Taadudiya is different. The source of the messages on Taadudiya posts were the actors in their stories in 10 posts; these actors were mainly common people working in their society to promote peace and coesxistence. They do not represent any official authority or institutions, and all their initiatives are personal based.

6. Main actor:

	Official Actor	Un-Official Actor	No Actor
Al Azhar	0%	90 %	10 %
Sawab	40 %	50 %	10%
Taadudiya	10%	90 %	0%

Half of Sawab posts included an unofficial actor like unkown figures representing the public or the victims of Daesh, while 40 % included official actors like police man and extremist fighter. And the remaining 10% was for posts with no actors.

There was no balance in Al Azhar posts. (90%) of the posts used unofficial actors, and the remaining posts were without any actor.

One actor was official in the videos of Taadudiya campaign, while the remaining 90% had unofficial actors.

7. Type of the Main Actor

	Youth	Adult	Governmental Authority	No Actor
Al Azhar	20%	70 %	0%	10 %
Sawab	10 %	70 %	10%	10%
Taadudiya	70%	30 %	0%	0%

Sawab and Al Azhar had the same 70% percentage of adult actors in their posts. Taadudiya gave more space for youth who appeared in (70%) of the posts while (30%) of the posts contained adults.

Only Sawab gave space for a governmental authority in their posts.

8. Gender of the Characters

	Male	Female	Male Primary Female Secondary	Female Primary Male Secondary	Female & Male Equally
Al Azhar	80%	0 %	0 %	0%	10 %
Sawab	70 %	20 %	0 %	0%	0 %
Taadudiya	0 %	30 %	20 %	30%	20 %

The majority of the actors who appeared in Sawab posts were male (70%) and (20%) for females. Al-Azhar Observatory had almost the same number as Sawab for the male presence with (80%). In one of the posts there was an equal presence for females and males. In the photos used of people, they were only men, but in the cartoon characters, they used both female and male characters.

(30%) of Taadudiya posts included females only and another (30%) included females in a primary role and males in a secondary ones. The remaining 20% was given to males as primary actors and females as secondary .

9. Color of Images/Scene

	Bright	Dark
Al Azhar	100%	0 %
Sawab	90 %	10 %
Taadudiya	100%	0 %

There is almost an equal percentage between the three senders for using the bright colors in their visuals more than the dark ones.

10. Variety of Colors

Sawab, Al Azhar and Taadudiya used three or more colors in their entire posts.

11. The Angle of Camera

	Eye Level	High Level	Low Level
Al Azhar	40 %	20 %	40 %
Sawab	20 %	10 %	70 %
Taadudiya	100%	0%	0 %

The majority of the photos and videos posted on Sawab were taken from a low level camera (70%). For Al Azhar, there was an equal use for the eye level and low-level angles. Taadudiya used eye-level angle for the entire videos.

12. Motion of the Camera (for videos)

Both Sawab and Taadudiya used video posts. The camera was fixed in all the 11 posts.

13. Camera Shot (for videos):

Sawab had one video only and they used in it long shot. Taadudiya used medium shot in 90% of their posts and long shot in one video only.

14. Main Effects in Video Messages

	Soft Music	Ambiance	Voice Over	No Music
Sawab	100 %	0%	100 %	0 %
Taadudiya	80%	100%	0%	20 %

In Sawab video they used voice over and soft music, while in the 10 videos of Taadudiya they used ambiance, which means the real sound of the image (hearing the traffic at the street, or hearing the students in the playground of a school while the character is talking), and in 80% they used soft music, and no music in two of the videos.

15. Effects Used in Still Photos

For this category, Sawab and Al Azhar used no effects in their entire photo posts. Nothing reported here about Taadudiya, since they had no photos in their posts.

16. Campaign Name Visibility Photos

	Visible	Not Visible
Al Azhar	90 %	10%
Sawab	11.1%	88.9%

90% of Al-Azhar posts included the name of the campaign in the visuals, while Sawab did not use the campaign name in 88.9 % of the posts.

17. Visibility of Campaign Name or Slogan on Videos

	Visible Sometimes	Not Visible
Sawab	0 %	100%
Taadudiya	100%	0%

The only post with video content for Sawab didn't include the name of the campaign. For Taadudiya, in the 10 videos the name of the campaign was visible and emphasized sometimes.

18. Caption of the Post

	Description about content of the post	Further information about the message itself	Call for action or engagement	1 & 2	1 & 3
Al Azhar	90 %	0 %	0 %	10 %	0 %
Sawab	50 %	30 %	0 %	20 %	0 %
Taadudiya	10 %	0 %	20 %	%	70 %

Al Azhar posts mostly included captions describing the content of the visual, and 10% included a description with information about the message of the campaign. Half of the Sawab posts were attached with captions that talk about the content of the visual, and 30% of the posts were posted with captions about the message itself only, while 20% combined the description with further information about the message as well.

Only one post for Taadudiya was without a call for engagement and with a description about the content. 70% of the posts included both description and call for action or engagement, and 20% included call for engagement only.

RQ2: Does the religious narrative rely more on basic and simple visuals in their campaigns rather than the other types of narratives?

