

Effectiveness Of Narrative Therapy In Promoting Students' Resilience To Violent Extremism

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Abstract

Violent extremism has been a matter of concern throughout history, in all societies and manifested in the name of various faiths, beliefs and ideologies embedded in religion, ethnicity or race. Serious efforts have been made by various agencies and the governments to cope with this issue across the globe under the banner of Countering Terrorism (CT) and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). After 9/11, a paradigm shift was witnessed from countering terrorism to preventing violent extremism. This paradigm shift provided bedrock for the formulation of 'United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism' and 'The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development' which recommended the utilization of comprehensive and preventive approaches to combat violent extremism. These approaches and techniques may include inclusive development, peaceful conflict resolution, ending discrimination and state violence, ensuring social justice, tolerance and respect for diversity, at government level, and likewise, using local approaches and involving local communities particularly youth, building community resilience and developing counter narratives at academic front. The core purpose of this research endeavour was to see the effectiveness of narrative therapy in promoting students' resilience to violent extremism. The study was built on theoretical ground provided by the intersection of narrative theory, under the social constructivist approach, and the resilience theory. It was an experimental study and one group pretest post-test experimental research design was used. Participants of the study were 10th grade students. A self-report rating

scale was used to assess students' vulnerability to violent extremism and effectiveness of narrative therapy thereafter by measuring their attitude. The difference between mean gain scores of pre-test and post-test against all the four indicators of the scale confirmed the effectiveness of narrative therapy in promoting students' resilience to violent extremism.

Key words: Narrative therapy; countering violent extremism; preventing violent extremism; resilience.

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) endorsed by the 193 countries of the world aim to reduce violence in all its forms until 2030 (UN 2015a). Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 particularly obligates all the member states and communities to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (Rehman, Shah et al. 2018). This target cannot be achieved in an environment characterized by inequality and exclusion; nor it can be attained where there is widespread violent Extremism (UNDP 2016).

Violent Extremism

Violent Extremism has been rarely defined not only by the United Nations but the European Union as well (Glazzard and Zeuthen 2014). United States Agency for International Development (USAID) defines violent extremism as an act or process of advocating, involving in, preparing, or supporting by an individual or group to any kind of ideologically motivated or justified violence with the purpose to promote its social, economic or political objectives (UNDP 2016).

The concept of Violent Extremism is also termed as the view of an in-group which feels that its survival and the ability to achieve its goals can only be made possible by the violence against an out-group (Kruglanski, Fernandez et al. 2019).

The world has experienced new waves of violent extremism, during recent years, that caused to end the lives of numerous innocent people. The extremist ideologies tend to glorify the pre-eminence of a group with particular ideology (Schmid 2014) having its roots in either religious, sectoral, ethnic or political grounds (Harris-Hogan 2017). In pursuance for dominance of that ideology that group dissents the establishment of a

tolerant and more inclusive society. This situation has caused to create two major challenges for present-day societies that are mutually distinct but closely related to each other: the escalation and spread of violent extremism, and the governance of the contemporary societies that are gradually transforming in to diverse and multicultural societies (UNDP 2016).

Violent Extremism is commonly regarded as a more inclusive term than its other counterparts (e.g., terrorism) however, it is arguably applied in a narrower sense; Violent Extremism associated with a specific religion, specifically, Islam (Glazzard and Zeuthen 2014). In real sense, Violent Extremism is not confined to any particular time, community or ideology (UN 2015b). It has been witnessed throughout time, in all societies and appears in the name of various faiths, beliefs and ideologies embedded in religion, ethnicity or race (UNDP 2020).

