

## Significance of Teaching Counter-Terrorism in the UK Mosques

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### Abstract:

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There is no doubt that terrorism is a world issue which has affected the whole of mankind in general, but Muslims all over the world have been troubled by it at large. Due to the misrepresentation of Islamic Qur'anic text and Prophetic narrations, young Muslims have been prey to being brainwashed in the hands of people who want to misuse them for their own political activities. In order to protect our young generation, it is important that the true concept of Islam and the counter-terrorism aspect of Islam is instilled within our young generation. This paper looks into the research carried out on the importance of teaching peace and counter-terrorism in the UK mosques by exploring the perception of UK mosque members about this. This study will also look into what curriculum UK mosques are using, whether it incorporates any counter-terrorism studies or not.

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**Keywords:** radicalization, peace, love, UK mosque curriculum, teaching counter-terrorism, the true concept of Islam

### Introduction:

There are many dimensions to why Muslims are in the limelight in the emergence of terrorism since 9/11. One of the dimensions of the issue is that the so-called terrorists have been claiming to be Muslims and have used Qur'anic verses and narrations of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to legitimize their inhumane atrocities. They validate their practices by using the term 'Jihad', therefore, they alter, twist and obscure the Islamic concept of Jihad (Tahir-ul-Qadri, M. 2010, p. 3). In another dimension, the terrorists use the Qur'anic texts wrongfully by twisting the meanings and brainwash, radicalize and take on young Muslims as part of their campaign (Minhaj.org 2015). Another major aspect of this issue which has struck the west, is that usually extremists and terrorists are notably recognized to be from the Middle East or East-Asia causing atrocities in the west, but the term 'homegrown terrorists' has emerged where Western grown young Muslims have been involved in such atrocities in the West (Beutel, 2007, p.3), or they have decided to migrate and join extremist organizations such as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

Various opinions suggest causes of terrorism, such as economic deprivation, modernization strain, political transformation and identity clash (Krieger & Meierrieks 2014). But one thing is for sure that Islam is being manipulated, and the situation is specifically making some young Muslims become victims to doubts and reservations created by them (Tahir-ul-Qadri, 2010, p. 3), which then opens them to be radicalized, and to become extremists and terrorists. This paper will explore literature about young British Muslims becoming radicalized and joining terrorist groups such as ISIS, it will also look into what work is being done in terms of de-radicalizing and countering terrorism so that young British Muslims do not become brainwashed, and more importantly, this paper will explore the perception of UK Mosque committees in terms of their perception about teaching counter-terrorism in their mosques and also explore the content of their current curriculum.

### 2. Radicalization of Young Muslims

Since the beginning of the millennium, Muslims had to face a whole new change in the way they lived their lives in the west. If a Muslim worked in an office with mix raced people whilst having a beard, praying at work, mingled with non-Muslims etc., everyone was fine with it, and no issues came to light. The same is with a Muslim woman; if she was wearing a scarf and a face covering and went to a shopping mall for shopping, there was never any feeling of hostility. However, the atrocity of 11 September 2001 changes the mindset of people living in the west. Muslims faced difficulties in their life at work and life in their neighborhood.

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The author of this research has also had firsthand experience during his travels from one city to another soon after this tragic event. People would feel hostile to even sit next to a person with a beard or who looked like a Muslim. It was an era of time where terrorism had started to be bracketed with terrorism. This section will sequentially mention terroristic events that started from 11th September 2001 up until the present time, describing the perpetrators, their terroristic act and their backgrounds, so one clearly view this in the light of Quran and Prophetic Traditions, to see if their actions were in line with the teachings of Quran and Prophetic Traditions or not.