	Photo	Photo and text
Al Azhar	10 %	90 %
Sawab	40 %	50 %
Taadudiya	0 %	0 %

The study showed that both Sawab and Al Azhar rely more on the photo content rather than videos. As for Taadudiya, 100% of the posts were videos. But if the criterion was between real photos and cartoon, then yes the religious narrative relies more on un-real photos rather than real ones. In addition, most of the photos used in Al Azhar posts were taken as extreme close-ups, so you can just see hands of people or mouth. While Sawab photos were mainly real photos of people with long and/or medium shot.

Discussion

This section presents the analysis of the results. The correlation between the types of the messages and their engagement rate, the relation between the types of senders and the presence of an actor, and the type of actors and their relation with the sender. In addition to this, the analysis deals with the characteristics and specifications of the senders' messages, whether it is Sawab, Al Azhar, or Taadudiya. Discussion of the results is based on the framing theory, and linked to the literature review presented.

Type of the Message and Engagement

The three senders, Sawab, Al Azhar and Taadudiya used photos and/or videos to counter violent extremism through their campaigns. The results of this study showed us that there was no significant difference between the engagement rate of the photos and the engagement rate of the videos.

The engagement rate is important to measure the success of social media campaigns. Engagement rate is the number of interactions that includes the likes, shares, clicks and comments on any post, divided by the number of users of the platform, as cited on Hopper, an Instagram planner and scheduling tool (Jan, 2019).

For this reason, it was important to repeat the statistical test (T-Test) in a different way and to measure the significance of the likes, comments and shares separately from each other. Nothing changed in the result of the likes, there was still no significant difference. As for the shares and comments there was a significant difference between the photos and the videos.

Nineteen posts were photos and eleven were videos. In the videos, the mean of comments and shares was higher than the mean of likes. This shows that the interaction of people exceeds the likes for video content. As a result, Taadudiya content has higher engagement than the others, as the entire posts of their campaign are videos.

As we saw in the first part of the literature review in the study about "The Use of Internet for Terrorist Purposes" (UNODC, 2012) that talked about the propaganda of the terrorist, a huge part of the propaganda was aimed at recruit more people and encouraging their audience to do violent acts, according to "The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes" (2012).

Therefore, both the VE and the CVE campaigns aim to get a high engagement rate from their audiences. CVE campaigns wanted to move the activity of the user from a negative position, to a positive one, which means increasing the calls for actions that are peaceful and added value to the society, and decreasing the promotion of violent and extremist activities.

The results of the study confirm what was mentioned in the "UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" (2016) as the fourth priority area in that plan emphasized community engagement. This engagement occurs online through the virtual engagement, and it occurs offline through actual activities on the ground.

Type of the Sender and the Framing of an Actor

The study showed no significant relation between the type of the sender and the presence of an actor in the post. The actor here means, seeing a person in the post even in an extreme shot that shows his/her hands only, or in medium and long shots.

It is positive to see that the three organizations use characters in their posts especially that the "UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" (2016) recommended highlighting the grass-roots initiatives to promote positive values and to give a voice to the victims to share their stories with the aim of preventing violent extremism.

This leads us to mention the types of actors that the campaigns used. It is true that Sawab campaign aims at giving visibility to the former extremists and victims of

extremism to share their testimony with the mass. This confirms what was mentioned in the "Responding to Cyber Jihad: Towards an Effective Counter Narrative" developed by the "International Centre for Counter-Terrorism- The Hauge" about the governmental counter narrative that Sawab is using: "Debunking myths, responding to misrepresentations of facts, showing the atrocities committed, and piercing the aura of heroism and camaraderie" (March 2015, p. 6).

As for Al Azhar, they did not use pictures of public figures. Most of the photos showed close-up shots of the mouth or hands of people, in addition to the use of cartoons and abstract images. Since this narrative is mainly based on the religious text (Quran, Sunna, Bible), this clarifies the usage of abstract photos more than real ones.

Taadudiya used actors in the entire video posts. The characters were mostly youth and all of them were unofficial. Investigating the type of actor in the campaign gives insights as to how each of narrative is being presented. The presence of actors in all of the videos is aligned with the existential narrative that aims at showing the stories of people and promoting their positive interpretations, as mentioned in the White Paper for Interreligious Collaboration and Policy Making in Addressing Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2017).

Having a messenger is crucial. In one of Hedayah Center's guide books, they mention that "determining effective messengers is crucial to how the message is delivered, and to whether the message will resonate with the target audience in the way it is intended." (Hedayah, 2017). Having a human being communicate with the user is important and what is also important is taking the context into consideration. Most of the papers and the UN plans stress the importance of customizing the strategy according to each context.

This is aligned with the opinion of Shoemaker and Reese (1996) who believe that journalists' framing of an issue is influenced by several social-structural or organizational variables as well as the (Tuchman, 1978) individual or ideological variables. So the context affects the choice of the journalist and the priority of the audience.

Characteristics and Specifications of CVE Narratives

This part presents the characteristics that the researcher mentioned in the previous sections of the analysis. It shows how each sender framed their messages. These characteristics remind us of the four dimensions of the framing theory that were presented by Ghanem (1997): first is the topic of the news item, second is the size and placement of the news, the third is the cognitive attributes, and the fourth one is the effective attributes. The following points can be categorized under these dimensions.