Drivers of violent extremism

Violent extremism is a very complex phenomenon that has numerous structural and psychological drivers (UNDP 2020). The underlying causes and precursors of violent extremism are intertwined, multifaceted and complex in nature. They come from the structural environment where violent extremism takes place (Mahiri 2016). Violent extremism is the outcome of the interplay between historical, social, economic and political circumstances combined with the effect of regional and international power politics (UNDP 2016). Increasing horizontal discrimination and inequalities are among the major drivers of violent extremism. Analytically, poverty and unemployment are not the only inciting factors to violent extremism (Mahiri 2016). Among other important push factors are: human rights violation and injustice, socio-political exclusion, continued ill-treatment by a certain group and prevalent corruption in the society (Allan, Glazzard et al. 2015). The failure of a state in providing basic human rights and security coupled with malfunctioning institutions, weak law enforcement and failed political transition offer a fertile ground for violent extremism (Francis 2012). The people living in such a situation are more likely to involve in violent activities under the combined impact of these horizontal and vertical inequalities (UNDP 2016).

Responding Violent Extremism

The various responses that are being made to violent extremism can be classified into following categories: counter terrorism (CT) the earlier approach to counter terrorism using military resources), countering violent extremism (CVE) a relatively new preventive approach using

commonly non-coercive strategies, risk reduction (RR) trying to ensure the avoidance of harm by the violent extremist through desirable change in behaviour (Glazzard and Zeuthen 2014) and preventing violent extremism (PVE) a comprehensive recent approach) (Direct 2017, UNDP 2020).

Countering Violent Extremism

Violent extremism is not confined to any specific religion, time, area, community or culture. In contemporary global community, this problem is being observed in both developing and developed countries (UNDP 2016). Countering violent extremism (CVE) is a growing and fast-evolving field and relatively young. Being originated from the fields of security and defence coupled with the dominance of western institutions, researchers and policy makers came up with less focus on locally-led policies and strategies (Direct 2017). As a matter of fact, the dynamics of violent extremism are context oriented and sharply vary from region to region with respect to their specific historical, social and political roots (Lemarchand 2012). The only way to develop successful peacebuilding approaches to counter violent extremism is to adapt context specific approaches relevant to each region. The best way to achieve this goal is to work with the local community who best knows their region, and develop effective connections between practitioners, academia and the policy institutions able to analyse the root causes of violent extremism and suggest relevant strategies (Mahiri 2016, Direct 2017).

Preventing Violent Extremism

For many years after 1990s, the counter violent extremism (CVE) has been governed both conceptually and programmatically by the security policy making agencies at national and international level as a part to the larger efforts to counter terrorism (Abu-Nimer 2018) . The shift from countering violent extremism (CVE) to preventing violent extremism (PVE) started after 9/11 by the changing the nature of terrorism as decentralized and self-redicalized groups. It was also guided by the sensitization that some of the counter terrorism approaches have worsened the situation of violent extremism (Holmer 2013). Moreover, the radicalization of European (van Meijl 2020) and American citizens in the recent past (Rosich 2020) has also diverted the attention of policy makers and academia, and added much to initiate the debate on prevention of violent extremism. And now the focus has been shifted at national and international level from combating terrorism to a more comprehensive and preventive approach to violent extremism (Odoorfer 2015).

Lessons learnt from various experiences of peacebuilding show that as much as the level of inclusion and tolerance increases in a community it leads to better governance of diversity and immunize the society against violent extremism (Direct 2017). Tolerance for diversity and inclusion of various cultures are central to the new 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that envisions a just, tolerant, equitable and socially inclusive world, specifically the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 (UN 2015a, Direct 2017, Rehman, Shah et al. 2018). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan very rightly said while addressing the Global Conference on Youth, Peace and Security in Amman in August, 2015, "The future of humanity is a future of co-existence" (UNDP 2016).

United Nations General Assembly in its Action Plan to the member countries for the prevention of violent extremism suggested numerous measures non-violent strategies which include dialogue and conflict prevention, engaging communities, gender equality, and empowering youth etc (UN 2015b). In pursuance of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, United Nations subsidiary organizations, other national and international organizations and researchers brought forward new approaches and strategies consistent with the contemporary global needs e.g. inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity (UNDP 2016), peaceful conflict resolution, ending discrimination and state violence, ensuring social justice (Aneel, Haroon et al. 2017, UNDP 2020), developing counter narratives by using local approaches and involving local communities (Direct 2017), developing peace building communities (Holmer 2013) by involving youth, families and communities (Veenkamp and Zeiger 2015) and through building and promoting community resilience (Duckhouse 2016, Mahiri 2016).