The terrorism act which took place on 11th September 2001, involved hijacking of four commercial planes by 19 men. They were all found to be affiliated with Al-Qaeda. Out of the 19 men, 15 were Saudi nationals, two UAE nationals, one Egyptian and one Lebanese. Two out of the four airplanes were crashed into the twin towers of the world trade centre in New York, one was crashed into the western side of the pentagon, and the fourth plane was crashed into a field. An interesting point to mention is that all of the 19 men who were involved were quite young. The youngest was 20 years of age and the eldest was 33 years of age. Out of 19 men, 14 of them are either age of 25 years or younger. This is very significant as one can see that this terrorist act has been carried out by very young men. This act of terrorism caused 2977 innocent lives as well as over 6000 injuries. The responsibility of this terrorism committed on 11th September 2001 was owned by Al-Qaeda (“Hijackers in the September 11 attacks”, 2021).

Soon after the atrocities of 9/11 in 2001, another terrorist attack was planned by a person known as Richard Colvin Reid. This planned attack is famously known as the ‘2001 shoe bomb attempt’. Mr Reid was a British national and spent some time in prison for street robberies. He accepted Islam whilst in prison. Later on, he became radicalized and went to Afghanistan for training and became a member of Al-Qaeda. He planned a bomb attack on American Airlines Flight 63, which had 197 passengers flying from Paris to Miami in the US. His bomb attempt failed, which was concealed within his shoes, and was held in control by the passengers until the plane landed, which was escorted by jetfighters. He was then arrested and sentenced. At the time of carrying this incident, Mr Reid was only 28 years old. If he was successful in his attempt of denoting the bomb, there 200 innocent lives would have been lost. When looking at the picture of Mr Richard, one can see him wearing a religious outlook, including a beard (“Richard Reid,” 2021).

Another deadly terrorist attack took place in the heart of the UK on 7th July 2005. This day involved was a series of suicide bombings which killed a large number of people. The bombs which were used were homemade, three of which were detonated in London underground on Circle line near Aldgate, Edgware Road and on the Piccadilly line near Russell Square. The fourth bomb was detonated on a double-decker bus in Tavistock Square. There were four people involved, all linked to the Al-Qaeda and all were British nationals born in the UK. Three of them had Pakistani origin and one has a West Indian origin. The age of the suicide bombers were 18, 19, 22 and 30. The point to note is that all of them are very young and all are grown up in the UK. These attacks caused 52 innocent lives who were all UK residents from 18 different nationalities, and there were more than 700 injuries. A video was released on Al-Jazeera News by Mohammed Siddique Khan, one of the bombers of this deadliest attack, in which he addresses the UK government rationalizing why he is targeting the UK with his terrorist attack. He explains that Muslims all over the world are suffering and the UK government are directly involved through their policies. The video concludes saying that “we are at war and I am a soldier” (“7 July 2005 London bombings”, 2021).

Below is a table listing of some of the terrorist attacks which have been carried out and the responsibilities that have been claimed by Al-Qaeda.

Table 2.1 Terrorist Attacks by Al-Qaeda

| Title of Attack                            | Date                | Additional Details  |
|--|---------------------|---|
| 2005 Baghdad bombings                      | 14th September 2005 | More than a dozen terrorist attacks carried out in Baghdad                  |
| Bombings of the Danish Embassy in Pakistan | 2nd June 2008       | It was a response to the 2005 publication of the cartoons                   |
| The Battle of Wanat                        | 13th July 2008      | NATO Troops were attacked   |
| Marriot Hotel Bombing in Pakistan          | 20th September 2008 | A truck bomb killed 54 people   |
| Baghdad Bombings                           | 25th October 2009   | Attacks killed 155 people and 721 injured                                   |
| Camp Chapman Attack                        | 30th December 2009  | 7 CIA Officers were killed  |
| Iraq Attacks                               | 10th May 2010       | Over 100 people killed and 350 injured                                      |
| Bombing of German bakery in India          | 13th February 2010  | 17 people were killed and 60 or more injured                                |
| The In Amenad Hostage Crisis               | 16th January 2013   | 800 people kept hostage in Amenad Algeria. 39 foreign hostages were killed. |

(Wikipedia 2021)

After looking into the above atrocities, which have been carried out by people claiming to be Muslims and their affiliation being linked to Al-Qaeda, it is important to mention here that the founder of Al-Qaeda network, Osama Bin Laden, was killed on 2nd of May 2011. We can see that the terrorist activities of Al-Qaeda are near to non-existence after the killing of Osama Bin Laden, but something for everyone to think about is, as soon as Al-Qaeda declined, another terrorist organization known as ISIS raised its head. How did they do that? Were there any international powers involved to support them? These questions are for the reader to think about, this paper will not discuss them as the focus of this section is to highlight the terrorist activities that have been committed by misusing the name of Islam and also to look at the characteristics of the terrorists involved and see what Islam has to say about such people.

