HOME TEAM
JOURNAL

**BY PRACTITIONERS,
FOR PRACTITIONERS**

THE LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW
**COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
HOONG WEE TECK**

"In a crisis, you have to assume command, take responsibility and be accountable for the actions of your officers. … You have to be able to withstand pressure because during a crisis, everyone wants their interests to be met. You have to work cohesively as a team. No matter how experienced you are, you need people to do the running and tap on the expertise of others. … Most importantly – don't start blaming. Focus on resolving the crisis first."

DS (INT'L & TRAINING) RAJA KUMAR ON
BUILDING A CULTURE OF LEARNING IN THE HOME TEAM

FEMALE OFFENDERS
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CYBER VIGILANTES:
ONLINE JUSTICE OR REVENGE?

HOW WORRIED SHOULD WE BE ABOUT DEEPFAKES?

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PROTEST MOVEMENTS

HOME TEAM JOURNAL

The Home Team Journal is a publication by the Home Team Academy in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs of Singapore and its departments, which are collectively known as the Home Team. It is a journal by practitioners and researchers for practitioners and specialists in safety and security.

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Foreword

In today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambigious (VUCA) environment, leaders need to transform in order to lead effectively. First coined as an acronym in 1991 by the U.S. Army War College to characterise a global environment fraught with turbulence that its students would face as they took on increasingly strategic leadership positions, VUCA as a concept has gained new relevance to evoke the leadership skillsets required to successfully navigate an unpredictable world. Here at the Home Team Academy (HTA), we take pride in playing our part in developing the Home Team's leaders and ensuring that their training and learning is also transformative. To meet evolving learning needs, we drive the implementation of innovative training technologies, upskill our Home Team trainers to become leading specialists, and partner both local and international academic and industry experts in delivering our leadership programmes. These are just a handful of the ways HTA continuously improves our training and learning efforts to support our leaders, and the Home Team itself, in our transformation journey.

Continuing the conversation on transformation and leadership, we asked **Commissioner of Police Hoong Wee Teck** what drives him in **The Leadership Interview**. CP Hoong speaks with an authenticity that comes from practising what he believes in. In this first interview he has given since becoming CP in 2015, he talks to *Journal* Editor Susan Sim about the lessons he has learnt from the cases he has investigated over more than three decades of fighting crime, the ethos of public service that drive him, and the professional excellence that he demands of his officers. The Singapore Police Force may be 200 years old this year and enjoy the highest level of public trust in the world, but for CP Hoong, there is no room for complacency and living on past glories. I agree with him that good leaders must not only care for their people, they must also be fair and guided by moral values. Leaders like him play an important role in shaping organisational culture, especially as the ongoing transformation of the Home Team's capabilities requires fundamental changes in workplace learning.

This is a point that **Deputy Secretary (International and Training) Raja Kumar** illustrates vividly in his essay on "Building a Training and Learning Ecosystem in the Home Team". DS Raja began the journey of transforming training across the Home Team by changing mindsets and leveraging technology when he was Chief Executive of HTA from 2014 to September 2018. He initiated the appointment of Chief Learning Officers (CLOs) in each Home Team Department. As a recent *Harvard Business Review* article reminds us, CLOs in dynamic organisations are now responsible not just for training, but are also "embracing a more powerful role in which they reshape capabilities and organizational culture".[1] CLOs are the transformers who help their organisations and employees thrive during time of rapid changes.

The articles in this issue of the *Home Team Journal* also reflect the emerging threats challenging modern societies. As criminal syndicates, terrorist groups, protesters, and even domestic voyeurs and cyber vigilantes leverage technology and social media to commit crime, recruit and fund-raise for violent causes, rally flash mobs, or interfere with law enforcement, how do we gear up to deal with such threats? For a start, we can increase our knowledge of the forces and fault-lines that drive human behaviour, emerging technological trends, and the strategies that have worked for other societies.

Some of the articles in this issue were inspired by recent news headlines. Deepfakes, cyber vigilantes, radicalised youths, returning foreign fighters, criminal scams, mass protests – these are some of the threats to safety and security that have gripped the attention of Singaporeans in the past year. The *Journal* has thus invited the **Home Team's behavioural scientists, psychologists and research analysts, and experts from among our global partners** to share their insights and contribute articles on these issues.

I am also proud to share that this issue includes a special section on drugs and female offenders with articles contributed by our colleagues from the Central Narcotics Bureau and Singapore Prison Service. These articles aim to help us better understand the gender-specific factors that affect the behaviour and needs of young female offenders. This is a research field that is still developing and such insights are crucial for the exploration of more targeted intervention programmes and guidelines for working with female youth offenders.

As a new decade dawns, let me wish all readers a transformative year empowered by learning.

Clarence Yeo
Chief Executive, Home Team Academy

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[1] Lundberg, A., & Westerman, G. (2020). Transformer CLO. *Harvard Business Review*, January – February 2020, 84-93.

The Leadership Interview
with Hoong Wee Teck
Commissioner, Singapore Police Force

> *When I first joined the force, an instructor shared with me that life is a stretch of suffering, punctuated by moments of happiness. This resonated deeply with me. Life is not always going to be smooth sailing, but if you work hard, your efforts will eventually be rewarded. Fame and recognition are temporary. You cannot live on past glories.*

Ask those who have worked with Commissioner of Police (CP) Hoong Wee Teck what they like about his leadership style and the accolades come fast:

A tough, no-nonsense leader who at the same time is tempered by compassion and experience. ... Well-grounded, because he walks the ground and thus understands the men and their operational realities. ... Pragmatic in solving problems, unwavering and courageous in running operations. ... A leader you want in a crisis because he is calm and composed with a clarity of focus.

The CP himself prefers to maintain a low profile. In the first interview he has given since becoming CP in 2015, Hoong tells *Journal* Editor Susan Sim: "I don't like telling war stories to outsiders." War stories, he believes, should only be told in the context of sharing lessons learnt, to provide specific examples of leadership. And even then, he

is very sensitive to the human suffering that lies at the core of the police cases he has investigated, for even when a case is successfully closed, "not everyone gets full closure".

Joining the Singapore Police Force (SPF) straight out of university, Hoong has been a police officer 33 years, more than half of that time in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Police Intelligence Department. He has investigated or overseen investigations into a diversity of cases – kidnappings, firearms-related crimes, the Silk Air plane crash in Palembang, subway train breakdowns, the "Messiah" cyberattacks, the Little India riot[1], the Shane Todd suicide[2]. The experiences have framed his policing philosophy and leadership style, making him a hands-on leader who, he notes wryly, has been accused of micromanaging investigations. "But this is part of my DNA. I just want to participate," he protests quietly.

He is proud to be part of a 200-year-old police force keeping Singapore safe, and honoured to lead a team of more than 15,000 dedicated and committed officers. "We enjoy a high level of public trust and respect from the public, even though we work with one of the lowest police-to-population ratios in the world. This was the hard work by generations of police officers," he says, adding: "I am proud of my officers and our achievements, but we have to continue to build on our past successes. I am always thinking about how to get the job done and make it better," he says at the start of the Leadership Interview.

"It is not right"

Hoong has a very strong sense of right and wrong that applies even to what he will talk about. He volunteers no information about the cases he has handled unless asked directly about them.

One of his most important cases as an investigator was the Silk Air Flight MI 185 crash in December 1997 that killed all 104 people on board. Hoong was not involved in the immediate search and recovery efforts in the Indonesian city of Palembang, nor in the initial investigations into the crash led by the National Transportation Safety Committee (NTSC)

Career Highlights

Year	Highlights
1987 to 1988:	'C' Course at Police Academy
1989 to 2001:	Foundational postings and various appointments in CID, including Head Organised Crime, Assistant Director of Major Crime Division and Intelligence Division
2001 to 2003:	Deputy Director (Enforcement), Singapore Immigration & Registration Department
2003 to 2005:	Commander, Bedok Police Division
2005 to 2010:	Deputy Director and Director, Police Intelligence Department
2011 to 2013:	Director, CID
2013 to 2014:	Deputy Commissioner (Investigations & Intelligence) and concurrent Director CID
Since 2015:	Commissioner of Police

of Indonesia. However, when the NTSC suggested in an interim update in August 1999 that the crash could have been intentional, the Singapore police was asked to investigate if the incident was indeed a case of suicide-cum-murder.

As Assistant Director of the Major Crime Division (AD MCD) at CID, Hoong was tasked to lead a Singapore team. Asked about his role and how the case might have influenced his personal growth as a leader, Hoong recalls:

> *It was one of the most tragic aviation incidents in the history of Singapore…. I was involved as AD MCD two years after it happened. It was not easy, especially when the crash happened some time ago. In such investigations, you need a good team of officers, and the support of specialists in the relevant fields – engineers, pilots, psychologists, financial experts – and our foreign counterparts. The original investigation had taken place two years ago. Everything was already packed in the hangar, in crates and boxes. We did not know if we would be able to locate the witnesses and re-interview them.*
>
> *The investigations were long and complex. It was full of challenges. But I had a good team. They did an excellent job. We completed our investigations and wrote our report. We were fair and transparent to everyone on the outcome of the investigations.*

Hoong's team concluded that there was no evidence that the pilot or any other crew member had the intention or motive to deliberately crash the plane.[3] Although the Indonesian NTSC agreed with this finding in its final report issued in December 2000, the US National Transportation Safety Board concluded separately that the cause was intentional pilot action and this later became the basis of several lawsuits in Singapore and the US against SilkAir, Boeing and other manufacturers of the aircraft's parts. The Singapore finding was vindicated in 2003 when evidence of defects in

the plane's rudder control system was recovered, leading Boeing to drop its claim that pilot suicide had caused the crash. In 2004, in the first US trial, the jury in the Los Angeles superior court found that the plane's faulty rudder was to blame and SilkAir was not at fault.[4]

Hoong wanted no recognition for his work on the case. When his team was given a Ministerial award for operational efficiency, he insisted it was not appropriate for the team to accept the award at the usual ministry-level award presentation ceremony. As a compromise, the Minister of Home Affairs presented the award to his team in the CID office. Almost two decades later, he is still conflicted about the case since he could not provide comfort to some surviving family members:

> *I felt that it was not right to accept an award, as many people had died, not everyone had a full closure. This case was too tragic. ... It was a very important case in my career as a police officer but it didn't cross my mind to take credit for the work. I did my best, but this case is unlike other major cases like kidnapping cases where you get a positive outcome if you solve it, such as the Sheng Siong and the Sandy Yong incidents.*

Sandy, the 14-year-old daughter of a local businessman, was snatched off a Singapore street while walking home in September 1999. It was the first kidnapping in a decade. Hoong, whose CID team led the operation, was among the 147 officers who received the Minister for Home Affairs Award for Operational Efficiency a month later for swiftly solving the case, arresting the mastermind within 20 minutes of the victim's release.[5] Fifteen years later, in another first kidnapping-for-ransom in a decade, the 79-year-old mother of the Sheng Siong supermarket chain's chief executive was abducted by a man who had been plotting to take her for several months.[6] Hoong was then Deputy Commissioner of Police for Investigations and Intelligence and concurrently Director CID. Within 12 hours of being notified, CID identified the

kidnapper, and arrested both him and an accomplice as soon as they released the victim. The ransom of $2 million paid was fully recovered. The quick resolution earned the praise of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who wrote on his Facebook page: "Great job by the Singapore Police Force, who arrested the two suspects … so quickly."[7]

Yet even with such success stories, it is the tragedy of lost lives and the loved ones they leave behind that Hoong thinks about. Nonetheless, he has learnt not to allow himself to be haunted by the cases. "After 33 years, I've learnt to isolate myself from work," he says. It is much harder, however, when a case involves an officer killing himself. Early in his career, Hoong had to lead a manhunt for a police officer who had gone AWOL with a loaded gun. Asked about the case, he says: "We cornered him at the Upper Pierce Reservoir. I was negotiating with him for a few hours, before the Crisis Negotiation Unit took over. It was highly emotional… He eventually shot himself… Whatever his reasons, it was a sad case, he was one of us."

"Work hard and you will be rewarded"

As the Leadership Interview is about getting at the personal stories that make Home Team leaders who they are, Hoong says he has thought about "the set of rules" that he lives by.

> *When I first joined the force, one of my instructors shared with me that life is a stretch of suffering, punctuated by moments of happiness. This resonated deeply with me. Life is not always going to be smooth sailing, but if you work hard, your efforts will eventually be rewarded. Fame and recognition are temporary. You cannot live on past glories…*

> *You have to accept setbacks. There are always ups and downs, opportunities and failures. It is meaningless to compare with the past…*

This, he says, is why he continues to work hard.

"And there is also timing, right?", Hoong grins as he refers to his own promotion to Commissioner of Police as the conversation moves on to the topic of police scholars and the perception they are given all the breaks. He is not an SPF scholar but has mentored several.

> *These [SPF scholars] are people we recruited because of their potential. It is only natural to pump in resources if you come across people with high potential. But at the end of the day, potential needs to be aligned with leadership and the actual work performance. The scholars may be exposed to more opportunities than others, but the assessment is no different from the rest.*
>
> *... I don't think there is anything wrong with that. It is a fair system, based on merit and suitability.*

Indeed there "is no glass ceiling" in the police force. When asked about women in the Force – since he became CP, the SPF has appointed its first ever woman Deputy Commissioner [DCP] who is also Director CID, another first, and for the first time, awarded the SPF Scholarship to a woman – Hoong notes proudly:

> *It is not just that. For this year's promotional cohort, the number of women who were promoted to DAC [Deputy Assistant Commissioner] is a record high. There is no glass ceiling. Florence [Chua] earned her promotion to DCP through very hard work. She is highly respected by officers.*

The numbers bear out his pride. Of the more than 30 officers who were promoted to DAC in 2019, about a third were women. The proportion of woman officers in the DAC and above ranks is also representative of the proportion of senior female officers in the SPF.

"Fairness is very important"

The SPF was the first Home Team Department to develop its own Leadership Competency Framework to ensure suitable officers are identified for leadership positions (see Figure 1.) "There are certain aptitudes and values we look for," Hoong says, but one quality in particular that he prizes:

> *To me, fairness is very important – being fair to people and transparent in your dealings. No matter how good you are, people may not go with you unless you are fair. You have to walk the ground and have empathy for people.*

You can tell if an officer is fair-minded from his behaviour, the recommendations he makes to the Attorney-General's Chambers on disposition of cases, his interactions with colleagues, and in his recommendations of subordinates for awards and promotions, he adds.

Figure 1. The Singapore Police Force Leadership Competency Framework

Fairness, he believes, can be nurtured, particularly through the sharing of experiences by mentors and senior officers. All police officers benefit from structured career progression, which is managed through structured postings, milestone programmes and leadership mentoring (Table 1). "Through these, we identify their strengths and weaknesses," Hoong says.

He has himself had the good fortune of being inspired by good leaders throughout his career, although he prefers not to name them. The leaders he has admired are those who build on the strengths of their officers, and who are very fair and value fairness in others.

The leaders I admire – it is not just one. I believe many people do what I do when I interact with leaders – I learn from their strengths. I've worked for leaders who always look at the strengths of officers more than their limitations. And they tailor their help to compensate for the officer's limitations. There are also leaders who will drop everything to attend to you, even if it is sometimes not within the job scope but personal to you.

I have worked for supervisors who are very fair and direct, who show no favouritism. They make fair recommendations. I've been very fortunate to have had very good leaders. There are many good leaders around. Just learn, strive to put these good qualities together. And as you lead, it is always good to think through what these leaders would have done if they were in the same position.

Table 1. The SPF's Structured Career Progression Model for Grooming Leaders

The SPF provides structured career progression for its officers. The two key mechanisms used to manage officers' career development are: i) structured postings and ii) milestone programmes. As they progress through the ranks, officers are posted to portfolios that commensurate with their seniority and competencies. In addition to moving upwards for more senior positions, officers may undertake lateral postings to gain greater breadth of exposure to different domains or functional areas.

COURSES/MILESTONE PROGRAMMES

Besides postings, officers also undergo milestone programmes for professional and academic development. Such programmes include work-specific training, developmental courses, executive leadership programmes and postgraduate programmes for further education. These include:

- SPF Command and Staff Course: to prepare participants for middle management positions
- Home Team Senior Command and Staff Course: to prepare MHA uniformed and civilian officers who are slated for key appointments or are in senior command positions
- SPF Commanders Course: to equip officers with the skills, knowledge and values necessary for their command responsibilities
- HTA Phoenix Programme: to provide continual learning and development for senior Home Team (HT) leaders to reinforce and expand their leadership repertoire and introspection, as well as enhance their proficiency and effectiveness to lead organisational and cultural change across the HT.

ASSESSMENT CENTRES

Assessment Centres are used as a tool to determine an officer's suitability for middle and senior leadership positions such as Commanding Officer Neighbourhood Police Centre, Deputy Commander and Commander Division. Candidates are assessed based on the SPF Leadership Competency Framework. At the end of the assessment, reports are shared with each candidate to provide information on the officer's leadership strengths and potential gaps. A Leadership Mentoring Programme helps develop the latent potential and strategic line-of-sight of young leaders, and encourage sharing of experiences and transfer of knowledge by the senior management.

Source: Singapore Police Force

"Values are important if you want to be a leader for long"

Hoong is emphatic that leaders must be guided by values. Asked which he considers to be more important – to be an effective leader or a moral leader – he is unequivocal:

> *Ideally, you have to be both. But if I have to make a choice, I would say that being a moral leader is more important. If you are not guided by values, you will be even more dangerous as an effective leader.*
>
> *A moral leader influences people to do the job, brings out the efficiency and competency from others. A leader can't do everything, so he has to empower others. Values are important if you want to be a leader for long.*

And that includes sending out a clear message that police officers who break the law will be punished.

> *Any prosecution of a police officer is a sad day for the Force. It is disappointing to see officers flout the law.*
>
> *If officers flout the law, we have to deal with them firmly but fairly. The reputation of the police force may suffer a dent, but we will recover. It sends a strong signal to the public and the men that the police force is transparent and non-corrupt. This is something we must continue to do, and it applies to all forms of disciplinary breaches, major or minor, even if the breach was detected internally.*
>
> *We do it because it is the right thing to do, even if it causes a dent in the next public perception survey, even if people mock us. This is the only way to safeguard the public trust in us.*

I would say that being a moral leader is more important. If you are not guided by values, you will be even more dangerous as an effective leader. A moral leader influences people to do the job, brings out the efficiency and competency from others. A leader can't do everything, so he has to empower others. Values are important if you want to be a leader for long.

According to the Gallup 2019 Global Law and Order Index, public confidence in the Singapore police is the highest in the world, and has been for several years.[8] Hoong is not worried about the police losing the public trust because of a few errant officers.

> *The community has been close to us since the eighties. We continue to be effective, and our interactions with the community are not transactional. We are non-corrupt, and we do not hide mistakes. Through our actions, we show people that we are genuine in wanting to serve them. If we continue to do this well, I am confident we will enjoy a high level of public trust.*

But he is also pragmatic. "In today's context, to be able to recover from a misdeed or scandal and not have it go into the public domain, the chances are almost zero."

"Every case has its own learning value"

Every police commissioner appointed in the last 50 years has spent part of his crime-fighting career in CID, often in senior leadership positions. Hoong's

time in the CID has been marked by a wide variety of cases, several closely watched at home and abroad. Asked if future CPs should also rise through the CID, he is diplomatically ambivalent.

People often think that CID is a good place because of the exposure to major crime cases. The major cases do indeed provide opportunities to broaden your exposure; you learn to work out a strategy to crack cases, collaborate with other government agencies, and find good partners with the right expertise. But it is not only about the cases. In CID, you also get involved in legislative amendments and reviews of investigative polices. This is important experience. You learn and benefit. You also work with people from different backgrounds, and that sharpens your assessment of human behaviour.

These are important leadership traits, right?

I spent most of my career in CID. Every case has its own learning value. Through the cases, you get to see the dedication and commitment of our officers, a never-say-die attitude, toughness and a strong sense of teamwork. You also get the satisfaction of helping the families of victims get closure.

However, I won't commit to say that all CPs must go through that. The Police Force is a huge organisation, with plenty of learning opportunities everywhere. What is more important is your willingness to accept challenges, and your desire to learn.

Hoong was Director of CID when a Committee of Inquiry (COI) was convened to look into the SMRT train breakdowns on 15 and 17 December 2011 that affected more than 200,000 commuters. The COI empowered the CID "to investigate any matter relevant to the Inquiry".[9] Hoong, 10 months

into his appointment as Director CID, oversaw the search for answers, including whether the disruption of train services was caused by sabotage. This was eventually ruled out by the CID, which found "no evidence of sabotage or deliberate human interference, including interference by SMRT personnel".[10] The COI agreed there was no reason to conclude otherwise, especially as there were technical and engineering causes that could explain why the two incidents occurred.

Investigating major cases such as these, Hoong believes, teaches leaders to be strategic, tactical, operational, collaborative and empathetic. But it is in a crisis that good leaders emerge.

"In a crisis, take responsibility and be accountable"

Hoong's "calmness, composure and clarity of focus in a crisis" is a leadership trait that other top civil servants who have worked with him value. It is also much appreciated by subordinates. When Hoong was Commander of Bedok Police Division in 2004, he ran a joint operation with another Home Team Department. "It was a very tense situation and the slightest provocation could have led to a disaster, but he was calm, unwavering and courageous," recalls the Home Team officer who was by his side throughout the operation.

Asked to share three lessons on crisis leadership from his personal experience, Hoong does not hesitate, offering four principles he has learnt to abide by:

Taking charge is very important. In a crisis, things are chaotic and people are at a loss and looking for direction. You have to assume command and start coordinating them. You have to take responsibility and be accountable for the actions of your officers.

Stay calm and prioritise according to the

needs. You have to be able to withstand pressure because during a crisis, everyone wants their interests to be met.

You have to work cohesively as a team. No matter how experienced you are, you need people to do the running and tap on the expertise of others. Your job is to form a good team and make them stick.

Most importantly – don't start blaming. It makes people clam up and not report issues to you, not tell you the truth. Focus on resolving the crisis first.

Whether it is a kidnapping or air crash, a big or small crisis, these principles don't really change. Resolve the crisis that is in front of you. Prioritise and make decisions.

But asked to discuss a crisis he has handled, Hoong declines. "I am very selective about telling war stories to people," he says. He knows the value of telling war stories but does it sparingly because context is important, and the stories need to be tailored to the audience for the right lessons to be distilled.

When doing fireside chats, I take into consideration the different types of audience. … It is not about glorifying yourself. If you want to elicit the right learning lessons, you have to tailor your story to the audience and put things in context for them.

Sharing without the right context is risky. With social media, the stories can spread and you won't have a chance to explain the details. There is a risk of officers following your example lock, stock and barrel. But in a team, you have different people with different sensing, and their risk appetites are different. They bring with them different life experiences and investigation backgrounds. You have to take these into consideration.

> " *In a crisis, things are chaotic and people are at a loss and looking for direction. You have to assume command and start coordinating them. You have to take responsibility and be accountable for the actions of your officers. … You have to be able to withstand pressure because during a crisis, everyone wants their interests to be met. You have to work cohesively as a team. … Most importantly – don't start blaming. It makes people clam up and not report issues to you, not tell you the truth. Focus on resolving the crisis first.* "

"I am open to changes but once I have decided, I expect people to follow through"

Hoong is well aware that in big organisations like the SPF, some people get "affirmation from their interactions" with their leaders. He thus believes in being consistent and in walking the ground.

You can send out emails, but nothing beats face-to-face interactions. That's why ground visits are important. It is also important to have a consistent leadership style. People shouldn't have to second-guess you.

Apart from the regular visits to the men on the ground, Hoong also sends out occasional "Message from Commissioner of Police" internal broadcast messages that are posted on communal spaces inside police departments. For instance, when the police introduced a tiered and differentiated approach to investigations to give officers the

discretion to streamline work processes so that the man hours and operational resources invested are proportional to the offence, Hoong wrote in an internal message addressed to all officers of how "immensely proud" he was of their dedication and the good work they were doing.

His familiarity with operational realities and his personal interest in operational work can, however, be a management liability, he notes wryly.

> *I am an operational man. Because of my character and background, I tend to want to be directly involved. Sometimes officers give me feedback that I have the tendency to micromanage, especially for investigations. But this is part of my DNA. I just want to participate.*

> *I know I need to let go, to come in only at the right juncture. It's not about taking credit. I'm still looking for the thrill of closing a case. But if I do too much, the supervisors will think I don't trust them. You have to be careful in your interventions. Otherwise, people will sometimes worry that you think they can't do the job.*

True to his reputation as a tough, no-nonsense leader, Hoong says he will listen to different views since "you can't do everything yourself", but he expects his orders to be carried out.

> *I am open-minded. There is a collective leadership in the police force, and I consult. I may have formed an opinion, but I like to hear alternative views and am open to changes. But once I have made a decision, I expect people to follow through.*

> *It's a complex world. You can't do everything yourself. You must listen. Our job impacts people's lives.*

And while he notes candidly that "what's important to me is policing", his personal mantra is all about people: "To lead with a heart and to care for the people."

Home Team CARES

HT CARES was developed by the SPF in consultation with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) to gel two seemingly distinct concepts – criminal investigations and delivery of social intervention programmes. Police Investigation Officers often see high recalcitrance rates among certain groups of offenders and believe that helping these offenders obtain social support services might help them address the fundamental social root causes of their criminal behaviour. Working with the Probation and Community Rehabilitation Service of MSF to develop the Home Team Community Assistance and Referral Scheme (HT CARES), IOs can directly refer offenders in need of social support to CARES officers who are embedded at police stations. The CARES officers will conduct social triaging to establish the socio-economic problems offenders face that are a trigger for their offending, and refer them to appropriate social service agencies for assistance. Positive outcomes have included the successful employment of a man recently released from prison, the successful employment of and application of subsidy for a couple who committed shop theft due to financial challenges, and the provision of after school student care for the young children of a recently bankrupted man so he can work during the day.

HT CARES integrates social service support directly into police processes and presents an alternative and holistic approach to effectively achieving SPF's mission to prevent, deter and detect crime. It reflects Police's willingness to be proactive in thinking and working beyond its boundaries to pursue collaborative partnerships with other stakeholders to achieve its mission by preventing crime upstream. This programme has been commended by private and public organisations such as Community Justice Centre and the Association of Criminal Lawyers. Now available only at Bedok Police Division, there are plans to expand it to more Land Divisions.

Source: Singapore Police Force

Home Team CARES: "We take a whole-of-government approach"

The people Hoong wants to care for are not just his police officers but also extends to those they arrest and their family members. He cites proudly a ground-up initiative proposed by Land Division Investigation Officers (IOs) called HT CARES:

There is a pilot initiative in Bedok [Police Division] called the Home Team CARES. We bring in social welfare and voluntary agencies while the suspect is in remand in the lockup. The IOs can directly refer offenders in need of social support to the social agencies to render help. This goes beyond policing work. It is a lifecycle approach, a joint approach with MSF [Ministry of Social and Family Development]. We may have an airtight case against the offender, but we will still help him and his family. ...

We help people to move on from their trauma. This goes to show that the concept of policing has changed and evolved. Our resources are going to be tight but that doesn't mean we aren't spending resources to do things better.

From the efficiency point of view, we don't have to do these, but we take a whole-of-government approach.

"A full shift in mindset"

Like all Home Team Departments, the SPF has been transforming itself, streamlining work processes to leverage technology and retraining its officers to deal with new challenges. Asked about the new capabilities he has been trying to grow since becoming CP, Hoong cites a few areas – counter-terrorism, cybercrime and harnessing AI-driven analytics – and the new training methodologies required to turn frontline officers into counter-terrorism emergency responders and cyber forensic warriors. Not only is "a full shift in mindset"

required of the current generations of officers, but the Force also needs to ensure that the right officers are recruited and that they are comfortable using the new technology and use it with integrity, he notes.

From routine crime-fighting to counter-assault armed response

Police officers are first responders. In the past, we trained them to deal with either crime or public order contingencies. The structure of the police force is built according to needs. Now, the threat of terrorism is very real. Rather than split our resources, we have raised the baseline skillset for the frontline officers – we are training them to do crime fighting, and to deal with public security and public order contingencies. This is a major transformation in our concept of operations, from routine crime-fighting to counter-assault armed response. It requires a full shift in mindset. We're dealing with different generations of officers across different functional areas. Change management is therefore, very important.

Given the imminent threat, you can't take four, five years to build the capabilities. You need to do change management in parallel with buying vehicles, changing weapons, improving equipment, et cetera. You have to do some things simultaneously and everyone needs to be aligned. That was how we managed to quickly ramp up our ERTs [Emergency Response Teams] and IRTs [In-Situ Reaction Teams].

We can no longer segmentise our job. We make it a frontline basic requirement to do all jobs. This is a key change in frontline policing.

A data-driven approach requires mindset shifts and safeguards

In terms of technology, we are beginning to use a lot of sensors. We have more than

Scenario-based Training for Counter-terrorism

All frontline ground response force officers now undergo centralised enhanced contingency training in public order and public security, going through scenarios where they are exposed to gunman attacks, suicide bombers, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) situations and learn how to perform tactical cover and movement, as well as extricate people under imminent threat to life situations.

Selected frontline officers also undergo more stringent training to form the Emergency Response Teams (ERT). ERT officers are equipped with higher calibre firearms, i.e. the HK MP5 Submachine Gun, and trained to handle vehicle attack scenarios, tactical live-firing, urban combat tactics and barricade situations in addition to the other scenarios.

Officers who graduate from these training sessions undergo periodic refresher training to ensure that they remain competent and confident to handle any terrorist threat. Exercises on counter-terrorism are also conducted on a regular basis to test frontline officers' response in real-life settings and their coordination with specialist forces.

Source: Singapore Police Force

80,000 cameras in the neighbourhoods. Some of our cameras now have video analytics capabilities. But change is not all about technology; it is also about people. Can they use analytics on the CCTVs to start to hunt down suspects? Can they use game theory to identify hot spots in MRT stations?

It is a data-driven approach. It is also about changing mindsets and skill sets, about having officers who will not shy away from using new technology. The last thing you want is to have the technologies in place but officers still do things the manual way.

With these technological changes, and as we empower officers with access to more information, the opportunities for abuse of systems and information will also open up. So we have to ensure we put in place the right safeguards and inculcate the right values in our officers to minimise such risks.

To enable in-shift training and e-learning, about 8,000 Police smartphones have been issued to frontline officers so that it is now basically "learning anytime, anywhere".

"Everyone will need to deal with cyber crime"

Hoong was Director CID when a series of high-profile cyberattacks took place between March and November 2013. Public anxiety spiked when the alleged hacker, calling himself "Messiah", published an online video threatening that the "Anonymous" hacker group would "go to war" with the Singapore Government. Hoong's team identified and traced the hacker to an apartment in Kuala Lumpur soon after. The culprit later pleaded guilty to 39 charges of computer misuse for perpetuating what the prosecutor described as "the largest, most prolific cyberattacks ... against IT systems in Singapore", with another 121 charges taken into consideration.[11]

With cyber-related crime trending, the Singapore Police Force is making cyber forensics a basic skill that all investigators must possess, Hoong declares:

The trend is changing to scams and cyber-enabled crime. You used to see such cases as those requiring specialist capabilities to deal with. When I was Director CID and we investigated the Messiah case, I had only a dozen men working on catching him, most of them cyber specialists. Since then, with the

rise of cybercrime and cyber-enabled crime, we have set up the Cybercrime Command and have pushed more capabilities to the front lines. Now, the baseline is different. It has become much higher. The average officer now needs to have basic knowledge of cybercrime forensics.

Gone are those days where you can refer all cyber-related crimes to CID the moment you come across them. I don't think we can do that anymore. Cybercrime investigation and forensic capabilities have to be pushed to the front line. All the police land divisions now have a cybercrime response team. Only the complex cases which require deeper cyber forensic capabilities will be investigated by CID. In the longer term, all investigation officers will need to have cyber forensic knowledge, to be able to conduct asset seizures and analysis. They will need new skillsets, more cross-cutting skills.

"A crime is a crime"

With crime rates in Singapore traditionally very low, a lot of police crime prevention messaging is about not falling for scams. Hoong is clear that the mission of the police is to fight all crime, regardless of why or how a person falls victim, especially to scams where some might say, victims should know better.

Scams are a worldwide trend because criminals exploit the Internet and hit at the vulnerabilities of the victims. You might say people fall for scams because of greed, lust, or other personal reasons. But when a crime has been committed, it is our mission to deal with it, to help the victims. Some officers have difficulty with cases like the credit for sex scam [where the victim believes he is paying for sexual services]. Sometimes officers feel the struggle: why would people do this and still expect the Police to help? But a crime is a crime, regardless of whether

it is committed against a bad guy. You go back to your mission. We cannot segmentise victims and decide who we will help. Public trust is not a transaction.

*In reporting crime [such as credit for sex scam] to us, it also shows that we have public trust. We are **a Force for the nation** [his emphasis]. We need to cater to the needs of the people.*

Indeed, Hoong is so confident that he has both a good system and officers in place that when asked what keeps him up at night, he admits:

It may not be politically correct to say this: I sleep quite well. I have good officers and a good system in place. My officers are doing a good job.