Aim of the Message

The humanitarian aim was a priority in the three campaigns. Assessing if this is good or not should be measured by seeing the link between the aim and the impact of the campaign (Hedayah, p. 15, 2017). What is unexpected is that the religious messages of Al-Azhar had a humanitarian aim not a religious one. All Al Azhar Observatory posts encouraged the users to be good with the other and to love your neighbor for example. Nothing in the posts was related to religious duties like prayer or fasting

In the framing theory, Entman (1993) believes that influencing the audience's perception about a certain reality could be done by "choosing and giving some part of noticed reality the elements in a message" (p. 52). This could explain why Al-Azhar is avoiding the use of sermons in their communication with the audience. Their approach

was soft with positive messages and photos that represent the humanitarian values that are common between the Muslims and Non-Muslims.

Mood of the Message

What is unique about the results is that the governmental entity, Sawab Center is the only sender that used threat in their campaigns. While the posts of Al Azhar were all presented in a serious mood. As for Taadudiya, the majority was in an optimistic mood.

Thus, the mood was aligned with the type of the sender. The government that has the authority to threaten, the religious institutions that offers constant reminders of rules and the civil society sector that sends a message with a mood that varies depending on the mission of the organization. Therefore, the mood of the message represents the type of the authority that each sender represents.

Tone of the Message

All senders' message were delivered with a formal tone. This might be a positive point, as these messages are trying to counter VE messaging that has a formal tone most of the time. Being on the same level of the other is essential to have an impact on the user that is being exposed to both messages. The relation between the violent narratives with the violent actions does not have a clear proof yet; as shown in the literature review, this is why there are a lot of campaigns that use the sense of humor as a strategy to counter violent extremism. Therefore, the relation between the tone of the VE and the tone of the CVE is still under investigation.

Source/Base of the Message

Another factor that is affected by the type of the narrative is the source of the message. The results showed that the main source for the religious narrative was the Quran and Sunna. In the definition of the narrative, it is mentioned that this type of

narrative relies on the religious text as a main source. Therefore, the messages are based on the Quran but have non-religious aim, which means that they do not promote religious duties or traditions, but they have a humanitarian aim by promoting the human values.

As for Sawab, they had several sources but it is important to highlight the testimonies of former extremists and victims. The literature review of the study confirmed the link between the governmental counter narrative and this type of messengers. This factor is aligned with the recommendation of the "Responding to Cyber Jihad: Towards an Effective Counter Narrative" developed by the "International Centre for Counter-Terrorism- The Hauge". The report recommended using the former extremists and victims as credible messengers for CVE purposes.

On the other hand, having a governmental institution in the messaging might affect the credibility of the message, as mentioned in Davies, Neudecker, Ouellet, Bouchard and Benjamin's study (2016) "Toward a Framework Understanding of Online Programs for Countering Violent Extremism." Having the unspecified source in the majority of the messages of Sawab could be to keeping the messages as general ones better than linking them with governmental authorities.

For the same reason, we see a lot of Sawab posts produced by another entity and re-shared by Sawab. In addition, Sawab gives funds to the civil society to produce CVE social media content. In this way, the aim of the US government is heavily present but it is implemented by different entities.

Gender of the Characters

The main actors used in the posts of Al-Azhar and Sawab were mainly males. 80% of Al-Azhar posts and 70% of Sawab visuals use the male characters to deliver their messages. As for Taadudiya, 30% of the scenes showed females only, 30%

showed females in primary roles and males in secondary ones, 20% were given for males as primary actors, and in 20% of the stories the males and the females had equal presence. These numbers are important to show how each sender is using the gender aspect in the framing of this CVE messages.

In Al-Azhar posts, the presence of the females was seen on a book cover and the second time the female was featured as a cartoon character. The two scenarios that included females represent the position of Al-Azhar as a religious Islamic institution on the women's roles. This is not just in Al-Azhar but it is a common point between most of the Islamic religious institutions that give women a secondary role.

The presence of women or discussing women issues in CVE is very controversial and may limit positive reactions of the audience to the posts. This was clear from the posts on Taadudiya platform. The users were highly negative while commenting on the presence of a female in the stories, or if the female is challenging her conservative society.

This issue represents the challenge that is facing the Arab women in the religious, political, social, and governmental sectors. This might be the reason behind keeping the women invisible in the Sawab campaign's posts. After all the campaign's main aim is not to advocate for women's right but rather to have its counter narrative reach as much audience as possible. Although it should be kept in mind that Daesh and extremists are recruiting women. According to "The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism" (2017), out of 31,000 fighters with Daesh, 6200 are women.

The predominant visibility of men could also be attributed to the fact that most Daesh fighters and advocates are males. Add to that, almost of the Daesh movement leaders are male. As previously mentioned, it is important to counter a narrative with

parallel elements in terms of tone or mood as well as actors. This does not dismiss the importance of women in the CVE campaign narrative but simply presents a possible explanation with regards to the use of men in those narrative. Another factor to take into consideration is that societies affected by the Daesh narrative - characterized by the extremist religious narrative- are more likely to be traditional and highly patriarchal. Such societies might dismiss a message delivered primarily by women and perceive it with less seriousness. A message delivered by a man is more likely to attract their attention.

