

ANALYSE THE SOCIAL CAUSES OF AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE THAT YOU HAVE STUDIED (12)

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

8K +4A

Knowledge

One example of a social cause of terrorism is Islamophobia. Islamophobia is defined as the 'dread or hatred of Islam and therefore, the fear and dislike of all Muslims'. In February 2018, it was reported that the number of Islamophobic hate crimes in London had soared by almost 40% in that year.

Knowledge

The Finsbury Park Mosque attack of June 2017 is an example of Islamophobic terrorism where several worshippers were struck by a hired van driven by Darren Osborne, a 47-year-old man from Cardiff. A witness reported that Osborne shouted '*I want to kill all Muslims*' before he was intercepted by onlookers and the police.

Analysis

This is significant because it shows that a social cause of terrorism is hatred of other religions. When some people, such as Osborne, feel that their culture is under threat this may lead to such individuals carrying out terror attacks as they believe that it is the only way to defend their way of life.

Knowledge

Another social cause of terrorism is targeted radicalisation particularly online. Some terror groups have targeted individuals that they believe they will be able to radicalise and carry out terror attacks on their behalf. Groups such as ISIL use the internet to engage vulnerable people in their ideas and encourage them to carry out atrocities in their own nations.

Knowledge

Social media is used to recruit, radicalise and raise funds. The attraction of social media tools is that they are cheap and accessible; identities can be hidden using encryption tools. ISIL have been known to use social media to recruit and inspire future jihadists. The Taliban has been active on Twitter since May 2011 and has many thousands of followers. The group tweets frequently, on some days nearly hourly.

Knowledge

The UK Government reported in 2015 that ISIL uses social media to incite radicalisation and support for the group. Images suggesting an exciting life are shared with the post description, '*Baqiyah wa-Tatamaddad*' (remaining and expanding) which presents the group as one that consistently achieves success.

Knowledge

Instagram is used by ISIL supporters and fighters to share photos frequently produced by various ISIL media organisations. ISIL supporters also use Instagram to share pictures of their life in Syria, often showing landscapes and images suggesting they are living a full and happy life. Hashtags are used to create a buzz and following.

Analysis

This is significant because it shows that some terror groups use social media to groom individuals to commit acts of terror in their name. Some groups such as ISIL promise those looking for a social identity and a sense of belonging the opportunity to become martyrs. Martyrs become heroes who are publicly celebrated and recognised on the Internet. This means that this terror group uses martyrdom as a powerful tool to convince their targets that the cause of ISIL is worth suffering and dying for.

Knowledge

An absence of social identity may result in an individual developing feelings of frustration with their society, government or country and this may be another social cause of terrorism. In 2011, Anders Breivik committed an act of terror. He was responsible for the deaths of 77 people after planting a car bomb in Oslo and opening fire on a large number of young people at a political camp. It has been reported that he is an individual who had become extremely isolated from society.

Knowledge

It has been reported by that Breivik was a dedicated online gaming enthusiast. Lengthy periods of time playing games resulted in him being isolated from friends and relatives. The subject of these games may have also contributed to his violence terroristic act. Breivik admitted that multiplayer role-playing fantasy games was practically his entire occupation for a whole year. He was also an active participant in online forums focused on far right or anti-Muslim views.

Analysis

This is significant because it shows a direct correlation between a lack of social identity and social isolation and terrorism. It could be argued that people that are in search of a group to belong to and have extreme political or religious views can find like-minded people online. With the ease of communication that the Internet offers, it would be fair to suggest that some people can easily find sympathy for even extreme views online and believe that they are justified.

Analysis

Overall, it would be valid to state that social factors are one of the most significant causes of international terrorism. It could be argued that social factors have the most impact and have caused some of the most deadly lone-wolf attacks in recent years in the UK. Sometimes when people feel that they are not listened to, fear other groups or faiths or feel as though they do not belong, they can be more at risk of targeted radicalisation. However, not all people facing such social issues become radicalised and commit acts of terror. Research has shown that when social factors are combined with political grievances, terror attacks can be more common.