"The Home Team path has served us very well"

The system works well because it is part of a larger entity called the Home Team, Hoong notes. Asked how a 200-year-old police force fits into a much younger collective entity called the Home Team, he is candid about the challenges.

This is a challenging question, the struggle with identity. We need that police identity to make things work. The SPF used to do almost everything – drugs, internal security, and so on. But now certain functions are managed by a separate specialist entity, like CNB [Central Narcotics Bureau] for drugs and internal security by ISD [Internal Security Department]. There is nothing wrong with this, because the structure of the Home Team will have to evolve with the needs of the society.

Being part of the Home Team won't change our C.L.I.F. [Courage, Loyalty, Integrity, Fairness] values and identity.

Both identities are actually important. The Home Team path has served us very well. When we neutralise a threat, the SCDF [Singapore Civil Defence Force] knows how to go into the hot zone [where there is imminent threat of grievous hurt and death] because it has held regular joint training and exercises with us. We learn to trust each other, whether you're working for SCDF, CNB or ISD.

The more important thing is that when we come to work, we don't just work in our own department, nor in the Home Team. We work in the public service; all of us have to work as one to get the job done, for the public.

Endnotes

The Editor thanks Lim Jing Jing for her help in transcribing the interview, and Koh Chao Rong of the Singapore Police Force for providing additional material.

[1] The first major riot in 40 years occurred in Singapore in December 2013 when 400 foreign workers in Little India attacked first responders after an Indian national was killed in a vehicle accident. Police and emergency vehicles were overturned and five were torched. Dozens of officers suffered minor injuries from projectiles thrown at them, but there were no fatalities apart from the accident victim. More than 50 people were arrested when the Special Operations Command troops, which are specially trained in quelling riots, arrived on the scene, and began dispersing the mob. The CID, under Hoong's command, identified those directly responsible for destroying public property through forensic investigations.

[2] Shane Todd was an American who was found dead in his apartment in Singapore in June 2012. His family disputed the police finding that he had committed suicide and alleged in the international media that the SPF had failed to properly investigate his death. A Coroner's Inquiry in 2013 ruled that there was no foul play involved in his death.

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[10] Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Disruption of MRT Train Services on 15 and 17 December 2011. (2012, July 3). Chapter 12 Findings and recommendations of the COI, p. 271. Retrieved from: https://www.mot.gov.sg/news/COI%20report%20-%20Chapter%208%20-%2012.pdf

[11] Lim Y. L. (2013, November 12). Hacker who calls himself 'The Messiah' charged with hacking; More being investigated. *The Straits Times*. Retrieved from: https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/hacker-who-calls-himself-the-messiah-charged-with-hacking-more-being-investigated; Ng, K. (2015, January 23). Hacker 'Messiah' pleads guilty to 39 computer misuse charges. *Today*. Retrieved from: https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/hacker-messiah-pleads-guilty-cyberattacks

Building a Training and Learning Ecosystem in the Home Team:
A Journey of Transformation

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There are no shortcuts to any place worth going.

Beverly Sills (1929-2007)
Opera singer,
Chairman of the Board of Lincoln Center, New York (1994-2002),
Chairman of the Board of the Metropolitan Opera (2003-2005)

When you train hard and train well, you set yourself up for success. I first learnt this lesson in sports, as I trained in athletics, soccer and hockey in school. The coaches pushed us hard in training and when meet day or match day came, we were that much more fluid in execution and had the stamina to last us throughout the game. This lesson was reiterated in National Service as we trained hard and purposefully to secure mission success, an insight that has since been firmly imprinted in my mind.

So when I was asked to head the Home Team Academy (HTA) as its Chief Executive in 2014, and thrown the challenge of transforming training in the Home Team, on top of my role as Deputy Commissioner (Policy) in the Singapore Police Force, I immediately said 'yes'. I knew that it would be a high order challenge but one that ultimately would be highly fulfilling. In my role as Deputy Police Commissioner (Policy), I was highly supportive of the training and capability development of Police Intelligence Department,

Special Operations Command (SOC)/STAR, Gurkha Contingent and the other specialist units. I visited them to keep tabs on their development and opened doors to allow them to test themselves in challenging environments. I made arrangements with then Chief of San Francisco Police Department Greg Suhr to allow an SOC team to participate in the gruelling 48-hour Alameda County competition against American police and law enforcement SWAT teams in 2013, which was an eye opener for our officers. They were pushed to deal with a range of operational scenarios in a compressed time environment battling the cold weather and fatigue as they took on scenario after scenario in unfamiliar surroundings. They gained tremendous exposure and learnt so much in a short period of time. The insights and best practices they gained made them more savvy and effective – which could mean the difference between life and death.

Fast forward to today. Training has become all the more important because the world is fast changing.

We live in a time where technology is upending the way we live, work and play, permeating every aspect of our lives. It is assisting us and making our lives easier, even as it brings new challenges. It is no different for us in the Home Team. Technology is a force multiplier, allowing us to do more with fewer boots on the ground. However, our new operating models require Home Team officers to know how and where best to apply technology, make decisions using data analytics, think of creative, new solutions, and provide insights beyond what we already know – these and other capabilities cannot be easily automated. Upskilling our officers in these areas to perform their roles can only happen if we concurrently transform how we train Home Team officers to be effective in their new roles.

To move forward, it is necessary to use systems thinking and examine structural conditions to drive and effect changes across not just individual Home Team Departments (HTDs) within the Ministry of Home Affairs, but the entire training ecosystem.

What is a training ecosystem you might ask. Training ecosystem might seem like a new 'buzzword' taken from the corporate world. It actually is an established concept that brings new emphasis to training as a human activity that needs to be supported in many places and in many ways (Benedicks, 2018). There is also a certain appeal to the use of this phrase as it suggests a living and evolving organism that needs every interconnected part to be in mint working condition; otherwise, it faces failure.

Just like a biological ecosystem has many interacting species, environments and complex relationships, so does a training ecosystem. It is made up of the people, content, technology, culture and strategies that exist both within HTDs and outside of HTDs which impact both formal and informal training that takes place in the Home Team.

And like a biological ecosystem, a training ecosystem can be healthy or sick, self-sustaining or reliant on external injects. It is our deep awareness of what goes on within the ecosystem that allows us to determine its status and how best to nurture and enhance it. Ultimately, our mission is to meet the learners' and the organisation's needs as well as align training goals to the Ministry's objectives.

Building a Culture of Learning

Like a biological ecosystem, organizations are either growing or they're dying. And organizations grow when their employees are learning. So if you want a high-growth organization, you need to create a learning ecosystem to support high-growth individuals – to expose them to new and challenging opportunities before their roles become stale. ... By creating an ecosystem that fuels continued learning, an organization builds capacity ahead of the competition.

Whitney Johnson
Harvard Business Review, 2019

There were challenges aplenty at the beginning of our journey to transform training in the Home Team. A very real challenge was the way some managers held training to be a silo distinct from operations. Such a narrow perspective does not see the training-operations-training continuum and the cruciality of training for operational success. Those holding this attitude often allow training time to be crowded out for other priorities. As a high operations tempo Ministry with long working hours, it has always been challenging to find time to train and access training resources. But left unchecked, such a lower prioritisation on training will take a toll on the organisation and its effectiveness.

We can learn from other disciplines, including soccer. I am a major soccer fan, and have supported my favourite English Premier League club since 1968. As a close observer of the game, there are rich lessons to be learnt from soccer. The best sides invest a lot in training, which has become more scientific, evidence-based and rigorous. The best

footballers practise and practise and practise, honing their skills to the sharpest level. They develop and work on set pieces which they then operationalise in the actual matches. How hard and how well you train will determine the quality of results, which any manager worth his salt knows and embraces. Good training will enhance skills and knowledge at the individual and team levels, and allow the team to function that much more effectively. So training time must be valued and protected.

To change perceptions and mindsets across the Home Team, I needed the full support of the Ministry's senior leadership as their attitude to training would definitely influence and impact the attitudes of key leaders across the Home Team. The senior management at Ministry Headquarters (MHQ) were unequivocal in their support, as they acknowledged the importance and value of training to support operations, and wholeheartedly supported the proposal to establish a training division within MHQ. The Training and Competency Development Division (TCD) was thus set up in April 2018 to staff and coordinate training issues at the Home Team level and ensure that training policies and plans are progressive and future-proofed. TCD's mandate is to develop training policies and drive the systematic and long-term strategy for skills development in the Home Team. It also ensures that training resources are well-utilised across the Home Team.

Another game changer has been the appointment of Chief Learning Officers across the Home Team since 2016. I realised that training was being driven at different levels across HTDs. To succeed in driving the training transformation, we needed top leadership to be training champions in each HTD to serve as a clear marker that training is a department priority, and to ensure that training development receives strong management support, including guidance and resourcing. We thus established forums at MHQ and HTA to ensure that training receives top management attention, and to drive development across the Training and Learning (T&L) ecosystem and support the HTDs in their transformation efforts.

With the CLOs at their helm, the HTDs have been investing more resources into training, including sending well-regarded officers to spearhead and staff training development. The Singapore Police Force now has its own training staff authority – the Training and Capability Development Division – to ensure that clear, coherent and centralised training frameworks and processes are in place. The Singapore Prison Service and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority have similarly set up their own training staff authority.

As we develop and put policies in place, we have also been working on influencing the learning culture in the Home Team. One significant area we have enhanced is frontline training. Ring-fencing training time on the frontline allows officers to train during operational "lull" periods, wherever they are. This is also facilitated by advancements in training technology, which now allows us to bring realistic training to the frontline through initiatives such as training simulators and e-learning. A significant early step to bring training to the frontline has been the Mobile Classroom (Mobic) initiative. HTA worked closely with the Office of the Chief Science and Technology Officer and the Singapore Police Force to develop a prototype Virtual Reality (VR) platform that brings realistic operational scenarios to officers training between shifts or duties. By utilising these pockets of available time, officers no longer need dedicated time away from work in order to train. Furthermore, VR technologies inject realism into training and makes the whole training experience more engaging and interactive for our officers. This pilot sends a very strong visible signal to the frontline that we are actively looking at supporting their training needs at the frontline to enable them to perform effectively.

Strengthening the T&L Ecosystem by Embracing Technology

Technology underpins the entire T&L ecosystem, which also includes curriculum and content development and the people who deliver training. While we explore new technologies, we have to be mindful not to adopt technology for its sake

but to ensure that any new training technologies introduced are indeed beneficial in terms of training realism, practicality, convenience and efficiency.

The first unified learning platform, the Home Team Learning Management System (HTLMS) currently hosts over 3,000 online courses across all HTDs. Set up in 2016, the HTLMS is a game changer for the Home Team. It has given us the ability to push content to every single officer across the Home Team and to pave the way for online learning to take off. It allows HTDs to develop and disseminate more engaging interactive training content, such as videos and quizzes, to all officers. It enables cross-department learning and sharing of content and is heavily utilised. The statistics for 2019 show that 86% of Home Team regulars actively log in to utilise the HTLMS to upskill themselves. We are not resting on our laurels. The Home Team Academy has already started planning for version two of the HTLMS to better serve the needs of all Home Team officers.

Aside from e-learning, HTDs are also delving deeper into simulation systems which allow for realistic and engaging training. The breakthrough project is the Home Team Simulation system or HTS2 for short. The HTS2 simulates complex, multi-level operating environments to hone commanders' strategic decision-making skills for joint operations and incident management. Modelled after a command post set-up, the HTS2 aims to better prepare HT commanders to deal with real-life situations. It has been exciting to see the system being used for cross-HTD command training, a new capability that has transformed the way we train our leaders to manage more complex incidents. The system has proved so useful that operational units ask to use the system for their preparations for major events, such as the annual Shangri-La Dialogue organised by the International Institute for Strategic Studies that attracts top defence chiefs from across the Asia-Pacific. With this level of traction, the development team knows that it has achieved another milestone. This is particularly salient; at its inception, the project drew on the collective knowledge and experiences of Home Team units that had successfully utilised simulator training in their respective domain areas. As a cross Home Team effort, it also serves to build deeper collaboration within the Home Team training community.

We are determined to take our training simulation capabilities to the next level. It is important that our simulation systems communicate and complement each other across the Home Team to better serve and synergise the training and operational preparation needs of departments, teams and officers. To this end, the new Science and Technology Agency (HTX) is working with TCD to develop the Home Team Simulation Roadmap. Our desired outcome is for all our simulation projects to provide real time feedback and analysis to measure the effectiveness of training as well as enhance training programmes to better cater to the training needs of Home Team officers.

Given the speed of technological advancements, we must be bold and innovative. We must be ambitious and set training and learning problem statements to take advantage of what technology can offer us. This allows the Home Team to stay abreast of the technology development curve, where even the development process becomes a learning opportunity for our officers. For example, the Singapore Police Force is now exploring how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used in interview training. Even if the trial indicates that AI cannot deliver the desired outcomes for police interviews, the officers involved in this trial will have learnt more about the design of algorithms and other aspects of AI that will be useful for future projects. This is something that I encourage all HTDs to do – dare to try out new technology to help you in your work.

Strengthening the T&L Ecosystem by Developing Relevant and Effective Curriculum

Apart from training technology, curriculum development is the next part of the ecosystem that we are strengthening. As the saying goes, "If you fail to

plan, you plan to fail." Curriculum development is exactly that – a plan for what should be taught, and how to do it. The curriculum developed must impart relevant and functional skills and knowledge to our officers to ensure continued mission success. HTA has developed a competency framework to provide standards and guidelines on the types of knowledge and skills required of curriculum developers. The framework also suggests relevant training interventions that HTDs can send their curriculum developers to in order to upskill themselves. TCD is playing a consultancy role in this area to ensure the framework is aligned to the rest of the T&L competency frameworks developed by TCD for learning strategies, evaluation and assessment, e-learning development, learning technology solutions design and learning management.

Strengthening the T&L Ecosystem by Developing Our People

Naturally, the curriculum is only as good as the trainer delivering it – this is where people come into play. I see this as a key success factor of our training transformation. Our trainers have to lead by example, and embrace learning and development themselves. There are stellar examples within the training community who on their own initiative have been experimenting with new tools and innovating in terms of how they teach. I have seen first-hand their passion and love for their job and strong desire to do their best for their trainees, taking pride in what they do. This is truly inspiring.

I still recall vividly my first meetings with some of these trainers. I interviewed then-Inspector Sutarsan s/o Jaganathan of the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority for the 2016 Home Team Training Excellence Award for Trainer of the Year. He clearly loves being a trainer and this passion came through. For example, he makes it a point to ask for incident reports of lapses at the checkpoints, extracts the lessons to be learnt and shares them with his trainees. His rich operational knowledge and experience coupled with these anecdotes make his lessons rich in value and very interesting. Dr Bryan Lim of the Centre for Protective Security

Studies is another innovative trainer. He developed a game to aid learning, transforming the way participants learn the rudiments of protective security, and facilitating learning. These officers are exemplars for the Home Team training community, and through them and their work I see the deep potential that we can unlock through scaffolded interventions, systematically building on their experiences and knowledge as they learn new skills. Such interventions include sending trainers to programmes such as the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Advanced Certificate in Learning and Performance, and WSQ Diploma in Adult and Continuing Education.

We cannot leave it to the trainers to upgrade their teaching methods and delivery. We have to upgrade their capabilities as trainers, and upskill them with the latest knowledge on learning methods, curriculum and pedagogy. When I began engaging the training community as Chief Executive of HTA, I saw that their knowledge was dated, and that many were still conducting lessons the traditional lecture style way; they were not taking advantage of the learning technology tools and applications available in the marketplace. We have to equip our trainers to succeed. If how the contents are presented is boring, trainees will not be engaged, and the intended learning will not take place. Our Home Team trainers have to understand the critical role they play in training and mission success. To ensure quality trainers, HTA has developed the Home Team trainers' competency framework to refine instructional competencies and skills required of Home Team trainers, set clear expectations of what is required, and better identify relevant courses for trainers to upgrade themselves. This development is timely as HTA had earlier revamped the Trainer Competency Development Roadmap, where among the improvements made was an increase in eligible allowances for trainers, and opportunities for them to contribute to the training fraternity.

It is also important to build the pride of the training community in their work and contribution to their department and the Home Team generally. We are doing this by introducing the Trainer badges recognising different levels of competency – from

Figure 1. HT Trainer Badges

Adjunct Trainer (blue badge), to Specialist Trainer (bronze badge), to Principal Trainer (silver badge), to Master Trainer (gold badge), as shown in Figure 1.

With our trainers wearing their badges with pride, the foundation has been laid for us to take the training ecosystem to the next level. Excellent trainers across the Home Team are now recognised for their work, initiatives and innovations to enhance training. The inaugural Home Team Training Excellence Award ceremony was held on 30 Aug 2016, with then 2nd Permanent Secretary Loh Ngai Seng as the Guest of Honour. The second award ceremony was graced by Second Minister Josephine Teo, which signals to the training community the value that our MHA leadership sees in training and learning and development.

Apart from recognising trainers, we have also embarked on developing T&L staff officers in the Home Team through sponsorships of postgraduate studies in the field of T&L. This is one way in which we have been encouraging good performing officers to take up training positions and to retain such talent in T&L positions. Kick-started in 2016, four officers have been awarded this opportunity to further their studies in T&L related fields. The first officer to be awarded the postgraduate award was Supt. Ricky Eu from Singapore Prison Service who pursued a Master of

Arts (Leadership and Educational Change) at the National Institute of Education.

You might ask, having done all this, how do we know that our efforts are bearing fruit? This is why TCD has piloted the Training Institute Excellence Model with the Singapore Civil Defence Force and Singapore Prison Service to measure the health of our Home Team Training Institutions through a checklist of outcome indicators. Using a self-assessment model, we can identify the training schools' strengths and areas for improvement (see Figure 2). Once rolled out across all HTDs, this model will serve as a form of quality assurance, giving the schools the flexibility and autonomy to adapt training in response to learners' needs. It is also a strategy to promote learners' potential and performance.

Figure 2. Benefits of Training Institute Excellence Model

Developing a Skilled and Future Oriented Workforce

Transforming the T&L ecosystem is not enough. Our people also have to be equipped with the necessary skills to perform their job well, including learning to use new technologies that allow us to be more efficient and effective. And we can expect more changes to come, as the operating landscape continues to rapidly evolve. Continuous learning must be second nature to all of us, and part of the Home Team's DNA. At the individual level, all of us must know and acquire the necessary skills and competencies to continue to be effective in our jobs. As supervisors, we have to ensure that our officers and teams build up their knowledge, skills and expertise to do their jobs well.

We have to upskill ourselves, across all levels. I signed up for an analytics course at the Civil Service College, and found myself the oldest course participant! Whilst I was able to quickly grasp the concepts, I found myself lagging in manipulating data using the software. But I persevered and kept at it by doing the various exercises till I was familiar with the use of the software and its

basic functionalities. Age is not a barrier to learning. What is crucial is the spirit of wanting to learn and grow and improve. This journey must never stop.

To empower Home Team officers to upskill themselves, TCD, together with HTDs and MHQ Divisions, has developed the Home Team Skills Framework (see Figure 3). The framework has been translated to the SkillsFuture@HomeTeam e-guide, a one-stop reference for officers to find out about the skills and competencies they require to stay professionally relevant and valuable, and the training opportunities available to them. This is a very good effort and a major milestone in ensuring that our officers are prepared for the future. To ensure that the future needs of our officers continue to be met, TCD is already working on version 2.0. All officers can look forward to the revised framework soon.

In the SkillsFuture@HomeTeam e-guide, uniformed officers have specialised skills called

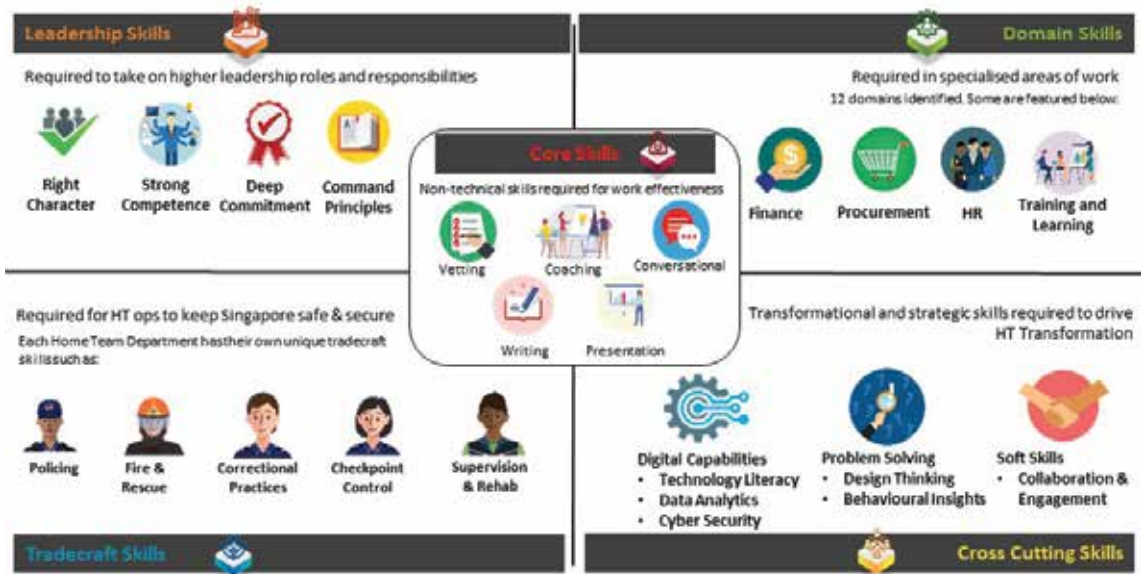### Figure 3. Home Team Skills Framework

Table 1. Civilian Milestone Programmes

Three Civilian Milestone Programmes were introduced in 2018:
- Step In for executives
- Step Up for first-line managers
- Step Beyond for middle managers

- The Civilian Milestone Programmes aim to equip civilian senior officers with requisite skills and knowledge to be effective in their roles

- These courses are designed and timed to be available to officers at appropriate phases of their careers

- The course aims to equip officers with the following skills and knowledge:
  o Leadership: Leading organisation, team and self
  o Understanding the Home Team: Home Team history, Home Team mission, values and ethos, Home Team collaboration, Home Team challenges and strategic direction
  o Personal Effectiveness: Achieving excellence, managing complexity and communication and collaboration
  o Core Home Team skills

tradecraft skills that are required for Home Team operations, to keep Singapore safe and secure. We realised – and Human Resources Division (HRD) at MHQ led this effort – that there was a gap in specialised training for civilian officers to be effective in what they do. To bridge this gap, HRD launched a new suite of civilian milestone programmes, aimed at upskilling civilian officers at important milestones in their careers to prepare them for their next appointments (see Table 1 for details). There are also plans in the pipeline to roll out training interventions to equip our support officers to handle jobs of the future. We must aim to leave no one behind in terms of knowledge and skills.

Transformation – An Ongoing Journey for Continued Success

We have taken major strides forward in our training transformation journey. We must not forget to recognise those who worked hard to kick start and put in place the systems and processes to transform training. I would like to thank the officers from the former Training and Learning Office in HTA, the forerunner of the current TCD in MHQ, for their early efforts in conceptualising and driving the changes we see today in the Home Team. The team members were truly change makers in their own right. The collective efforts of the dedicated staff in HTA and the HTD Training Institutions who have worked alongside them to make change happen have made a significant difference to training in the Home Team. I am grateful to have worked with a passionate and capable team to bring training forward in somewhat exciting times, supported by able leaders, specifically Teo Tze Fang (Deputy Chief Executive of HTA), Amanda Chua, and Tricia Ortega. I am also grateful for the support given by the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments over the years.

There is much still to be done in our journey towards training excellence in the Home Team. The advances we have made must not be a once-off effort but must be pursued relentlessly.

For training to transform, we need to change our

mindsets and embrace learning as an organisational imperative for continued mission and organisational success. Training and learning must be second nature to us, a part of our culture and the way we do things in the Home Team. Our leaders – from junior supervisors on the ground to the Leadership group of each HTD – must drive training and learning across every level of their organisation. The Home

Team T&L community on its part must continue to work hard to sustain the momentum of the training transformation.

I strongly believe that "training maketh the Home Team officer". Together, we can build a future-ready Home Team that continues to keep Singapore, our home, safe and secure.

About the Author

T. Raja Kumar has served in the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and Ministry of Home Affairs for 33 years in a wide range of leadership roles. As Deputy Secretary (International) and concurrent Chief Executive of the Home Team Academy from 1 Jan 2014 to 17 Sep 2018, he was instrumental in driving the transformation of the training landscape in the Home Team, working closely with and supporting the Home Team Departments. His leadership and operational experience gave training a renewed focus, leading to new and innovative ways of delivering training at the frontline. Training policies were reviewed to ensure that safety remains the utmost priority, and training resources synergised for more efficient utilisation. In April 2018, Raja was appointed Deputy Secretary (International and Training) and oversaw the setting-up of the Training and Competency Development (TCD) division at the Ministry Headquarters, whose role is to drive training and development, and serve as the training staff authority in the Home Team.

Raja was awarded the Public Administration Bronze medal in 1996 followed by the Public Administration Silver medal in 2007. He was also bestowed the National Order of Merit by the Government of France in October 2017, carrying the rank of Knight.

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The SCDF's
Future-Ready Workforce:
Transforming Skills and Heartware

Kok Kim Yuan, Quek Wei Liang, Jennyline Fan & Melissa Choo

Singapore Civil Defence Force

ABSTRACT

In view of Singapore's aging and shrinking workforce, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) believes that its journey of preparing for the future goes beyond merely innovation and technology. People remain at the heart of its transformation, as it is only in the hands of people that innovation and technology can flourish. With the Emergency Medical Services Tiered-Response System as the nucleus of its transformation, the SCDF has prioritised the upskilling of responders, and taken intentional and progressive steps to upgrade the "heartware" of its people. Dual-skilled responders are also entrusted with a novel creation, known as the Fire Medical Vehicle. This article describes the SCDF's quest to transform into a future-ready workforce by focusing on its people.

The "Demographic Time Bomb"

Increasing life expectancy and declining birth rates – the "demographic time bomb" – is a challenge facing many developed countries around the world today. Owing to medical advancements and the longevity effect, the median age of the world's population looks set to skew high in the years ahead. This aging process is expected to continue across the world, and is especially advanced in developed countries like those of the European Union and Japan (European Commission, 2013; United Nations et al., 2013).

Singapore is not spared from this phenomenon, as the average life expectancy hits 82.9 years of age; according to data compiled by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Singapore has a World Life Expectancy ranking of 4, after Japan, Switzerland and Spain (World Health Rankings, 2018). In 2017, Singapore's total fertility rate of 1.16 was significantly lower than the recommended 2.1 for population renewal (Ong, 2018). Beyond 2020, it is projected that the total workforce growth will slow to half of the average of the past 30 years (Chan, 2013).

Irregularities in age distribution are undoubtedly detrimental to a nation's labour market. In the case of an aging population, the challenges extend to providing sufficient and timely medical health, and nursing care for the elderly. Old age entails a higher occurrence of multi-morbidity, and complex clinical conditions (Barnett et al., 2012). As a consequence, older individuals are hospitalised more frequently, and for longer periods in comparison to the younger population (Veser et al., 2015). Similarly, older patients contribute to a larger proportion of emergency medical calls (Veser et al., 2015).

Impact on Emergency Response

In most regions of the world, aging has major consequences for emergency response, one of which is the increasing demand for Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Several studies have documented this effect over the past decades in developed countries, such as Australia (Lowthian et al., 2011a), Japan (Hagihara et al., 2013), Spain (Diaz-Hierro et al., 2012), the United Kingdom (Peacock et al., 2005), and the United States (Burt, McCaig, & Valverde, 2006).

The demand for EMS encompasses more than just the increasing number of calls to be managed by call-takers; more ambulances and paramedics are also required to keep up to standard response times, and to ensure that patients treated at the scene have the transportation required for conveyance to the hospital.

Since 2003, the number of emergency medical calls in Singapore has increased by about 5% each year. As the core service provider of prehospital emergency care, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) plays a critical role in making certain that the provision of EMS is not compromised in view of an aging and shrinking workforce.

In 2016, SCDF conducted a comprehensive study to determine the future demand for emergency response. It projected medical cases to hit a range of 276,000 to 356,000 calls by 2025. This is a significant 50% jump compared to the 182,502 medical calls SCDF responded to in 2017. With the decreasing population of Full-Time National Servicemen eligible to serve with the SCDF, this call load will not be serviced by a commensurate increase in personnel. Fire and Rescue calls are also expected to increase by about 20% by 2025, due to the proliferation of complex infrastructure and higher road density. The study also found that for every 1% increase in the elderly population, a 3.5% increase in the proportion of calls can be expected from the elderly.

Left unabated, the consequences of an aging society with the projected constraints on manpower will certainly overwhelm current protocols related to emergency response, with service delivery standards suffering. Acknowledging that demand will soon outstrip resources, SCDF has been taking steps to anticipate this long-term challenge of an aging and shrinking population.

Seeding the "Heartware" of Transformation

People remain at the heart of transformation, and it is only in the hands of good "heartware" that innovation and technology become multipliers. "Heartware" here refers to the skill capabilities of people. In expecting a significant increase in the demand for EMS, SCDF recognised a need to expand traditional firefighter roles, and that it included cultivating a change in the mindset of each and every firefighter involved. Conversations and dialogues were carried out to help firefighters assimilate that handling syringes, needles, and stethoscopes was equally important in emergency response, and required as much practice and training as managing water nozzles, hoses, and other firefighting equipment.

It took more than a comprehensive conversion programme to assure the firefighters that their roles had diversified in the wake of the current demographic landscape. Timing training well and in phases was essential, and discussions were held to understand the challenges they faced every step along the way. SCDF was cognizant that a failure to obtain buy-in on the "heartware" would not result in the desired outcomes.

SCDF planted the seed of its skills transformation in 2012 when it equipped firefighters with fundamental emergency medical capabilities to reinforce their EMS counterparts. A pilot group of 80 Firebikers was subsequently trained to

respond to cardiac arrest cases prior to the arrival of the ambulance (see Figure 1 for media coverage of the announcement). The Firebikers were not only equipped with and trained in the use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED), but also coached to manage next-of-kin and bystanders at the scene, and to a high level of competency.

Because of the swifter response from these Fast Response Bikes, SCDF was able to respond within eight minutes for 82% of all life-threatening cases in 2018, about 8.6% more than if only ambulances were despatched. In that same year, Firebikers responded to 16,987 life-threatening cases.

Next, the EMS Tiered-Response Framework was developed in 2014 to better manage the increasing demand for EMS. Unlike the previous single-tiered operating model where medical cases were attended to on a first-come first-served basis, the

tiered-response system adopts a differentiated concept by calibrating response based on acuity (see Table 1). This system was introduced in April 2017 as an integral part of the SCDF's EMS Master Plan 2025. Central to the plan's strategic direction, the Emergency Medical Technician scheme and the Fire Medical Vehicle were also conceived in tandem to buttress the new framework.

In 2017, SCDF attended to 42,581 minor emergency cases (23.3% of total ambulance calls), and 11,384 non-emergency cases (6.2% of total ambulance calls). To efficiently manage the demands of minor and non-emergencies, the SCDF Operations Centre has since been enhanced with the implementation of the Advanced Medical Protocol System – a set of standardised telephone interview questions that allows emergency medical call operators to rapidly assess the severity of a patient's illness. This helps to ensure that a robust call-centre triaging system is

Figure 1. Article in the The Straits Times, 12 Jul 2012

Table 1. EMS Tiered-Response Framework as of 1 Apr 2017

Category of Cases	Examples	Response
Life-Threatening Emergencies	Cardiac arrest, unconsciousness, breathlessness, active seizure, major trauma, and stroke	Highest priority Fastest response Extra resources deployed
Emergencies	Severe allergy, emergency labour, head injury, bone fracture, asthma, elderly with chronic medical conditions, and sick children	High priority Fast response
Minor Emergencies	Cut with bleeding, accident with bruising, swelling, mild injury, and persistent fever	Lower priority Slower response
Non-Emergencies	Constipation, chronic cough, diarrhoea, and skin rash	Emergency medical assistance not required Seek treatment at clinics or call for non-emergency ambulances

in place, and appropriate resources are despatched according to the severity of the case. A seamless and effective response model is pivotal to this concept of operations.

In alignment with the framework, a horizontal despatch model is now in place, where instead of arranging for a single call operator to manage both triaging and despatch, the duties are concurrent. With the Advanced Medical Protocol System, while the cell operator is triaging the patient, a separate designated despatcher is activating the appropriate resources. Meanwhile, the call operator continues to engage the caller and where necessary, provides medical advice. This model is superior in terms of efficiency, and results in the process taking only about ten seconds to a minute.

In addition, there is a pool of Community First Responders registered with the SCDF myResponder mobile application where trained volunteers are alerted to suspected cardiac arrest cases occurring within a 400m radius of their location. As of July 2019, there are 46,239 registered responders, of whom 2,870 responders have rendered assistance when called upon. This partnership with the community is a crucial step in the SCDF's transformation, which envisions 'A Nation of Lifesavers'.