After this campaign of Sawab examined in this thesis, Sawab conducted several campaigns targeting women and talking about issues related to women in Daesh, but in Al-Azhar campaigns, the absence of women is still there.

Color of Images/Scenes

In most of the posts, there was a variety of bright colors, which made them more appealing in the Facebook newsfeed. Even in the posts that show a dark face of an extremist, they made a contrast by using bright colors in the same posts to avoid keeping the dark impression. The three senders portrayed their images with bright colors to prove that darkness represents a small part of the scene.

It is strategic to give a big space for the bright colors and limit the VE in a dark place, to say that they just represent themselves and life is bigger than them; in other words they are trying to limit their role. Answering the HOW to deliver CVE messages is important to create effective and strategic campaigns. None of the scholars talked about the framing of CVE posts in academic papers dealing with this topic

The Camera Angle

Seventy percent (70%) of Sawab photos were taken from a low angle, 20% from eye level and 10% from a high level. Taadudiya's angle was 100% from an eye level

angle, where Al-Azhar posts were 40% from an eye level, 40% from a low level and 20% from a high level. In cinematography and semiotics, each type of angle has its own meaning. The eye level angle puts you on the same level with the character. Regarding the high-level angle, the camera looks down at the character and make them look smaller and powerless. On the other hand, the low-level camera looks up to the character, and portrays them as dominant and powerful.

Sawab portrayed the victims of Daesh, Nelson Mandela and the former extremists from a low angle to show them in a powerful position. They portrayed an extremist from a low angle with a quote filled with regret and dark shades on his face. The only high angle in Sawab posts was when they showed Daesh soldiers in caricature portraying how their leaders are using them as game players.

The eye level angle of Taadudiya videos is aligned with the definition of the narrative itself: "instead of having one orthodox counter-narrative issued by the formal religious authority, the existential narrative stimulates reflection within communities and engages theologians, preachers and believers in an open reflection process, to offer adequate answers to identified challenges in coherence with human rights and values." (Rashad Center for Cultural Governance, 2017, p. 28). The philosophy of this narrative is related to the regular people and their interpretations. So the audience can relate with the narrative and its way of presentation; seeing things from a regular eye level as it is in life.

Camera Shot (for videos):

Camera shots: long shot, medium or close-up have significance and impact on the frame. The study focuses on the camera shots used in the video posts. Ten posts of Taadudiya were videos and only one video post was for Sawab. The majority of the scenes in Taadudiya posts were taken in medium shot, while the video of Sawab mainly

used long shots. It is important to shed light on the difference between the medium and long shots. Medium shots allow the viewer to see the action, motion and emotions of the character, and to have an idea about the environment around the character. On the other hand, long shots allow the viewer to see the whole seen without any specific detail about the facial expressions or actions in details. In the photos posted by Al-Azhar there were many extreme close-up shots on the hand, mouth, or arms to represent core values like: helping others, communicating positively, and coexistence. The camera angle along with the camera shot, which is a medium shot, confirm the framing style of Taadudiya narrative that aims to be the "narrative of people".

Main Effects used in Video Messages

Music and the ambiance (real sounds) are the main effects used in Taadudiya videos. The music was soft not dramatic or emotional; therefore the focus was on the talk of the characters themselves. Sawab used voice over since the clip was part of news reportage and all the story was portrayed in formal frames.

Caption of the post:

The engagement of the communities and the positive and negative (remove or block) engagement, have been mentioned by several studies as positive factors in the CVE strategies. As for the CVE campaigns of Sawab, Taadudiya and Al Azhar some of them included call for actions in the post itself or in the captions of the posts. Taadudiya included call for action in all the videos of Shu Ostak campaign and the captions were calling youth to watch and share their stories. Al Azhar captions included the hashtag of the campaign with the name of Al-Azhar observatory. Sawab captions focused on providing more information about the main message with a description about the content of the post. There was warnings more than calls for actions and engagement in Sawab posts.

Neuman, Just, and Crigel (1992) believe that “mass media give the story a spin” and this is how the framing theory affects the presented content. All the characteristics and specification mentioned in this section show us how the governmental entity is threatening and sending warning with any news related to former extremists. And we see how the soft narrative of Al-Azhar is fostering the humanitarian values away from the usual narrative that tackles the duties In Islam. Taadudiya gives a spin to their stories that shows youth models fighting extremism in an optimistic and engaging way that ends with a call for action.

Most of the CVE papers mentioned in the literature review focused on the importance of the credibility and its impact on the effectivity of the CVE campaigns. The UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism” (2016) considered the governmental messenger as a negative sender because they do not have high credibility among the audience. If we want to evaluate the online work of Sawab based on the engagement rate, they are higher than Al-Azhar and less than Taadudiya. In addition, the engagement rate is affected by the amount of money spent on the boosting of the Facebook posts. Not all the engagement is paid, but it is affected by the budget.

This study considered that the type of narrative of each sender is based on how each one of them present themselves. Al Azhar uses the religious narrative, Sawab adopts the governmental counter narrative, and Taadudiya follows the existential narrative. As mentioned in the literature review, this is how each sender represents their narrative. But based on all of these characteristics, it is important to check whether the types of narratives are really represented in the campaigns or not.