When we look at the history of ISIS, we know that it was founded in 1999 by a person known as Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi. ISIS is known by many other names, such as ISIL, which stands for the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant, ISIS which stands for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and is also known by the name of Daesh. Although ISIS was found in 1999, it picked up global awareness in 2014 when it forced the Iraqi government out of certain cities and when it captured Mosul and also after carrying out the Sinjar massacre. ISIS self-proclaimed itself to be an Islamic State since then and have been inviting people to join it from all over the world ("Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant", 2021).

Around 30,000 people have joined ISIS from abroad to become fighters, and they have come from around 85 countries. The majority of these fighters come from Middle Eastern countries, but there is a large number of people who have come from western countries too, such as the European Union, Australia, Canada, and the USA. There have also been a large number of people who have joined from Indonesia and Russia (Benmelech et al., 2016). Barrett & Soufan Group (2014) have provided data in which they have ranked countries based on the number of its citizens who have joined ISIS and have become ISIS fighters. The data shows that people from Tunisia has the highest number of people who have joined ISIS to fight, which is an estimate of 6000. Then it displays around 2500 people from Saudi Arabia have joined ISIS to fight. Then around 2400 people from Russia have joined, around 2100 people from Turkey, around 2000 people from Jordan, and from the western countries, there are around 1700 people from France, around 760 from Germany, and around 470 people from Belgium.

James Comey, who is a FBI director, stated a reason why people go and join ISIS He states that to gain experience in the battlefield and to also have an increase to elements of violent extremist, foreign fighters set off to Syria and Iraq so that they can make use of these skills to carry out an attack on their homeland, such as the United States (United States 2014). It is unfortunate that this is the reality where thousands of young Muslims are brainwashed and are being recruited. Even the household members are not aware of what their family members are up to. There have been so many incidents that reflect this. Barrett & Soufan Group (2014) asserts that a family only finds out that their member of the family has gone to Syria when someone dies, either through a phone call made by a friend of the fighter or through news which has been published on social media (p. 12)

As this study is focusing on the UK Mosques, this section will look into some of the British nationals who have left the UK and joined ISIS. This would give an insight into the issue at hand, which is young Muslims are vulnerable to becoming radicalized and brainwashed.

A young girl known as Shamima Begum was only 15 years old when she left the UK and fled to Syria to join ISIS. She was born in the UK, and her parents were Bangladeshi. She grew up in London, where she received her secondary education at the Bethnal Green Academy. She left the UK in February 2015 along with her friends Amira Abase and Khadiza Sultana. When she reached Syria, she got married to a Dutch-born man called Yago Riedijk, who was a convert to Islam. She gave birth to three children, but all three children died young. Begum appeared before the media in February 2019, where she expressed to come back to the UK for the birth of her child. The UK government were looking into stripping Mrs Begum from her UK citizenship, but there has been a debate around the matter in terms of the legality of doing so (“Shamima Begum”, 2021).

Another person called Mohammed Emwazi but famously known as ‘Jihadi John’ was a British Citizen and moved to the UK when he was six years old in 2006, he attended the University of Westminster studying Business management. He travelled to Syria in 2013 to join ISIS, and at that time he was 25 years old. Mohammed Emwazi was believed to be in many videos in which showed the beheading of a number of captives in 2014 and 2015. It is said that he read out statements before beheading the captives demanding to cease the 2014 American-led intervention in Iraq. Mohammed Emwazi was killed on 12th of November 2015 through a drone attack (“Jihadi John”, 2021).