Dual-Skilled Responders

Prior to the execution of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework in 2017, there was a clear need to expand beyond the pilot group of Firebikers trained to respond to minor medical emergencies and cardiac arrest cases. The Emergency Medical Technician scheme was thus formulated to build a pool of dual-skilled responders. Fire and Rescue Specialists were progressively identified in batches to undergo six weeks of training, in order to acquire a Level 2 certification in medical competency. They were upskilled in both theory and practice to manage medical protocols, such as trauma, acute myocardial infarction, respiratory emergencies, and cardiac arrest. The training gave them the proficiency to manage low-to-medium acuity medical cases independently.

Thereafter, the cross-trained Fire and Rescue Specialists - Emergency Medical Technicians (FRS-EMTs) were deployed for experiential learning. They were appointed to a two-year stint with the EMS crew of a fire station to gain ground experience assisting the paramedics in responding to all medical emergencies. At the end of the two-year stint, they returned to their Fire Rotas as full-fledged dual-skilled responders.

In preparation for the next phase of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework, SCDF also sent a team of officers to the Seattle Resuscitation Academy to learn high-performance cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). High-performance CPR was introduced in April 2019 in line with efforts to provide enhanced medical support, especially for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest cases. A training framework has been established to formalise proficiency in high-performance CPR as a mandate for all dual-skilled responders.

As the FRS-EMTs possess both the "heartware" for fire/rescue and medical cases, they can be assigned to any emergency appliance, whether the Pump Ladder or the Light Fire Attack Vehicle, without an ambulance. In the event that there are casualties, their cross-training allows them to perform initial triaging and stabilisation while waiting for the arrival of the paramedics to commence prehospital emergency care.

Fire Medical Vehicle

Similar to the upskilling of "heartware", the Fire Medical Vehicle is an upskill of SCDF's "hardware". One key aspect of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework is the conceptualisation of a hybrid vehicle epitomising the integration of fire and medical response capabilities within SCDF. In other words, the Fire Medical Vehicle is a physical manifestation of the FRS-EMTs amalgamation, allowing them to respond to a wider range of emergencies.

The Fire Medical Vehicle is equipped with firefighting capabilities, such as a fire pump and a water tank. It also contains a patient cabin similar to an ambulance, with the capacity to convey up to two patients lying prone or three seated patients (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Artist's Impression of the Fire Medical Vehicle

Fire Medical Vehicle (FMV):

The FMV is a hybrid of a fire appliance and an ambulance. It is the first of its kind in Singapore and is custom-built to integrate both firefighting/rescue and emergency medical capabilities onto a single platform. The vehicle is designed to have a patient treatment space and allows for conveyance of patients to the hospital.

Crew:
• FRS-EMT | Regular
• FRS | Regular
• Firefighter 1 | NSF
• Firefighter 2 | NSF

FIRE & MEDICAL RESPONSE

A NATION OF LIFESAVERS

SCDF

Key Medical Equipment:
• In-vehicle Oxygen Cylinder
• Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)
• Stretchers

Key Firefighting / Rescue Equipment:
• Compressed Air Foam (CAF) Backpack
• Triple Extension Ladder
• Battery-operated Combi Tool

Firefighting Pump / Tank:
• Compressed Air Foam (CAF) Pump
• 600 L Water Tank
• 150 L Foam Concentrate Tank
• Pump Capacity of 2,000 L/min

FRS-EMTs on board the Fire Medical Vehicle will be assigned to respond to Priority 3 medical cases to carry out initial triaging, patient assessment, and life-sustaining medical treatment. If the injuries are assessed to be at least a Priority 2 case, they will be able to stabilise the patient and provide immediate basic life support prior to the arrival of the ambulance.

The first phase of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework rolled out in April 2017 involved the operationalisation and deployment of 30 Fire Bikes and 6 Fire Medical Vehicles with dual-skilled responders at selected bases. Under this phase of the operating model, the vehicle was despatched to all industrial and road traffic accidents within the station boundary, as part of the first fleet of responding appliances (i.e. together with the Fire Bike, the Pump Ladder, and the Light Fire Attack Vehicle). At the incident site, the dual-skilled responders equipped with medical competency render medical care while the others attend to firefighting or rescue operations. In 2018, SCDF's fleet of Fire Medical Vehicles responded to a total of 312 incidents.

Since April 2019, each of the SCDF's fleet of response vehicles has been manned by at least one dual-skilled responder to augment the response of our Fast Response Bikes and ambulances. This calibrated deployment of medical resources serves to address the rising demand for EMS, which is in line with the primary objective of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework. The full roll-out of the framework is on course to be executed by 2025.

A Future-Ready Workforce

The SCDF's transformation journey is not bounded by merely leveraging on innovation and technology. An organisation is, after all, the sum of all her people and what they are capable of. With the introduction of the EMS Tiered-Response Framework, upgrading the "heartware" of responders will help the SCDF manage the resource challenge posed by Singapore's longer term "demographic time bomb". Assembling and sustaining a pool of dual-skilled responders translates into a corresponding increase in versatility in the types of incidents they can be deployed to. This is in essence an optimisation of SCDF's existing manpower resources.

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Will Deepfakes Change the Landscape of Disinformation?

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Many have argued that recent breakthroughs in the field of artificial intelligence will reshape the landscape of threats posed by disinformation. At the center of this discussion has been the emergence of the "deepfake" – extremely high-fidelity fakes of videos, audio and images that are produced by machine learning, the subfield of artificial intelligence responsible for many of the technological advances of recent years.

Highly believable videos have been produced which depict Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama making a variety of statements which they never in reality ever made. This has led a wide range of policymakers, researchers and journalists to worry about the extent to which this technology may be put to harmful purposes.

One might imagine that a state-run campaign to interfere in an election might use a wave of realistic deepfakes to spread doubt about a political candidate. An unscrupulous business might create deepfakes to erode trust in a competitor's product. Deepfakes might be used by an authoritarian regime to harass and suppress dissenting voices. The list can go on. This has even led one commentator in the New York Times to claim that "[d]eepfakes are coming. We can no longer believe what we can see" (Rini, 2019).

Given these developments, should law enforcement and national security practitioners worry about deepfakes? While the demonstrations that have dominated the headlines recently are certainly very dramatic, I think we need to take a more grounded approach to assessing the risks and avoid overly investing in stopping deepfakes.

Like all technologies, deepfakes can and have been used for harmful purposes. But it is far from clear that the use of deepfakes will be widespread and even less clear that it will somehow destroy our ability to discern what is true from what is fake. There are three important things that security specialists should keep in mind as they assess the risk from these emerging technologies.

For one, we should see deepfakes through the eyes of those who might want to use the technology for malicious ends. We should expect that many of these actors will weigh the costs and benefits of deepfakes against the many different options for spreading disinformation. Beyond deepfakes, bad actors might crudely Photoshop an image, hire an impersonator, or simply use bots to spread disinformation about a person or an event. In many cases, these low-tech techniques will be both cheaper and more effective than gathering the specialised resources needed to create a truly

cutting edge deepfake. For more pragmatic actors, this might be sufficient to discourage them from investing in and using deepfakes aggressively as a "go-to" tactic. This may go to explain why – despite fears around the technology – deepfakes have not been seen in widespread political use.

However, these costs will continue to come down. Although the computing power and programming expertise needed to conduct advanced research in the field of artificial intelligence requires considerable capital, deepfakes can be produced by amateurs for very little money. The term deepfake, in fact, originated with a Reddit community in which members shared not only deepfake videos they had made, but also links to the free and open-source software they wrote to produce the videos. The more complex the project, the more costly the process might be, but it can take very little capital to produce a video sufficient to ignite a dangerous rumour. "Face swaps" – videos in which a new face is substituted for a person depicted in a video – have become particularly commodified in recent years.

Secondly, it is important to understand that modern techniques of machine learning are very proficient at identifying and replicating patterns, but that the technology remains quite limited in its capacity to understand context. This means that while deepfake technology allows a malicious actor to replicate the shape and movement of a face or the tone of a voice, it still requires a human to write a believable script and produce a convincing narrative. This means that many of the same techniques that we have used to debunk and fact check in the past remain viable in an era of deepfakes. We will still be able to look at context in assessing the truth of the events that are purported to have occurred in a deepfake video.

"Is there corroborating evidence to support what is shown in the video?" "Do we have eyewitnesses that recall this statement being made?" "Where and when does this video look like it was taken? Do those match up with other data that we have?" These questions will remain viable even in a deepfake world.

Finally, it should be recognized that the state of the art of detection is already improving rapidly. Many machine learning researchers are investing effort in identifying various methods for detecting deepfakes, and the US Department of Defense has an ongoing effort to support further work in the space. Researchers have developed a range of interesting approaches, including one by researchers Yuezun Li, Ming-Ching Chang, and Siwei Lyu which attempts to use physiological signals like blinking rate to distinguish videos of real people from deepfakes (Li, Chang, & Lyu, 2018).

We should expect that these techniques will improve in ways that counter in part the negative uses of the technology. However, this will not be the last word on the matter. Instead, as with other forms of media forgery, we should expect deepfakes to continue to be an "arms race" where bad actors develop new techniques as detection methodologies improve. To that end, continued investment in this research will be an important part of any strategy to counter these threats.

In the end, deepfakes may serve as a distraction from the broader challenges posed by campaigns of online disinformation. Overly focusing on the latest technological threat will result in brittle solutions: we may develop a highly effective tool to detect deepfakes only to discover that malicious actors have already changed to some other method for spreading disinformation. We might spend a great deal of resources building a high-performance deepfake detector, only to discover that malicious actors are investing aggressively in simply deceptively taking clips from real footage to spread their messaging.

Instead, security practitioners should maintain a broader view of this issue. Ultimately, whether or not someone believes and spreads the narrative being disseminated by a deepfake does not depend on how sharp the image is. Many of the most widely spread pieces of online disinformation rely on poor quality footage or even just rumors spread through text. A June 2019 study by Nieman Lab concluded that confirmation bias, the psychological tendency to believe new information if it confirms what we already believe, is a key condition for the spread of misinformation (Diakopoulos & Johnson, 2019). It is the tension between confirmation bias and digital literacy that will determine how widely a deepfake is believed to be genuine, rather than the technology used to create it.

Disinformation spreads because of deeper cognitive, sociological, and psychological factors: often people already want to believe the narrative being spread by a disinformation campaign. To that end, only by focusing our efforts on the influences which impact the person behind the screen can we create robust defenses against these threats. Being driven by the latest technological threat will only produce strategic confusion, and leave us forever behind and playing catch up.

About the Author

Tim Hwang is executive director of The Cognitive Security Institute. He is the former director of the Harvard-MIT Ethics and Governance of AI Initiative, a $26 million philanthropic fund and research effort working to advance the development of machine learning in the public interest. He previously served as the global public policy lead for artificial intelligence and machine learning at Google. He is on the board of Meedan, a hybrid nonprofit/for-profit organisation that builds digital tools for global journalism and translation, including initiatives to enable large, high-profile social monitoring and verification projects such as coverage of national elections and disasters. Tim's publications include Maneuver and Manipulation: On the Military Strategy of Online Information Warfare (US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2019), and Digital Disinformation: A Primer (Atlantic Council, 2017), a concise handbook of key terms, major actors, and policy recommendations to address current and emerging threats, including trolling campaigns, cyber-attacks, and artificial intelligence.

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CRIME & VIGILANTISM

Cyber Vigilantism:
What Drives People to Enact Morality Online and What Can We Do About It?

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ABSTRACT

With Web 2.0 making it easier for people to share information via social media platforms, blogs and Internet-based communities, some users have felt empowered to enact morality online by identifying and correcting perceived injustices. One of the consequences of this is the phenomenon of cyber vigilantism, which is the attempt by private, autonomous individuals or online communities to seek revenge and deal justice through the Internet. This article explores the factors that motivate acts of cyber vigilantism, and the implications for law enforcement.

Introduction

On 18 April 2019, the case of the "NUS Peeping Tom" hit the Internet. Netizens in Singapore reacted with outrage to an alleged mishandling of a sexual harassment case at the National University of Singapore (NUS), where a student was caught filming another student in the shower at a hostel on campus. The victim released, in her own name, a series of Instagram stories detailing the incident and what she considered to be inadequate punishment meted out to the perpetrator, whose personal information she also published (Ang, 2019). In what became a 'trial by social media', the perpetrator was harassed and shamed online, while the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and legal system were accused of 'incompetency' by many netizens. That it was the victim herself who carried out the act of doxxing against her perpetrator was novel, but doxxing and the onslaught of shaming behaviours directed by

netizens against the perpetrator and law enforcement are characteristic of online vigilantism, of which there has been an increasing trend in recent years (Ministry of Law, 2019).

With increased accessibility to new communication technologies that allow just about anyone to share information and build a community around any cause, the public's capacity to enact morality online by identifying and correcting perceived injustices has been augmented. Netizens can now unearth, or gain access to, previously obscure, anonymous, or protected personal data of anyone accused of wrongdoing from their social media accounts (Cheong & Gong, 2010), thereby facilitating individual participation in acts of cyber vigilantism. It is also important to recognise the highly collective nature of cyber vigilantism, as netizens often

congregate spontaneously on social media sites to enact 'justice' against an identified wrongdoer. In some cases, netizens have attempted to take things a step further by meting out 'punishments' with consequences for the alleged perpetrator online and offline.

This article examines the phenomenon of cyber vigilantism from a behavioural sciences perspective. Cyber vigilantism is here defined as a planned illegitimate act that is carried out by private, autonomous individuals, or online communities formed in response to a perceived violation of societal norms, to bring to light perceived transgressions identified by netizens online, and to carry out acts of punishment against the perceived perpetrator with the purported aim of providing assurances of safety for the online community. The article begins by identifying the consequences of cyber vigilantism before exploring the factors that motivate such acts. It then identifies implications for law enforcement and recommends possible actions to ameliorate the trend.

Consequences of Cyber Vigilantism

Doxxing and shaming are common manifestations of cyber vigilantism. These often have detrimental effects for the individuals on the receiving end of such behaviours. Doxxing is short for 'dropping docs' and involves the public sharing of personal details (e.g., home address, phone number) of the targeted individual, by publishing them on a public website (Douglas, 2016). These effects extend beyond the cyber realm and can result in real life consequences for its victims, as well as psychological distress (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015). In fact, research has shown that symptoms of depression and anxiety are commonly seen in cases of cyberbullying (Fahy et al., 2016).

Besides psychological trauma, cyber vigilantism can result in the spread of falsehoods as netizens often act on incomplete information (Lin, 2017).

The wrongful doxxing of a perceived perpetrator has caused innocent victims to be shamed and harassed online as the false news of his or her alleged misdeed spreads online. Doxxing may also interfere with Home Team operations, as public disclosure of suspects' names can potentially disrupt ongoing investigations, and exacerbate distrust of the authorities.

More importantly, cyber vigilantism also signals the public's lack of confidence in traditional law enforcement as members of the public step in to enact justice, instead of relying on law enforcement agencies and the judicial process. It also sets a precedent for future cases as individuals may be spurred to act without heeding law enforcement.

Troublingly, this phenomenon of cyber vigilantism does not seem to be dissipating, and the long-lasting consequences this phenomenon has on its victims (i.e., the alleged perpetrators), together with the challenges it poses to the judicial system, present security implications for the Home Team. Recognising the importance of dealing with cyber vigilantism, the Protection from Harassment Act (POHA) has been amended to make doxxing an offence if the publication was made with the intention of harassing the victim, or made with the knowledge or intention of putting the victim in fear of violence, or made with the knowledge or intention to provoke violence against the victim (Ministry of Law, 2019).

To complement the legal measures regulating cyber vigilante behaviours, it is equally important to understand the factors that motivate acts of cyber vigilantism.

Factors Leading to Cyber Vigilantism

Cyber vigilantes are motivated by a variety of reasons, which can be grouped into behavioural motivations and systemic factors. Behavioural motivations refer to socio-psychological factors

that influence an individual's decision to partake in cyber vigilantism. In contrast, systemic factors are characteristics of cyberspace that facilitate such online behaviours. These two groups of factors often work in tandem to motivate and create an environment conducive to cyber vigilantism.

Behavioural Motivations

Need to Uphold Justice

According to Vidmar (2002), individuals undergo certain psychological changes when they perceive some form of injustice occurring. Such changes can also be observed in the context of cyber vigilantism. To begin with, cyber vigilantes need to establish an individual as guilty of breaking or violating certain social norms. Not all social norms (e.g., respect for elderly, caring for the less fortunate) can be covered under the rule of law, so in order to protect some of these social norms, netizens take it upon themselves to police the perceived transgressions.

Next, anger is aroused in the cyber vigilantes as the violation of social norms threatens their internalised group social norms (Vidmar, 2002). Studies have shown that anger can be used to motivate people to deal out punishment in the name of retribution (Nelissen & Zeelenberg, 2009). Such punishments help to right the wrong, emphasising to the community that the transgression of norms are unacceptable (Okimoto & Wenzel, 2009).

Furthermore, people usually adopt a just desserts perspective when given the chance to punish others. When presented with hypothetical situations describing various crimes of different severity, participants tend to implement punishments that are perceived to be proportional to the severity of the crime (Darley, Carlsmith, & Robinson, 2000). After the punishment has been meted out, the emotions of anger dissipate and the norm is perceived to be vindicated.

In some cases of cyber vigilantism, the punishment meted out by the legal process is deemed by netizens to fall short of the severity of the injustice committed. To right what they consider to be an injustice, netizens enact their own version of punishment that they deem proportional to the severity of the perpetrator's misdeeds.

Perceived Inadequacy of Law Enforcement

In classic vigilante literature, vigilantism is understood as a social response to a perceived lack of, or threat to security (Silva, 2017). Extrapolating to cyberspace, one key reason for cyber vigilantism is netizen perception of inadequate law enforcement. In some cases, netizens believe the police are not taking any action. In others, it is the perception that law enforcement agencies are too lenient. For example, the perceived leniency of a sentence, especially if the law appears to benefit an individual in a position of power, may lead to speculations of corruption or unfair practices. This therefore creates a perceived vacuum, often used as justification for the public to step in and police the situation.

Such perceptions of the inadequacy of law enforcement can happen during a police investigation and after the verdict has been released. Furthermore, distrust in law enforcement that develops because of the incident can spur more acts of cyber vigilantism in the future because individuals assume the results of any police investigation will be unsatisfactory.

Influenced by Emotional Reactions of Others

When netizens engage in discussions in online groups, the emotions of one individual can trigger similar emotions in others, i.e., emotional contagion takes place (Barsade, 2002). An experimental study found that when individuals saw negative posts on their news feed, they similarly posted negative posts on their feed (Kramer, Guillory, & Hancock,

2014). In a separate experiment, when participants were placed in a room with a trained experimentor who espoused either positive or negative moods, participants from both groups were influenced by the experimentor and experienced high levels of emotional contagion (Barsade, 2002).

Applying this to cyber vigilantism, it is probable that individuals may be influenced by emotionally-charged comments posted by others. If there is a large number of like-minded individuals espousing the same sentiments, the individual may pick up the same emotions, and be motivated to engage in similar cyber vigilantism acts (Wood, Rose, & Thompson, 2018). This is facilitated by the interactive nature of social media, where netizens can comment on the posts made by other netizens. Thus, social media provides a platform where netizens can experience and validate one another's emotional response to any given issue, creating a network conducive for emotional contagion.

Perceived Normalisation of Cyber Vigilante Behaviours

Given the sociality – the tendency of people to form social links – of social media, cyber vigilantism may be exacerbated due to its widespread occurrence amongst the online community. Some individuals may have performed acts of cyber vigilantism due to the perception that it is a normal and acceptable behaviour. To borrow from the theory of social normalisation of deviance, we may posit that individuals become so accustomed to a deviant behaviour that they do not consider it to be deviant (Vaughan, 2008). In online circles where cyber vigilante behaviours are common, antisocial behaviours like doxxing and shaming are normalised in spite of individual morality or wider societal rules that exist. In fact, individuals who carry out acts of cyber vigilantism are often praised, receiving many social media likes, for instance. As a result of the social validation and approval, individuals may be incentivised to commit more of such acts.

Alternatively, cyber vigilantism can be explained using the cognitive bias known as the bandwagon effect. According to Nadeau, Cloutier, and Guay (1993), individuals exhibit bandwagon effect when they adopt the view of the majority, under the assumption that the majority is usually right. In an environment where there is a lot of information available (i.e., cyberspace), individuals tend to look for popularity cues in order to assess what they read online (Fu & Sim, 2011).

In cases where netizens respond to an incident with an onslaught of memes and parodies, these serve as popularity cues and create a bandwagon effect. A meme, which is a "piece of culture, typically a joke, which gains influence through online transmission" (Davison, 2012), resonates with netizens because it utilises humour and language commonly used amongst netizens. Memes are thus typically used to ridicule the perceived perpetrator, pointing out the absurdity of his or her transgressions. The humorous nature of memes not only adds to its wide reach, it also normalises cyber vigilante behaviours. Netizens often participate in shaming behaviours through the creation or remixing of memes, or by commenting on them. This is because the humour of Internet memes replaces the anti-sociality of shaming with the sociality of participation, making it more palatable. In sum, netizens are influenced by social cues that support or are at least uncritical of cyber vigilante behaviours, thus leading them to participate in shaming behaviours themselves.

Systemic Factors

Besides behavioural motivations that contribute to cyber vigilantism behaviours, systemic factors create an online climate that is conducive to the enactment of cyber vigilantism.

Anonymity

Research has shown that anonymity lowers people's barriers to engaging in anti-social behaviour online, as there is a perceived lack of accountability for

their actions, making them more willing to express themselves online (Chang & Poon, 2017). This is especially pertinent to the shaming of others.

Social media has been said to diminish both the discomfort of seeing the suffering of victims and the shame of being seen making them suffer (Koganzon, 2015). This is perhaps due to the lack of social cues in online contexts. This makes online shaming easy to execute as it "causes harm with no physical interaction, little planning and small chance of being caught" (Peebles, 2014). Furthermore, the lack of social cues combined with emotional arousal when faced with perceived injustices may lead netizens to rush to judgment and "fill in the blanks" about others they encounter on the Internet (Blackwell et al., 2018).

Asynchronicity

When an individual engages in discussions online, responses obtained are not instantaneous or immediate (i.e., asynchronous) due to the presence of lag time on the Internet (Suler, 2004). This asynchronous nature of the Internet tends to prompt people to comment more due to the lack of feedback (Fox, Cruz, & Lee, 2015). As a result, cyber vigilantes are exposed to more ideas or arguments relating to the issue at hand, trapping them in an echo chamber with like-minded individuals.

Optimisation of Online Content

Often, social media sites have algorithms that ensure that the top posts shown to the user are relevant to the user's preference (Trottier, 2017). Facebook's algorithm optimises the content on everyone's feed, often showing content that is relevant, liked by peers or popular, at the top of one's page (Swan, 2019). Repeated engagement with the post thus not only creates a sense of social influence, it also contributes to the virality and longevity of the post. When posts shared by cyber vigilantes gain traction amongst the online community, the social media algorithm will therefore increase the chances of it being seen by friends who have liked or shared the post.

Internet as a Facilitator for In-group Formation

Although the process of doxxing a perceived perpetrator can be an individual endeavour, cyber vigilantism is often a social affair. A group is often formed in online discussions or forums around a specific case, where members of the group identify with the case and become personally invested in it. Central to the formation of such groups is the individual's ability to find and connect with like-minded others (Code & Zaparyniuk, 2010). The ease with which one can find familiar others online, combined with the relative anonymity, are some of the unique features of the online sphere, which makes it conducive for group formation.

Furthermore, when people identify with each other and form online groups, they amplify each other's emotions and attitudes, forming echo chambers that further reinforce preconceived ideas (Quattrociocchi, Scala, & Sunstein, 2016). An individual's social network is often highly homophilic (i.e., similar), and individuals are often exposed to views that are similar to theirs (Lewis, Gonzalez, & Kaufman, 2011). Constant discussion of the issue may further polarise their views towards the extremes, all of which amplify the effect of emotional contagion (Williams, McMurray, Kurz, & Lambert, 2015). In the context of cyber vigilantism, this reinforces and solidifies the negative emotions felt towards the perceived offender, with alternative or more objective views drowned out.

This echo chamber is exacerbated by "slacktivism" in social media spaces. Slacktivism refers to the passive liking and sharing of online content as a means of demonstrating support through little effort and participation (Skoric & Zhu, 2015). Slacktivism is born of social media as the 'share' and 'like' functions make it easy to show support for causes that are popular. In cases of cyber vigilantism, it has been observed that netizens participate in shaming behaviours by commenting in discussions surrounding the perceived perpetrator, as well as by sharing content aimed at shaming the perceived

perpetrator (e.g., sharing personal information that has been doxxed).

What Can be Done?

Given the many negative consequences of cyber vigilantism, it is incumbent on the authorities to warn people against engaging in it. What can be done to dissuade people from doing what they perceive to be the right thing in shaming someone who might otherwise get away with bad behaviour?

Raising Awareness about Damage Inflicted

For a start, the authorities should warn netizens about the negative consequences of taking things into their own hands. Highlighting this can help cyber vigilantes to recognise the damage they inflict on affected parties and perhaps ameliorate the effect of emotional contagion. For example, they need to be told that naming and shaming individuals online might compromise the ability of the law to protect vulnerable people, such as minors. This can be coupled with outreach efforts to educate the public about existing laws that criminalise doxxing and shaming behaviours.

Importantly, there is a need to be specific that netizens should not try to publicise attempts to identify perpetrators on social media, unless help is requested by the police to do so on a controlled platform. In many cases of cyber vigilantism, mis-identification of individuals have occurred. Cyber vigilantism can also jeopardise and/or interfere with police investigations, as officers have to deal with the negative repercussions of cyber vigilante behaviours (e.g., breach of privacy, spread of misinformation).

Social Media Partnership to De-escalate the Incident

The authorities need to work with social media companies to flag any potential threat and curb the presence of strongly worded hate content that poses an imminent threat to anyone involved. Of late, Facebook has been working towards easier reporting of fake news, including measures to ensure that stories that are flagged by users will not show up as often in other feeds (Facebook, 2017). The authorities should also work with social media sites to ensure that any personal information published by a third party without prior consent of the owner is quickly removed. Moving forward, the authorities could perhaps also work with social media sites to educate users about their responsibility to report false information.

Besides addressing false news, a steady inflow of accurate information from legitimate sources may also help to quell public anxieties following an incident (Andrews, Fichet, Ding, Spiro, & Starbird, 2016). When cyber vigilantism escalates, the authorities can immediately use their official accounts to dispel any misinformation, or update netizens on the situation regarding the investigation. This makes it easier for netizens to assess the information that they receive on their feed, preventing the spread of misinformation.

Providing Care for Parties Involved

Cyber bullying behaviours commonly associated with cyber vigilantism (e.g., spread of personal pictures or videos) often result in greater negative impact on the victim as compared to traditional bullying (Slonje et al., 2017). There is a greater sense of threat when it comes to public forms of cyber bullying as there is a fear of not knowing who is participating in it (Slonje et al., 2017). As the Internet gains increasing prominence in our lives, online activities are recognised to no longer be separable from our real lives, but an integral part of it (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015). Thus, the emotional trauma faced in cyberspace may affect the victim offline, which may cause long-term psychological issues.

Besides the perceived perpetrator, innocent victims such as the family members of the target of cyber vigilantes are often implicated because of their associations with the target. Similarly, misidentified individuals are often harassed, leading to long-term psychological distress. As such, the relevant authorities should establish a framework to refer victims of cyber vigilantism to psychological services to reduce the stress and psychological trauma resulting from the incident.

Harnessing Cyber Vigilante Behaviours for Good

Despite some of its unsavoury consequences, cyber vigilantism is a form of citizen participation that can be harnessed for good. Positive outcomes are evident in cases of cyber vigilantism dealing with animal abuse. Animal welfare groups have noted that the posting of instances of abuse on social media not only helps to bring such cases to light, but also helps with the identification of perpetrators and raises awareness of animal welfare issues. The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), for example, leverages complaints from the public for its investigations, its acting executive director Jaipal Singh Gill told the media, citing a case in November 2016 when a video of an owner swinging a dog by its neck was posted on citizen journalism site STOMP, resulting in SPCA intervening and rehoming the dog (Tay, 2016). In such cases, citizen participation serves as extra sets of eyes and ears for law enforcement (Nhan, Huey, & Broll, 2017), providing valuable intelligence for relevant agencies to act on.

Thus, community involvement can be harnessed for good, if the authorities moderate the process of crowdsourced investigation. This can be done through encouraging users to provide information to the relevant authorities and thus help to bring perpetrators to justice. An example is the i-Witness platform created by the Singapore Police Force to provide a platform in cyberspace that allows individuals to provide information about any criminal activity observed. The authorities should focus public attention on these platforms before and during cyber vigilantism incidents, reiterating to cyber vigilantes that they should share information on these platforms, and not elsewhere.

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Don't Believe Me, Just Watch:
Live-streaming Crime

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ABSTRACT

The advent and democratisation of mobile live-streaming technology in 2015 has catapulted live-streaming digital citizens into the spotlight as they document their everyday activities and lives. Even criminals have jumped on the bandwagon as they broadcast, in real time, a variety of crimes of a violent, sexual, economic, or religio-political nature, attracting many viewers, many of whom further disseminate the videos. The emergence and growth of live-streamed crime warrants concern due to its transnational reach across cyberspace and impact on victims as well as both online and real-world communities. This article reviews and categorises reported instances of live-streamed crime from 2015 to 2019 to identify the functions of live-streaming in criminal activities. Given its potential for harm, some recommendations are provided to mitigate or control the dissemination and spread of such footage.

Introduction

On March 15, 2019, a mass shooting in Christchurch, New Zealand, resulted in 51 deaths and 50 people injured (Saldivia, 2019; Withers, 2019). What made this attack different from previous mass shootings was the gunman's resolve to record and broadcast his act in real-time on the live-streaming platform, Facebook Live. While more than 200 users watched the live-streamed video of the massacre, it was only reported to moderators 12 minutes after the broadcast ended on Facebook Live (Sonderby, 2019). Despite the platform's prompt response in removing the video after it was flagged, it went viral with more than 1 million views within the first 24 hours of the shooting.

Three years earlier, in 2016, Marina Lonina live-streamed her friend being raped by Raymond Gates, a stranger she had met the previous day, on the live-streaming service, Periscope. Lonina claimed that she began recording the event rather than calling the police because she thought it would help the victim. Allegedly, she could be heard giggling in the background. The authorities were only contacted when an out-of-state friend of the victim saw the images on Periscope. The prosecutor claimed that Lonina had become enchanted by the positive feedback from likes, comments, and viewers. The live-stream lasted about 10 minutes, of which the prosecutor accepted that Lonina tried to help for roughly 10 seconds (McPhate, 2016).

The adage that technology is both a boon and bane holds true for mobile live-streaming technology. A live-stream refers to any video footage that is both recorded and broadcast simultaneously through digital media (Payne et al., 2017). With the release of free mobile streaming video technologies like Meerkat, Periscope and Facebook Live in 2015, the ability of anyone to broadcast his or her activities to global audiences on a whim has spilled over to the domain of criminal behaviour. Between 2015 to 2017, there were at least 45 live-streamed instances of violence reported on Facebook Live alone (Kantrowitz, 2017). This live broadcast of criminal activities over social media is now known as live-streamed crime.

Live-streamed and Performance Crime

Live-streamed crime represents a new face of crime in the modern era as criminal acts that are conducted in the real world are being witnessed in cyberspace in real-time. The content might include pre-crime footage of a criminal leaking his intentions, actual footage of the crime as it happens, or post-crime footage of confessions or bragging. Since live-streaming services are now widely utilised by individuals, communities,

and industries for various reasons, whether to garner popularity, gather like-minded individuals, promote one's agenda, or simply as a by-product of the increased instinctive reliance on modern social media, especially among the younger, tech-savvy generations, it should not be surprising that incorporating live-stream into criminal activities involves similar factors, which will be explored in-depth in this article.

Notably, the concept of live-streamed crime shares its roots with performance crime. Performance crime refers to the recording, sharing, and uploading of crime with the purpose of distributing the "act" to new media audiences (Surette, 2015; Yar, 2012). These criminal acts are committed with an audience in mind and they are filmed with the intention of achieving certain goals or functions such as causing fear to communities or for self-promotion. Performance crimes are often self-incriminatory and contain details that can be used in the identification, apprehension, and prosecution of the perpetrators. An example are the video recordings of acts of violent extremism that are intentionally distributed to news outlets or online sources with a statement by the actor or group claiming responsibility and justifying their actions.

Figure 1. Relationship between Performance Crime and Live-streamed Crime

Performance Crime

Live-streamed Crime

Recording, sharing, and uploading of crime with the purpose of distributing the "act" to new media audiences.

