

Reactions to Terrorism and Radicalization Processes in the Netherlands

Bertjan Doosje, University of Amsterdam

Abstract

Radicalization processes and terrorism have become important topics in psychology (and in the media). Part 1 of this presentation focuses on the reactions to terrorist attacks, for example after the death of Theo van Gogh. In a series of 3 studies we show that Islamic and non-Islamic people in the Netherlands respond differently in terms of perceived typicality of the perpetrators and how this affects attributions of responsibility to the whole group to which the perpetrator belongs. Part 2 focuses on radicalization process among Dutch Muslim youth (N=131). We hypothesize that this process is driven by three factors: (a) personal uncertainty, (b) perceived injustice, and (c) perceived group threat. Using Structural Equation Modeling, we demonstrate that these three factors are important determinants of a radical belief system (e.g., perceived superiority of Muslims, perceived illegitimacy of Dutch authorities, perceived distance to others, and a feeling of being socially disconnected). This radical belief system in turn predicts endorsement of violence by other Muslims and own violent intentions. Implications for intergroup relations in the Netherlands are discussed.