Resilience

Many a times, people come across challenging incidents and experiences. These may include internal factors (e.g., personality traits, health issues) and external factors (e.g., death of a beloved one, poor social support, problematic home environment etc.) (Gardner and Stephens-Pisecco 2019). How do people cope with these challenges? Most of them react to these circumstances negatively with a sense of uneasiness. Yet over time, they adapt and adjust with the situation by hooks or by crooks and they 'bounce back' from that adversity. "The process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances" because of their inherent ability is called resilience (Masten, Best et al. 1990).

Likewise, International Labour Organization (ILO) defines resilience as the ability of a system or community (ILO 2017) to “resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner” (p-9). Resilience is also termed as the process through which the “protective factors enable a child to achieve desirable outcomes despite the presence of adversity”. This ability is developed through the interaction of the children with their family, community, school and their ecosystem at broader level (Duckhouse 2016). Resilience is also referred to the ability, optimism, competence, flexibility and the inner strength of a child to effectively deal with an adverse situation. In the same way, it is associated with the boosting the protective factors like social support and optimism (Abiola and Udofia 2011).

As a matter of fact, resilience is not a personality trait that a child either have or does not have. Resilience comprises thoughts, behaviours and actions that can developed and learned (McDonald, Jackson et al. 2012). The process of becoming a resilient person needs to reduce potential risk factors and promote protective conditions or factors (Ellis and Abdi 2017).

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Resilience theory, the social constructionist approach and narrative theory provide bedrock to the present research work. Resilience is the set of factors (reactions, behaviours and attributes) which enable a person (students in this case) to achieve desirable outcomes in the presence of an adverse situation (e.g., Violent Extremism). These factors not only involve attributes of a child (e.g., emotion regulation and problem-solving skills etc.) developed over time in him but many other key factors also that are present in the world around the child (the ecosystem). These factors are dependent on the interaction between the child his ecosystem (e.g., close relationships with the parents and other key adults, friendships with peer group and effective school environment etc.) (Duckhouse 2016) “Resilience theory suggests that the resilient child will be able to achieve these outcomes, however, in different contexts these words could be used to describe different constructs” (Kaplan 2005). A social constructionist approach however suggests that the ability of a child to be resilient depends upon his perception of the situation he is in, the perception of other people around him, and his sense of ability to cope with it (Duckhouse 2016).

“Narratives shape the way societies respond to extremism” (UNDP 2020). Narrative theories suggest that a child will develop his own narrative of

resilience to violent extremism (resilience self-identity) on the narratives he hears from the key persons around him (subject positions) and how these persons position themselves in relation to these narratives (identity position). Hence, a child's 'resilience self-identity' and the sense of being able to cope with the adversity will depend on the narrative he has about himself with respect to key resilient factors (protective factors and risk factors). In a nutshell, a child's level of resilience is dependent upon the relative presence of protective factors over risk factors (Hiles 2007, Duckhouse 2016).

Rationale of the Study

The need for and importance of building students' resilience right from their childhood is well documented like the implications of lack of resilience. The non-resilient children are likely to join the company of troublesome friends under the influence of their aggressive and/or introverted personality traits (Cicchetti 2010, Beutel, Tibubos et al. 2017). They may potentially lack their self-esteem and personal competencies (Cicchetti 2010, Marx, Young et al. 2017). While studying in the class, for example, these vulnerable students, can be easily distracted; may exhibit disruptive and uncooperative behaviour (Distiller, Theron et al. 2007). These vulnerable students can even become aloof, truant or may be dropped from school (Bethell, Davis et al. 2017). In extreme situations, they even suffer from hypertension, may experience hyper-aroused senses (Ungar 2015, Liu 2017), or incline to self-harm tendencies like drug addiction and alcohol dependence (Liu 2017).