Any criminal behaviour that is recorded and broadcast simultaneously via live-stream technology.
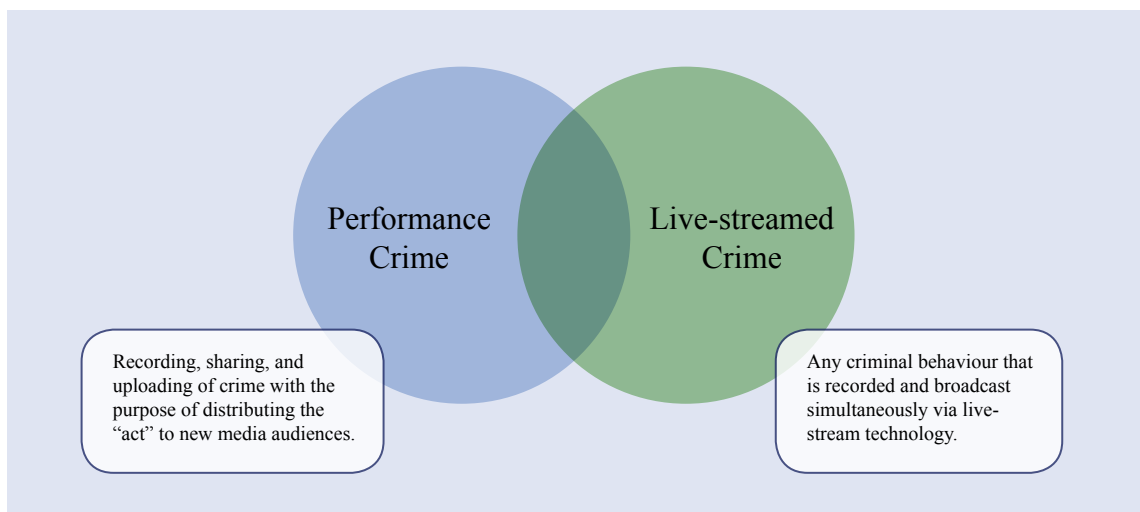
Conceptually, performance crime and live-streamed crime overlap by a significant margin (see Figure 1). It appears that they are two sides of the same coin, since both involves recording and broadcasting of the crime. However, not all performance crimes are live-streamed, and not all live-streamed crimes involve a performative element. An example of the latter would be the voyeuristic live-stream recording of victims in private places. These perpetrators do not seek to self-promote through public dissemination but do so clandestinely within closed communities with other goals such as self-gratification or profit (Jeong & Griffiths, 2019).

What Crimes are Live-Streamed

The increasing frequency of criminal behaviour being live-streamed warrants scrutiny. From the Periscope rape to the Christchurch shooting, live-streamed crimes seem to be the inevitable consequence of rapid technological change, as criminals incorporate or adapt to new technologies in their modus operandi. Additionally, with the use of mobile streaming video technologies, the delay between production of videos and distribution is virtually non-existent. This results in increased difficulty in policing what information goes out to deviant subgroups or the general public, and the risks of disturbing broadcasts. Therefore, the emergence and increase in criminal broadcasts is complex and challenging for relevant agencies to deal with.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive look at live-streamed crimes by reviewing crime reports where live-streaming technology was used during the commission of the crime. A non-exhaustive list of 33 crime cases reported by online news media from April 2015 to July 2019 was collated for this analysis (see Table 1). These cases are categorised to provide a better overview of the diversity of crimes that have incorporated a live-streaming element. The authors will then discuss the functions that live-streams might serve for the perpetrators. They will then consider some approaches to curb the dissemination of live-stream recordings to mitigate the potential harm to individuals and society.

Table 1. List of Live-streamed Crime Cases Between 2015 to 2019

No.	Date of Article	Source	Article Headline	Crime Type
1	2015, April 4	Variety	Twitter's Periscope and Meerkat Invade Theaters, But Movie Biz Not Too Worried	Digital piracy
2	2015, October 12	Mail Online	Florida woman arrested after she starts live streaming on Periscope to tell the world she's driving while 'f***ing drunk' with a flat tire	Drunk driving
3	2016, June 3	Fortune	This Happened When a Guy Streamed a Movie to Facebook Live	Digital piracy
4	2016, June 14	New York Times	Killing Twice for ISIS and Saying So Live on Facebook	Murder / violent extremism
5	2016, September 8	Independent	Father uses Facebook Live to confess shooting of ex-wife and son	Murder
6	2017, January 5	Guardian	Four suspects charged with hate crimes over beating in Facebook Live video	Assault
7	2017, January 20	Guardian	Ohio mother who taped son to wall on Facebook Live faces charges	Child abuse
8	2017, January 25	Irish Times	Three for court in Sweden over Facebook Live 'gang-rape'	Rape
9	2017, January 29	Sun	Sick sexual predators are grooming young children on livestreaming app Periscope	Online child sexual exploitation
10	2017, February 15	Independent	Teenager jailed for broadcast of girl's rape on online Periscope app	Rape
11	2017, February 15	Mail Online	Two Slovenian men are arrested after victim dies following sickening 20-minute beating that was streamed on Facebook Live	Assault and murder

No.	Date of Article	Source	Article Headline	Crime Type
12	2017, March 22	NBC News	Gang Rape of Chicago Teen Was Watched Live by 40 People on Facebook, No One Called Cops	Rape
13	2017, April 12	CBC News	Saskatoon man charged in international child porn ring faces new charges	Online child sexual exploitation
14	2017, April 18	CNN	The Facebook victim was a granddad walking home after Easter meal	Murder
15	2017, April 25	Straits Times	Thai man broadcasts baby daughter's murder live on Facebook	Murder-suicide
16	2017, May 4	Sun	Serena McKay, 19, 'beaten to death by gang of schoolgirls who may have filmed themselves stomping on her head in sick Facebook Live video that remained on the site for four hours'	Assault and murder
17	2017, May 15	NBC News	Memphis, Tennessee, Man Fatally Sets Himself on Fire on Facebook Live	Attempted murder and suicide
18	2017, June 5	Fox 23 News	Tulsa man accused of broadcasting child abuse on Facebook Live	Child physical abuse
19	2017, December 30	Independent	Kansas 'swatting' latest: Man arrested in Los Angeles after gamer Andrew Finch shot dead by police in Wichita	'Swatting' resulting in death
20	2018, October 19	Channel NewsAsia	Nudity, public sex, stalkers: What children are in for on live-streaming apps	Exhibitionism
21	2018, October 27	Channel NewsAsia	Live-streaming of child sex abuse spreads in the Philippines	Child sexual exploitation
22	2018, December 20	Mail Online	Chinese man live-streams himself torturing small dogs with a taser to earn money from followers before being caught and publicly shamed	Animal abuse
23	2018, December 28	South China Morning Post	Six men arrested in Vietnam for killing and eating endangered monkey on Facebook live-stream	Animal abuse
24	2019, January 20	CBS San Francisco	Burglar Live Streams Own Crime On Victim's Phone, Strips To Underwear	Housebreaking
25	2019, March 12	CBS 17 News	Police: 2 Raleigh men live streamed drug use with child in room	Drug possession and use
26	2019, March 15	Chicago Tribune	New Zealand mosque shooter is a white nationalist who hates immigrants, documents and video reveal	Mass murder / violent extremism
27	2019, March 19	Metro	Ex-deputy headteacher admits taking class A drugs while live-streaming child sex abuse	Online child sexual exploitation
28	2019, March 21	CNN	Hundreds of motel guests were secretly filmed and live-streamed online	Voyeurism
29	2019, April 30	Verge	People are live-streaming new Game of Thrones episodes on Twitch every week	Digital piracy
30	2019, May 17	Newsweek	Florida man lives-streamed argument with Walgreens staff before smacking baby in head: 'I didn't do nothing!'	Assault
31	2019, May 20	Straits Times	North Korean women tell of paedophilia, slavery and gang rape on camera in Chinese cyber sex dens	Online sexual exploitation
32	2019, June 6	New York Post	Monster gets 120 years in prison for livestreaming sexual abuse of his daughter	Online child sexual exploitation
33	2019, July 2	BBC News	Man admits live-streaming child sex abuse at Irvine home	Online child sexual exploitation

Method and Analysis

A search was conducted on the Google search platform across reputable English-language news media and technology websites using keywords such as 'live-stream', 'video', 'crime', 'broadcast' and other related terms such as 'Facebook Live', 'Periscope', and 'Meerkat'. The following inclusion criteria was then used to sieve out articles relevant to this report: the incident is construed as a law-breaking event within the article or under the Singapore criminal justice system; a live-streaming component or platform is involved before, during, and/or after the commission of the crime; and the live-stream is purposefully initiated by the perpetrator or abettor. In the event where multiple articles regarding the same event were present, they were counted as a single case. The search was limited to the period of 2015 to July 2019 as popular live-streaming platforms such as Facebook Live and Periscope were publicly launched in 2015.

Based on the above criteria, a total of 33 crime cases with a live-streaming element reported between 2015 to 2019 were identified from various internet sources (see Table 1). This is not an all-encompassing list of reported cases that occurred globally during the time frame but is sufficient for the purpose of this preliminary analysis and discussion. These cases have been further categorised according to their crime types and frequency in Table 2.

As these 33 crime cases show, live-streaming can occur within a diverse range of law-breaking behaviours – from traffic and digital piracy offences to serious sexual crimes, violent assaults and mass murder. The most frequent crimes with a live-stream component are online sexual exploitation, followed by murder or grievous hurt resulting in death, rape, and digital piracy.

Table 2. Categories of Live-streamed Crimes Identified Between 2015 to 2019

Crime Type	Brief Description	Frequency (%)
Online Sexual Exploitation	The perpetrators live-streamed their victims committing sexual acts for online viewers, or the perpetrators groomed the victims to perform explicit acts while live-streaming on their own (i.e. pay-per-view) channels. Notably, 6 of the 7 cases involved the exploitation of children.	7 (21.2%)
Murder / Grievous Hurt Resulting in Death	The perpetrators shot or fatally assaulted their victims while being live-streamed. In one case, the perpetrator confessed to a shooting after the crime.	4 (12.1%)
Digital Piracy	The perpetrators engaged in unauthorised live-streaming of movies in the cinema, particularly during new releases.	3 (9.1%)
Rape	The perpetrators filmed themselves in the act of sexually assaulting their victims.	3 (9.1%)
Acts of Violent Extremism	The perpetrators were motivated by extremist ideologies to commit their acts of violence and to record them.	2 (6.1%)
Animal Abuse	The perpetrators intentionally and explicitly tortured animals and streamed the act to an online audience, sometimes for a fee.	2 (6.1%)
Assault	The perpetrators physically attacked their victims while recording the acts.	2 (6.1%)
Child Physical Abuse	The perpetrators filmed themselves physically abusing their children.	2 (6.1%)
Murder-suicide	One case involved the perpetrator filming himself hanging his child before committing suicide. The other involved a perpetrator who attempted to kill another by setting himself on fire.	2 (6.1%)
Driving Under Influence of Alcohol	The perpetrator live-streamed herself as she drove dangerously on the road while under the influence of alcohol.	1 (3.0%)

Crime Type	Brief Description	Frequency (%)
Drug Use	The drug offenders live-streamed themselves abusing marijuana.	1 (3.0%)
Exhibitionism	The perpetrators filmed themselves displaying their genitals on a live-streaming platform to unsuspecting viewers.	1 (3.0%)
Housebreaking	The perpetrator broke into a house and live-streamed herself committing the offence using the victim's phone.	1 (3.0%)
"Swatting" Resulting in Death	"Swatting" involves a perpetrator prank-calling the police to report a serious offence in the victim's house so that it would be raided by SWAT. The entire act would usually be captured on the victim's own live-stream channel which is active while he is playing a video game. This case led to the live-streaming gamer being fatally shot by the police.	1 (3.0%)
Voyeurism and Distribution of Obscene Materials	Perpetrators used spy cameras for illicit filming of victims in compromising situations so that online paying customers can watch.	1 (3.0%)

Why Criminals Live-stream their Crimes

1. New Modus Operandi for Cyber-facilitated Criminality

Since live-streaming represents a new leap in technology that enables simultaneous production and distribution of digital content, it was only a matter of time before cyber-enabled crimes that rely on illicit recording and broadcast began leveraging this advancement. With live-streamed platforms, it is now faster, easier and cheaper for perpetrators to produce and distribute digital content. Of the 33 crime cases reviewed, it is not surprising that online sexual exploitation of victims shows the highest frequency.

A closer look at the recent phenomenon of online sexual exploitation in Philippines gives further insight into how live-streaming has become a lucrative modus operandi for this criminal activity (Promchertchoo, 2018). In the Philippines, localities with high poverty rates and strong internet culture have become operating grounds for the child sex tourism industry. Parents or family members may encourage or compel their children to be sexually

exploited online by syndicates to supplement their income. Cyber sex predators who may be halfway across the globe pay and direct the victims to perform sexual acts with other juveniles, a sibling, or adults. One method for these paedophiles to access such content illicitly is through the dark web where they can stream these contents, and at times are even able to direct the sexual abuse based on how much they are willing to pay (BBC, 2019). In addition, because live-streams do not need to be downloaded and stored on devices, there is no evidence stored on the viewers' devices, offering them an additional safeguard against criminal prosecution.

At the same time, online sex predators are also exploiting vulnerable groups to perform explicit acts for their own gratification, in particular children and teenagers who use live-streaming platforms on a widespread and frequent basis. This may occur within social media outlets, such as Bigo Live and Periscope, where predators look for opportunities to groom children remotely and anonymously across the web. These acts may go unnoticed or unreported when viewers do not report inappropriate messages, particularly when the audience comprises online sex predators that band together to support a fellow commenter's

grooming. Furthermore, vulnerable victims may be persuaded by these perpetrators to create private channels via other platforms such as Skype where they can further groom the victims with greater anonymity and privacy (Bevan, 2019; Smith, 2019; Wheatstone, 2019).

Finally, it is perhaps inevitable that digital pirates will leverage live-streams to propagate the unlawful filming and distribution of copyrighted content. Viewers on these platforms have free access to the latest media releases by viewing the perpetrator's channel. A recent example in 2019 is the rampant live-streaming of episodes of the popular TV series, Game of Thrones, in the "Just Chatting" section of the popular streaming platform, Twitch. One streamer who openly titled his video "Game of Thrones season 8 premiere" had more than 500 audience members (Alexander, 2019). Interestingly, some sub-communities on Twitch endorse these pirated streams and even provide strategies to streamers to conceal their activities from moderators and detection. Digital pirates thus are encouraged to use live-streaming to provide free, live entertainment.

2. Accessible Means of Self-expression Without Regulation

Live-streams represent an easy technological avenue for disseminating unregulated and unbounded content. With the profusion of live-streaming applications and capabilities online that can be easily and freely utilised to create and transmit content, criminals have direct access and widespread outreach to global audiences and deviant subcultures. They can broadcast ideologies, grievances or illicit materials, or gain infamy and notoriety without having to go through the corrective filters of mainstream reporting. While violent extremist attacks that seek to broadcast the perpetrators' ideologies and to promote and justify their actions are the crimes that get the most attention, they make up a small proportion of live-streamed crimes compared to the acts of violence committed by individuals or small groups acting out their own personal beliefs and attitudes.

Live-streaming has become a portable method for violent individuals to express their thoughts and emotions while committing their crimes. In 2017, the shooting of Robert Godwin Senior by Steve Stephens at point blank range would have been another random act, if not for the shooter's posting on Facebook Live while killing another man. Stephens bragged about killing other people at random, and eventually killed Godwin after "snapping" following a break-up with his girlfriend, Joy Lane. This was evidenced by Stephens telling Godwin to say her name, "Joy Lane", and blaming Lane for his shooting Godwin (Selk, 2017). The use of live-streams thus becomes a means by which a perpetrator attempts to avenge himself or ventilate his pent-up emotions in front of a readily available audience through mobile streaming technology.

The ability to express oneself freely to a responsive audience may also explain the use of live-streams prior to the act of suicide. In Turkey, Ayhan Uzun recorded himself on Facebook Live expressing his grievance and disappointment that his daughter had married without his consent. He then pointed a handgun to his head and threatened to end his life. Family and friends urged him not to pull the trigger on the live-stream but to no avail (Robinson, 2017). With live-streams, suicide no longer becomes a private affair but a disturbing spectacle for family, friends, and even strangers. The live-streaming of suicides may function as a 'cry for help' from available digital sympathisers as a last barrier to suicide. For some, the live-stream may also be a modern substitute for a suicide note addressed to specific individuals or to a larger public to justify ending the recorder's life.

3. Added Channel for Public Humiliation of Victims

Live-stream platforms can offer another avenue for individuals to openly humiliate others. Offenders tend to feel a sense of power and control when they victimise their subjects particularly in violent crimes such as sexual assault. The addition of live-streaming exacerbates victim-shaming as the victims' identities are not concealed and they are publicly humiliated and dehumanised before a live

audience. The 2017 Uppsala rape in Sweden is a prominent example, where a group of three men raped an unconscious woman over several hours. The live-stream was only halted when police arrived after viewers realized what was happening and reported the crime. The live-stream was available to a closed group of 60,000 on Facebook, and to about 200 people who were online at the time of the incident (Kale, 2017; Scally, 2017). Live-streams of such crimes may also be recorded and shared numerous times in addition to the live viewing of the event. While the videos may be taken down from their original posts, copies may be kept and posted on other websites. This will only exacerbate the secondary trauma that is experienced by the victims at the knowledge that the abuse will be re-watched by many others.

4. Incorporation of Digital and Sociocultural Lifestyle

Finally, the use of live-streams may simply reflect the lifestyle of the contemporary, digitally connected generation, including criminals. It is fast becoming a social norm for people of all walks of life to share their views and aspects of their lives online, so much so that it may have become an integral part of social interaction and identity formation for many. Since they have become producers and distributors of their own content, some may make postings that violate legal or moral norms of society. Criminals who live-stream their crimes may represent a small, deviant subgroup who are culturally influenced to overshare their criminal activities online even if it backfires on them when footage is released and incriminates them.

Sandberg and Ugelvik (2017) raise two sociocultural aspects that may explain why criminals record their crimes. The first is the increasing sexualisation and pornographisation of society due to the accessibility of various genres of sexual and sexually-explicit materials in the internet. This perceived mainstreaming of online pornography or sexualised violence in the mind of criminals may motivate and justify their use of live-streams to record and broadcast acts of sexual

abuse. Secondly, the culture of instant photo-taking and sharing with others, particularly of things that are out of the ordinary, has become an instinctive action for many. Since crime can be construed as an event that is exceptional and rare, criminals might be motivated by the same urge to capture the situation for personal collection or distribution.

Implications

The advent of social media not only blurs the boundary between public and private space, it also changes the way a criminal commits a crime in the eyes of an audience. In this social media-dominated era, the altered nature of crimes to be able to exist both offline and online, as well as the potential for disturbing footage of criminal acts to spread like wildfire among the public, have important implications for the Home Team.

Live-streamed crime implies that the official ownership and control of crime-related media content by the perpetrators is lost. Traditionally, evidence of crime tends to be textual, paper-based, and linear in nature. Now, evidence of live-streamed crimes is digital, multimedia and non-linear. A crime can be recorded live, witnessed by many simultaneously and circulated virally across continents. While the act may have been streamed for a small target audience (e.g., within an online sexual exploitation community), access is often limitless because of its digital nature. The "crime scene/evidence" has become more fluid, multi-directional and is possessed by many. This poses operational and investigative challenges for law enforcement officers as the owners of the content and perpetrators of the crime may no longer be that apparent (Strutin, 2011; Surette, 2015).

Second, live-streamed crime also sees a shift in the level of influence and involvement of the online public in the act of the crime. Netizens are now not only passive witnesses of a criminal act, but they can easily become "influencers" through posting immediate feedback and influencing the course of the crime, or "distributors" by sharing, tweeting or circulating the contents to others (Surette,

2012). Such activities might be perceived to be endorsing and encouraging the crime and further inciting the perpetrator to intensify the severity and frequency of the act. With this element of audience participation and social reinforcement, individuals may be tempted to live-stream their crimes if they intend to pursue notoriety and attain online celebrity status.

Thirdly, the reduction in duration between the time when a crime is committed and reported after being witnessed on live-streams may influence the public's attitudes towards and perceptions of the efficacy of law enforcement. Immediate post-crime reactions of horror or distress particularly for serious crimes may result in an outcry against the lack of or promptness of intervention. This might lead to greater pressure mounted on law enforcement agencies to swiftly intervene and arrest the perpetrator, or the imposition of unreasonable demands that the police should have prevented the criminal act from occurring. Tactics and processes utilised by law enforcement may also be put to biased scrutiny by live commentators if they are captured within a live-stream.

Recommendations

As research into and knowledge about live-streaming crime remain limited, this article looks at what has already being done, and proposes some possible ways that the Home Team can mitigate or respond more effectively to live-streamed crimes in Singapore.

1. Collaboration with Digital Platforms and Firms

The Home Team can consider engaging technology firms and social media platforms with live-streaming capabilities to fine-tune methods of preventing or halting the live-streaming of crimes within Singapore. In the aftermath of the Christchurch shootings, additional measures were implemented as Facebook began restricting access to Facebook Live by strengthening rules, addressing hate messages on their platforms, and restricting usage by those who violate the rules

and regulations (Channel NewsAsia, 2019). Other safeguards may include expedited processes to report, regulate, and remove disturbing content upon identification, and technological measures to restrict or prohibit online participation by netizens in order to reduce the incentive of live-streaming crime.

2. Surveillance and Risk Management

As threats can surface rapidly, law enforcement agencies should continue to hone their capabilities in risk detection, reduction and pre-emptive interventions (Surette, 2015). This may involve proactive surveillance of the online activities of persons or forums of interest that are known to incubate discussions or circulate materials that are disconcerting or inimical to societal values. Collaboration with tech firms may also be essential to expand the watch list for individuals or groups of interest, to better understand the networks of those disseminating illicit content in cyberspace, and to be kept abreast of new criminal behaviours or trends that surface online. To that end, law enforcement can work with local branches of tech firms to set up processes to facilitate the flow of information pertinent to public safety and security, such as encouraging firms to report suspicious users or groups who have been repeatedly flagged for violations of relevant community standards. This might entail legislative measures to compel firms to comply with such investigations.

3. Community Involvement

In the event that surveillance and technological methods are bypassed, members of the online community would be the first to observe a live-streamed crime. Thus, it would be of value to involve them as part of a coordinated effort against the spread of live-streamed crime. More resources could be allocated to raise awareness of the harms that online criminal broadcasts inflict on victims and society, and to encourage reporting of the production or distribution of such content to moderators or to the police. Doing so might help to reduce any online bystander effect that could take place as viewers would know how to respond

if they encounter such footage (Hendricks, 2014; Hudson & Bruckman, 2004).

4. Targeted Crime Prevention

Efforts should also target crimes that are more likely to be associated with live-streaming rather than the technology itself. For example, with the high social media penetration rate among children and teenagers in Singapore (Grosse, 2018), online child sexual exploitation and grooming through popular digital platforms should be of concern. Combating such crimes through preventive efforts such as public awareness or education may help to reduce the rate of victimisation among vulnerable individuals.

5. Research and Understanding

Finally, the rise of live-streamed crime also calls for more research on several important issues relating to its nature. Future research can explore on a deeper level the thought processes and motivations involved in live-streaming to an online community one's activities that are deviant or criminal in nature. Since live-streamed crime occurs across many categories of crime types, it would be meaningful to explore what deterrence and preventive factors and measures might be more effective for selected categories of concern, such as violent sexual crimes or violent extremist attacks. It would also be valuable to further identify the impact of live-streamed footage on victims of such crimes so that appropriate support and recovery services can be offered to them.

Conclusion

The nature of crime has been and will continue to evolve in the digital era given the accelerated pace at which technology is advancing and being made accessible to the public. Live-streamed crime represents one façade of this phenomenon which depicts how traditional performance crime can now reach a transnational audience with relative ease at the click of a button. Although they have been present since mobile live-streaming technology began to be widely used, it took the catastrophic tragedy of the 2019 Christchurch shooting to compel technology companies and societies to mobilise to find workable solutions and interventions.

With the streamer-centric live-streaming services, filtering what is safe from what is criminal will not be an easy task, especially with the instant recording to distribution capabilities that they provide. Yet, it is vital for concerted efforts to be put in place to mitigate the lasting harms that they can inflict on individuals and societies. From law enforcement agencies, to tech firms, online communities and individual netizens, it might require the entire digital village to jointly prevent, restrict, report, remove, and contain the production, broadcast and distribution of criminal footage. As the use of live-streaming while committing crimes is relatively novel, further research into the technological and psychological nature and processes involved may help in the formulation of more effective interventions.

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Impersonation Scams in Singapore:
Who Falls for Them and Why?

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ABSTRACT

Are some people more vulnerable to scammers? What are the scam techniques that people are most susceptible to? To explore the victim characteristics and the underlying psychological principles involved in Impersonation Scams, the authors analysed 266 Statements of Facts (SOFs), and eight victim interviews. Among their findings: there are no specific demographic factors (e.g. age, education, gender) that render a victim more vulnerable to being victimised, but across victims, compliance principles such as obedience to authority, commitment, social proof, reciprocity and scarcity, contribute to their falling for the scam. Scammers also use visceral cues to evoke strong emotions in victims, leading them to process information via the peripheral route. Most victims thus do not realise they have been scammed until money is found missing or the banks or their loved ones tell them. This study also highlights a need to address the stigma faced by victims of scams and the gap in social, emotional and psychological support for them. Other suggestions for crime prevention are also discussed.

Introduction

Scams have become a global problem (Button, 2012; Levi, 2008; Smith, 2010). Scams affect millions of people all over the world, and operate both within and beyond the borders of a victim's country (Karstedt & Farrall, 2006; Office of Fair Trading, 2006).

The scam landscape is constantly evolving and in Singapore, there has been a significant increase in e-commerce scams, loan scams and credit-for-sex scams in the first half of 2019 alone (Singapore Police Force, 2019). During this same period, there were 122 cases of China Officials Impersonation Scam,

with a total of $7.1 million cheated, making it one of the top ten scam types in Singapore (Singapore Police Force, 2019). The persistence of scam victimisation in Singapore continues to be a concern and thus, a deeper understanding of the mechanics of scams specific to the Singapore context is critical to facilitate crime prevention efforts.

Psychological Principles Involved in Scams

As the population becomes more reliant on information technology and technical prevention

improves, humans remain vulnerable to psychological manipulation and therefore continue to be a weak link in any security system (Rouse, 2006).

Influence of Demographics in Scam Victimisation

Empirical investigations on the type of victims that are more vulnerable to scams have had mixed findings. In the United Kingdom, the Office of Fair Trading published a report in 2006 that concluded that the elderly, less well-educated and socially isolated are particularly susceptible to social influence, and are thus more vulnerable to scams. In fact, it found that older victims are likely to lose nearly twice as much per scam compared with younger victims (Office of Fair Trading, 2006). Researchers posit that this increase in financial harm is due to the higher fixed income and savings of this demographic (Cohen, 2006; Blanton, 2012). On the other hand, there are other studies which found that younger people are more likely to lose money to scams due to lifestyle factors (Muscat, James, & Graycar, 2002; Titus, Heinzelmann & Boyles, 1995). Furthermore, individuals with professional careers such as university professors have also been identified as targets of scams (Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Titus, Heinzelmann & Boyle, 1995). The lack of consensus on how demographic factors influence scam victimisation underlies the possibility that anyone, regardless of their demographic profile, might fall prey to scams. Indeed Fischer, Lea & Evans (2009, 2013) and Titus, Heinzelmann & Boyle (1995) have found that factors such as gender, education and income level do not significantly influence one's likelihood of succumbing to a scam. However, while such research has been conducted in other countries, there is a lack of information as to the applicability of their findings in Singapore.

Use of Social Influence Principles in Scam Victimisation

Social influence is when an individual's attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours change because of real or imagined pressures. Cialdini (2009) has identified six universal social influence principles or tactics – Authority, Commitment and Consistency, Social Proof, Reciprocity, Scarcity, and Liking – that are commonly utilised to influence and persuade people to behave in a certain manner or to gain their compliance.[1]

Of these principles, **Authority** has been identified as a key trigger for victims falling for scams (Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Whitty & Buchanan, 2012). As a persuasion technique, Authority works on people's tendency to comply with the requests of authoritative figures because they are perceived as being credible and powerful, and their words thus carry weight (Cialdini, 2009). This automatic way of thinking may be explained by the socialisation that humans undergo from childhood, from obeying parental-adult authorities to teachers in school and finally to bosses in the workplace. Through these experiences, humans learn to comply with society's written and unwritten rules and regulations, sometimes unquestioningly. This disposition can be exploited by scammers who impersonate as authority figures, especially as trappings of authority (e.g., police logos or lab coats) are often sufficient in eliciting compliance (Milgram, 1963).

Another very common persuasion principle employed by scammers is **Commitment and Consistency**, also known as Behavioural Commitment (Modic & Lea, 2013). The Office of Fair Trading (2006) suggests that people tend to prefer consistency in both their behaviour and that of others, as the consistency provides a sense

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[1] Cialdini (2016) has also identified a 7th social influence principle that he calls Unity to describe when individuals are more influenced by others they perceive to be a part of themselves. An individual who shares the same identity as another can influence that person even if they do not like each other. However, whilst Unity has been found to be effective in persuading individuals in an offline physical environment, no experimental research has been done regarding the persuasiveness of Unity in a human-computer environment (Halbesma, 2017). Since impersonation scams are not perpetrated in person but through alternative mediums such as phone-calls and online platforms, the Unity principle will not be explored in this study.

of control and predictability. A main way that scammers manipulate victims' desire for consistency is through the foot-in-the-door technique, wherein they get their victims to accede to small requests to pull them in, before persuading them to commit to larger requests (Button, Nicholls, Kerr & Owen, 2014; Cialdini, 2009). Feeling compelled to be consistent with his/her previous act of complying with the initial request, the victim tends to be more compliant with subsequent requests.

Social Proof is when scammers attempt to manipulate victims into believing that other people are complying with their requests and that others are involved in the situation (Cialdini, 2009; Muscanell, Guadagno & Murphy, 2014). People tend to look to others to make sense and define reality when the circumstances are uncertain or unclear (Cialdini, 2009). For example, a scammer may have plenty of made-up reviews on his/her online profile which makes the scam believable and victims more inclined to trust the scammer (Muscanell, Guadagno, & Murphy, 2014). It has been found that scam messages that contain cues of social proof have a higher probability of success (Cukier, Nesselroth & Cody, 2007).

Reciprocity refers to the tendency to repay debts of all kinds (Cialdini, 2009). The scammer offers or demonstrates kindness such as sending money or gifts upfront without having received anything themselves, thereby invoking the principle of reciprocity, and the victim then feels obliged to agree to a subsequent request or instruction because they feel they owe the scammer (Muscanell, Guadagno, & Murphy, 2014).

Scarcity refers to cues that scammers give to hasten their target's decision-making process, reducing the victim's chances of cognitively processing or discussing with others the situation (Cialdini, 2009). Scammers highlight the limited resource, for example, the limited time available to respond, to nudge or pressurise victims to make their decisions quickly (Muscanell, Guadagno, & Murphy, 2014; Naidoo, 2015).

Finally, the principle of **Liking** is when a likeable individual is more socially influential (Cialdini, 2009). Scammers utilise an individual's inclination to gravitate towards sources that are perceived as more familiar, similar, and trustworthy as opposed to people who are unlikable, believing that information from a likeable source is likely to be good information (Cialdini, 2009; Muscanell, Guadagno, & Murphy, 2014). It has, however, been found that Liking and Scarcity are the two least useful techniques for scammers (Modic & Lea, 2013).

The key reason the social influence principles work is because they function as the rules of thumb or heuristics in information processing and are depended on because people generally have limited cognitive capacity (Muscanell, Guadagno & Murphy, 2014). Most people do not usually process all aspects of messages they receive (Lang, 2000). They generally do not have the capability or drive to partake in thinking that requires effort and cautious deliberation (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). This tendency to depend on heuristics when processing information may be especially true for online interactions (Guadagno, Okdie & Muscanell, 2013). Decision-making therefore tends to involve rules of thumb or heuristics (Cialdini, 2009; Metzget, Flanagin, & Medders, 2010). Scammers exploit the victims' heuristics by employing compliance principles that lead them into making cognitive biases or errors, thus making them comply (Dang, 2008; Luo, Brody, Seazzu & Burd, 2011; Twitchell, 2009).

Scam research suggests that visceral cues that induce emotions such as fear can also play a critical role in increasing one's tendency to employ heuristics, thereby making a person more susceptible to scams (Button, Nicholls, Kerr & Owen, 2014; Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Modic & Lea, 2013; Office of Fair Trading, 2009). Intense emotions such as fear can impair a victim's ability to evaluate the content of scam messages carefully, leading to an emotional and superficial route of cognitive processing (Fischer, Lea & Evans, 2013;

Kienpointner, 2006; Langenderfer & Shimp, 2001). In the context of Chinese Officials Impersonation Scams, victims may be more vulnerable if they are unfamiliar with the standard operating procedures used by the organisation being impersonated – and thus are potentially more fearful of the threats issued – and also if they are unable to control their emotions (Button, Nicholls, Kerr & Owen, 2014; Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Modic & Lea, 2013).

The literature suggests that social compliance principles, manipulating heuristics and triggering visceral cues continue to be relevant to the current scam types employed in Singapore. However, it has yet to be ascertained whether the above principles are common and applicable to the experience of the impersonation scam victims in Singapore or if there are other mechanisms utilised. Therefore, it is the aim of this study to address and gain insights into the impersonation scams in Singapore and complement the existing literature findings. The study will thus first explore the demographics of victims of impersonation scams to ascertain if it is aligned to the literature's conclusion on demographic vulnerabilities, followed by exploring the social compliance principles experienced by local victims. Are there specific vulnerabilities common amongst victims and what are the techniques utilised by the scammers that seem to work?