A young girl at the age of 20 called Aqsa Mahmood from Glasgow also went to Syria to join ISIS in 2013. She was known for her social media and blogs, where she praised Tunisia and France attacks. She frequently called out for young British women to travel to Syria to join ISIS. She was given a leading role in enforcing the ISIS interpretation of Shariah Law. Enforcement included arresting and beating women for going out without a male guardian and lashes for not wearing modest clothes. Another young girl called Grace Dare, who was 24 years old and a British national, also fled for Syria in 2012. She was originally Christian and then later accepted Islam in her teens. She became quite active on social media, where she celebrated the beheading of James Foley and vowed to be the first UK women to kill a UK or US terrorist (Dearden 2014).

A group of sisters who were British nationals living in Bradford also joined ISIS in 2015. The three sisters were known as Khadijah, Zohra and Sugra. Their ages were 30, 33 and 34. They went to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage along with their nine children, and on their way back, they boarded a flight to Istanbul and crossed Syria instead of coming back to the UK. The sister had a brother called Ahmed Dawood, who was already in Syria working for ISIS. The children were five girls and four boys aged between 3 and 15 when they left. Two men who are the husband of the two sisters have pleaded for them to come back, but nothing has been heard from them (Dearden 2019).

The above are some of the examples from hundreds of British young people who have fled the UK and joined ISIS in Syria. It is unfortunate to see young people being influenced and brainwashed into joining a cause which is alleged to be Islamic but in reality has nothing to do with Islam. Below is a table to show some of the terrorist attacks ISIS have carried out under the name of Islam and have killed so many innocent lives.

Table 2.2 Terrorist Attacks by ISIS

| Title of Attack                            | Date   | Additional Details   |
|--|--------|--|
| Jewish Museum of Belgium shooting          | 14-May | A man known as Mehdi Nemmouche open fired. Four people died  |
| 2014 Endeavour Hills stabbings (Australia) | 14-Sep | Two counter-terrorism police officers stabbed  |
| 2014 Australian counter-terrorism raids    | 14-Sep | 15 people were detained after planning to kidnap a random Australian citizen and execute them, two died.   |
| 2014 shootings at Parliament Hill, Ottawa  | 14-Oct | Soldier standing guard at National War Memorial shot dead. Gunman storms Parliament. Security officer shot in leg trying to take gun from perpetrator.   |
| Bardo National Museum attack (Tunisia)     | 15-Mar | Mass shooting and hostage-taking of foreign tourists at the Bardo National Museum, 22 killed and 50 injured.   |
| 2015 Diyarbakır rally bombing              | 15-Jun | NT bombing targeting a rally of the Peoples' Democratic Party, 4 died and over 100 injured.  |
| 2015 Sousse attacks                        | 15-Jun | Mass shooting targeting western tourists at a hotel in Port El Kantaoui 10 kilometres north of Sousse, 38 killed and 39 injured.   |
| 2015 Ankara bombings                       | 15-Oct | Suicide bombing targeting protesters at a peace rally, 103 died and over 400 injured.  |
| November 2015 Paris attacks                | 15-Nov | Shootings, suicide bombings, grenade, hostage taking, 131 died and 413 injured.  |
| 2016 Brussels bombings                     | 16-Mar | Suicide bombers attacked a metro station and an airport, 32 killed and 340 injured.  |
| Orlando nightclub shooting                 | 16-Jun | 29-year-old Omar Mateen killed 49 people and wounded 53 others in a mass shooting inside Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, 49 people died and 53 were injured.                                 |
| 2016 Nice truck attack (France)            | 16-Jul | Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, a 31 year old from Tunisia, deliberately drove a 19 tonne cargo truck into crowds celebrating Bastille Day on Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, 86 died and 434 injured. |
| 2017 Westminster attack (UK)               | 17-Mar | Car plows through crowd gathered outside of Westminster Palace before assailant stabbed police officer to death, 6 died and 49 injured.  |
| Manchester Arena bombing                   | 17-May | Suicide bombing targeting concertgoers at the Manchester Arena at the end of an Ariana Grande concert, 22 died and 59 injured.   |
| 2017 London Bridge attack                  | 17-Jun | Van drives into pedestrians on London Bridge before three men emerge and stab people in nearby bars and restaurants, 8 died and 48 injured.  |
| 2017 Barcelona attack                      | 17-Aug | Van hits several pedestrians after jumping sidewalk in La Rambla, 16 died and 152 injured.   |
| 2019 Jolo Cathedral bombings (Philippines) | 19-Jan | 22 people, were killed and 102 others were injured when two bombs exploded in a cathedral during Sunday mass in Jolo, Philippines.   |