The implications of non-resilience among children may persist for decades. In the long term, the non-resilient children can face social, psychological and even physical problems e.g., maladjustment and deviant behaviour (Bethell, Davis et al. 2017). The maladjustment problems potentially comprise physical and psychological disorders like pessimism (Liu 2017), difficulty in managing personal problems or accomplishing various types of life goals (Masten, Monn et al. 2011, Wright, Masten et al. 2013). The deviant behaviour, on the other side, may ensue to their involvement in violent criminal activities (Bethell, Davis et al. 2017).

Nonetheless, the scholars unanimously agree that non-resilient children mostly face psychological and social development problems in their later years (Panter-Brick, Hadfield et al. 2018). Subsequently, they recommend consistent work to fortify and reinforce the vulnerable students for building and maintaining their resilience to overcome violent tendencies (Condly 2006, Wright, Masten et al. 2013). Beside this, the educators

should observe their students on periodic basis to judge their vulnerability to violent activities because of the possibility of fluctuation in development under the influence of environmental changes (Limonero, Tomás-Sábado et al. 2014, Haroz, Jordans et al. 2017).

The present research work is an experimental research which sees that whether or not and to what extent the students' resilience can be promoted by changing their narrative (from risk factors to protective factors). For this purpose, Narrative Therapy Techniques are used.

Present study is contextually very significant as it was conducted at secondary school level. Students' enrolment at secondary level represents approximately 57% of the total populace of that age bracket in the Punjab. A minute number of them enter into higher education and rest of others go back to community to start their practical life (Afzal 2015). Present study is hoped to have a remedial effect on the students with violent behaviour and for others it may serve as a vaccination against violent extremism. The results of the study may lead the organizations/agencies and practitioners serving in the area of countering 'violent extremism' to an alternative way (Narrative Therapy) of promoting 'resilience to violent extremism'.

Objectives of the Study

The core objective of the present research was to check the effectiveness of narrative therapy techniques in promoting students' resilience to violent extremism.

Methodology

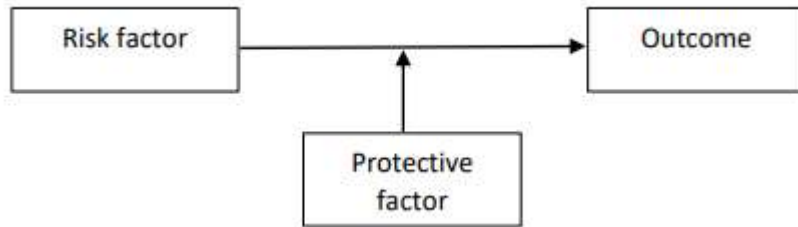
Researchers in the field of resilience presented numerous models to find out the mechanism by which the protective factors reduce or counterbalance the possibly adverse effect of the risk factors. These models provide basis for hypothesis generation and testing as well as offer a framework to build intervention thereupon.

The Compensation model introduced by Garmezy, Masten et al. (1984) and Masten (2015) propounds that both the risk factors and the protective factors have a direct and independent impact on the outcome of the child. The Challenge model offers some developmental purpose i.e., a child when faces a relatively less hard challenge to overcome he develops some ability through this experience that will be helpful to overcome the same or a relatively harder challenge in future. On the other side, the Mediator model uses ecological framework of a child and shows that the risk factors (e.g., poverty) can be permeated through a

mediator (e.g., parents) rather than influencing directly the outcome of the child.

Present study used both versions of Protective Factor model; the Risk/Protective Factor model and the Protective/Protective Factor model that underpin the interventions of narrative therapy.