Method of Study

Participants

Archival demographic data of all the people who reported to the Singapore police that they had been cheated in impersonation scams between 31 May and 6 December 2016 was obtained. From a total of 268 victims, two were excluded due to incomplete information. Out of the 268 scam victims, nine (4 males, 5 females) were recruited for the interview phase of the study by opportunity sampling. One was later excluded as her archival data was not available for the study. The eight interview participants (4 males, 4 females) had a mean age of 41.0 years (SD = 11.20, age range: 25 – 57 years).

Their highest educational qualifications included Primary School education (12.5%), GCSE-equivalent certificate (25.0%), Diploma (25.0%), Degree (12.5%), Postgraduate Degree (12.5%) and undeclared (12.5%). All interview participants were briefed on the purpose of the interview and provided informed consent before taking part in the study.

Procedure

The study consisted of two phases. The first phase involved analysing archival data in the form of 266 Statements of Facts (SOFs) obtained from the investigation files of impersonation scams reported over slightly more than six months in 2016. The SOFs contained basic demographic information about the victims and details of the scams as reported. Phase two involved interviewing eight victims of impersonation scams. A structured professional judgement approach was taken for the interview. The areas covered in the interview included personal history, education history, exploration of social support, details of the scam incident and the participant's experience of the incident.

Two types of data were collected. Archival data was collected from the police in the form of the SOFs. The data found in the SOFs were analysed for demographics information using quantitative descriptive statistics.

The second type of data was collected through semi-structured interviews using a Structured Professional Judgment approach. Interview participants were invited to participate via a telephone call. Interested and willing participants were asked to report to the designated venue for the interview. They were then given an explanation of the purpose of the study and the interviewer's affiliations with the SPF. Participants were subsequently asked for their informed consent. All eight participants gave their consent. The participants were interviewed individually. The data found in the interviews were analysed qualitatively.

Results

Demographics of Victims of Impersonation Scams

There were 146 (55.7%) female victims and 116 (44.3%) male victims in the sample of 262[2] valid cases. Out of the 254 cases where citizenship was stated, 94 (37.0%) were foreign nationals and 160 (63.0%) were Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents (PR). (The data captured did not distinguish between Singapore citizens and PRs nor record the country of origin of PRs.)

In terms of occupations, there were 7 (3.20%) unemployed individuals, 106 (48.4%) in professional or white collar jobs, 30 (13.7%) in pink collar jobs, 48 (21.9%) in blue collar jobs, and 28 (12.8%) who were economically inactive

in the sample of 219 valid cases (see Figure 1). Unemployed individuals is here defined as individuals who are trying to seek employment and may not have financial resources while those who are economically inactive are individuals who are not actively seeking employment but have sufficient financial resources. Pink collar jobs are defined as service-oriented occupations.

In terms of age, victims fell into a wide range of age groups. The mean age of the victims of impersonation scam was 38.3 (SD = 12.8) while those aged 20-29 formed the largest group of victims (72 or 29.8%). Four victims were between

Figure 1. Breakdown of Victims by Occupation Type. N=219.

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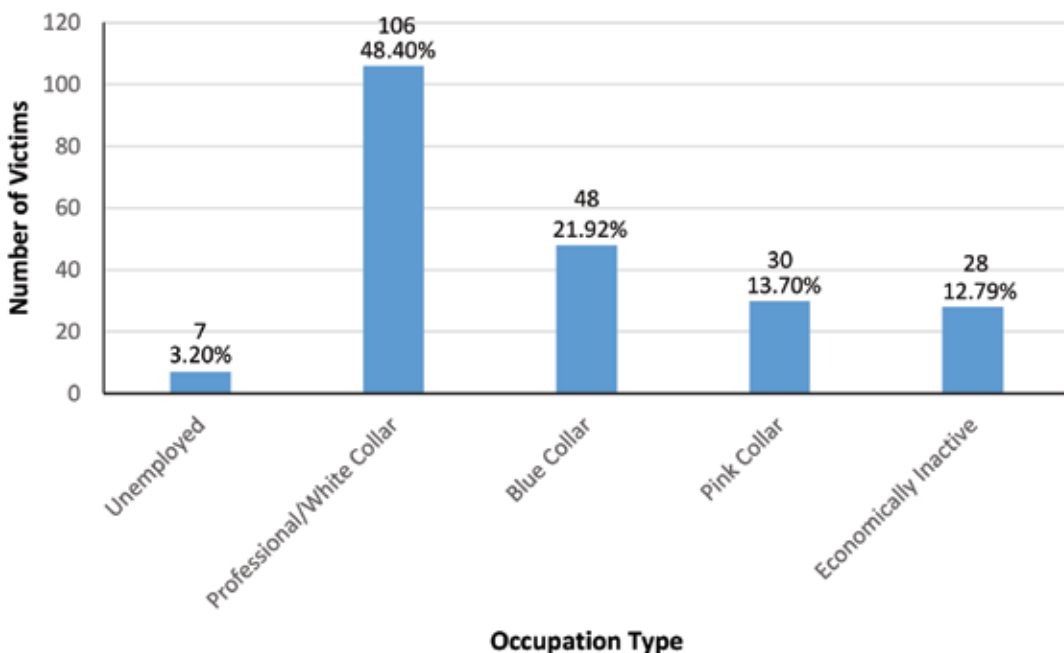
[2]   Although archival data from 266 scam victims was studied, some of the Statements of Facts had missing information. The different statistical analyses exclude individuals with missing values and the number of valid cases is thus indicated for each statistical analysis.

Figure 2. Breakdown of Victims by Age Range. N=242.
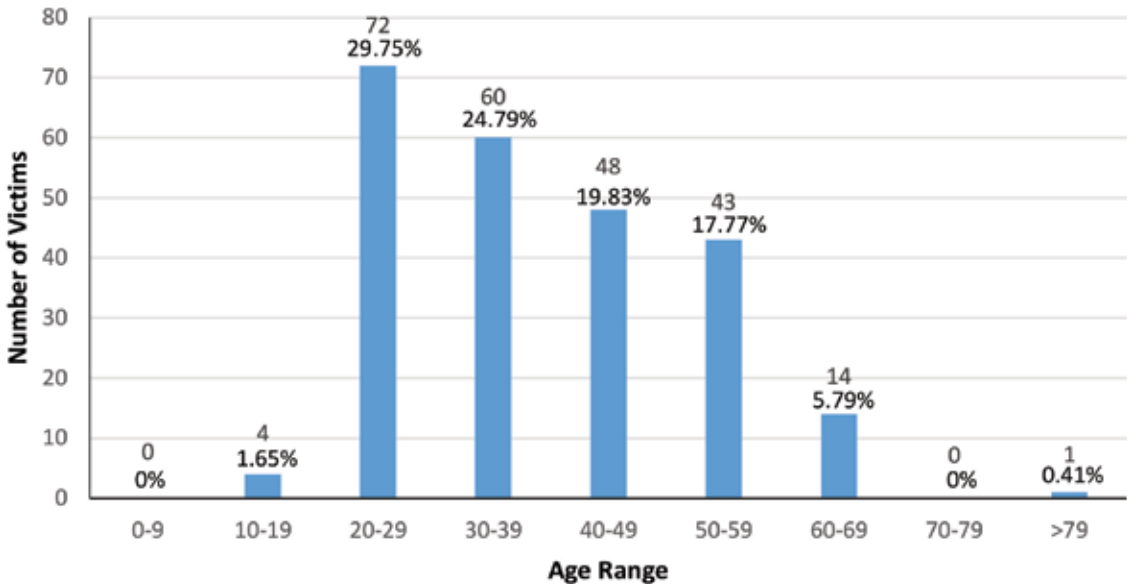
10 and 19 years old while the oldest was above 79 (see Figure 2).

*Analysis of Different Associations
between Gender, Nationality and Occupation*

Significant associations were found between gender and nationality (X^2(1, N = 252) = 7.09, p = .008); gender and unemployment status (X^2 (1, N = 262) = 8.09, p = .004); gender and professional status (X^2 (1, N = 235) = 5.83, p = .016); nationality and employment status (X^2 (1, N = 253) = 6.84, p = .009). Based on the odds ratio, the following findings could be made:

• The odds of female impersonation scam victims being Singaporeans/PRs (as compared to being foreign nationals) was 2.02 times higher than for males (95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.20, 3.40).

• The odds of female impersonation scam victims being unemployed (as compared to being employed) was 3.94 times higher than for males (95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.44, 10.75).

• The odds of female impersonation scam victims being employed as professionals (as compared to being employed as a non-professional) was 2.14 times higher than for males (95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.15, 3.99).

• The odds of Singaporean/PR impersonation scam victims being unemployed (as compared to being employed) was 3.93 times higher than for foreign nationals (95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.32, 11.70).

Bivariate correlation between time taken between start of scam and realisation of scam, and time taken between realisation of scam and reporting of scam.

	(n = 213) Time taken between start of scam and realisation of scam	Time taken between realisation of scam and reporting of scam
Time taken between start of scam and realisation of scam	1	.348* [.209, .481]
Time taken between realisation of scam and reporting of scam	.348*	1

Note: *p < .001. BCa bootstrap 95% CIs reported in brackets.

Duration of Realisation x Reporting Delay

Spearman's correlation was run to determine the relationship between the time taken (in days) from the start of the scam to the realisation of having been scammed, and the time taken from that realisation to the reporting of the scam. The analysis was conducted based on a sample of 213 victims. As Table 1 shows, there was a positive correlation between the two variables, which was statistically significant (r_s = .348, p < .001). This finding suggests that the longer victims took to realise that they had been scammed, the longer they took to report it.

Qualitative Analysis

Stages of Scam

All eight interview participants experienced the same stages of impersonation scam, which can be described as having these six main stages:

1. Introduction
2. Call transfer
3. Threat
4. Demands
5. Realisation
6. Reporting.

The first four stages are the main aspects of the scam while the final two stages are the recovery process. The interview participants reported experiencing similar tactics utilised by the scammers that triggered respective persuasion techniques at different stages.

Introduction Stage. The victim either receives a call directly from the scammer or an automated voicemail. The caller introduces himself as an authority figure while the voicemail includes a message allegedly from a police organisation or postal service requiring the victim to press a number to be transferred to a human speaker.

The automated voicemail may be functioning as an automatic filtering system to identify individuals who may be more susceptible to the scam's ruse since they took the initial bait. However, experimental research needs to be done to ascertain the mechanism behind moving forward with the automatic voicemail.

Within this introduction stage, the scammer explains that the victim is involved in an illegal activity. Some examples of the illegal activity include a parcel being seized with the victim's identification details and

containing either fake passports, credit cards or drugs, or the victim being implicated in an international crime as his or her name or bank accounts have been used for money laundering. Victim 1 recounted: "The caller explained that the SPF received a call from the Beijing Police Force regarding a money laundering case and that it implicated me."

It is within the introduction stage that the main persuasion principle of Authority is utilised. All eight interviewed victims reported that they were interacting with a person of authority. This illusion of authority was elicited through various methods.

a. The scammers spoofed the phone numbers to mimic the police number. Victim 4 reported: "They said if I don't believe and they asked me to put down my phone and see if it is from 999 or not. They cut off the line and they called again and it is 999…"

b. They appeared to have the victim's personal information. Victim 4 recalled: "They got the name right. They got the English and Chinese right."

c. They utilised a professional tone of speech or used police jargon. Victim 3 reported: "He said he still needs to investigate and cannot conclude based on my personal declarations. He also said the suspect admitted to knowing me personally."

d. The scammers used websites or other platforms that contained logos of the institutions of authority with documentary proof such as an 'arrest warrant'. Victim 2 reported: "He sent me my arrest warrant via WeChat. My latest identification photograph was on the arrest notice…"

Call Transfer Stage. The second stage of the scam involves a call transfer. The transferring of the call increases the perceived trustworthiness due to involvement of multiple personnel and escalates the perceived severity of the situation. This is the persuasion technique of Social Proofing. All eight interviewed victims mentioned that their calls were transferred to someone else. For example, Victim 6 said: "The first person who called was from the customs before transferring to Officer Yeh from Interpol who then transferred me to his superior and then finally to China Police Headquarters. With each transfer it seemed like the investigation was becoming more and more serious."

Another method to create social proofing was using accomplices to create the impression that there are many officers involved in the investigation and providing realism that the call is taking place in an office with colleagues in the background. For example, Victim 3 noted: "The phone call was then directed to a male caller… during the call another male caller in the background is saying they have to arrest me because of this case…"

Threat Stage. The third stage is when the victims are threatened with legal consequences. For example, Victim 8 recalled: "I was told if I do not follow their instructions, I would be arrested and jailed for two weeks."

The intense emotions triggered impair the target's ability to deeply evaluate the content of a scam message (Kienpointner, 2006; Langenderfer & Shimp, 2001). Scammers use threats that trigger visceral cues that appeal to basic needs such as money, sex, love, pain and sorrow, increasing the likelihood of victims falling prey to scams (Kienpointner, 2006; Langenderfer & Shimp, 2001; Office of Fair Trading, 2009). All eight victims reported that they experienced intense emotions, predominantly fear, in relation to visceral cues.

Recounted Victim 3: "After hearing I might be arrested, I was feeling shocked, anxious and fearful."

Three of the eight victims also expressed fear that the case would impact their livelihood or resident status in Singapore. Victim 1 shared her fear: "I was worried about the possibility of being arrested and sent back to China since Singapore has very strict laws. I did not want to leave my husband and children as they are Singapore citizens."

Four of the eight victims also expressed a strong urge or anxiety to prove their innocence. Said Victim 2: "I was very keen on removing my status as a suspect. …I felt it was crucial that I resolved this as soon as possible in order to prove my innocence." This anxiety led the victims to diligently carry out the demands of the scammers.

Demand Stage. In the fourth stage the scammers offer a way to resolve the situation by complying with their instructions. They use a few persuasion techniques such as Behavioural Commitment, Reciprocity and Scarcity. Victims are given tasks to carry out and the scammers keep adding to their demands to induce behavioural commitment. All eight interviewed victims experienced behavioural commitment. Victim 6 recalled: "During the first three days, I had to report on my whereabouts every morning and night, to make sure that I am in Singapore... It was only after that that they asked me for my bank account details for their investigation."

Four of the eight victims experienced the Reciprocity principle. The scammers induced reciprocity by exhibiting concern or assurance for the victim and creating the impression that they were trying to help the victim. Victim 1 revealed: "Throughout the calls, I was told to and given time to take care of my child when the officers heard him crying over the phone."

Two of the eight victims experienced Scarcity. The scammers induced the principle of Scarcity by giving victims the impression of a limited time offer such as informing the victim that if they did not act upon a task by a certain time, they would have to come down personally for the investigation. Victim 3 explained: "If it takes too long, I might be implicated or even arrested. If I do not provide information, the investigation will take a long time. I might have to go to the police officer's side for investigation."

Realisation Stage. Stage five is when victims discover that they have been scammed. Most victims find out from their banks. Others come to the realisation on their own, or after talking to family and friends. Two of the eight victims said their banks called them, including Victim 2: "After the DBS personnel called to inform me that I may have been a victim of scam… I then made a police report." Two victims said they realised they had been conned after making some checks. Victim 3 said: "I started to think about all these incidents from the beginning. I checked the phone number to understand what is happening if it is a correct number and it came out [there was] information on a few scam cases. I further checked the details on Google and someone had the same experience and I suddenly realised I had been cheated." On the other hand, four realised they had been victims of scams after informing their family or friends of the incident. Victim 1 reported: "My parents-in-law returned home in the evening and asked me what happened when they saw me in a bad mood. I told them about the phone calls I received and they suspected I was scammed."

Reporting Stage. The sixth and final stage is the reporting stage. The interviewed victims reported that they went to make the police report either immediately upon realising they had been scammed or at the first convenient opportunity, such as the following morning.

Table 2 below illustrates the various psychological mechanisms discussed as well as supporting examples from the victims' interviews.

Table 2. Psychological Mechanisms Used in Scams

Theory or Principles	Sub-principles	Examples	Remarks
Demographics	Nationality	V1: PR- China V2: China Foreign National V3: PR – China V4: Singaporean V5: PR- Malaysia V6: PR – China V7: Singaporean V8: Naturalised Singaporean (China)	2 were born Singaporeans 1 was a naturalised Singaporean 1 is a China National 3 Singapore PRs were from China 1 Singapore PR was from Malaysia
Visceral Cues	E.g. Fear	V1: "… was worried of the possibility of being arrested and sent back to China since Singapore has very strict laws…" V2: "My feeling at that time was rather panicky, especially after I verified that the numbers were valid… I was worried and wondered if someone was trying to set me up." V3: "After hearing I might be arrested, I was feeling shocked, anxious and fearful." V4: "They threatened me… I might lose my job and go to jail… At that time, I was a bit lost already…" V5: "I felt confused and scared as I was applying for Singapore PR and worried the investigation would affect my application." V6: "Felt numb, could not breathe properly, heart beating very fast..." V7: "Nightmare, when I receive call." V8: "Felt scared and anxious upon hearing that my bank account was used for illegal activities .… if do not follow instructions, would be arrested and jailed for two weeks… I felt very afraid because I have to take care of my child."	All 8 victims reported experiencing intense emotions relating to visceral cues such as fear
Compliance Principles	Authority	V1: "…it was the SPF HQ. He told me that I am involved in an international case and for more details, I will have to speak to the China Police Force." V2: "Conversing in Mandarin, she told me she was from SPF and is an IO in charge of international cases. The caller explained that SPF received a call from the Beijing Police Force regarding a money laundering case and that it implicated me. As a result, I had to contact the Beijing Police Force to assist in investigations." V3: "I simply believed it was a legitimate call because she introduced herself as a police officer from SPF." V4: "I was a bit scared that it is the Police Headquarters called me lah. Then they said that I have to come down and verify and go down for investigation." V5: "The first caller claimed to be from Police Headquarters at Chinatown and told me I was involved in a case and to provide my name and FIN number. I did so as I believed that the caller was a police officer." V6: "The first person who called was from Customs before transferring to "Officer Yeh" from Interpol who transferred to his superior and finally to China Police HQ." V7: "They are from China but under the Singapore Police Force… I just follow whatever they asked me to do." V8: "China Police instructed me to visit a police website and the website looked legitimate."	All 8 victims reported speaking to a person of authority and being told to obey / comply with instructions.

Theory or Principles	Sub-principles	Examples	Remarks
Compliance Principles (continued)	Behavioural Commitment	V1: "Told me to take down my case number and thereafter linked me up with the China Police Force…" V2: "As a result, I had to contact the Beijing Police Force to assist with investigations. Caller gave me a China telephone number…" V3: "The entire phone call lasted longer than 30 minutes as I was still engaged on the phone call as I rushed home from office in the taxi to retrieve my bank token which I had left at home…" V4: "They asked me if my phone is Apple and I have to purchase an android phone… I really went to buy it during lunch time. I went to buy on the same day…" V5: "The entire call took approximately 4 hours and I was engaged in the conversation with the two police officers while at work and travelling home… They told me that they would need to monitor my whereabouts and can use the bank token as a GPS tracker…" V6: "During the first three days, I had to report on my whereabouts every morning and night, to make sure that I am in Singapore... It was only after that that they asked me for my bank account details for their investigation." V7: "So they asked me can I go and apply for ibanking…. They asked me when I reached there to message him… So I reached there I called him and he told me do not mention anything and just ask for ibanking…." V8: "I was told by them to call back the number…. China police instructed me to visit a police website and the website looked legitimate…."	All 8 victims reported acceding to various requests and carrying out the tasks given to them leading to behavioural commitment.
	Social Proof	V1: "… In total, 3 males called me. … his supervisor contacted me and requested formy bank account and China IC photo to be sent to him.…" V2: "Caller explained that SPF received a call from Beijing Police…. Both the Singapore and Beijing numbers were verified online via Google….When I called the Beijing number, a male officer spoke to me…sent me an arrest warrant via WeChat. My latest identification photograph was on the arrest notice.…" V3: "She introduced herself as a police officer from SPF…. she had to direct me to the Chinese counterparts for them to follow-up with me. The phone call was then directed to a male caller…, During the call another male caller in the background saying they have to arrest me because of this case.…" V4: "They put me on a speakerphone. Then they also mentioned that the high-level officer is involved in this and they want full cooperation from me…. The background there were a few people talking. Like office like that. I can hear asking to hold the person here and there.…" V5: "The first caller claimed to be from Police Headquarters at Chinatown…. would need to transfer the call to a supervisor from the Beijing Police…" V6: "The first person who called was from the customs before transferring to Officer Yeh from Interpol who then transferred me to his superior and then finally to China Police Headquarters. With each transfer it seemed like the investigation was becoming more and more serious." V7: "The boss was quite aggressive… after that he said his supervisor will call me and don't mess up the thing…. after that I was called by his man and inspector.…" V8: "I checked on the number and it seemed legitimate…. I spoke to two different male callers… they spoke in a professional tone.…"	All 8 victims were transferred to different callers which included different police agencies or higher authority such as supervisors as possible social proof.

Table 2. Psychological Mechanisms Used in Scams (continued)

Theory or Principles	Sub-principles	Examples	Remarks
Compliance Principles (continued)	Reciprocity	V1: "Throughout the calls, I was told to and given time to take care of my child when the officers heard him crying over the phone…." V5: "Caller told me that they now believe I am a victim.… in order to help me, caller would need to transfer the call.… the second caller then introduced himself as the officer who would be helping me with the appeal.… He would need to monitor my whereabouts and can use the bank token as a GPS tracker." V7: "They said they will assist me.… They are very helpful. They say don't worry we are investigating. You just do what we ask you to do." V8: "The caller even said 'if you're crying and speaking, I can't help you.'"	4 of the 8 victims experienced reciprocity where the scammer gave them the impression that he were trying to help or do the victim a favour but they needed the victim to cooperate or do some tasks in return.
	Scarcity	V3: "If it takes too long, I might be implicated or even arrested.… If I do not provide information, the investigation will take a long time. I might have to go to the police officer's side for investigation…" V5: "When conversing with the second caller on the bank token OTPs, I felt I was being rushed.…"	2 of the 8 victims reported experiencing scarcity where they were given the impression that if they did not act upon the tasks, they would be further inconvenienced at a later stage or be in more trouble.
	Liking or Similarity	Nil	None of the victims experienced the technique of liking or similarity.
Proving Innocence		V2: "I was very keen on removing my status as a suspect.… I felt it was crucial that I resolved this as soon as possible in order to prove my innocence." V3: "I was quite eager and anxious to prove my innocence." V4: "I just wanted to clear my name." V6: "I noted that since I was in no wrong, I might as well prove it."	4 of the 8 victims said they cooperated with the tasks because they wanted to prove their innocence.
Fear of Deportation		V1: "I was worried of the possibility of being arrested and sent back to China since Singapore has very strict laws. I did not want to leave my husband and children as they are Singapore citizens." V2: "She told me that the case might potentially affect my ability to work and stay in Singapore." V5: "I felt confused and scared as I was applying for Singapore PR at that that time. I was worried that this investigation would affect my application."	3 of the 8 victims said they were worried about the investigations having an impact on their livelihood or resident status in Singapore.
Threat		V1: "He told me that if I resisted cooperating with him, he will get the SPF to arrest me, and that SPF officers were already on standby to do so." V3: "He told me of potential consequences if I do not cooperate with their investigations." V4: "They threatened me. This is high level Chinese authority involved in the investigation and needed me to cooperate. If I did not, I have serious problem here and there and I might lose my job and to go jail." V6: "Caller threatened me. If I do not cooperate, I will encounter issues in the future." V8: "I was told if I do not follow their instructions, I would be arrested and jailed for two weeks."	5 of the 8 victims said they were directly threatened by the scammer.

Theory or Principles	Sub-principles	Examples	Remarks
Realisation		V1: My parents-in-law returned home in the evening and asked me what happened when they saw me in a bad mood. I told them about the phone calls I received and they suspected I had been scammed." V2: "After the DBS [bank] personnel called to inform me that I may have been a victim of scam …. I then made a police report." V3: "I started to think about all these incidents from the beginning. I checked the phone number to understand what is happening if it is a correct number and it came out [there was] information on a few scam cases. I further checked the details on Google and someone had the same experience and I suddenly realised I had been cheated." V4: "I went home I was so worried. My wife realised I looked worried and asked me.… She called my daughter… my daughter said you stupid…. I started to realise I really was stupid… So we went to the police post and reported it." V5: "While I was having dinner, I had some space to think about what had happened. I questioned myself if it was possible to make the token a GPS tracker.… I felt suspicious and uncertain about being instructed not to check my account for three days. I checked the bank account." V6: "My friend invited me and my daughter out to eat. When I had to take a call from the scammer, my friend asked me why I had to hide in a corner to call someone. … I decided to share my story.…My friend said that I might have been scammed and we rushed down to a police post to report it." V7: "When my account was frozen, then I think something is wrong.… The bank called me, I said nothing. They said, you better tell me the truth. Then I went to update my book and saw money in and out. Someone transferred money to my account. Some people at UOB [bank] asked me to go to the police and make a report and then take the report back to the bank and their investigation side will help me.…" V8: "I felt suspicious and contacted my relative. This relative (my husband's cousin) was a policeman in China and he told me that I had been scammed."	4 of the 8 victims found out after informing family and friends. 2 found out after the bank informed them. 2 realised they had been conned after having the space to think about the events.

Discussion

The analysis of the victim demographics reveal some interesting findings. The significant findings of the various associations between gender, occupation and nationality from the sample indicate the possibility of specific groups of individuals being targeted, or being more vulnerable to impersonation scams in the Singapore population. This study found that more victims were employed as professionals than other types of professions which is aligned to other findings (e.g. Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Titus, Heinzelmann & Boyle, 1995). It found that the Singaporeans or Singaporean Permanent Residents are more likely to be unemployed compared to foreign national victims. A likely profile of a female impersonation victim is that she is a Singaporean or Singapore Permanent Resident and unemployed. However, the employed female victim will more likely be in a professional occupation. A male impersonation scam victim is more likely to be an employed foreign national but he is less likely to be in a professional occupation. Whilst these findings were found to be significant, more empirical studies need to be conducted to ascertain if there are indeed specific vulnerability, accessibility or other factors that single out these groups of individuals. The findings from

this current study could form the basis of future empirical studies by first understanding the sample of impersonation scam victims in Singapore.

Another quantitative finding is the victims' delay in reporting the scams. It was found that when victims took a long time to realise they had been scammed, they then tended to take a longer time to lodge a police report from the point of realisation. A delay in reporting the scam could have various impacts. For example, there is a lower probability of recovery of financial losses when there is a delay in reporting since the window for the bank to block or freeze the transaction may be closed. Victims may have various reasons for the reporting delay, including feelings of shame (Cross, Richards, & Smith, 2016) or optimism bias (Weinstein, 1980). Optimism bias refers to cognitive bias that causes a person to believe that they are at a lesser risk of experiencing a negative event compared to others (Weinstein, 1980). An experimental study done to test optimism bias found that being primed on cybercrime issues and being warned through leaflets does not influence a participant's willingness to disclose personal information (Junger, Montoya, & Overink, 2017). Some studies have found that self-blaming discourse is present with scam victims (Cross, 2015). A future study should look into finding the associations between such factors and reporting delay.

The qualitative findings from this study are largely similar to those from other studies on scams where social influence principles such as Authority, Commitment and Consistency, Social Proof, Reciprocity and Scarcity have been found to influence the victims' decision-making (e.g. Cukier, Nesselroth & Cody, 2007; Lea, Fischer & Evans, 2009; Modic & Lea, 2013; Muscanell, Guadagno & Murphy, 2014; Naidoo, 2015; Whitty & Buchanan, 2012). However, this study did not find the Liking principle being utilised for impersonation scams. Similarly, an experimental study carried out in the Netherlands also found that the Liking principle

was ineffective in influencing cooperativeness in telephone survey participation. The study posited that mode of communication, specifically phone communication, may be the reason that the Liking principle is ineffective (Palmen, Gerritsen, van Bezooijen, 2012) as opposed to face-to-face situations (Mai, & Hoffman, 2011).

This study also found that victims were eager to prove their innocence. This may be a reflection of the visceral cues used by the scammers, where victims are strongly motivated to avoid pain and punishment and therefore, desperate to prove their innocence (Kienpointner, 2006; Langenderfer & Shimp, 2001; Office of Fair Trading, 2009). Hurl-Eamon (2005) found that all the victims in her study were intimidated by the threat of entanglement with the law. We found similar findings in our interviews where the victims' compliance was driven by fear and wanting to avoid the consequences of being involved with the law. However, this finding may also be indicative of a phenomenon in deception literature where innocent witnesses believe in an illusion of transparency (Gilovich, Savitsky, & Medvec, 1998), where they believe that they will be perceived as telling the truth and the truth will emerge (Vrij et al., 2009). Hence, empirical research has found that those who are being truthful utilise straightforward verbal strategies such as providing the information as it is (Hartwig, Granhag, & Strömwall, 2007; Kassin, 2005; Strömwall, Hartwig, & Granhag, 2006), and are mainly concerned with relating everything they can remember (Vrij, Mann, Leal, & Granhag, 2010). This may explain the level of cooperation the interviewed victims gave the scammers when accused of being involved in a crime. It will be interesting to explore this finding further through experiments.

Impact of Scam Victimisation

Research looking into the consequences of scam on victims has found that there are intense emotional

and psychological impact on them. One study found that the most common feelings amongst victims include shame, embarrassment, distress, sadness and anger. Some of the effect is enduring and lead to behavioural changes such as being more cautious and not trusting others, with the extreme end of spectrum including contemplation of suicide (Cross, Richards, & Smith, 2016). There are similar findings from this study where some of the victims interviewed said they experienced a strong negative impact and even contemplated suicide.

A study by Cross (2015) found a strong victim-blaming discourse based on assumptions that the victims are guilty and gullible and, and that this narrative is also believed by victims themselves. Similarly, this study found that some victims were blamed by their family members for being naïve whereas other victims were reluctant to share that they had been scammed for fear of their family's reaction. There is critical need to understand the psychological impact on victims as it acts as a significant obstacle in seeking support and reporting the crime to the authorities (Cross, 2015).

Implications of Study

The study's findings are indicative that social influence principles are utilised in the execution of impersonation scams. This suggests that certain scam prevention strategies can be considered.

A possible strategy to counter the social influence principle of Authority, which is the predominant tactic found to have been employed by scammers in this study, could be to implement a system that provides warning messages for unidentified or suspicious international internet calls, preventing call-spoofing from being successful or Caller ID authentication (Choi, Lee & Chun, 2017; Tu, Doupe, Zhao, & Ahn, 2016). This could reduce the legitimacy of the Authority principle being employed in impersonation scams.

Other suggested scam prevention techniques include educating the public, forewarning people of the contents of scam messages, and providing reality checks to target optimism bias, such as making targeted groups aware that everyone is vulnerable (Chantler & Broadhust, 2006). Reality checks can be done by encouraging the public to check with their banks about unauthorised transactions or to check with the ScamAlert.sg website when they receive unsolicited financial requests or suspicious calls.

Limitations of this Study and Possible Future Studies

The current study has several limitations which include issues relating to limited information in the SOFs, sampling, and the analysis of the open-ended question.

Limited Information from SOFs

Firstly, there is insufficient information captured in the Statements of Facts (SOFs) to explore various factors identified in the literature, such as victims' emotional experience e.g. fear of deportation or loss of citizenship status, victims' thought processes such as cognitive fallacies or justifications, their level of knowledge such as familiarity with scams, criminal justice processes, their rights and protections. The SOFs were also unable to capture other personal characteristics such as personality factors like extraversion or agreeableness and access to social resources. The study was unable to decouple Singapore citizens from naturalised citizens or PRs; the differentiation might have allowed us to better understand how mechanisms such as the threat of citizenship complications play a part in impersonation scams.

Sample Size, and Sampling

In terms of the qualitative data, the study was only able to interview eight victims, and they

were identified through opportunity sampling and may thus not be representative of the Singapore population. The study was also unable to obtain a control group of individuals who were approached by scammers but did not fall prey, thus limiting the understanding of the differences in the impact of the social influence techniques between those who were victimised and those who were not. Related to this limitation is that the sample was also restricted as it did not capture the group of victims who were repeatedly victimised and the psychological mechanics involved for repeat scam victimisation. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised when making inferences about the population. The sample was also made up of Asian victims and may not be representative of victims of scams across other cultures. Future studies could consider replicating this study cross-culturally in order to examine whether the findings are applicable to victims from other cultures.

Analysis of the Semi-structured Interview

The responses in the semi-structured interview were analysed qualitatively and described in frequencies. These were not subjected to inferential statistics and hypothesis testing and therefore, inferences cannot be made as to how representative these responses are to the Singapore population. Thus, caution needs to be exercised when interpreting these results. Nonetheless, the semi-structured interview has its merits as it allows the researcher the freedom to probe for more detailed information and to clarify responses (McIntosh, & Morse, 2015), allowing for deep exploration of topics (Harrell, & Bradley, 2009) such as obtaining information on the experience of the scam and social influence techniques which could not be derived from the SOFs. While the responses offered some insights, the anecdotes would benefit from further analysis in future experimental studies that allow for significance testing.