("List of terrorist incidents linked to ISIL", 2021)

After exploring the above literature, it is quite evident that young Muslims, especially young British Muslims have been involved in terroristic activities. The question is, is there any effort by the Muslims in the UK to prevent this? In order to explore this, it is important to understand that there two main places where counter-terrorism in the Islamic context can be taught to Muslims in the UK at a young age, they are state schools, faith schools and mosques.

### 3. Islamic Education

#### 3.1 Islamic Education in UK Schools

Islamic Education System in UK State Schools

A basic curriculum for Religious Studies has to be provided in all maintained school in England as it is part of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. However, in regards to the way RE is taught, when it is taught and how much time should be spent on each subject, the schools are free to choose (Great Britain 2010). This is due to the diverse background of the pupils who are studying at the school. Depending on the religious and cultural background of the pupils, the local authority specifies the subjects for the RE curriculum. So if an area is predominantly Christian, then the RE curriculum will be based around the religion Christianity. If the school is predominantly of Muslims, then there will be an option of choosing Islam as part of the RE curriculum at that school, as long as the local authority makes sure that the syllabus that has been agreed for their area is in line with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996; it wants the syllabus to reflect that the Great Britain's religious tradition is Christian as the main when dealing with teaching and practices of the other principal religions that are in Great Britain' (Great Britain 2010).

After understanding how RE is compulsory in maintained schools in the UK and how the subject Islam becomes part of it, let's now discuss the approach of Islamic education under the banner of RE curricula. So wherever Muslims are in a large population, schools will have the option of choosing Islam as part of their RE subject. Sometimes the subject can be combined with another religion. Nevertheless, when we look at the subject of Islam, the approach is quite the opposite to what the approach of teaching Islam at an Islamic school, mosques and Islamic centres.

The Islamic subject under RE, are not taught in terms of equipping you with convincing arguments about Islam, how Islam is a true and final religion given by Allah (SWT), how Islam has closed the doors for any more prophets to come, how Islam is superior to any other religion, but rather it is taught as a subject filled with information, filled with an argument for and against, opening doors for discussion and giving your own opinion. To understand this further, when a non-Muslim is teaching Islam, what Islam will you learn? It will be mere information accompanied by many doubts and questions. So it would not be wrong to say in regards to the Islamic education in UK schools in the form of a component of Religious Education, is in no way similar to the Islamic education given in concentration to Muslim children in Islamic schools, mosques and Islamic centres. It is quite visible that there is no direct teaching of counter-terrorism as a subject in the light of Islam in the state schools.

### **3.2 Islamic Education System in UK Mosques and Islamic Schools**

After briefly discussing the approach to teaching Islam in maintained schools in the UK, the approach to teaching Islam in Islamic schools and mosques must clear, as the approach is quite the opposite to what is taught at UK maintained schools. The ultimate purpose of Islamic schools and mosques in the UK and all over the world is to provide Islamic teaching and guidance for people. Their aim is to give a concentration of knowledge to the seeker, to show him the true path and to get him connected to Allah (SWT) and His Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). When this is the aim, then certainly the approach to teaching will be quite the opposite of the approach adopted by the UK maintained school.

In the UK, there are over 1700 Mosques, Islamic schools and Islamic centres. Each one of them provides facilities to teach and educate the Muslims through the Islamic literature adopted from Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). The common curriculum of all of these mosques, Islamic schools and Islamic centres include subjects like; Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Seerah, Morals, Islamic history etc. The depth of each subject is taught in accordance with the ability and level of the student. Muslim parents who are concerned about their children being brought up in the UK society, have a strong tendency to make their children attend Islamic schools if they can afford it, and if that is not possible, then are keen to make their children attend a local mosque in the evenings when the child has returned from school.