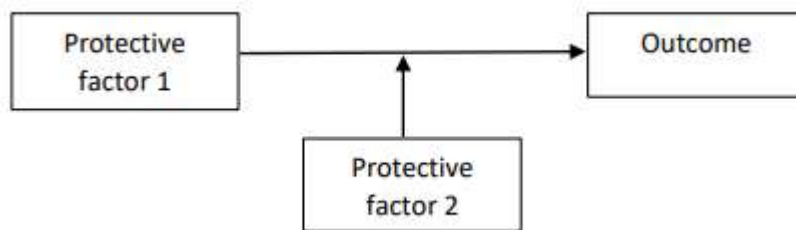
Figure 1: Risk/Protective Factor Model



Source: Brook, Brook et al. (1990) in Zimmerman and Arunkumar (1994)

In Risk/Protective Factor model the protective factor is supposed to interact with the impact of risk factor instead of directly influencing the outcome of the child (resilience to violent extremism in this case). Whereas, the Protective/Protective Factor model shows that the addition of both protective factors has a greater impact on child's outcome than each may have separately (Zimmerman and Arunkumar 1994).

Figure 2: Protective/Protective Factor Model



Source: Zimmerman and Arunkumar (1994)

Research Design

Various researchers from different fields of research use numerous types of experimental research designs. For example, the true experimental design; to compare two groups after manipulation, Solomon four-group design; to compare four groups (2 control, 2 experimental), quasi experimental design; for multiple experiments, and pre-experimental designs. Among other types of pre-experimental research designs the one group pre-test, post-test experimental research design (Gay, Mills et

al. 2009, Creswell and Clark 2017) was used in this research endeavour. The one group pre-test, post-test design involves a single group that is pretested, then exposed to certain treatment, and lastly tested again (Gay, Mills et al. 2009).

Participants of the Study

Participants of the study included 10th grade students of Government High School Sangoraka, Tehsil Sahiwal, District Sargodha. The participants of the study were selected due two fundamental reasons.

One, that the “Resilience encompasses a process of learning and adaptation” (Van Metre 2016) P-10, and schools are the best places for this purpose. In the wake of current upsurge of Violent Extremism, the schools, over the globe, have risen to support the children’s development of Resilience to Violent Extremism by providing appropriate interventions. The in practice successful interventions within schools for promoting Resilience tend to increase protective factors, decrease risk factors or both and reshaping the attitudes/beliefs of students thereby. Research into the effectiveness of these interventions recommends that the early intervention programs (e.g., during schooling) that develop protective factors among students, are possibly more effective than the programs that aim to reduce the risk factors (Duckhouse 2016).

Moreover, the school education has been the central to the research work conducted in connection with the Countering Radicalization and Preventing Violent Extremism particularly after 9/11. It is evident from the work of Sjøen and Jore (2019) who reviewed the post 9/11 literature on Preventing Violent Extremism. They reported that 17, out of 23, research studies were conducted at school level across the globe during this period authenticating the significance of research in school context.

Secondly, that one of the research assistants in this study was the head of that school who could better facilitate this process.

Research Instruments

A self-report rating scale was used to assess students’ vulnerability to violent extremism by measuring their attitude. The rating scale was developed on the basis of the fundamental definition of Violent Extremism brought forward by UNESCO (Choi 2016, United Nations Educational and Organisation 2016, UNESCO 2017), and, in the light of the related literature covering its psychological aspects (Horgan 2004, Silke 2005) and contextual sensitivity (Duckhouse 2016).

The rating scale was adapted from Peracha, Ayub et al. (2017). The process of adapting the scale involved several steps. Firstly, the literature on violent extremism and its prevention was reviewed which provided the foundation for understanding the nature of violent extremism and the latest preventive approaches and techniques which the practitioners in the field are using (Horgan 2004, Silke 2005, Lakhani 2012, Lowndes and Thorp 2012, Borum 2014, Choi 2016, Duckhouse 2016, UNESCO 2017).