The names of the campaigns are very representative. For instance, Sawab’s campaign is under the hashtag (in Arabic) #DeludedFollowers (#أتباع_الضلال), and in the

definition of the narrative it mentioned that it aims to directly respond to extremist messages to show their deception and break their heroic image.

While Al Azhar used: "Humanitarian Values" (#قيم_انسانية) and this type of narrative relies on the religious text as a main source of messages and the campaign promotes the values by showing their religious background from the Quran or Sunna.

Taadudiya used: what is your story? (#شو_قصتك), and in the definition of the narrative it is considered the narrative of people that relies on the stories of regular characters and give them visibility.

On the content level the messages are synchronized with the titles and the types of narratives. The type of content, the mood of the message, the type of the actor, the camera angle, the key idea of the messages, along with the captions of the posts have been used in a specific frame (details in the beginning of this section) that gives each narrative specific characteristics. For this reason, the study aim is to examine these characteristics that are not included in the papers and studies that deal with the CVE narratives.

Another important factor here is that the video production of Sawab is not directly managed by the center. Since they are a governmental entity and they distribute their budget on different stakeholders to produce CVE content and publish it, then they show it on their pages. Therefore, there is another factor that should be studied in terms of the credibility and framing.

Based on all the provided analysis, the optimal characteristics of a general counter extremist narrative would be:

- The best counter narrative should be selected based on the contextual factors that are related to the target area or audience

- Youth actors in all types of narratives are more effective than other age category. Youth religious figures can play a significant role in influencing the religious extremist youth
- Video content is more appealing for Facebook users than photos or text
- Videos should include subtitling in the same language of the videos, because many users watch without turning on the sound
- Warning mood of the messages would be less appealing for youth who need to be approached in an un-official way that put the sender and the target on the same level of communication
- Optimistic mood in the messages attract people more to comment and share the post
- The formal tone of the CVE messages put them on the same level of the VE messages, which is important to have an impact on the user that is being exposed to both messages
- Women should be addressed more in the CVE campaign as they are the first educators in the family and they are among the extremists fighters
- The religious narrative should tackle more the women issues in religion as Daesh is still recruiting women in the name of Islam
- The religious narrative that promotes humanitarian values is much more appealing for the Facebook users
- All narratives should tackle the psychological factors of the extremists that are related to lack of belonging and identity. More content about citizenship is recommended

- The non-governmental narrative or the governmental counter narrative that works with low profile, or without showing their governmental background, have more credibility among the Facebook users
- The existential narrative should rely more on the testimonies for former extremists or victims as they have high credibility
- Call for action in the captions of the posts would increase the engagement rate of the posts
-

Limitations and Further Suggestions

This study has several limitations due to different reasons. The size of the sample was five posts for each sender, but the researcher had to increase them to 10 for each sender in order to be able to get the results of the statistical tests. The results of the study cannot be generalized to other campaigns of Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya. The variables used in this study might not be applicable to other campaigns specially the ones that target specific audience like women or children.

The effect of the paid boosting should be taken into consideration while reading the results of each campaign. This is why, it is hard to assess the credibility of each sender. An access to the insights of the Facebook pages can solve this point but this is impossible in most of the times.

In the theoretical framework, the absence of content analysis studies related to CVE has affected the academic baseline of this study. In addition, the contextual aspect should be taken into consideration in such studies, but the variety of the audience of each sender complicates the process.

Therefore, there should be more contextual content analysis for CVE campaigns, with a link between the communication strategies and the national CVE plans of the countries. On the other hand, studies related to women in CVE and the framing of their role in the terrorism field would be very rich and interesting for future research.

Conclusion

Due to the lack of research studies about the characteristics of different CVE narratives, and how each sender frames the narrative in relation to the strategies of governmental institutions, religious authorities and civil society organizations, this paper set out answer these questions.

This study can be useful for the media practitioners and civil society organizations that aim to study or create online CVE campaigns, by using its findings as a baseline for their social media strategies. The analysis of the results highlighted the similarities and the differences in the framing patterns of the CVE campaigns on Sawab, Al-Azhar and Taadudiya. In addition to the correlation between the characteristics of the messages and rate of engagement of the users.

The findings of the study show how each sender portrays the CVE messages differently and with some common points. Video content is appealing for the Facebook users more than the photos. An important factor here is the paid campaigns or the boosting of the Facebook post that can affect the engagement rate. Nevertheless, this might affect the likes more than the comments and shares that cannot be done through fake account as much as the likes.

The image of women is still missing in Al-Azhar and Sawab campaigns. Although, the presence of women in Daesh is 6200 out of 31,000 fighters, according to "The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism" (2017).

There are many similarities between the three senders but that does not remove the presence of difference, not based on the type of narrative only, but on the ideology of the sender as well. For instance, applying the religious narrative by a Christian institution would have different framing methods and missing point.

Creating effective CVE campaigns is significant. Fighting dangerous people in the field is needed, but dealing with powerful minds in the virtual world is critical as well. Such studies about the content of the CVE campaigns should be done more often. What is necessary now is not creating new types of narratives to combat the extremist, but rather to have more strategic content based on success stories, like the ones presented in this study.