Is counter-terrorism being taught in the UK Mosques, do the members of the UK Mosques consider teaching counter-terrorism as significant? In order to answer these questions, the following details are part of a large study exploring implementation of Islamic Curriculum on Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ICPC). The relevant data has been extracted for this paper.

## **4. Research Methodology**

The research approach adopted in this research is a mixed-methods approach using the convergent parallel design. The mixed-method approach incorporated involved quantitative method and qualitative method. The quantitative data collecting instrument was the form of a questionnaire which were asked by all the institutes which will be part of the selected sample. The qualitative data collecting instrument were in the form of semi-structured interviews which were conducted with a set number of institute members which will be selected from the sample. The population target were only the UK Mosques which are around about 1,750 (BBC 2016).

When selecting the sample size for this research, the free online calculator provided by Raosoft was used due to its ease of use and range of information automatically provided. When inserting the target population in the calculator, I kept the confidence interval low at 5% and the confidence level high at 95% to increase the accuracy of my data, although this would increase the sample size. When inserting the population target of 1750, the sample size of 316 mosques was given. This sample size was for the quantitative data method which is a questionnaire. For the qualitative data method, I decided to keep the sample size very small as the purpose is to triangulate the data with qualitative data. Therefore, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of mosques who have taken part in the questionnaire. To allow an equal chance for the population to be selected as part of the research, I used the probability sampling method.

As there are over 1750 mosques across the UK, drawing numbers out of a box was used so that I could ‘confidently generalize the findings to the sample universe “as each and every item in the population has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample” (Kothari, 2014, p.15). The relevant variables for this paper were

**Variable 1:** Mosque management attitude towards counter-terrorism

**Operational Definition:** The importance of counter-terrorism perceived by mosque committees

**Variable 2:** Counter-terrorism content reflected in Mosque curriculums

**Operational Definition:** Expressing the different themes which are taught in the Mosque curriculums that are considered to be part of counter-terrorism. Themes like, love, peace, human rights, serving humanity are considered to be part of counter-terrorism.

This study used primary research methods to gather the data. The collection of primary data was done through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires were administered to the 316 mosques by the researcher by the researcher. The semi-structured interviews were carried out directly by the researcher. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes and these interviews were recorded using a hand-held recorder. After the interviews, each interview were transcribed. The collected data were analysed carefully by using two software. For the quantitative data, IBM SPSS 2015 data analysis software was used which allowed statistical analysis of the data entered. For the qualitative data, the transcript of the interviews were prepared and then data were placed under themes. This was then transferred to excel for analysis.

## 5. Results and Analysis

### 5.1 Results and Analysis for Questionnaire

The following is the result and analysis of the selected data from the main research which is relevant to this paper.

Table 5.1 Importance of Teaching Counter-Terrorism to Youngsters

**Q1. Do you think it is important to teach counter-terrorism to youngsters?**

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes   | 259       | 82.0    | 82.0          | 82.0               |
|       | No    | 57        | 18.0    | 18.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 316       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table 5.1 shows that out of 316 respondents, 259 respondents shared that it is important to teach counter-terrorism to youngsters, whereas 57 respondents shared that it is not important to teach counter-terrorism to youngsters. Figure 5.1 represents the responses on the importance of teaching counter-terrorism to youngsters.