The factors of violent extremism emerged from the literature led the whole succeeding process of finding relevant scales that could measure secondary school students' vulnerability to violent extremism. During literature review numerous germane scales were identified like: generic scales on i) Endorsement of Extremism ii) Acceptance of Violent and/or Illegal Means (Ozer and Bertelsen 2018) iii) The Building Resilience against Violent Extremism (BRAVE-14) Scale (Brisson, Gerrand et al. 2017) iv) Youth Extremism Scale (YES) or otherwise named as Violent Extremism Disposition Scales (VEDS)- a blend of eleven mutually exclusive scales (Davydov 1993) and v) Violent Extremism Beliefs Scale (VEBS)- an indigenously developed and validated scale (Peracha, Ayub et al. 2017). The researchers gone through these scales keeping in view the various dimensions of the construct in Pakistani context. After that these scales were presented before the panel of experts for the examination and seeking expert opinion on them. On the basis of the experts' opinion, it was found that the first two scales were although developed especially for secondary school students yet they were very much generic in nature, validated in Canadian and Spanish context, and were too short to cover all aspects of violent extremism. The third scale (BRAVE-14) was well constructed and rigorously validated but had the same weakness of first two scales i.e., too short and generic in nature and inconsistent with Pakistani context as it was validated on Canadian and Australian samples. The fourth scale (VEDS) was relatively more extensive covering a relatively wider range of factors of violent extremism. It encompassed 11 mutually exclusive scales however it had several technical deficiencies e.g., providing no empirical evidence for its validation. In more precise terms, it just presented a schema of the tool with a brief description of each factors. The fifth scale (VEBS) however proved to be relatively more relevant to the construct, fair in length, and offering better coverage of different factors of violent extremism. Additionally, it was formulated and validated in Pakistan. Hence this scale was adapted for the present study.

It was again discussed with the experts with respect to social constructivist postulation. This was done due to certain reasons. Firstly, this tool was validated in 2017, four years back, when terrorist activities were common in the country while in 2021 the country witnessed a massive decline in these activities. Secondly, the tool was validated on the sample taken from the participants of de-radicalization programme who have been involved in terrorist activities whereas presently it was going to be used on students just to detect their vulnerability to violent extremism. Thirdly, during this period a global paradigm shift had been found in the field – from the notion of countering-terrorism to preventing violent extremism (Choi 2016, Fonseca and Rosen 2017, UNESCO 2017). This change in the context called for contextualization of the scale so that informants can better understand its items and respond them accordingly. Social constructivist approach informed that the mental processes maintain social origins which are mediated by certain tools and signs (the shaping mechanisms) and can be fully understood with respect to their sociocultural context. These tools (physical artifacts for example) and signs (language concepts for example) are bound by cultural beliefs and practices that govern the ways as to how the individuals perceive the phenomenon and interact in their own context (Vygotsky 1980, Wertsch 1985, Lantolf 2006, Valsiner 2007).

The actual tool (VEBS) consisted 30 items. Among them 4 items were deleted which either were found irrelevant or very sensitive to students' religious belief system. Fifty percent of the remaining 26 items (i.e., 13 items) of the questionnaire were either rewritten, rephrased or minutely changed. Moreover, some important demographic variables were added to achieve the objectives of the study more fully. As the respondents of the study were secondary school students and there was a threat that they could find the scale items difficult to understand or misunderstand them otherwise. Hence, to avoid any kind of bottle neck, the tool was translated in Urdu and a bilingual version of it was used so that the students could understand the items in their true perspective and provide quality data (Erkut, Alarcón et al. 1999, Potaka and Cochrane 2004).

Process of the Experimentation

The one group pre-test post-test experimental design was used to carry out this study. The experiment was conducted at Government High School Sangoraka, Tehsil Sahiwal, district Sargodha. The 10th grade students of the said school were taken as participants of the study. The

students were pre-tested on adapted VEBS (Violent Extremism Beliefs Scale).

After pre-test, the students underwent narrative therapy treatment for four weeks (18th January to 13th February, 2021). During the treatment it was ensured that the students could not identify that they were being treated as vulnerable students.

The process of Narrative Therapy was completed in two steps.