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Why Do Youths Join Terrorist Groups?
A Psychological Study of At-Risk and Radicalised Youths in Singapore

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ABSTRACT

The Ministry of Home Affairs embarked on a study to examine a range of general and radicalisation-specific factors in a sample of 40 young Singaporeans who were investigated for terrorism-related offences between 2012 and 2017. The study sought to understand the various factors underlying the process of radicalisation in Singapore youths, how 'at-risk' youths differ from those who become radicalised to the point where they either articulate specific plans to join a terrorist group or to travel to conflict zones, and to explore the psychological motivations of both groups. The findings suggest that the process of youth radicalisation in the Singapore context is a complex one, with the process going beyond religious motivations and exposure to radical rhetoric online, and that beyond exposure to the larger contextual factors, it is specific triggers and individual psychological functioning that pushes a youth to embark on a radical pathway. It also shows a continuum in terms of the attitudes and beliefs beyond the at-risk and radicalised youths. The article concludes with three broad strategies that can be considered in dealing with at-risk and radicalised youths in Singapore.

What Drives Youths to Kill in the Name of Religion?

> *Lone wolves... for their work in supporting their brothers, a bullet, or a stab or a bomb would be worth a thousand operations. And don't forget to drive into crowds in the streets.*

> *Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, 2018*

In August 2018, the self-proclaimed Caliph of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, agitated for the use of violence in any way, shape or form, amplifying the call made four years earlier by his then spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani to kill disbelievers and citizens of countries in the coalition against ISIS "in any manner or way", whether with a rock, knife, car, bare hands, or poison (Bayoumy, 2014). As the various ISIS-linked terror attacks around the world since 2014 have shown, that call has been taken up by an increasing number of young people. One such youth was 22-year old Salman Abedi, a British citizen of Libyan descent, who killed 22 people and wounded over 250 in a suicide bombing attack after an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, in May 2017. This was the deadliest terror attack

since the July 2005 London bombings. Almost half of the victims were below the age of 25. Abedi had been flagged as a threat at the age of 19 (Counter Extremism Project).

Since ISIS's declaration of its so-called caliphate in 2014, there has been an increasing number of individuals worldwide who have found appeal in ISIS. Singapore has not been spared this trend. Between 2007 and 2014, 11 self-radicalised Singaporeans were dealt with under the Internal Security Act (ISA). Since 2015, at least 22 Syria-related radicalised Singaporeans have been dealt with under the ISA. Except for three, they were all radicalised by ISIS's online propaganda. These 22 cases are just a small subset of those who were investigated for suspected radicalisation.

One radicalised Singapore youth had believed that terror attacks, including suicide bombings, were permissible in Islam as long as they were conducted with the intention of destroying the enemies of Islam – including Singapore which he perceived to be an infidel state. Another radicalised Singapore youth wanted ISIS to wage war on Singapore. He felt that it was acceptable to kill fellow Singaporeans.

So, what drives some young Singaporeans to want to kill in the name of religion? This question is why the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) of Singapore undertook a psychological study of local cases. By examining a range of general and radicalisation-specific factors in a sample of young Singaporeans who were investigated for terrorism-related offences over five years from 2012 to 2017, the study sought to understand the triggers and psychological functioning that pushed some youths towards violence. How do 'at-risk' youths (those sympathetic to or who showed some level of support for terrorist organisations, such as sharing ISIS-related online content) differ from radicalised youths (individuals that MHA dealt with under the ISA because they either articulated specific plans to join a terrorist group or to travel to conflict zones)? What are the psychological motivations of both groups? To answer these questions, data was collected via face-to-face interviews with 40 respondents using a structured interview guide that was specifically developed for this purpose. This sample of at-risk and radicalised Singaporean males had an average age of 23.

Studying Youth Self-Radicalisation

This article focuses mainly on one key aspect of the larger study – the process of youth self-radicalisation in the Singapore context. The concept of 'self-radicalisation' is defined in this article as a process where an individual adopts radical ideology through self-learning and without a pre-existing physical affiliation with a terrorist group. These individuals become influenced by the terrorist group's ideology and develop a sufficiently significant level of commitment to the group such that it manifests in the way they behave (e.g. open support online for ISIS, stating a desire to be physically part of the terror group, etc.). Through this process of self-radicalisation, the individual seeks out like-minded individuals for ideological support as well as engages in the discourse, either in the virtual or physical world. This serves to further solidify the individual's commitment to the group.

It is important to note that radicalisation is not peculiar to any specific religion, ethnic group or nationality. The study uses ISIS-related cases because of the current serious threat presented by ISIS and the youths who are inspired by ISIS's ideology. That ideology remains alive despite al-Baghdadi's death in Idlib province, Syria, on 27 Oct 2019. As a large number of his companions clashed with US special forces, he killed himself by detonating a suicide vest.

This article covers a range of youth cases – from individuals who were at the nascent stages of radicalisation, to those who subscribed to the violent ideology propagated by ISIS and manifested a willingness to use violence in support of a perceived religious cause.

Research in the West has highlighted that one of the key drivers of youth radicalisation is a sense of social isolation from not quite fitting into the society that they are living in; struggling between

the expected values and behaviours within their culture of origin, i.e., Muslim values and behaviours, and that of the prevailing culture, i.e., Western values and behaviours, (Alcala, Sharif & Samari, 2017; Lyons-Padilla, Gelfand, Mirahmadi, Farooq & Egmond, 2015). Another factor that has been suggested in Western literature is that of perceived economic marginalisation of Muslim youths of immigrant parents (Mitts, 2019). Specifically, the lack of employment opportunities that may negatively impact a youth's perception of his or her place in society as well as in the individual's sense of purpose. A combination of these key factors is thus argued as the basis for the radicalisation of Muslim youths in the West. Thus, one of the objectives of this study was to explore if similar sociological factors were key contributing factors to the radicalisation process of Singapore youths. The present study did not indicate this to be the case.

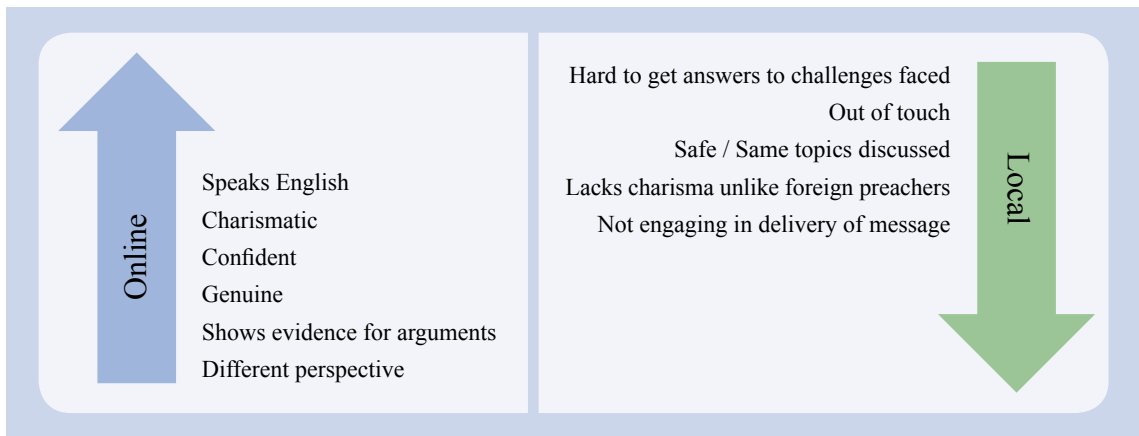## Key Findings

Religion-specific Components

The study looked at the various religion-specific aspects in the sample. These ranged from changes in religiosity, religious content that was sought online, to the types of preachers that appealed to the youths and why. 81% of the respondents attended formal religious classes, starting on average at the age of 8; their parents had initiated their attendance in these classes. However, the majority of the respondents dropped out of formal religious classes in their early teens citing the prioritisation of other responsibilities in their lives. Approximately 60% of the respondents had attended informal religious classes (i.e. classes not authorised by formal institutions), on average since the age of 16 and, again it was largely family members who had initiated their attendance in such classes. These findings suggest that parents place priority on their children's religious knowledge and thus it might be useful for the relevant religious organisations to help parents make appropriate decisions on where and how their children receive religious instruction.

The study also examined the reasons for the change in religiosity among the respondents, specifically their quest for religion after having moved away from it. A number of respondents attributed a change in religiosity to a desire to evaluate their lives, either in terms of seeking meaning in their lives or wanting to redeem themselves for having lived a 'sinful' life. Another key reason for a change in religiosity among the respondents was their reaction to perceived life stressors, such as having met with a traffic accident or facing financial difficulties. Other less common responses included wanting to be more responsible as they grew older.

The study also examined the range of religious topics that the respondents were seeking information on. The most commonly cited topic of interest was information related to general Islamic knowledge such as the basics of the faith (e.g. five pillars of Islam). This was followed by an interest in the concept of 'tawheed' (or the oneness of God) and 'sharia' (or Islamic law). The respondents were also keen to understand Islamic history and the concept of End Times Prophecy (which refers to the eschatological concerns related to the end of the world, including what happens to an individual after death and of the penultimate Judgement Day which is preceded by major and minor signs). When the findings were differentiated between radicalised and at-risk youths, the former were found to be specifically interested in ISIS, the establishment of an Islamic caliphate, and the use of violence from a religious perspective ('armed jihad'). These topics were absent in the at-risk group; meaning that these topics were not of particular interest to them.

While a number of youths in the study started with seeking general religious knowledge online, it is important to note that this is not a risk in and of itself. However, it becomes problematic when youths veer into focusing solely on religious propaganda that supports extreme interpretations of the faith. The study also examined who these youths tended to seek information from, and the characteristics that made these religious preachers appealing. Across the respondents, the study found that there was a

Figure 1. Respondents' Perception of Online versus Local Religious Preachers

Online
- Speaks English
- Charismatic
- Confident
- Genuine
- Shows evidence for arguments
- Different perspective

Local
- Hard to get answers to challenges faced
- Out of touch
- Safe / Same topics discussed
- Lacks charisma unlike foreign preachers
- Not engaging in delivery of message

significant preference to seek religious information from overseas online preachers compared to local religious preachers. The respondents provided a range of reasons for this preference. Some examples are included in Figure 1.

The study also looked at which online preachers the respondents tended to follow. The study found that across the sample, the youths tended to listen to preachers who sought to either denigrate other religions or preach messages of exclusivism, e.g.

Zakir Naik, an Islamic preacher from India wanted for money laundering and hate speech, who currently holds Malaysian permanent residency and not only preached the supremacy of Islam over all other religions, the permissibility of suicide attacks and the death penalty for apostates and homosexual individuals, but has also described the September 11 attacks in the US as having been orchestrated by then US President George W Bush;

Ismail Menk, a Zimbabwean Muslim scholar who has been known to preach segregationist and divisive teachings, e.g. that it is a big sin for Muslims to wish non-Muslims during their festivals such as Christmas or Deepavali.

The study also looked at the differences between at-risk and radicalised youths in terms of the online preachers that they tended to follow. Radicalised

youths showed a clear interest in preachers who overtly supported and agitated for the use of violence; the top three preferred preachers were:

Anwar Al-Awlaki, the US-Yemeni propagandist for al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula;

Osama Bin Laden, the Saudi co-founder of al-Qaeda responsible for numerous large-scale terrorist plots, including the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US; and

Musa Cerantonio, the Australian Islamist preacher responsible for inspiring numerous foreign fighters to join ISIS in Syria.

Awlaki, in particular, has remained one of the most popular radical preachers worldwide despite the fact that he was killed in 2011 in a drone strike. Indeed, his public statements and videos have continued to influence and inspire acts of terrorism in the wake of his death.

Attitudes and Motivations

The study also looked at a range of attitudes and motivations held amongst the sample. These were measured by attitudinal statements in a 6-point Likert scale from (1) being Entirely Disagree to (6) being Entirely Agree. Strong agreement referred to scores of 5 (Strongly Agree) and 6 (Entirely Agree).

Of concern are some attitudes that the sample held strong agreement towards.

For example, the subjects indicated a high level of agreement when reacting to videos and other material depicting the suffering of Muslims elsewhere in the world and believed that they needed to take action to alleviate this suffering. Specifically, the youths identified emotional sensitivity to the suffering of fellow Muslims and oft-quoted examples include exposure to online information or imagery of individuals – in particular women and children – being killed in conflict areas. For some of these youths, this triggered a desire to help others who are perceived to be suffering. While experiencing high empathic concern and wanting to alleviate the suffering of others are not necessarily negative aspects of human functioning, the means by which some of the youths in this study sought to express their concerns – such as wanting to join a terrorist organisation or taking up arms – was highly problematic.

A related attitudinal aspect that the subjects had a strong level of agreement to, was that armed jihad for the defence of Islam was acceptable, and that it was the individual's duty to defend Islam against its enemies and oppressors. The sample was also observed to have demonstrated high levels of agreement to statements related to the superiority of Islam, specifically that Islamic rule was ideal and superior to all other religions. One other attitudinal component that recorded a high level of agreement across the sample related to a more dogmatic view of Islam – specifically, the practice of Islam according to the Prophet's time, and the perception that sharia was superior to secular laws.

Differences between At-risk and Radicalised Youths

However, the study also found clearly differentiating responses for specific attitudinal statements between radicalised and at-risk youths. Specifically, these are items that the at-risk youths tended to disagree with (scores of between 1 and 3) while the radicalised youths had a higher level of agreement to (scores of between 4 and 6). For instance, while the at-risk youths tended to agree with the defensive components of armed jihad (i.e. the acceptability of and the individual obligation of armed jihad to defend against the perceived enemies and oppressors of Islam and of fellow Muslims), they disagreed with offensive jihad. However, the radicalised youths tended to agree with both the defensive and offensive aspects of jihad, including the belief that the use of violence was an acceptable way to pursue what they believed to be an Islamic cause such as the establishment of a caliphate. They appeared to have accepted the ISIS framing of the use of violence as a legitimate means with which to pursue a religious goal – the establishment of an Islamic caliphate. The terrorist group has done so by liberally citing religious texts underscoring the idea that it is the obligation of Muslims to defend the Islamic caliphate and that the act of killing will be rewarded in the afterlife. While both the at-risk and radicalised youths agreed to a more fundamentalist practice of Islam (i.e. Islam as it was practised during Prophet Muhammad's time using a literal interpretation of the primary sources of Islam, i.e. the Quran and Sunnah), the radicalised youths identified more with the political aspects of Islam – specifically, the importance of a caliphate to bring together the Muslim community and as a means to practise a pure form of the faith. Another difference between the two groups was that while the at-risk youths did not indicate positive sentiments toward terrorist organisations, the radicalised youths both admired and attributed legitimacy to such groups.

Psychological Motivations

The study also looked at a range of psychological motivations that contributed to the youths' behaviour (i.e. from showing support online for ISIS to planning to travel to Syria to join ISIS). One of the psychological motivations collectively held by the sample – both at-risk and radicalised youths – was a desire to champion the weak (hero complex). However, the radicalised youths were distinguished by various other inter and intra-personal psychological motivations. These ranged from wanting to derive a sense of belonging, to form a new identity as an extremist, to seeking thrills and as a way to avoid current problems in their lives.

In relation to poor coping, the study showed that a number of the radicalised youths tended to adopt avoidance-coping strategies more often than approach-coping strategies to deal with stressful events. Stress-coping researchers have argued that the type of coping responses manifested by the individual is dependent on the interaction between the person and context-related factors. Examples include the availability of social resources, type and frequency of the stressful event, the subjective appraisal of the stressor to the personality characteristics of the individual (Moos, 1993). Avoidance coping refers to an individual's tendency to adopt coping strategies that are emotion-focused and seeks to avoid thinking about the stressor and its implications. This is in contrast to an approach coping style that is problem-focused, where individuals seek to resolve his or her life stressors.

Two common avoidance-coping strategies observed in the radicalised youths were: (a) the tendency to engage in attempts that involve substitute activities as a way of either creating new sources of satisfaction in their lives or as a way to distract from the stressor; and (b) the tendency to utilise coping strategies that helped them avoid thinking realistically about their problems. For example, an individual may refocus all his efforts on finding information on ISIS, instead of dealing with interpersonal difficulties experienced at home or in school. Another example entails making detailed plans to travel to Syria, including seeking and discussing with like-minded individuals online, to wanting to be part of ISIS as a way of escaping from his current reality – based on the individual's subjective negative appraisal of his or her current reality. Added to this, the study found that radicalised youths also tended not to seek guidance or social support as strategies to deal with their problems.

Complexity of the Youth Radicalisation Process

It is important to understand that the process of youth radicalisation is a complex one. The process goes beyond religious motivations and the youth's exposure to radical rhetoric online. This study has shown that beyond exposure to the larger contextual factors, it is the specific triggers and individual psychological functioning that push a youth to embark on a radical pathway. Additionally, the study has also been able to identify differences between radicalised and at-risk youths – specifically in terms of their beliefs and behaviour. In particular, the radicalised youths tended to legitimise ISIS, their cause and the methods used in pursuit of this cause.

This study has also helped to unpack the complexity that underlies the process of radicalisation, beyond the Singapore youths' exposure to extremist content online. The findings have shown the interplay between three key areas or factors as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Interplay between Three Key Components
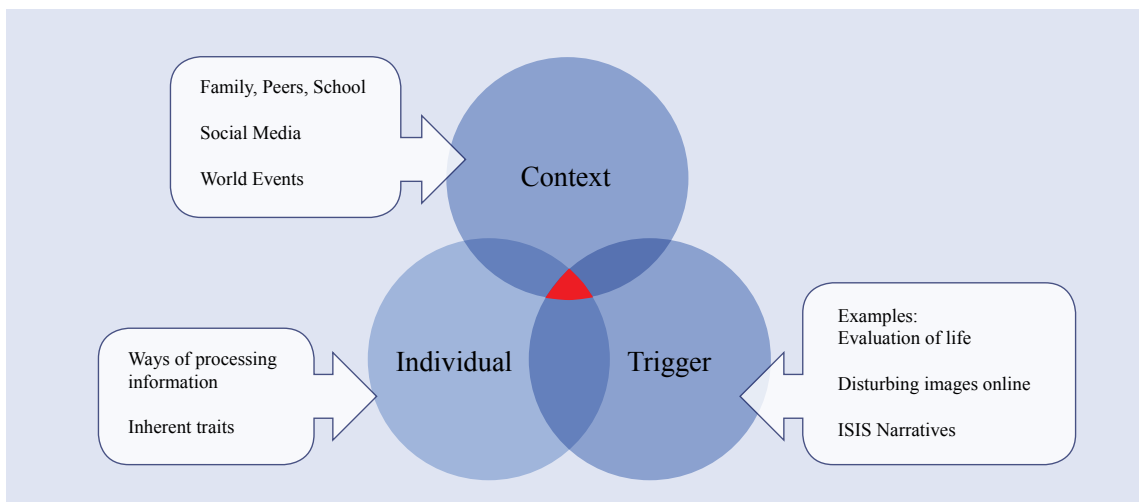
1. The **environmental context** is where the youth is situated within. This is the broader ecological context for the individual.

2. The **individual** refers to who the youth is, in terms of his psychological traits (such as thrill-seeking or poor coping) and how he makes sense of the world.

3. The **triggers** refer to the range of religious and/or psychological issues that function as the onset of the resonation of extremist content with the youth.

An illustration of how these three components relate to each other is the case of a radicalised Singapore man in his 20s who was experiencing difficulties in his family environment. He witnessed domestic violence and his mother was subsequently diagnosed with cancer. He and his family members became religious. He was exposed to radical preachers online at the home of an extended family member. He then came across news reports of the Arab Spring and started to believe that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was a big bully and he thus supported ISIS for fighting against him. He started to believe that violence was an acceptable way of addressing a perceived wrong. He also thought that fighting for fellow Muslims would mean that he would attain martyrdom and redeem his and his family's sins. The contextual factors such as those related to his family and world events formed the background. The interaction between the way he interpreted these contextual factors and the triggers that emerged, eventually led him down the path of radicalisation. While a number of youths may be exposed to the larger contextual factors, it is the specific triggers and individual psychological functioning that pushed some youths to embark on a radical pathway. The area in red (see Figure 2) illustrates this point.

Conclusion

Considerations for a Youth-specific Rehabilitation Framework

In concluding this article, three points are offered to practitioners and policymakers for consideration when thinking about a youth-specific rehabilitation approach in dealing with at-risk and radicalised youths:

1. **A Comprehensive and Structured Assessment Approach**: A systematic and comprehensive approach in assessing the youth is important as it will help practitioners identify the risk issues that have contributed to the youth's radicalisation process, so as to prioritise areas of intervention. It is equally important to identify protective factors that can be capitalised on. The key objective of this assessment is to develop an effective and impactful intervention process for the youth.

2. **A Rehabilitation Framework** that incorporates risk management with a strengths-based approach: For a radicalised youth, practitioners can consider adopting a risk management framework in tandem with a strengths-based approach. This means that apart from looking at the individual's risk factors and addressing these, it is also important to think about building the strengths and capabilities of the youth.

The objective is to help the youth develop pro-social ways of being part of a community and contribute to the needs of others. The end goal is essentially to provide the youth with an opportunity to lead a productive and fulfilling life in the community without the need to engage in extremism.

3. **A Whole-of-community Approach**: A whole-of-community approach needs to be adopted to be able to successfully deal with the issue of youth radicalisation. This means addressing the continuum – from at-risk youths to youths who are radicalised into violent extremism.

For at-risk youths, the key objective would be to ensure that they do not escalate in terms of radicalising into violent extremism and this can be done by working with community stakeholders such as schools as part of MHA's wider outreach efforts.

Early intervention can be in the form of guidance from established religious clerics who can address faith-based questions that youths might have. Non-religious aspects of early intervention could also include cyber-wellness or guiding youths through coping with significant life stressors in an adaptive manner.

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Hegemonic Masculinity and the Rise of the Indonesian Foreign Fighter

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ABSTRACT

Trying to understand what motivates those who choose to join extremist causes is a difficult but necessary task, for it is by understanding their motivations that societies can prevent others from following their path, and reintegrate those who return. Following interviews with many foreign fighters in Indonesia, the author, noting that the overwhelming majority are males, decided to explore their conceptions of masculinity. In this article, he uses the case study of 33-year-old Ramdan, a returned Indonesian foreign fighter, to explain how an "imagined masculinity" is used to lure recruits to extremist groups.* Many Indonesian foreign fighters say they joined ISIS because they wanted to carry AK47s and fight against "the enemy of Islam". In Ramdan's case, he was lured by the promise of a better life under the caliphate, which supposedly guaranteed financial independence, a sense of belonging, and the ability to exert control over women. In this context, Ramdan's masculinity was defined in relation to material wealth and the subordination of women. This served as a catalyst for his radicalisation and decision to join ISIS. Ramdan's history suggests that the meaning of masculinity changes for a man as he grows and matures. This definition is dependent on the social institutions available to a person, as well as his experiences in life. Those working on preventing violent extremism need thus to understand how extremist groups like ISIS appeal to the masculine self-image of their recruits and how to use specific stories of disenchantment like Ramdan's to challenge their false promises.

Introduction

Since the Syrian conflict began in 2011, more than 700 Indonesians have fought alongside 35,000 foreign fighters from 120 countries who travelled to Syria to join Islamist groups fighting the Assad regime (Afrida, 2014). Why do Indonesians intent on jihad join a distant conflict when, like many others, they could be fighting to implement Sharia at home? In order for an individual to make a life-altering decision to leave his or her country, there has to be a major change in the individual's belief system. In explaining this phenomenon, the prevailing theory is that the fighters are driven by

[1] Ramdan's case study is one of the 25 life histories of male Indonesians who returned from fighting in various conflict zones that the author collected and analysed for his thesis, *The Indonesian Foreign Fighters, Hegemonic Masculinity and Globalisation*, submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Monash University in 2018. This article is adapted from his PhD thesis, which is available at https://www.docdroid.net/RMeqXrs/disertation-noor-huda-ismail.pdf.

religious ideology. For example, in one of its first reports on Indonesians and the Syrian conflict, the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) noted: "Syria is directly linked to predictions in Islamic eschatology that the final battle at the end of time will take place in Sham, the region sometimes called Greater Syria or the Levant, encompassing Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel." It concluded that any Indonesian going to Syria, imbued with this ideological belief, was thus hoping to see Islam's final victory (IPAC, 2014).

Similarly, David Malet (2013) has argued that the mobilisation of Muslim foreign fighters is triggered by a need to defend a shared transnational identity, rather than by opportunities for individual gain. Both accounts explain the occurrence of foreign fighters in terms of the salience of transnational identities which produce shared belonging across state borders. These two explanations are useful but insufficient. They ignore another more important commonality among the majority of foreign fighters: they are overwhelmingly male.

This article aims to develop a new understanding of the causal link between masculinity and the mobilisation of Indonesian foreign fighters. This topic is of major concern not only to International Relations scholars but also those who seek to understand and address global security. Historically, the involvement of foreign fighters has prolonged civil wars by introducing more actors to the theatre and complicating attempts to end the war through intervention or negotiation (Bakke, 2014). More importantly, foreign fighters gain international networks and military skills, which they may put to use to foment conflict and violence back home.

Given the male-dominated social milieu in which foreign fighters operate, can gendered dynamics of recruitment, training and combat more adequately explain the pathways of individuals toward violence? How far and in what ways do constructs of masculinity support and sustain the rise of the Indonesian foreign fighter? Is there a gendered construction of the foreign fighters' identification, belonging and mobilisation? Do recruiters appeal to the religious obligations of fellow Muslims by appealing to particular gendered symbols and narratives which are centred on notions of masculinity?

There have been many works seeking to explain foreign fighters, such as Thomas Hegghammer (2010), David Malet (2012), Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan (2015), Jessica Stern and J M Berger (2015), Fawaz Gerges (2016), and David Kilcullen (2016). None of them deal with the question of how gender structures their participation in foreign conflicts. One main reason is that masculinity and its constructions are rarely treated as a research subject worthy of investigation. Men and masculinities "have been taken for granted" (Peletz, 1995). As a result of this gender-blind approach, there has been a vacuum of systematic analysis of the interaction between hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities, or how the performance of heterosexuality by foreign fighters is linked to the dominant constructs of masculinity (Ford & Lyons 2012).

Defining Hegemonic Masculinity and Interpreting Jihad

The influence of masculinity or the socially constructed identities of men is under-examined in the field of terrorism studies. In this context, masculinity operates as a kind of collective common sense, an implicit, and often unconscious shorthand for processes of explanatory and normative judgments (Hutchings, 2008). It refers to "cultural norms and ideals, powerful men and patriarchal authority, or both" (Flood, 2002). Connell (1995) provides an analysis of the relationship between masculinity and power where, in most societies, there is a form of masculinity that is hegemonic and most valorised in a given space. He uses the term, 'hegemonic masculinity', to illustrate an ideal type of masculinity, which in a given context is accepted as the most natural, materially privileged, and maintains the hegemony of specific types of

men over other men who are viewed as culturally subordinate and marginalised, and all women (Connell, 2005). Hegemony does not equate to violence, even though force can support hegemonic forces. Rather, it means ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasions. Connell (1987) clarifies the term:

> *Though hegemony does not refer to ascendancy based on force ... Indeed, it is common for the two to go together ... The connection between hegemonic masculinity and patriarchal violence is close, though not simple. 'Hegemony' does not mean total cultural dominance, the obliteration of alternatives ...*

The concept of hegemony is largely borrowed from Marxist analysis. In The German ideology, Marx and Engels (1937) suggest that the economic structure is the real foundation determining a legal and political superstructure, and the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas. The Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci (1971) further developed the concept in rejecting economic determinism and a less dogmatic ideology. For Gramsci, the cultural and intellectual realm is even more significant for establishing hegemony than Marx's focus on economic factors. Gramsci's conception of power is that it is multifaceted and not based only on coercion. Power is often associated with the mobilisation of ideas, particularly by the media, and the organisation of social institutions. In other words, the Gramscian approach stresses that this fusion of the "hegemonic apparatus" is brought about by one fundamental group and those groups allied to it through the intermediary of ideology – when an ideology manages to "spread throughout the whole of society determining not only united economic and political objectives but also intellectual and moral unity" (Gramsci, 1971).

Simply stated, hegemonic masculinity is a culturally based way of organising society, everything from ideologies, institutions, and identities, in order to ensure and perpetuate male domination. Or as Connell (2005) defines it, "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women." Men and boys are encouraged to emulate this model and are rewarded when they succeed (Connell, 1987; True, 2012). In the hierarchy of masculinities, hegemonic masculinity is at the top. Subordinate masculinities, which might consist of immigrant masculinities, or any oppressed or exploited category barred from economic, social, or political power in society, have the potential to become protest masculinities when they challenge the defining ideal (Howson, 2006). Hegemony is thus achieved by the use of both coercion (force) and consent (culture). Compared to Malet's identity politics, the framework of masculinities provides a more nuanced understanding of the beliefs of foreign fighters and highlights structural conditions that produce the gender identity of the men studied (Duriesmith, 2017).

In the context of this study, the beliefs of foreign fighters are mainly derived from selective religious texts, specific historical events within Islamic history and its cultural norms. These Islamic traditions form an important subtext for the production of masculine narratives that serve to inspire and justify the participation of Muslim men in combat activities, and to recruit prospective fighters. This can be seen from the series of publications produced by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) titled "Among the Believers Are Men", which provides biographies of 16 "martyrs" who were killed in battles. As noted by Nanninga (2018) in his commentary on these biographies: "Although nowhere explicitly indicated, informed readers will recognize these words as part of Sura 33:23, which praises the believers for not running away from battle but fulfilling their promise to God until death." The beliefs held by foreign fighters are not fixed. Instead, they are produced, reproduced, and transformed by the foreign fighters according to particular contexts; that is, they adapt the interpretation of the Quran according to the social conditions.

Through this framework of masculinities, one can analyse the complex overlapping hierarchies of masculinities that are present *before*, *during* and *after* the foreign fighter's involvement in international armed conflicts.

Foreign fighters are here defined as those who travel across internationally recognised state-borders to engage in armed conflict, yet, in contrast to mercenaries, they have no expectations of financial enrichment or gain. The definitions deployed around foreign fighters are contentious and often blurry. However, in this article foreign fighters are treated as a distinct category to differentiate them from the terrorist groups. This distinction is made although many returned foreign fighters have become involved in terrorism because the trajectories of a terrorist and a foreign fighter are different, even though in many cases they may overlap and intersect. Thomas Hegghammer (2011) makes a similar distinction in *The rise of Muslim foreign fighters: Islam and the globalization of jihad.*

The phenomenon of the Indonesian foreign fighter is further situated within the broader social context that is directly linked to the pre-existing masculine traits and the patriarchal practices in the country. In the Indonesian context, the local articulation of foreign fighters' masculinity represents a tension in the broader national gender regime between the secular government and militant Islam. This tension is linked to global contestation between the hegemonic and the subordinate masculinities that emerged as a result of European colonialism. In the late 19th and early 20th century, in the wake of the "Western colonialist onslaught", many Muslim societies bifurcated into a secularist elite dedicated to the goal of modernisation along Western lines and Islamic clusters devoted to reforming and reorganising society in accordance with Islamic teachings (Weisman, 2011). Since then, Islam and Islamic movements have become the hegemonic religious discourse in the contemporary Muslim world. This is to say that the rise of Indonesian foreign fighters does not occur on a tabula rasa. The

form of masculinity that they enact does not emerge in a vacuum and is always being shaped, influenced and mediated by previous cultural and historical circumstances that allow this phenomenon to happen. This echoes Karl Marx's claim that "men make their own history, but they don't make it as they please, they don't make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past" (Marx & Engels, 1972 [1937]).

This article argues that the official narrative of the Indonesian military encourages recruits to embody universalised values of militarised masculinities such as brotherhood, bravery, toughness, roughness and heroism. The construction of these universal militarised masculinities that legitimise violent solutions to conflict and disorder influences the masculinity of foreign fighters even *before* they interpret the religious jargon of jihad to construct an alternate understanding of militarised manhood (Gerami, 2003). However, it is important to note here that the semantic meaning of the Arabic term jihad has no relation to holy war or even war in general.

Equating the term jihad with holy war is a Western invention. The word jihad is derived from the root *j.h.d* that means "to strive, exert oneself, or take extraordinary pains" (Firestone, 1999). Lentini (2013) cautions that jihad is not the same as jihadism. He notes: "Jihad is a well-respected component in Islam that has many diverse meanings, and it is sacred to Muslims." Jihadism, however, is a "distinct twentieth-century interpretation of Islamists writings on the instrumentalization of jihad to achieve a political goal in Muslim-majority countries – whether directly engaging such secular states' militaries in combat, assassinating key political leaders (usually associated with the military) and attempting to overthrow these governments, or by resisting foreign occupations" (Lentini, 2013). As modern political mobilisation, jihadism probably found its original inspiration from the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb (1906-66) whose ideas on pre-Islamic society (*jahiliyya*) and

sovereignty of God (*hakimiyya*) inform the analysis of reality (*waqi*) and in so doing, change that reality leading to the implementation (*tatbiq*) of jihadi strategy (Meijer, 2014).