References

Abu Nimer, M. (2018). Alternative Approaches to Transforming Violent Extremism. Berghof Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue13_Abu-Nimer_lead.pdf (Accessed on May 2019).

Al Azhar Observatory [Facebook Post]. (2017, 10 October). Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/AlazharObserver (Accessed on 25 March 2018).

Al Azhar [Website]. About Al Azhar observatory. Retrieved from http://www.azhar.eg/observer/%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%AF (Accessed on March 2018).

Al-Azhar University [Website]. Education. Retrieved from http://www.azhar.edu.eg/AboutUs/i (Accessed on May 2019).

Al Azhar Graduates [Website]. Retrieved from https://azhargraduates.org/ar/news_archive2.aspx?id=357 (Accessed on May 2019).

Arab Center Washington DC. Countering violent extremism (CVE) in the United States: An assessment of domestic and international efforts. (December 2016) Retrieved from http://arabcenterdc.org/policy_analyses/countering-violent-extremism-cve-in-the-united-states-an-assessment-of-domestic-and-international-efforts/ (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

Bamford, J. (March 2015). Reading this article could land you in jail. Foreign Policy. Observation Desk. Retrieved from https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/25/reading-this-magazine-could-land-you-in-jail/. (Accessed on May 2019).

Brigs, R., & Feve, S. (2016). Review of programs to counter narratives of violent Extremism. Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Retrieved from *http://docplayer.net/4673424-Review-of-programs-to-counter-narratives-of-violent-extremism.html* (Accessed on 25 March 2018).

Daou, F. & Mokdad, D. (2017). Life is stronger than death. Doufaf Magazine. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/adyanfoundation/status/913395073781551112 (Accessed on May 2019).

Davies, G., Neudecker, G., Ouellet, M., Bouchard, M., & Ducol, B. (2016). Toward a framework understanding of online programs for countering violent extremism. *Journal for Deradicalization*, *6*, 51-86.

Druckman, J. N. (2001). The implications of framing effects for citizen competence. Political Behavior , 225-256.

Entman, R. M. (1991). Framing US Coverage of international News: Contrast in Narratives of KAL and Iran Air Incidents. Journal of Communication, 41 (4), 6 –27.

Ferguson, K. (2016). Countering violent extremism through media and communication strategies. Partnership for conflict, crime and security research, University of East Angila, *7,* 2-34.

Frazer, O and Nunlist, C. (2015). The concept of countering violent extremism. *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, 183, 1-4. Retrieved from http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/CSSAnalyse183-EN.pdf (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

Gerrig, R.J. (1993). *Experiencing narrative worlds*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ginkel. B. Responding to cyber jihad: Towards an effective, counter narrative. *ICCT Research Paper,* (March 2015). Retrieved from https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-van-Ginkel-Responding-To-Cyber-Jihad-Towards-An-Effective-Counter-Narrative-March2015.pdf. (Accessed on May 2019).

Glazzard, A. losing the plot: narrative, counter-narrative and violent extremism. *ICCT Research Paper,* ISSN: 2468-0656 (May 2017): 5. DOI: 10.19165/2017.1.08.

Macnair, L., & Frank, R. (2017 Spring). Voices against extremism: a case study of a community-based CVE counter-narrative campaign. *Journal for De-radicalization, 10,* 16-17.

Mandaville, P & Nozell, M (2017). Engaging Religion and Religious Actors in Countering Violent Extremism. Retrieved from *The United States Institute of Peace Special Report.* Retrieved from https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR413-Engaging-Religion-and-Religious-Actors-in-Countering-Violent-Extremism.pdf (Accessed on May 2019).

Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Sciences (MIDS) [Website]. Retrieved from http://www.midss.org/content/behavioral-avoidanceinhibition-bisbas-scales (Accessed on May 2019).

Mokbel, R. (2015) Al-Azhar goes online to fight extremism. Al Monitor. Retrieved from https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/06/egypt-al-azhar-internet-social-media-religious.html (Accessed on January 2018).

Moore, J. (2010). The impact of visual-music interaction on music perception: The influence of agreement and disagreement. Unpublished master's thesis, Baylor University, Texas.

Muslims for Progressive Values. *Best Practices and Lessons Learned on Protecting and Promoting Human Rights to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism*. Retrieved from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/RuleOfLaw/PCVE/MPV.pdf (Accessed on May 2019)

Patel, S. *The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism*. Australian Strategic Policy Institute (February 2017). Retrieved from: https://www.aspi.org.au/report/sultanate-women-exploring-female-roles-perpetrating-and-preventing-violent-extremism (Accessed on April 27, 2019).

Plan of action to prevent violent extremism (2016). The United Nations, 15-22941.

Sawab Centre using Instagram to counter extremist propaganda on Social Media (2015). The 7days. Retrieved from *https://7days.ae/sawab-centre-using-instagram-counter-extremist-propaganda-social-Media* (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

Seidman, S.A. (1981). On the Contributions of Music to Media Presentations, Educational.

Hedayah Center [Website]. Brand. Retrieved from http://www.hedayahcenter.org/about-us/619/brand. (Accessed on May 2019).