Step-1:

Underlying 'risk factors' (conflict ridden family environment, acute inferiority complex, negative thinking, impulsive behaviour), and 'protective factors' (students' determination to their study, positive thinking, consistency, confidence in their abilities, being energetic and hardworking students etc.) of students' narrative were identified. The identification of students' 'risk factors' and 'protective factors' was made on the basis of pre-test results and group discussion with their parents and teachers. Their shared 'risk factors' and 'protective factors' were enlisted to formulate the action plan for step-2.

Step-2:

During step-2 of the study students were given treatment to promote their resilience to violent extremism by enhancing their 'protective factors' and reducing the effect of 'risk factors'. This process involved three type of strategies; i) Teaching modules ii) Outsider witness practice, and iii) Definitional ceremonies. During this 4-week treatment Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Friday were reserved for teaching modules while Wednesday and Saturday were kept for 'outsider witness practice' and 'definitional ceremonies' respectively as under:

- 16 teaching modules, representing the four indicators of the construct and 25 complimentary indicators, were used according to above schedule.
- One session of '**outsider witness practice**' (Morgan 2000, Walther and Fox 2012) per week (inviting significant others such as parents and teacher to contribute into the therapeutic conversation) was scheduled for the change of narrative in this case.
- The above strategies were also supplemented by the '**definitional ceremonies**'— a structured set of conversations in which adults bring their own experiences of being successful to battle a problem; with the focus on strength and ability rather than the problem (White, Wijaya et al. 1990, Myerhoff 2007).

This was how the researcher enriched students’ narrative by spotlighting their ‘protective’ factors (the strengths or abilities) by externalizing the problem — firmly locating the problem as external to the children.

In this way, the problem became the problem separate from the student and the student’s relationship with it was seen as a problem and addressed as above.

The intensity of risk factors started gradually declining and protective factors gradually inclining

After four weeks the student was close to normal, at his point the post test was conducted on the same scale. The collected data were analysed by applying paired-samples t-test to see the difference of mean of their responses.

Ethical and Social Consideration / Approvals

As the study required building therapeutic relationships with the participants and gaining the trust of their parents and teachers which called for multifaceted ethical considerations. Informed consent was sought from each student, their parents and from the authorities of school education department (the head teacher concerned). The participants and other relevant persons were assured about the confidentiality of their personal information and the findings of the study. Moreover, all safeguards were taken into consideration to protect the participants of the study from any possible harm which may befall any of them at any stage of the experiments. Importantly, while communicating with the participants during narrative therapy special care was taken to avoid any sort of psychological harm.

Results of the Study

Table 1 Effectiveness of Narrative Therapy in Promoting Students’ Resilience to Violent Extremism

Level of Vulnerability	Violent Extremism	Religious Power Violence and Extremism	Extent of negative Thinking	Power Politics	Risk-taking and Impulsive Behaviour
Pre-test	3.57	3.28	4.12	3.00	3.88
Post-test	2.55	2.60	2.48	2.80	2.32
Mean Gain Score	-1.02	-0.68	-1.64	-0.20	-1.56

Table 1 shows that the mean gain score was calculated to check the effectiveness of narrative therapy in promoting students’ resilience to violent extremism. The lesser mean gain score in post-test as compared

to pre-test reveals that the students are less vulnerable to violent extremism after undergoing the narrative therapy. Hence, the mean gain scores confirmed that the narrative therapy is effective in promoting students' resilience to violent extremism.

Conclusion and Implications;

The mean gain scores show the effectiveness of the narrative therapy in promoting students' resilience to violent extremism. Present study provides an alternative way for promoting resilience in students against violent extremism vis-a-vis several other recent and traditional techniques. As the present study was conducted on secondary school students it follows that the policy makers, and authorities of school education department may initiate it in other secondary schools of the Punjab as part of the formal teaching learning activities to avoid students' vulnerability to violent extremism at large. It necessitates teachers' training on how to execute narrative therapy techniques to equip them with the skills needed to produce resilient students by reshaping their narrative. The findings may help parents and social activists to understand that as to how resilience against violent extremism can be developed in the society.

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