Ramdan the Disillusioned Foreign Fighter

This article uses the life history narrative approach as a tool to examine gendered power relations among men/masculinities during their life course (Connell, 2002). Although the author collected and analysed the life histories of 25 male Indonesian foreign fighters who returned from three foreign conflict zones – Afghanistan in the 1980s, Southern Philippines in the 2000s and Syria in 2015 – as well as seven supplemental interviews with family members of female foreign fighters, this article features only one Indonesian foreign fighter as his story is the most complete and bears out the key findings also obtained from the other interviewees.

Ramdan (not his real name) is a 32-year-old Indonesian who went to Syria with his son and fought with ISIS for six months before escaping from Raqqa in 2014. He was interviewed by the author two years after his return to Indonesia. His narrative is essential because it is a primary way by which Ramdan makes sense of the world around him, produces meanings, articulates intentions and legitimises his actions. Interpreting his story as told, the author analyses Ramdan's masculinity *before, during and after* his participation in the Syrian conflict at three different levels: micro (family), meso (societal) and macro (global).

Disillusioned by what he saw in Syria while with ISIS, Ramdan was able to return to Indonesia with the help of the Indonesian government. As he had no connections to existing terrorist groups in Indonesia such as Jemaah Islamiyah and Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), and he was cooperative during interrogation, he was released. There being no legal basis at the time for the Indonesian government to detain foreign fighters – the 2003 Law on Terorrism did not explicitly criminalise

travel overseas to join terrorist groups – he was a free man. After months of communication with the author, Ramdan finally agreed to be interviewed in Jakarta on September 12, 2016 for the author's PhD thesis.

The Masculinity of the Indonesian Foreign Fighter *Before* Fighting

Making of the Man in the Family

Ramdan grew up in a middle-class family in Tasikmalaya, West Java. His family ran a garment business. As a child, he learned from his father that being a man meant having economic power. To teach his value of masculinity, his father often took him to the market. Through this socialisation, Ramdan imbibed the cultural expectation that being a 'real man' entailed performing, achieving and defining oneself as an independent provider and protector of the family. As a child, he realised this expectation by taking up the hobby of selling items, from books to candies, to his friends. He found the hobby gratifying since he could be independent financially. Ramdan was among the top students in his class. He went to university but left in his 20s and, with his family, went to Jakarta to run his own lingerie business. The business did well as he received many international orders. Feeling successful as a man, he decided to get married. This juncture of Ramdan's life suggests that even in areas like Tasikmalaya, known as one of the strongholds of Darul Islam supporters, which might be considered highly religious or religiously fundamentalist, the gender norm of a man being the breadwinner for his family was still very critical. Ramdan expanded his business rapidly without thinking deeply about its future implications. He took a business loan from the bank, using his house as collateral. When the business failed, he lost his house. He recalled: "I was young and ambitious. I wanted to get rich as quick as possible. I did not think much of risk. Just like driving a car, I pushed my pedal to the limit until finally the car crashed. I went bankrupt."

After losing his business, he had to deal with an important masculinity trait: his honour as a man. This notion of honour is linked to male societal privilege of control over female sexuality and the ideal of masculine toughness that includes the perceived necessity for men to be fierce. This 'crisis' of masculinity led him to have fights with his then pregnant wife. True (2012) has observed that violence against women becomes the norm if some men fail to achieve hegemonic masculinity. When Ramdan's baby was born, the situation got worse. To solve his economic problems, he decided to leave Jakarta and return to his parents' hometown in West Java. He recounted:

> *Initially she did not want to come with me. She prefers to live in the city, but I couldn't afford the lifestyle of the city. I threatened her with divorce. She then decided to stay with me for a while. But her parents always intervened in our family affairs. I couldn't stand it. Finally, I divorced her.*

Such 'crises' of masculinity were also reported by other Indonesian foreign fighters. Abu Tholut, who was sent by Jemaah Islamiyah to Afghanistan for military training, suffered the disappointment of a failed dream to join the Indonesian military. Yusuf decided to fight with the Mindanao Muslims in Southern Philippines after watching a video about atrocities committed against Muslims in Bosnia. Their crises, and Ramdan's business loss occurred *before* they joined the Indonesian foreign fighter community.

Making of the Man in Society

During the process of regaining his honour as a man, Ramdan went to Jakarta to borrow money from his relatives, who had a successful business. One of them was Bahri. Ramdan had not met him for years. Although Bahri's father was an employee of an American oil company in Riau, Sumatra, Ramdan remembered him as a troublemaker in the family. Bahri was also known locally as a *jeger* (someone who is good at martial arts), and who

liked to get involved in street brawls and get drunk as well as engage in petty crime, such as stealing motorcycles. He spent a short period in jail because of these activities. Bahri could be said to have been exhibiting 'protest masculinity', a term conceived by Connell (1995) to describe a destructive, chaotic and alienating sort of masculinity. To Ramdan's surprise, Bahri had changed. He had become a successful lingerie businessman and more importantly, he was demonstrating a deep commitment to Islam. Bahri prayed five times a day and had been to Mecca on religious pilgrimage. His wife dressed in a *burqa*, covering herself from head to toe. His wife's behaviour helped to define his Muslim authenticity, identity and status. He was also no longer drinking and fighting. When Bahri spoke, he often used religious terms such as *sabr* (being patient), *istighfar* (ask forgiveness from God) and *tawakkal* (surrender to God's will). Bahri was a born again Muslim. He told Ramdan:

> *Our life in this world is only temporary. We have to help God by doing what he asked us to do. We have to fix our religion and I am sure God will help us in every single step in our life. So, before you ask my help, please ask yourself. Have you helped God? So please come to our religious gathering in my home. You will be illuminated like me.*

Bahri shared with Ramdan his spiritual journey but Ramdan was not really interested in his conversion. He was firm in his intention to borrow money to fix his business. However, that gradually changed in the months after Bahri came to visit him in Tasikmalaya on *Idul Fitri* (the religious event to celebrate the end of the fasting month of Ramadhan). Bahri gave Ramdan money to travel to Jakarta to attend one of his regular religious gatherings. Ramdan did not know then that Bahri was one of the financial supporters of the pro-ISIS groups in Jakarta. His network was linked to Aman Abdurrahman, a convicted terrorist who became well-known among Indonesian militants because of his writings and translations of ISIS propaganda from maximum security prison. Aman's refusal to cooperate with

prison guards or participate in any rehabilitation programme also won him ardent supporters. Inside prison, he created Jamaah Anshorut Daulah (JAD) as a platform to support ISIS.

Ramdan's recruitment to the ISIS cause demonstrates the role of social networks of Islamic activists who skilfully tap into personal quests for significance. They enabled Ramdan to transform his grievances into membership of a collective of likeminded individuals of different backgrounds and from different countries that style themselves as an epistemic community with authoritative claims to Islamic knowledge, viz. the authenticity of the ISIS caliphate. The leaders of this community work in subtle ways to gain influence and power. For example, they have co-opted the legitimate concept of transnational Islamic brotherhood of *ummah* to lure prospective recruits to be part of the Indonesian community of foreign fighters.

Making of the Man in the International Context

Ramdan's radicalisation started when Bahri asked him to attend the gathering of ISIS supporters in his house. Ramdan's radicalisation trajectory is similar to other former foreign fighters interviewed for this study. They too were recruited by members of an existing social network tied by kinship and friendship; siblings, relatives, in-laws and friends who were part of a violent network (Sageman, 2004). Ramdan's recruitment was straightforward because of the dynamics of gender hierarchy among the men. Within gender relations, Bahri had a higher gender position than Ramdan due to his wealth and his religiosity. Meanwhile, Ramdan was in a lower one because of his 'crisis' of masculinity. In this social setting, Ramdan's masculinity was defined by his fear of other men, especially when he was perceived as being feminine for not having enough money to support the family. In this critical moment, Ramdan was attracted to the version of Islam promoted by Bahri as a possible solution to his 'crisis'.

Ramdan's idea of using Islam as a panacea for individual and social problems did not come out of nowhere. He grew up in an area that was

a Darul Islam (DI) stronghold. Even though Kartosuwiryo, who founded the rebel movement and perpetuated the notion of Islam as the solution to life's problems, died in 1962, his teachings still linger in the community. One of Kartosuwiryo's key teachings was to blame secular life under Pancasila as the root cause of Indonesia's social and economic problems. Some DI supporters, who desire to live under Islamic law, saw the rise of an Islamic caliphate in Syria as an opportunity for them to live an Islamic lifestyle and resist Western secular nationalism. This pattern of resistance of the status quo is similar to the finding made by Kimmel's study of right-wing militias in America and Scandinavia: militia recruiters tap into a general malaise among white men men seeking some explanation for the contemporary 'crisis' of masculinity. Men, in this social setting, are required to centre their identity within the group context to create a communal sense of responsibility for acts and violence or aggression (Kimmel, 2007). Similarly, ISIS ideologues in Indonesia frame the conflict in Syria as a testament to the global coalition against Islam.

Another turning point for Ramdan came when Bahri included him in a WhatsApp group of ISIS supporters. It was through this platform that Ramdan's radicalisation rapidly took place. Almost every day, ISIS supporters including Bahri shared religious messages that included 'selfie' photos and videos of Indonesians who had joined the so-called Islamic State declared by al-Baghdadi. The group believed the prophecy of the Prophet– that there would be a reformer in a hundred years – was happening, and that this reformer (al-Baghdadi) had risen from Sham carrying the black banners and had a direct blood lineage with the Prophet himself. This community of ISIS supporters imagined, conceptualised, valorised, articulated and gave mutually communicable meaning and belonging to their lives in terms of Islam. Unlike many Indonesian foreign fighters who wanted to join ISIS to be able to carry an AK47 assault rifle and fight against 'the enemies of Islam', Ramdan was lured by the promise of a better life under the Islamic caliphate that included financial

independence, belonging and control over women. He said:

> *I was never interested to fight with ISIS. Bahri always told me that I can be part of an Islamic caliphate as a civilian. I can contribute to the development of the state. With the collapse of my business and the ever-increasing challenges to start a new one, I want to explore other possibilities. After watching the videos depicting the good life under an Islamic caliphate, I was intrigued. Especially, I also want to get a new wife. Imagine getting a wife with blue eyes? Ha ... ha ...*

Ramdan's narrative suggests his masculinity was defined in relation to the material ownership of wealth and the subordination of women. Ramdan's socially constructed core masculine identity such as the desire to dominate, to control, and to succeed served as a catalyst for his further radicalisation, and desire to join ISIS. Thus, when Ramdan was asked by Bahri to accompany him to travel to Syria together with his family, Ramdan agreed. Ramdan's case also underscores the importance of real-world networks, which often help the transition to further radicalisation. These religious gatherings, as well as social media networks, create an ecosystem in which people with similar ideas meet and develop radical ideas forming a jihadist's ideology. This eco-chambering dynamic in which one set of views predominates and dissenting viewpoints are marginalised and even suppressed, has increased the opportunity and the likelihood for many individuals like Ramdan to travel to Syria to join ISIS. The international conflicts, in the Middle East and beyond, have provided a spawning ground for violent non-state actors, extending the threat from international terrorism for at least a generation, possibly even longer.

The Masculinity of the Indonesian Foreign Fighter *during* Combat

Ramdan's motive for travelling to Syria was not to fight. He joined ISIS hoping to find a better prospect for life under an Islamic caliphate. At the outset he saw many people from different countries such as France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Tunisia, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Singapore, Malaysia and elsewhere. He said: "As a businessman, I used to travel abroad and meet with many different people. So, I know how to do business with foreigners. But these people came to Syria for ideological reasons. They wanted to be part of the caliphate." In these encounters, he positioned his masculinity against men and women who were racially different from him but shared a similar vision of restoring the ummah.

However, Ramdan was quickly disenchanted with the harsh living conditions in Raqqa. Life with ISIS was physically strenuous and mentally exhausting. There was not enough running water, the electricity was infrequent, and the food was limited. More importantly the people, especially the religious police or *hisbah*, were rough and authoritative. They regularly checked if shops were closing, that people wore modest clothing and that unrelated men and women did not engage with each other in public. He also saw a special female police force called the Al Khansa brigade. This brigade checked that women were wearing prescribed clothing and were behaving decently in public (Halliday, 2015). Dealing with this unexpected atmosphere, his hope of finding a better life gradually disappeared. But his cousin, Abu Ibrahim, who had travelled with him told him:

> *But you can still find a wife here, right? Just look around, maybe you are interested to get married with one of those sisters? We want to build a new Islamic community here. This is our dream to have our own territory to implement Islam.*

Ramdan decided to stay in hopes of getting a new life partner, but not to fight. Even though he was disenchanted with the local conditions it was not enough reason for him to leave ISIS. He was still hoping to get the benefit of staying with the group. This specific juncture of Ramdan's life with ISIS suggests that disengagement is not a thing

but a process that requires active negotiation and modification of one's gender order. In his case, once ISIS successfully arranged his marriage with a female ISIS supporter, he would earn a higher position socially and economically. Socially he would be recognised as a committed ISIS member as he was married not only for biological reasons but also ideological ones. Economically, ISIS provided a higher salary for their married fighters.

The military training was one of the important turning points that caused Ramdan to leave ISIS. He was asked by ISIS leadership to exercise the exaggerated ideals of manhood that often included involvement in violent activities such as direct confrontations with the Kurds. ISIS's brutality is based on a monograph written by a jihadi using the pseudonym Abu Bakr Naji titled, *The Management of Savagery: the most critical state through which the umma will pass*. One of its doctrines is that it is important to raise the level of belief and combat efficiency during the training of the youth of the region of savagery and establish a fighting society at all levels and among all individuals by making them aware of its importance (Abu Bakr Naji, 2004). As Ramdan saw it, this doctrine allowed the ISIS leadership to consider foreign fighters as cannon fodder for the movement. He remembered that when his group was under attack from the Kurds and they used a walkie talkie to ask for help from the ISIS leadership, they were told: "Keep fighting brother. Don't you want to be the martyr here?" Listening to the reply, Ramdan felt repugnance and irritation towards the ISIS leadership. "ISIS offers nothing but the death ideology for its foreign fighters there," he said.

During that period, the recruits were also isolated by the leader of the group. They were not allowed to have contact with their families and relatives to ensure that they focused on understanding all of the lessons. The non-stop activities in the military academy were designed to make them forget about their families at home and create new solidarities among members. Moskalenko (2010) notes that under these circumstances, the group wields special power to answer such questions as: "what is good and what is evil?"; "what is worth living for, what is worth working for?"; and "what is worth killing for, what is worth dying for?" Yet such intense indoctrination could not stop Ramdan from feeling guilty about his mother. Before going to Syria, he had lied to her that he was going to Europe for business purposes. "She trusted me when I told her that I was going for business, especially after I showed her my air ticket to Turkey. So she let me go with my son," he said. Ramdan's mother is a sports teacher with an elite high school in Jakarta. When the author met her with Ramdan, it was obvious that he was very attached to his mother. During that encounter, Ramdan did not speak much and listened attentively to his mother's instructions. His attachment to his mother is not unusual; most of the other Indonesian foreign fighters interviewed were also attached to their mothers but detached from their fathers. All of them considered their recruiters to be their father figure.

The feelings of guilt were further aggravated by the death of his cousin, Abu Ibrahim, in a confrontation with the Kurds. Said Ramdan: "He was the reason why I came here. When he died, I did not have any friends and family. I told myself that I must escape from this hell and start a new life in Indonesia." This internal contradiction shows that achieving hegemonic masculinity entails power but at the same time it is very harmful. In Ramdan's context, the power can be seen as his ability to carry weapons wherever he went in ISIS territory. However, not all men want to be seen as being hegemonic by exercising violence against other men. This is to suggest that power relations, discourses, ideologies and practice produce multiple and sometimes contradictory masculine identities (Collinson & Hearn, 1994).

Using Connell's (1987) terminology, Ramdan's masculinity can be described as 'complicit

masculinity' since he did not want to be part of the violent practices of masculinity promoted by ISIS. However, he still received benefits of being associated with the group, including the possibility of getting a wife or wives. In other words, masculine identity in this social setting has concrete effects since it incorporates a hierarchical logic of undermining women. This is to say that to be a man in this community is to be identified as governing. This social practice is also akin to Hooper's notion of masculinism; that is, an ideology of male dominance that constantly enforces the association of power and masculinity (Hooper, 2001). This process is not automatic, but organised through gendering strategies, which build on and emphasise hierarchically gendered dualisms (Hooper, 1998). Thus, the nature of masculine identities must be achieved, negotiated and contested in day-to-day interactions (Kerfoot & Knights, 1993).

For instance, the celebration of martyrdom is ubiquitous among ISIS supporters both in Indonesia and Syria. Although Ramdan never wanted to be a martyr himself, he encountered a number of Indonesians in Raqqa who wanted to be involved in ISIS' suicide missions in Syria. One of them was Abu Irsya, an Indonesian student from London who enlisted as a suicide bomber. Ramdan said that while waiting for his turn for a suicide mission, Abu Irsya told him that his father was a rich businessman in Indonesia who always sent him a lot of money. Instead of using that money to support his studies, Abu Irsya used it to commit all kind of sins ranging from drinking, using drugs, and having sex with prostitutes. He felt empty with these worldly activities and reached a point of boredom. Accidently, he came across a story that told how Abu Mushab al-Zarqawi, the founding father of ISIS, used to be a thug, a bootlegger and a heavy drinker, and even allegedly a pimp in the Zarqa's underworld. [See, for example, Weaver (2006).] Abu Irsya told Ramdan: "I want to clean myself from my previous sins like al-Zarqawi. To die for an Islamic cause will give me direct access

to Paradise as promised by God." This narrative suggests that the act of martyrdom is not carried out in a vacuum. Although the action is designed by ISIS to scare the enemies of Islam with its strong religious justifications, some of those who embrace martyrdom are often individuals, like Abu Irsya, who are clueless about Islamic theology.

The Masculinity of the Indonesian Foreign Fighter *after* Combat

Unlike many Indonesian foreign fighters who joined ISIS so that they could carry AK47 rifles and fight against 'the enemies of Islam', Ramdan was lured by the promise of a better life under the caliphate, which supposedly guaranteed financial independence, a sense of belonging, and the ability to exert control over women. This promise, however, was not fulfilled. Ramdan's masculinity was defined in relation to material wealth and the acquisition and domination over women. This served as a catalyst for his radicalisation and decision to join ISIS. Consequently, when his brother Bahri asked Ramdan and his son to travel to Syria, Ramdan agreed. Ramdan's story illustrates how seductive the idea of an 'ideal' Islamic life under ISIS in Syria and Iraq is for those who dream of seeing the full implementation of Islamic sharia on earth. That ISIS was then sufficiently well-endowed to pay regular salaries to those 'working for the state' also helped ease the anxiety of giving up everything at home to travel to Syria. Once there, they were prepared to kill for their utopia and rationalise away the brutality and gratuitous cruelty towards captives because they themselves felt frightened by rival forces; some like Ramdan saw men die in combat with another rebel group, Jahbat Al-Nusro. He recalled: "Inside ISIS territory, I was occupied with one thing, which was my own survival. To kill or be killed. I almost lost my humanity."

The ISIS ideology, in conjuring up an existentialist threat posed by 'Western imperialists' to the

caliphate, helped nurture a siege mentality that demanded their absolute obedience; the daily coalition airstrikes strengthened their resolve. However, disillusioned with the group's promises, Ramdan decided to leave. "I felt I didn't belong in the group anymore," he said of his decision. He is a man struggling to re-invent himself and negotiate his masculine identity, without means or even the support of friends, as he does not want people to know his real identity. He dreams of setting up a new business but as the bleakness of his circumstances hits him – his former wife does not allow him to meet his son whom he took to Syria – he becomes less clear as to whether he will return to the violent world again. In this context, social relations are at the core of a person like Ramdan to position himself in the gender hierarchy as a good man within his immediate community. This finding supports Barelle's (2015) claim that "social relations are at the heart of how a person negotiates relationships with the rest of society, especially if they belonged to a separatist group or one that promoted hatred towards out-groups".

Conclusion

This study using the life history narratives of Indonesian foreign fighters like Ramdan has shown that Islamist violent networks like ISIS recruit foreign fighters through the mobilisation of hegemonic masculine tropes and the institutionalisation of these tropes in religious narrative to propagate the *mujahid* as the hegemonic model of manhood within the *jihadi* sub-culture. These processes are only possible due to the mainstream patriarchal order in the country and Muslim communities that entitle men to assume moral authority and leadership of the family.

The construction of masculinities among Indonesian foreign fighters can be explained at three levels. At the *micro* level or individual level, in the early process of mobilisation the prospective foreign fighters come to associate masculinity with courage, discipline, authority, coercion, dominance, competition and violence. This transformation occurs at the same time that the individual's understanding of religious piety becomes increasingly associated with achieving the status of being a *mujahid*.

At the *meso* or group level, foreign fighters in Indonesia ground their beliefs in religious narratives that are deployed in specific spaces by drawing on masculine tropes and gendered interpretations of local political conditions, and on selected Islamic texts and early Islamic traditions. In practice this means that militant groups like ISIS reinterpret old sacred religious texts with new meanings, illustrating the dynamic role of Islamic scriptures in the group's recruitment discourse. Despite drawing on a common set of texts and narratives to assert the equality of all group members, the participants clearly express the different racial, class, national and social hierarchies that place some men in positions of power.

Lastly, at the *macro* level, internationalised conflicts become a theatre to validate the foreign fighters' sense of manhood by participating in military training and actual combat experience. These internationalised conflicts produce a different practice of militarised masculinity. The Syrian conflict in 2011 gave rise to the so-called Islamic caliphate in Iraq and Syria in 2014. This newly established and self-proclaimed Islamic caliphate inspired a number of those in the foreign fighter community to move to Syria to be part of the caliphate project.

Gender dynamics are, of course, not the whole story of the mobilisation and recruitment to global jihad. Existing scholarship has gone a long way to establish the role of religious group identity in fuelling the rise of foreign fighters. However, while religious identity is important, it is insufficient to explain the mobilisation of men who were not initially deeply religious or moved by a desire to

be pious. Ignoring gender analysis runs the risk of reifying the phenomenon of foreign fighters as a natural result of identity politics deployed across national borders (Duriesmith, 2017). Hence, concentrating on religion only views one form of identity and denies the multiple competing identifies present in the fighter's lives (gender, class, ethnicity, etc.).

Nor is jihadi masculinity monolithic. While some of the foreign fighters interviewed for this study defined their masculinity by the desire to inflict harm on an enemy, albeit only combatants in the conflict zone, Ramdan in Syria defined his masculinity in economic terms and the prospect of getting a new partner in life. Just as there are complexities and contradictions which characterise foreign fighter masculinity during armed conflict, there is also no single trajectory for returned foreign fighters. Yet, existing approaches to de-radicalisation present the idea that 'extreme' or 'radical' ideas around religion and violence push individuals towards violent acts and it is such radical or extreme ideas that need to be challenged.

This study suggests that to address foreign fighter recruitment, there is a need to address harmful masculinity as a root cause of radicalisation. Policy responses should thus include promoting gender equality by educating young men in ways that offer more options for them to express themselves and achieve their life goals *not only* through stereotypical masculine values such as courage, aggression, autonomy, mastery, group solidarity, adventure and toughness. Accordingly, it is critical to promote educational and cultural materials that do not place domination and the use of violence or show of strength and force at the top of the value hierarchy, but instead offer more peaceful, conciliatory and egalitarian ways to be a man in the world. In other words, we need to change the construction of masculinities, particularly their hegemonic expressions, by offering and

celebrating multiple, positive and nonviolent forms of masculinity. To get maximum results, one needs to execute this endeavour not only through creative methods such as documentary films or a social marketing campaign, but change also needs to become embedded in social institutions.

For example, the UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015) calls on states and UN bodies to integrate a gender dimension into all counterterrorism efforts, particularly to conduct gender sensitive research into radicalisation to violence and the impact of counter-terrorism efforts on women and women's rights in order to develop targeted and evidence-based policies and programmes.

As this study has shown, radicalisation dynamics focus on social networks, and women are uniquely placed to influence their spouses, children and siblings, in ways both subtle and direct, to turn away from the destructive path of violent extremism. For instance, in the case of Ramdan and another foreign fighter interviewed for this study, their mothers played two important roles: 1) to encourage them to disengage from ISIS, and 2) to help them start a new life once they returned home. Therefore, governmental and non-governmental actors must invest in preventing and countering violent extremism through a range of programmes going beyond law enforcement and criminal justice processes associated with traditional counterterrorism efforts; this includes work in education, development, conflict prevention, mediation, strategic communications and human rights – women's rights in particular – and gender equality.

Lastly, this study has shown that we can capitalise on disenchanted foreign fighters' stories to challenge the radical narrative of Islamist groups like ISIS who have been making false promises to their recruits.

About the Author

Noor Huda Ismail joined the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University as a Visiting Fellow after completing his PhD at Monash University, Melbourne, on an Australian Award Scholarship. In 2005, he was awarded the United Kingdom's Chevening Scholarship to pursue a Master's degree at St Andrew's University, Scotland. While conducting fieldwork in Northern Ireland, he had an epiphany after meeting with a local activist trying to integrate former terrorists into society. On his return to Indonesia in 2008, he established the Institute for International Peace Building to help the social rehabilitation and re-integration of convicted Indonesian terrorists by employing them upon their release in social enterprises such as Dapoer Bistik Solo, a cafe he set up in Central Java. In 2013, he was elected an Ashoka Fellow by the Washington DC-based Ashoka foundation for being a leading social entrepreneur championing innovative new ideas that transform society. A writer and former journalist who has written several books and commentaries for leading newspapers, Ismail is also a documentary producer whose works include *Jihad Selfie*, *Pengantin* (The Bride), *Seeking The Imam* and *Cubs of the Caliphate*.

Ismail's work has been informed by a personal background that allows him to obtain an insider-outsider perspective. Born in Yogyakarta in Indonesia, and brought up by a Muslim father who was raised in a Catholic family, and a mother whose father was a puppet master and told him Hindu stories, Ismail was sent to the al-Mukmin Islamic boarding school in Solo, Central Java, when he was 12 to become a 'good Muslim'. His parents did not know then that since its founding in 1972, the school, better known as Ngruki, had become an important fount for the cultural formation of militants and promoted the radical ideology of Darul Islam (DI) espoused by two of its founders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. After graduating from Ngruki, Ismail remained affiliated with DI but left the movement when an internal split in 1993 led to the birth of Jamaah Islamiyah. He continued his studies at Gadjah Mada University and the State Islamic University in Yogjakarta, Central Java. Working as a special correspondent for the *Washington Post* from 2002-2005, he was shocked to discover that his Ngruki roommate was one of the Bali bombers. Since then, the question of why a regular individual and Indonesian citizen would become involved in terrorism has been a very personal one for him.

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DRUGS & FEMALE OFFENDERS

The Risk Factors that Drive Young Women to Drug Abuse

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ABSTRACT

An ever-growing body of literature has shown that males and females enter the criminal justice system differently. For women, the experiences of victimisation and abuse, marginalisation, mental illness, substance abuse and dysfunctional relationships play a significant role in their offending behaviours. Studies by the Singapore Prison Service have shown that while both adult males and females continue to abuse drugs for similar reasons such as to cope with stressors, regulate negative emotions, and elicit pleasurable feelings, there exist gender-specific factors. For instance, female abusers' unhealthy relationships with their significant others (who tend to be drug abusers) play a substantial role in perpetuating their drug use. To understand the risk factors that put young women on the pathway to drug abuse, the Central Narcotics Bureau's Psychological Unit conducted a study of young women between the ages of 16 and 20 who were arrested for drug consumption offences. The review of archival data reveals that young female drug offenders share five risk factors: Childhood victimisation (i.e. abuse or neglect), dysfunctional intimate relationships, marginalisation (i.e., parentification or low education achievement), maladaptive coping, and body image issues. The article concludes with recommendations for how the findings can be used to improve the design of female-specific drug prevention and intervention programmes.

Drugs and Youths

The worsening drug situation around the world continues to be a concern in many countries, including Singapore. In particular, Singapore faces challenges on both the global and local front. Globally, the regional drug situation remains worrying - methamphetamine production and trafficking in the Southeast Asia region reached an all-time high in 2018, with seizures in East and South-East Asia almost tripling from 2013 to 2016 (Central Narcotics Bureau [CNB], 2019). Our close proximity to large-scale drug production regions creates a backdrop of easy availability of drugs. Locally, the latest CNB drug situation report released in June 2019 revealed a 9% increase in new drug abusers and that close to two-thirds of new abusers arrested were under 30 years old (CNB, 2019). Studies conducted in Singapore have also found youths to have more liberal attitudes towards drug use (Taskforce on Youths and Drugs, 2015). For instance, a recent Public Perception Study on Singapore's Anti-Drug Policies, which was conducted between July and October 2018, showed that while about 84% of those above the age of 30 surveyed perceived the consumption of cannabis

to be harmful, only 68% of youths surveyed held similar views (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2019).

To tackle the drug situation, including drug use amongst youths[1], Singapore engages in a comprehensive approach covering targeted prevention, strong deterrence and enforcement, upstream intervention for young abusers, rehabilitation and supervision to reduce the relapse rate, and active engagement of families and the community to support the fight against drugs. Specifically, Singapore uses a tiered approach to drug intervention programmes to ensure drug-involved youths are provided the appropriate level of services. CNB's Psychological Unit (CPU) conducts Drug Risk Assessments so that young abusers are placed in differentiated programmes in line with their risk levels.

Why Do Young Females Abuse Drugs?

In September 2017, CPU undertook a review of the risk profiles of youth drug offenders in Singapore. It found that female youth drug offenders had a significantly higher risk of re-offending compared to male youth drug offenders. The young female offenders presented with higher risks in the domains of family, leisure, education and employment, anti-social peers and anti-social personality. However, the nature of the risks they manifested was less clear.

CPU thus embarked on a study to elucidate the risks, and to understand how female teenage experiences of victimisation and abuse, marginalisation, mental illness, and dysfunctional relationships intersect with their substance abuse.

Theories about Gender-specific Offending

The risks presented by the young female drug offenders in the CPU study are in line with what gender-neutral theorists have identified as the individual-level factors that lead to criminal conduct. These factors – known as the Central Eight – are antisocial history, antisocial cognitions, antisocial personality, antisocial peers, substance use, unrewarding family/marital relationships, education/employment difficulties, and unconstructive use of leisure time (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). These individual-level risk factors are equally relevant to both males and females (e.g. Loeber & Farrington, 2000; Gendreau, Smith & French 2006). Nonetheless, with increasing focus on the female offender, there is now a surge in studies lending support to the gender-responsive theories that argue that the aetiology of female offending is unique (e.g. Reisig et al., 2006; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). These theories assert that women's experiences of victimisation and abuse, marginalisation, mental illness and dysfunctional relationships play a significant role in their involvement in crime and substance abuse (e.g. Daly, 1992; Belknap, 2007). For instance, Benda (2005) has found that stress, depression, suicidality (or suicidal thoughts), childhood and recent abuse predict recidivism, while having better interpersonal and marital relations decrease their risk of recidivism. Salisbury & Van Voorhis (2009), the first study to conduct path analyses of females' pathways to offending, has found three distinct gendered trajectories into crime: The childhood victimisation path model, the relational path model, and the social and human capital path model.

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[1] Singapore's definition of youth is an individual between the ages of 15 and 35 (Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth). For the purposes of this study, we are using the WHO definition of youth as a person between the ages of 15 and 24. Youth is here used interchangeably with young woman/man to refer to a person ranging in age from late teens to early 20s.

In the Singapore context, studies by the Singapore Prison Service have demonstrated that while there are similarities in the reasons behind drug use for adult males and females – they reported reasons such as to cope with stressors, regulate negative emotions and elicit pleasurable feelings (Leung et al., 2015; Loh, 2018) – there are also distinct differences between the genders. For instance, female abusers' unhealthy relationships with their significant others who tend to be drug abusers play a substantial role in perpetuating their drug use. However, it is unclear if the Singapore Prison findings on female adult drug offenders also apply to female youth drug offenders. Additionally, to the best of the authors' knowledge, the ways in which various aspects of females' experiences contribute specifically to substance abuse has not been studied in Singapore.

Study Methodology

Participants

Archival data (i.e., drug risk assessment reports) of 35 randomly selected young females arrested between 2014 and 2017 was examined in this study. These young women were first-time drug offenders between the ages of 16 and 20 years old when charged with drug consumption. Participants mostly used 'ice' (n = 23), with the rest using cannabis (n = 7), or multiple drugs (n = 5).

Procedure

The iterative approach was used to analyse the drug risk assessment reports. From the reports, specific codes were generated by three researchers to iterate themes based on existing theories of offending behaviours – specifically the three pathways models established by Salisbury & Van Voorhis (2009) and the central eight in general re-offending (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The researchers subsequently engaged in discussions to ensure inter-coder reliability. Once the codes were standardised, new themes were identified based on the emergent data to complement existing information. The relationships between the themes

were then conceptualised based on the existing theories.

Results

The review of archival data surfaced five key themes in the initiation and perpetuation of substance abuse by teenage female drug offenders: (i) Childhood victimisation, (ii) dysfunctional intimate relationships, (iii) marginalisation, (iv) maladaptive coping and (v) body image issues.