Hedayah Center for countering violent extremism, & International center for counter-terrorism - The Hague (2014). Developing effective counter-narrative frameworks for countering violent extremism. Retrieved from https://www.icct.nl/download/file/Developing%20Effective%20CN%20Frameworks_Hedayah_ICCT_Report_FINAL.pdf (Accessed on 18 January 2019).

Hedayah Center for Countering Violent Extremism. Hedayah website. Sawab Centre launches new digital space campaign against Daesh. News archive. Retrieved from *http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Media-details/49/news/344/news-archive/537/sawab-centre-launches-new-digital-space-campaign-against-daesh* (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

Hemphil, L. Culotta, A. Heston, M. Framing in Social Media: How the U.S. Congress uses Twitter hashtags to frame political issues. Retrieved from *https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269608475_Framing_in_Social_Media_How_the_US_Congress_Uses_Twitter_Hashtags_to_Frame_Political_Issues* (Accessed on April 4, 2019).

Engagement rate. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.hopperhq.com/social-media-marketing-glossary-2018/engagement-rate/ (Accessed on January 2019).

Fisher, W. R. (1987). Human communication as narration: Toward a philosophy of reason, value, and action. Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press.

King Faisal Prize Website. Retrieved from https://kingfaisalprize.org/al-azhar-al-sharif/ (Accessed on May 2019).

Richardson, B. *Recent concepts of narrative and the narratives of narrative theory.* 34-2. University of Maryland, 2000.

Sawab Facebook page. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/sawabcenter/?fref=ts (Accessed on January 2019).

Scheufele, D. (1999). *Framing As a Theory of Media Effects*. Retrieved from https://www.studocu.com/en/u/1418601. (Accessed on May 2019).

Statistic Portal (2019). Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 4th quarter 2018 (in millions). Retrieved from https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/ (Accessed on January 2019).

Taadudiya Facebook Page. Retrieved from www.facebook/taadudiya (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

Taleb, I. (2014). *Narrative Theory: a Brief Introduction*, Chapter 1. Retrieved from https://courses.nus.edu.sg/course/ellibst/narrativetheory/chapt1.htm (Accessed on 1 December 2017).

The European Institute for Peace. EIP Explainer: Understanding Daesh/ISIS. Retrieved from http://www.eip.org/en/news-events/eip-explainer-understanding-daeshisis (Accessed on May 2019)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], (2012). The Use of the Internet for Terrorists' Purposes, 3-13.

Tuck, H., and Silverman, T. *The Counter-narrative handbook*. Institute for Strategic Dialogue, (2016).

What is Narrative Theory? The Project Narrative. *The Ohio State University*. Retrieved from https://projectnarrative.osu.edu/about/what-is-narrative-theory (Accessed on December 1 2017).

White, H. *The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality*. The University of Chicago Press (1980). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1343174.pdf (Accessed on May 2019).

Williams, M. (1974). Jazz at the movies. In Limbacher, J. L. (Ed.), Film Music: From Violins to Video (pp.42-44). New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc

Yan, C. Dillard, J. & Shen, F. The Effects of Mood, Message Framing, and Behavioral Advocacy on Persuasion. *Journal of Communication*. ISSN 0021-9916 (2010). DOI:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2010.01485.x.

Appendix A: Codebook

The aim of this study is to examine three cases, the Sawab Center, Al Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism and Taadudiya CVE narratives on Facebook; which represent the governmental counter narrative, the religious narrative, and the existential narrative to study and compare their strategies and characteristics in relation to the type of sender.

The following are the variables assessed in this codebook.

1. The sender:
   - Al Azhar Facebook = 1
   - Sawab Facebook = 2
   - Taadudiya Facebook = 3
2. The narrative is:
   - Religious narrative = 1
   - Governmental Counter narrative = 2
   - Existential narrative = 3
3. The type of the message:
   - Text = 1
   - Photo = 2
   - Video = 3
   - Graphics = 4
   - Photo and Text = 5
   - Graphics and Text = 6
   - Video and Text = 7

4. Aim of the message:

- Governmental = 1
- Humanitarian = 2
- Political = 3
- Religious = 4
- Other = 5 specify _____

5. The mood of the message (you can select several options):

- Joyful = 1
- Serious = 2
- Humorous = 3
- Pessimistic = 4
- Optimistic = 5
- Threatening = 6
- Other, _____ = 7

6. The tone of the message:

- Formal = 1
- Informal = 2

7. Source/Base of the message (you can select several options):

- Quran = 1
- Sunna (Hadith) = 2
- Bible = 3
- Religious scholars = 4
- Other, specify……. = 5

8. Main actor:

- Official actor = 1

- Unofficial actor = 2
- No actor = 3

9. Type of main actor:

- Youth = 1
- Religious figure/s = 2
- Governmental authority = 3
- Youth and religious figure = 4
- Religious figure and governmental authority = 5
- Governmental authority and youth = 6
- Adult= 7
- No actor = 8