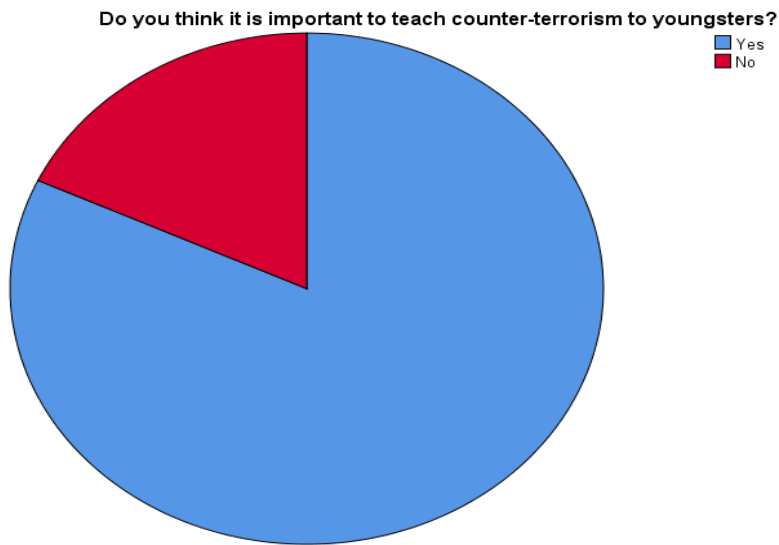


Figure 5.1 Importance of Teaching Counter-Terrorism to Youngsters

Table 5.2 Themes Reflected in the Curriculum

**Q2. Are any of the following themes covered in your curriculum: love, peace, human rights, serving humanity, counter-terrorism?**

|           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 316       | 100.0   | 100.0         | 100.0              |

Table 5.2 shows that all respondents shared that love, peace, human rights, serving humanity and counter-terrorism are covered in their curriculum. Figure 5.2 represents the response on themes covered in their curriculum.

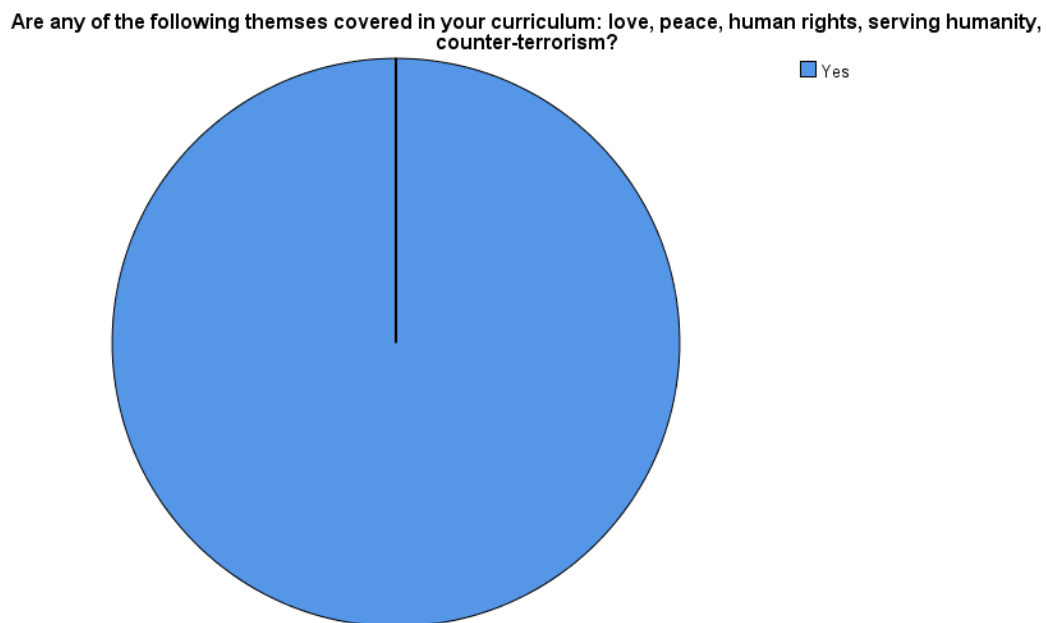


Figure 5.2

## 5.2 Results and Analysis for Semi-Structured Interviews

Theme 1: Counter-Terrorism Significance



This theme was generated by the comments of the participants in regards to their perception of how important it is to teach counter-terrorism. There were three categories formed when organizing this theme. Out of 15 participants, 10 of them expressed that teaching counter-terrorism to the young generation and community is very important. The following are some of their quotes, “terrorism is a problem which cannot be denied. Our children need to know how to deal with it. It is crucial to teach them and equip them against terrorism”, “the problem we are facing is that not enough is being done to tackle this issue (terrorism). Our community needs to be educated about this and how to deal with this problem. A lot of young people are affected and there has been news that they have gone to ISIS and join them. We need to do something about this before it is too late”. There were three participants who expressed that it is important to teach counter-terrorism. One of them stated, “I think it is important to teach our young generation about counter-terrorism as they should be able to recognize the issue and be able to deal with it”. There were two participants who expressed that teaching counter-terrorism is less important. One of them said, “I think there is not a major need to put a lot of effort in focusing on counter-terrorism”. The second person said, “The teachings of Qur’an and Sunnah are very explicit in their teachings. Terrorism has no link with Islam. Teaching this (counter-terrorism) as a separate subject is not important”.

## Theme 2: Themes Taught

When looking at the transcript which allowed me to choose this theme, the majority of the interviewees revealed that the theme of their curriculum are worship, manners, love, peace, dealings. Here are some of the quotes of participants indicating this, “our Islamic studies incorporate general rules about worship, manners and etiquettes, loving and caring for others as well highlighting the peaceful aspect of the Din”, “the courses cover different aspects to instill our students with etiquettes and manners of worship, looking out for rights of everyone, loving and taking care of everything around you”.

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Mosque management attitude towards counter-terrorism

When we look at the response recorded in table 5.1, we can see that out of 316 participants, 259 have responded with yes, which is 82 percent. When semi-structured interviews were carried out with 15 participants, they also expressed in regards to the importance of educating the coming generation and community about counter-terrorism, as mentioned earlier, 10 participants out of the 15 considered it to be very important, 3 participants considered it to be important and 2 participants considered it to be less important. Here are some of their quotes indicating it is very important, “terrorism is a problem which cannot be denied. Our children need to know how to deal with it. It is crucial to teach them and equip them against terrorism”, “the problem we are facing is that not enough is being done to tackle this issue (terrorism). Our community needs to be educated about this and how to deal with this problem. A lot of young people are affected and there has been news that they have gone to ISIS and join them. We need to do something about this before it is too late”. Here are some of the quotes indicating it is less important, “I think there is not a major need to put a lot of effort in focusing on counter-terrorism”, “The teachings of Qur’an and Sunnah are very explicit in their teachings. Terrorism has no link with Islam. Teaching this (counter-terrorism) as a separate subject is not important”.

### 6.2 Mosque management attitude towards counter-terrorism

In order to find a response to the question of whether or not the various themes of counter-terrorism is reflected in the existing curriculum of the mosques, they were asked to confirm whether the following themes are covered in the curriculum: love, peace, human rights, serving humanity, counter-terrorism. Table 5.2 shows that all 316 respondents responded yes confirming that these themes are covered. However, it is not clear whether all of these themes are covered or some of them.

However, it is not clear whether all of these themes are covered or some of them. We can derive an understanding by looking at the qualitative data in this regards. The data indicates that most of the participants have expressed some of the taught themes which have been mentioned in the questionnaire, such as peace, love, human rights, dealings etc. The results also indicate the possibility that a theme may be covered by some mosques and may not be by others. For example, only one participant from the interviewees mentioned human rights, but no one else did. The following is the quote of that participant “the courses cover different aspects to instil our students with etiquettes and manners of worship, looking out for rights of everyone, loving and taking care of everything around you”. Here is a quote from amongst those who did not mention human right, “our Islamic studies incorporate general rules about worship, manners and etiquettes, loving and caring for others as well

highlighting the peaceful aspect of the Din”. So this indicates that there is a high possibility that not all themes are covered by all the participants from the questionnaires and from the interviews.

## Conclusion

After carrying out this research, it is clearly evident that UK Mosques do consider the teaching of counter-terrorism for the youngsters as important. However, none of the Mosques that were part of the study showed that they are teaching counter-terrorism as a separate subject. There are some themes of counter-terrorism reflected in their current curriculum, but is it sufficient to protect the young generation from becoming radicalized and becoming brainwashed in the hands of extremists? This is something for the Muslim community to think about, and push for radical changes in the mosque education system to ensure and secure the safety of our young Muslim generation as well as instilling of the true concept of Islam.

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