10. Color of images/scenes:

- Dark color = 1
- Bright color = 2

11. Variety of colors:

- One color = 1
- Two colors = 2
- Three and more colors = 3

12. The angle of camera

- Eye level = 1
- High level = 2
- Low level = 3

13. The motion of the camera (for videos):

- Tilt up = 1
- Tilt down = 2

- Pan left = 3
- Pan right = 4
- Fixed = 5

14. Camera shot (for videos):

- Long shot = 1
- Medium shot = 2
- Close up shot = 3
- Extreme close up = 4

15. The main effects used in the video messages (you can select several options):

- Music = 1
- Voice over = 2
- Ambiance (sound as it is in the real life of the scene) = 3
- Image effects (exposure, distort...) = 4
- Special colors of image (vintage, black and white…) = 5
- No effects = 6

16. If there is music in the videos, what is the tone:

- Soft music = 1
- Thriller = 2
- No music = 3
- Other, specify:_____ =4

17. The duration of the video: _____

18. The effects used in the still photos:

- 3d effects = 1
- Special colors of image (vintage, black and white…) = 2
- Info graphics = 3

- No effects = 4

19. In case of the presence of characters, are they:

- Men only = 1
- Women only = 2
- Man primary and woman secondary character = 3
- Woman primary and man secondary character = 4
- Woman and men equally= 5
- Female children = 6
- Male children = 7
- Balance between men and women = 8
- Balance between female and male children = 9
- No character = 10

20. Is the name of the campaign visible on the photos?

- Yes visible = 1
- No not visible = 2

21. Is the name or slogan of the campaign visible all the time on videos?

- Yes visible = 1
- Not visible = 2
- Sometimes visible = 3

22. Describe the caption of the post

- Description about the content of the post = 1
- Further information about the message itself = 2
- Call for action or engagement= 3
- 1& 2 = 4
- 1 & 3 = 5

- 2 & 3 = 6
- 1&2&3 = 7

23. Summarize in your own words the key idea of the visual:

---

24. Number of likes: _____
25. Number of shares: _____
26. Number of comments: _____

Appendix B: Screenshots

I. Sawab

Sawab-Post 1

Sawab-Post 2

Sawab-Post 3

Sawab-Post 4

Sawab-Post 5

Sawab-Post 6

Sawab-Post 7

Sawab-Post 8

Sawab-Post 9

Sawab-Post 10

II. Al-Azhar

Al-Azhar-Post 1

Al-Azhar-Post 2

Al-Azhar-Post 3

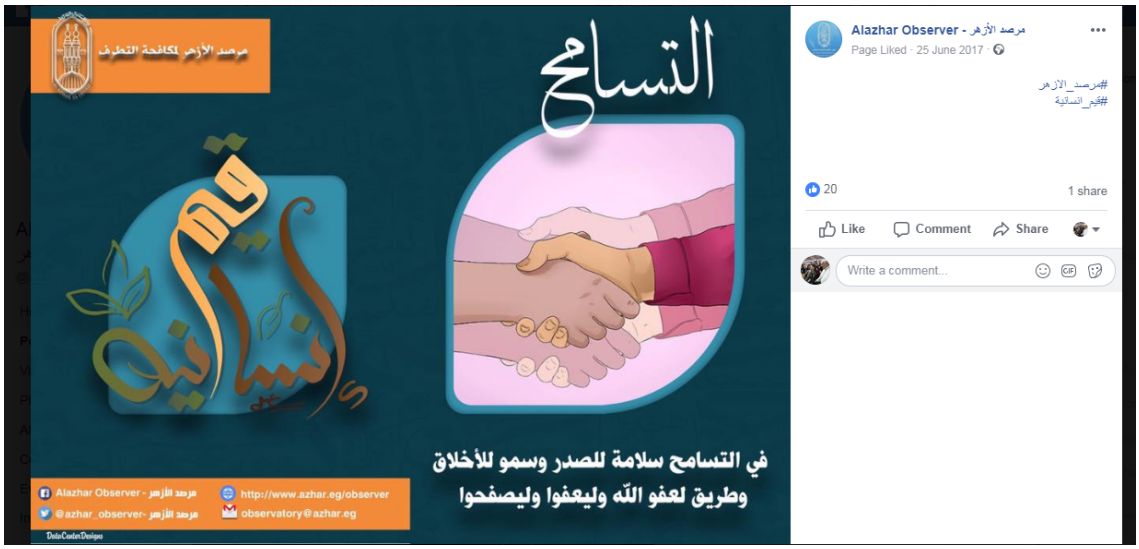
Al-Azhar-Post 4

Al-Azhar-Post 5

Al-Azhar-Post 6

Al-Azhar-Post 7

Al-Azhar-Post 8



Al-Azhar-Post 9

Al-Azhar-Post 10

III. Taadudiya

Taadudiya-Post 1

Taadudiya-Post 2

Taadudiya-Post 3

Taadudiya-Post 4

Taadudiya-Post 5

Taadudiya-Post 6

Taadudiya-Post 7

Taadudiya-Post 8

Taadudiya-Post 9

شو قصتك؟ - سلطنة عُمان

Like Comment Share

Taadudiya - تعددية

4K 86 Comments 609 shares

Taadudiya-Post 10

شو قصتك؟ - سلام وزينب

Like Comment Share

Taadudiya - تعددية

1.1K 132 Comments 112 shares