(i) Childhood Victimisation

The reports revealed an overwhelming myriad of early adverse experiences – they reported physical and emotional abuse, neglect, exposure to domestic violence and substance abuse in the household, parental separation and divorce. For a majority of these young women (n = 17), these difficult childhood experiences appeared to have led to symptoms of mood-related disorders.

AT, 18-year-old 'ice' abuser:

AT said that she had been staying and shifting among her grandmother and four friends. She shared that she left home… could no longer tolerate her elder sisters who would always find fault with her and would often abuse her (i.e. punched her, hit her with perfume bottles and shouted at her). AT said that she would often sustain injuries and needed to see a doctor. She shared that she was in the midst of applying for a PPO [personal protection order] against her sisters but her mother refused [to let her] as it was against her siblings. During the interview, AT disclosed that she has been feeling depressed for the past few months and would cry herself to sleep every night… felt pressurised due to a lack of social support and does not know how and who to share her problems with…. considered attempting suicide by sitting on the railing on the 40th storey outside a flat after a quarrel with her family.

For other teenage female drug offenders, the non-affirming family environment contributed to their moving out of their households, becoming affiliated with drug-using associates that eventually led to their exposure to illicit substances.

NM, 16-year-old 'ice' abuser:

When NM was younger, her late mother was abusive towards her (e.g. belting and beating her badly). [After her mother's death, NM stayed with her aunt.] Her aunt had often made derogatory remarks about her and her family. NM was chased out from her aunt's place because she could not contribute any finances to the household. NM said that she was living at a cemetery where her late mother was buried. [NM eventually moved in to her stepfather's house.] She had easily trusted her stepfather's current wife... believing that the white-looking substance was nothing... She had allowed herself to smoke 'ice' for the second time thinking that it was not a drug.

For a few other teenagers, familial criminality and drug use led directly to their illicit use.

W, 18-year-old 'ice' abuser:

She was primarily taken care of by her grandmother when she was very young as both her parents were incarcerated (her father was in prison for armed robbery and her mother for drug abuse). She was also influenced [to take drugs] because her father abused drugs in her presence and kept offering the drug to her.

(ii) Dysfunctional Intimate Relationships

The presence of dysfunctional intimate relationships was another key theme that emerged for the young female drug offenders. Nearly half (n = 16) of them reported involvement with older, anti-social partners in relationships characterised by insecurities, jealousy and hostility with episodes of emotional and physical abuse. Their dysfunctional intimate relationships led to difficulties in various domains of their lives (i.e., school, work, family and peers), culminating in social isolation. Some of the young women reported using illicit substances to cope with the negative emotions arising from these relationships.

J, 17-year-old 'ice' abuser:

Before J got to know her husband, she would attend school. After she started dating her husband in April, she attended school up to two days a week. Her relationship with her husband… he would often scold and shout at her whenever he was angry. J also appeared to be neglected by her husband throughout her pregnancy. For instance, he continued to be involved in drug activities and refused to accompany her for medical check-ups. J reported that her husband and his friends would abuse drugs in their room regularly. She had quarrelled with her husband that day as she saw a seemingly intimate photograph of him with another girl whom she knew was abusing drugs. The 'ice' in the bong was left on the table in her bedroom by her husband. Hence, she decided to smoke 'ice' out of frustration.

Accounts from other young female drug offenders indicated they used illicit substances with their romantic partners as a way to maintain their relationships.

J², 20-year-old 'ice' abuser:

She reported that she was introduced and coerced to use 'ice' by her boyfriend when she met him in October 2012. Since then, her boyfriend would provide her the drug and they would consume together. It appeared that she agreed to use the drug each time her boyfriend offered her as she was fearful of making him upset and the possibility of losing their relationship.

(iii) Marginalisation

Another theme common to most was the experience of marginalisation that included chronic accommodation instability, financial difficulty, early pregnancy, low education achievement and '*parentification*'. In particular, their experiences of '*parentification*' – children or adolescents having to assume adult roles before they are emotionally or developmentally ready to manage those roles successfully, viz., through (i) having to contribute to the household income, (ii) taking care of their younger siblings, and (iii) early pregnancy – caused significant stress.

AT, 18-year-old 'ice' abuser:

AT reported that her mother who is a divorcee is staying in a 1 room rented flat and is taking care of seven children including her. She said that she had been staying and shifting among her grandmother and four friends… Her family is financially unstable. She said even though her sisters are working, they are not contributing to the family finances. Therefore, AT's mother is depending on her to pay for the housing loan as well as to purchase groceries for the family.

NI, 19-year-old multiple drug abuser:

NI's attachment and bonding with her mother was affected by her mother's absence due to her repeated incarceration. She was not close to her current step-father and described him as being financially insecure and not being responsible towards the family. NI expressed parenting concerns in managing her younger half-siblings as they are not receptive to her parenting style.

R[1], 16-year-old 'ice' abuser:

Although R[1] is still officially enrolled in secondary school, she had not attended school for more than one year. She shared that she "hates school", and did not wish to continue her studies. She revealed that she hates most of her classmates in school because they had been teasing and making fun of her (e.g. joking about her getting pregnant and having been retained).

(iv) Maladaptive Coping

The young female drug offenders also had maladaptive coping mechanisms. 14 of them revealed a history of self-harm behaviours and suicidal ideations.

T, 20-year-old 'ice' abuser:

T described her childhood as difficult. She was frequently… called "prostitute" by her father for minor misdemeanours when she was 9 years old till 16 years old… causing her to feel angry, hurt and depressed. She reported a history of self-harming… which resulted in her first arrest by the police. She was admitted to the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) for a few days. There were visible cut marks on her left hand.

Substance abuse was also a way for many of these young women to cope.

JH, 19-year-old 'ice' abuser:

She would consume Erimin-5 tablets [a prescription drug used to treat insomnia and depression once popular with drug users because it was cheap] whenever she quarrelled with her ex-boyfriends so she could sleep through her troubles. When she felt distressed over her ex-boyfriend cheating on her, she told her friend that she wanted to try smoking 'ice'.

(v) Body Image Issues

Several of the young women said they used illicit substances as a way of coping with body image issues:

C, 17-year-old multiple drug abuser:

C reported that she started smoking 'ice' when she was working in a pub in 2012. She had been having problems losing weight. Hence, her pub manager had introduced her to 'ice' as a solution. Despite her pregnancy, C reported that she would smoke 'ice' daily. She had no regrets for her decision to use 'ice' as it helped her to slim down."

V, 19-year-old 'ice' abuser:

According to V, she had been having problems losing weight (i.e. 70kg). Hence, when she did a search on the internet, it appeared that smoking 'ice' was one of the options. She then approached her drug acquaintances whom she knew smoked and sold 'ice'. She eventually bought and learned how to smoke from them. She started smoking 'ice' in early 2012… she said that in June 2013, she relapsed by taking 'ice' when she perceived that she looked fat (i.e. 55kg) after her delivery.

Female Youth Drug Offenders who used Cannabis

An unexpected finding of this study was that young female drug offenders who used cannabis did not appear to share the same risk factors as those who used 'ice' or multiple drugs. Their reports were not consistent with gender-responsive theories – they did not reveal childhood victimisation, dysfunctional intimate relationships, marginalisation, maladaptive coping or body image issues. Instead, their cannabis use appeared primarily to be a result of their liberal attitudes towards cannabis. This was illustrated in the report of one young female offender who used cannabis:

R^2, 20-year-old cannabis abuser:

It seemed that R^2 had learnt about cannabis from the Internet and only knew about the good effects of the drug. Despite knowing that cannabis use could lead to an arrest, she allowed herself to try the drug out of curiosity and for fun.

Discussion

Five themes surfaced in this study: (i) childhood victimisation, (ii) dysfunctional intimate relationships, (iii) marginalisation, (iv) maladaptive coping, and (v) body image issues. To integrate existing theories and research with our findings, we theorized the relationship between the themes and substance abuse to be as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Relationships between Themes and Drug Abuse
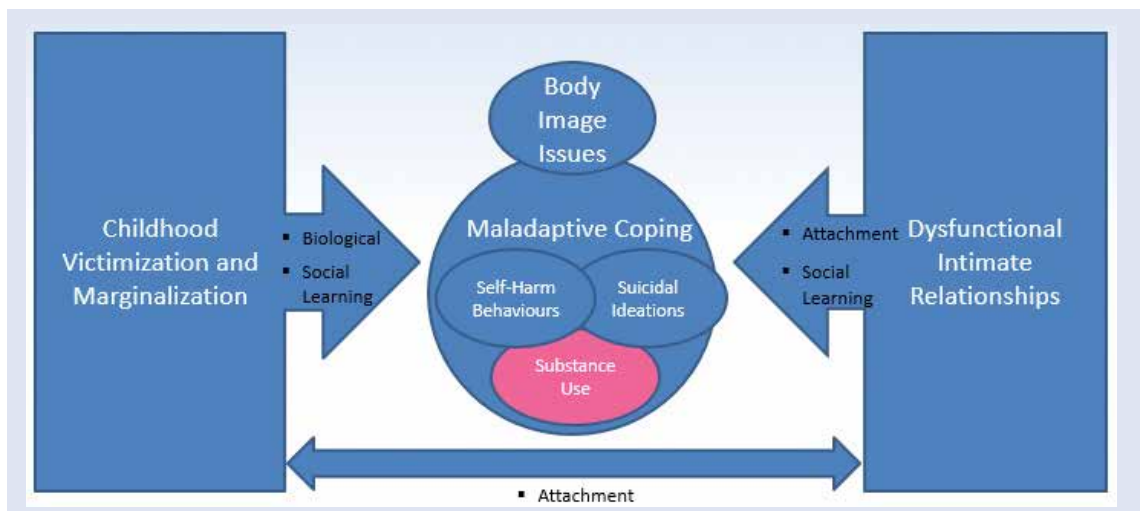
Substance Abuse due to Childhood Victimisation and Marginalisation

A recurrent theme that surfaced in the study is that the personal histories of the female youth drug offenders were fraught with childhood victimisation and marginalisation. This is consistent with what has been previously established in multiple studies: Feminist scholars have often highlighted that justice-involved females are more likely to have experienced victimisation during childhood and adolescence compared to their male counterparts, and that female offenders' extreme poverty and economic marginalisation occur in more frequent numbers than males (e.g. Holtfreter et al., 2004). These experiences can contribute to difficulties throughout their lives which are manifested in various ways – mental health difficulties, substance use and aggression – and increase their risk by acting as precursors to the other factors that precipitate their involvement in criminal behaviour (Hollin & Palmer, 2006). For instance, Benda (2005) has demonstrated that such forms of victimisation and marginalisation have a stronger relationship to women's future criminal behaviours compared with men. This is reflective of Salisbury & Van Voorhis' (2009) childhood victimisation path model that highlights the contribution of such experiences to offending through its psychological and behavioural effects.

The relationship between childhood victimisation and marginalisation, and substance abuse can be understood in these ways:

(i) Biological: Impaired Response and Regulation Due to Trauma on the Brain

Research has consistently shown the impact of early complex trauma on the structural and functional development of the brain (e.g. Ford, 2009), particularly in regions related to stress response and affect regulation (Schore, 2002). Such experiences in the young female drug offenders' formative years can impair the development of their brains, and when faced with chronic and prolonged

stressors in their adolescence, lead to internalised mood disorders. Illicit substance use then becomes another arsenal in their maladaptive coping mechanism to self-soothe and self-medicate. This is consistent with research by several academics (e.g. Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Anumba, DeMatteo & Heilbrun, 2012) supporting the mediation model: A history of trauma and abuse increases one's vulnerability to stress and mental health difficulties, which in turn predicts criminal involvement.

(ii) Normalisation through Family Members and Peers

Another potential mechanism by which childhood victimisation and marginalisation can lead to illicit substance use is that of social learning (Bandura, 1963). One of the key tenets of the theory is that of reciprocal determinism which posits that behaviour both influences and is influenced by cognition and environment. In the context of this study, the young female drug offenders' substance abuse could be a result of the continued interplay between their cognitions and environments. The young women were initiated into drug use through their environment: their social circles comprised drug-using family members and/or peers, who eventually provided them with access to illicit substances. This is congruent with multiple studies that have demonstrated the impact of family members, peers and social contexts on adolescent substance use (Velleman, Templeton & Copello, 2005). Chuang, Ennett, Bauman & Foshee (2009) have also highlighted that the presence of substance-using family members can lead to opportunities for access to substances.

The drug-using milieu that the young female drug offenders in this study were routinely exposed to contributed to the development and normalisation of cognitions supportive of drug use, that is, deviant individuals or groups and their social behaviours became included in multiple aspects of the typical conventional life (Nirje, 1980). For these young women, the 'deviant' behaviour of substance abuse became the norm. This is in line with the study by

Griffin & Botvin (2010) which demonstrated the role that social learning processes in the context of family plays in modelling the behaviours and attitudes regarding substance use.

Substance Abuse due to Dysfunctional Intimate Relationships

The young female drug offenders in this study were mostly engaged in dysfunctional intimate relationships characterised by abuse and negative emotions. It is hypothesized that their repeated involvement in such relationships despite awareness of the dysfunctionality could be due to the following reasons:

(i) Attachment Security Due to Childhood Victimisation and Marginalisation

The young women were entrenched in dysfunctional intimate relationships: Even after getting out of a destructive relationship, they would start another one. Courtois (2004) and Howe (2011) have highlighted the effects of trauma on attachment security, where trauma increases the likelihood of insecure attachment. These may potentially play a contributory role in keeping the young female drug offenders entrenched in their cycle of dysfunctional relationships.

(ii) Normalisation of Dysfunctional Relationships

Female offenders tend to be of lower socio-economic status, have lower educational attainment, fewer vocational skills and experience instability in employment (Flower, 2010). This was the condition of the young female drug offenders in our study who were predominantly of lower socio-economic status and had low educational attainment; most of them resided in rental flats and their education stopped at primary school. This kept them trapped within their cycle of poor and often criminal relationships as it limited their ability and opportunities to expand their social network and build social capital to get out of the vicious cycle. While gender-neutral theorists have pointed out

that low educational attainment and difficulties with finances and employment are risk factors that apply to both males and females, it should be noted that these are exacerbated by "gendered constructs including a lack of support in their romantic and familial relationships as well as their diminished self-efficacy" (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009, 20).

The exposure of violence and victimisation has also socialised young female drug offenders to accept a misrepresentation of gender roles. Hence, the concept of male privilege to exert power and control in the form of abusive behaviours by their partners was normalised and accepted, contributing to the repetitive cycle of being in an abusive relationship. Coupled with their defining their self-identities and self-worth by the relationships with their significant others (Miller, 1976), this could have led to the young women seeking connections with partners even through means that could be destructive or criminogenic. This was observed in most of the narratives in this study, where substance abuse with their partners became a means for them to maintain or enhance their relationships.

The findings from this study show that the complexity of females' substance abuse has factors beyond those of Andrews and Bonta's central eight domains of general offending. Instead, the study provides further support for the gender-responsive theorists who maintain that women's unique life experiences create pathways to offending that may not be typically observed with men. In particular, some of the themes surfaced in this study mirror the gendered pathways previously established in Salisbury & Van Voorhis' (2009) study: the young female drug offenders' victimisation mirror the childhood victimisation path model; their dysfunctional relationships, the relational path model; and their marginalisation, the social and human capital model.

Implications

This study has provided CNB with insights into the various female-specific risk factors present in

our female youth drug offenders. These should be taken into consideration during the development of drug prevention and intervention programmes, which have been predominantly gender-neutral.

Drug Prevention Programmes

CNB has several key preventive drug education initiatives, including:

(i) anti-drug talks conducted in schools to empower youths with knowledge of effects and consequences of drug use, and

(ii) the Drug Buster Academy, a mobile outreach platform that utilizes innovative technology such as augmented reality and facial scanning digital interactive display and touch screen feature for the exhibits, designed to be an entertaining learning experience on the dangers and consequences of drug and inhalant use.

However, these programmes do not take into consideration the various nuances in gender socialisation that affect development and behaviours. With this study showing the risks that dysfunctional intimate relationships, childhood victimisation, marginalisation, maladaptive coping and body image issues can present to young female drug offenders, CNB should consider complementing its preventive education efforts with the development of a female-specific drug prevention programme targeting gender-specific risks. For instance, for the universal educational programmes that target all females, CNB can include psychoeducation on functional relationships and healthy body image. For selected programmes that target at-risk females, CNB can incorporate trauma-informed elements

such as psychoeducation on the symptoms of trauma and enhancing emotional regulation skills to aid them in coping with these symptoms.

Drug Intervention Programmes

First-time young drug offenders are emplaced on differentiated programmes matching their level of risks (see Table 1).

In the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) for women, the Singapore Prisons Service runs a gender-responsive substance abuse programme titled "4C: Catch It! Check It! Change It! Cast It!" Launched in 2017, the programme addresses female-specific risk factors through dedicated topics on their unique risks. For instance, to address their entrenchment in dysfunctional relationships, the programme includes dedicated modules on boundaries and healthy relationships – in the course of the programme, group participants assess their relationships and set goals to either repair or disconnect from these relationships. Additionally, the programme engages in frequent emotional regulation practices to equip them with skills to cope with symptoms that might have arisen from their histories of victimisation. However, the Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES) programme, which most of the teenage female drug offenders are emplaced on, has yet to include elements of gender-responsivity. This is a service gap that should be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of the YES programme.

Another implication of this study on drug intervention programmes is the absence of service for moderate-risk females. While the number of teenage female drug offenders pales in comparison to their male counterparts – CPU's review in 2017

Table 1. Summary of Programme Placements

Gender \ Risk Level	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
Male	Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES)	Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC)	Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC)
Female	Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES)		Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC)

revealed that for every 100 teenage drug offenders, 73 were male and 27 were female – young female offenders have been found to be of significantly higher risk. This could be due to their complex and unique risks affecting other domains in their lives. Yet, these females are often emplaced on the lower-tiered YES programme due to a lack of service for them. Hence, it is recommended that a programme for moderate-risk females be developed so that their risks and needs are adequately addressed.

Conclusion

This study adds to the developing literature on female offenders by extending it to female youths in the Singapore context. While it is an exploratory research into the risk factors leading to substance abuse among young Singapore women, it has demonstrated the universality of the female experience in their gendered pathway to substance abuse: teenage female drug offenders in Singapore also have histories of victimisation and marginalisation, mental health difficulties, relationship dysfunction, and low human and social capital, and these initiated and perpetuated their substance abuse. It is recommended that the findings from this study be used to inform the development of preventive and intervention programmes to fully address the risks and needs of young women involved in drugs.

About the Authors

Yong Kaiqi joined the Central Narcotics Bureau as a psychologist in 2018. She focuses on operations psychology-related matters such as overseeing the drug risk assessments and operational assessments for youths and adults respectively. Her current research interests include developing a uniquely Singaporean screening and assessment tool for youths and understanding gender-specific risks. Before joining CNB, she was a correctional rehabilitation specialist in the Singapore Prison Service, primarily delivering cognitive behavioural therapy-based programmes to high-risk adult drug offenders.

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Seah Wang Ling is currently a psychologist with the Central Narcotics Bureau where she oversees staff selection, training and development, including selection for officers for specialised units. She has also been involved in several research projects on drugs, including the Behavioural Analysis of New and Young Drug Offenders (2015) and Curiosity Towards Drugs of Youth in Singapore (2016). Most recently, she presented her research on organisational support and help-seeking at the Asian Conference of Crime and Operational Psychology, and another study on youths' attitudes towards drug users at the Conversations on Youth symposium in 2019.

Salina Samion joined the Ministry of Home Affairs as a psychologist with the Singapore Prison Service in 2003, where she was instrumental in the development of mental resilience services and evidence-informed offender rehabilitation programmes. She is currently a Principal Psychologist overseeing the Psychological Unit of the Central Narcotics Bureau. Prior to joining MHA, Salina worked in the community serving low-income families and the protection of vulnerable children. She also has a deep passion for training and development; as an adjunct faculty member with UniSIM, she developed and delivered counselling courses at undergraduate and graduate levels. Salina's current focus is on issues related to drug abuse prevention and intervention, particularly amongst youths. She is also interested in research areas pertaining to the cultural nuances of offending and intervention and is currently pursuing a Doctoral Degree in this area.

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Young Women in the Singapore Prison System:
A Preliminary Study of Risk and Needs of Female Youth Offenders

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ABSTRACT

While there have been a growing number of gender-responsive research on female offenders in recent years, the majority of studies were conducted on adults and not youths. The limited literature and understanding of the risk factors and pathways into crime for female youth offenders in turn impact the development of effective risk assessment tools and interventions. In Singapore, gender-responsive studies on the factors contributing to female youth offending are in the nascent stage. This exploratory study establishes the profile of female youth offenders in Singapore by identifying both generic offender factors and factors specific to female youth offenders. Through a qualitative analysis of 50 risk assessment reports of female youth offenders aged between 16 and 22 years old when admitted to the Reformative Training Centre (RTC), the risk of recidivism and the criminogenic needs that contribute to criminal behaviour of young female offenders are surfaced and classified into three main categories, namely, interpersonal, intrapersonal and situational factors. Significant risk-needs include family dynamics and abusive histories. Findings from this study will provide directions for future research and recommendations for developing more targeted interventions for female youth offenders.

Introduction

In the past decade, there has been growing advocacy of the importance of addressing gender-responsive needs of female offenders (Blanchette & Brown, 2006; Van Voorhis, Write, Salisbury, & Bauman, 2010). In Singapore, the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) has moved towards recognising gender-specific needs of the local female offender population and incorporating gender-responsive approaches in its work with female prisoners. Concurrently, local studies have also been conducted to understand the local profiles of female offenders and to identify their gender-responsive needs (Chong et al., 2004; Loh, 2015). While there is growing contribution to the literature on the unique needs of the female offender population in recent years, little research has been done on specific risk and need factors of female youth offenders. This limited understanding of the risk factors and pathways into crime for female youth offenders in turn impact the development of effective risk assessment tools and interventions (Andrews & Bonta, 2004; Ney, Ramirez, & Van Dieten, 2012). The authors thus

embarked on a study to explore the risk and needs of the local female youth offender population.

Female and Youth-specific Literature Review

To understand the needs of female youth offenders, understanding the needs that surface during their developmental period is important. A youth is a person in a state of transition (Douglas, 1966). During adolescence, the physical growth of brain regions results in shifts in emotional, cognitive and social perspectives and abilities. For female youths, early pubertal development is often characterised with lower self-esteem and increased concern over body image (Williams & Currie, 2000). Adolescence is also a period where youth are forming their unique identity and roles, where an incoherent sense of self and values affect successful identity (Erikson, 1968). Youths become highly concerned about their popularity within their social circles, with acceptance leading to self-confidence. During this state of transition, the choices they make feel consequential to how they are viewed by their peers and adults, inherently affecting their self-view.

The identity formation period is also characterised by moments where youths assess the risks and consequences before making decisions (Giddens, 1991). These moments define and shape their identity and may translate to a pathway of continued deviancy, where fateful moments become empowering experiences. The commitment to a selected identity presents the youth with a next set of options for action. Consequently, youth offending is a combined reflection of biological changes, environmental circumstances, social contexts and personal attitudes that together influence the likelihood of a youth committing crime. One tool that is sensitive to the combined factors affecting youth offending is the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) (Goh, 2012). The gender-neutral tool identifies domains such as criminal history, education, employment, antisocial patterns, peers and family to be predictive of reoffending in youths.

One model that reflects the specific needs of female offenders, though not specific to female youths, is the Women's Risk/Need Assessment (WRNA) model. In addition to the domains found in the YLS/CMI, the WRNA model also places emphasis on the following domains:

1. Relationships and the Relational Sense of Self
2. Abuse and Trauma
3. Mental health and Drug use
4. Anger/Hostility, and
5. Socio-economic marginalisation

The model indicates that these domains help predict risk of re-offending in females.

Since YLS/CMI is already acknowledged to be youth-centric in identifying the risk and needs of reoffending in young people, this paper takes reference from the gender-responsive risk and needs identified in WRNA and uses the model as a basis to contextualise research about female youths.

1. Relationships and the Relational Sense of Self

The gender-responsive 'Pathways' perspective hypothesises that women offending occur in the context of relationships. Evidence suggests that females develop a more relational "sense of self", whereby their identity is defined by the quality of their relationships (Covington & Surrey, 1997; Surrey, 1985). Due to this relational sense of self, it has been found that a female's identity suffers when she disconnects from a relationship, causing her to strive towards maintaining relationships (Miller, 1991).

When offending, females often override their values and beliefs (Ney, Ramirez, & Dieten, 2012), as their relational identities shape the ways in which they approach criminal activities (Gilfus, 1992). This is because females feel a need to alter themselves to fit the relationship available, in an attempt to maintain that relationship (Covington, 1998; Ney et al., 2012). For instance, females often engage in substance abuse or crime after being

asked by their partners to join them, to strengthen their relationship with antisocial partners (Ney et al., 2012). This is also evident in the local context, where females offend as a means to boost their intimate relationships (Chong et al., 2004; Loh, 2015). The healthy formation of the relational sense of self becomes even more significant for female youths as the developmental stage of youth is a crucial period for them to set the foundation for healthy, stable relations (Stöckl, March, Pallitto, & Garcia-Moreno, 2014).

2. Abuse and Trauma

Abuse and victimisation histories have been found to be important predictors for female offending (Finkelhor, Turner, Hamby, & Ormrod, 2011). An abusive relationship not only manifests into poor self-worth and self-esteem, it also increases the likelihood of negative health consequences such as depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (DeJonghe, Bogat, Levendosky, & von Eye, 2008). The negative effect resulting from trauma can lead females to turn to substance abuse as a means of self-medication to cope with the psychological and emotional distress of victimisation; or to "numb" themselves from the negative emotions (Blume & Zilberman; Chasser, 2016; Macy, Renz, & Pelino, 2013). This difficulty in emotional regulation is also prevalent in female youths when abusive environments lead female youths to use substances to cope with the negative effect of the trauma (Bloom & Covington, 2008; Chasser, 2016).

Additionally, childhood victimisation amongst female youths has also been found to play an important role in youth delinquency (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004). Female youths abused at a young age run away from home to escape the abuse and end up spending more time on the streets. They then turn to deviant means including theft, drug involvement, sex trading and association with deviant peers, to survive on the streets (Chen, Tyler, Whitbeck, & Hoyt, 2004).

3. Mental Health and Drug Use

Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety have been associated with negative life events such as abuse and victimisation (Covington, 2003). Females have been found to resort to self-medication and substance abuse behaviours to cope with their emotional distress, depression, anxiety, and PTSD resulting from traumatic experiences (Cobbina, 2009; DeJonghe et al., 2008; Peugh & Belenko, 1999). This association is likewise observed in youths where stressful life events have been associated with negative mental health such as depression as stress disrupts the adaptive processing of emotions (Bloom & Covington, 2008; McLaughlin & Hatzenbuehler, 2009). To cope with the negative emotions, female youths turn to substance abuse as a self-medicating strategy (Bloom & Covington, 2008; Blume & Zilberman, 2004; Chasser, 2016). A local study also has similar findings where female offenders turn to substance use to cope with their negative emotions and to obtain relief from stressful life situations (Loh, 2015).

4. Anger and Hostility

Anger and hostility have been associated with female offending. This association may be described through the "harm-and-harming woman" theory, where females who were abused as a child respond with anger and violence (Daly, 1992), as a way to regain power and control lost through episodes of abuse (Morton & Leslie, 2005). This association also seems to be present for female youths. Although common coping mechanisms like self-harm provide a sense of control, female youth offenders have reported the need to regain the power and control they lost by acting aggressively and manipulating the system or people after traumatic events and episodes of victimisation (Morton & Leslie, 2005).

Anger and hostility in female youths is also attributed to the normalisation of violence, either

from witnessing violence against others or from experiencing it themselves. Essentially, with time, it becomes ingrained in female youths to act out violently in response to anger, as that is a routine behaviour they observe while growing up (Le, 2012).

Additionally, female youths experience anger more frequently than male youths (Mirowsky & Ross, 1995) when faced with stressors and relational conflicts (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Dey, Rahman, Bairagi, & Roy, 2014). This leads them to respond with aggression to communicate their frustrations and to deal with stressors (Carrington, 2013; Crick, 1995; Dey et al., 2014). This may be due to the normalisation of violence they observe in their daily life.

5. Socio-economic Marginalisation

Socio-economic marginalisation often includes several risk and need factors, namely, joblessness, unstable housing, unsafe residential area, and poverty (Zaplin, 2008). Females who experience socio-economic marginalisation are often involved in the criminal justice system (Bloom & Covington, 1998), as it often leads them to be under or unemployed due to being lowly-skilled or undereducated. Such profiles of marginalisation are also associated with youth delinquency. Low education and skills exclude many female youths from legitimate and prosocial employment opportunities, prompting them towards economically driven crimes to survive (Bloom & Covington, 1998; Bloom, Owen, & Covington,

2003; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Smith & McAra, 2004; Vitorino, 2012).

Not only is low education and unemployment linked to female youth offending, they are also linked to the persistence of offending into adulthood. This is because low education and unemployment in youth can affect future employment opportunities (Youth Justice Board, 2009).

Aim of Study

With the literature appearing to posit that the gender-responsive risk and needs of female offenders are also applicable to female youth offenders in general, the authors embarked on a study to explore the risk and needs of female youth offenders in Singapore.

Methodology

Participants

In Singapore, youth offenders sentenced to the Reformative Training Centre (RTC) undergo a comprehensive regime that is designed to help them reintegrate into society. This includes programmes that target their relationships with their families, as well as education and vocational opportunities (Ang, 2018). For this study, the sample population was 50 female Reformative Trainees (RTs), aged 16 to 22 years old when admitted to RTC from 2013-2017. The breakdown of the offences committed by the participants is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Types of Offences Committed by Female Youth Participants
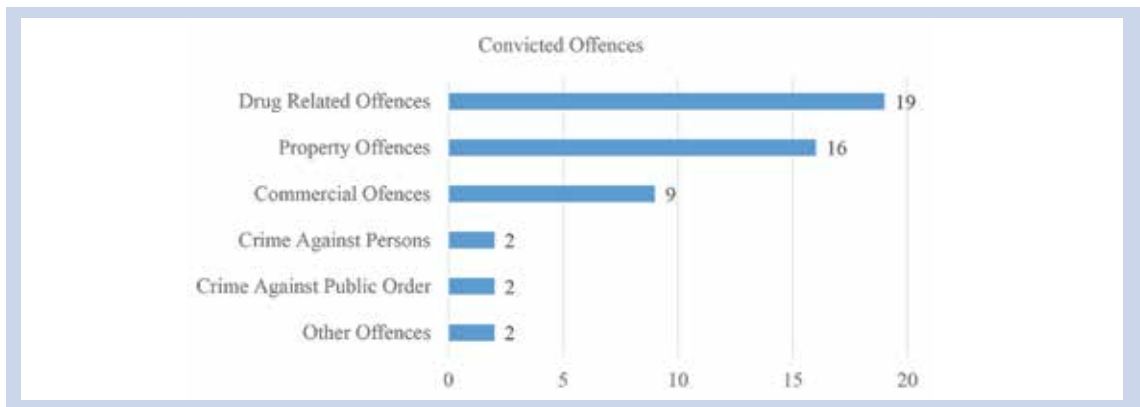
Materials

The participants' profiles were retrieved from the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) for offenders aged 19 and above, and the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) for offenders below 19 years of age. Both are gender-neutral risk-needs assessment tools administered for offenders within the Singapore Prison Service. Since the LS-YLS/CMI reports are actuarial assessment tools which provide information on seven domains – education, employment, leisure, family, peers, substance use, and procriminal attitudes – we decided to extract the participants' profiles from them. The sample of 50 was drawn from 32 LS/CMI and 18 YLS/CMI reports.

Additional information was also extracted from the participants' pre-release reports. These reports help inform aftercare partners on the assessment, progress, and needs of the RTs for their reintegration. Information from the LS-YLS/CMI was corroborated with the pre-release reports. In addition to the domains identified in the LS-YLS/CMI, the pre-release reports also capture participants' accounts of anger, trauma and abuse.

Demographic data such as age, type of offences committed and institutional offences committed were obtained from the Prison Operations and Rehabilitation Systems II (PORTS II). Information on violent or aggressive institutional infractions from PORTS II, together with participants' self-reporting, provided the basis for comparison to identify anger and hostility amongst the participants.

Procedure

The data from the reports was tabulated to provide a brief profile consisting of demographical and descriptive information of the female RTs.

Results

The results of the various risk and needs factors were then categorised according to three main categories: Interpersonal factors, Intrapersonal factors, and Situational factors.

Interpersonal Factors

Interpersonal factors look at the relationships surrounding the participants, viz., family, mothering and childcare, peers, intimate relationships and abuse.

Family Factors

34% of participants in the study reported at least one family member with criminal antecedents.

The marital status of their parents was also categorised to understand their family stability. 76% of the participants had changes to their original family structure (i.e. parents currently married), such as parents being divorced, widowed or remarried. Figure 2 shows the marital status of the parents of participants.

Figure 2. Marital Status of Participants' Parents
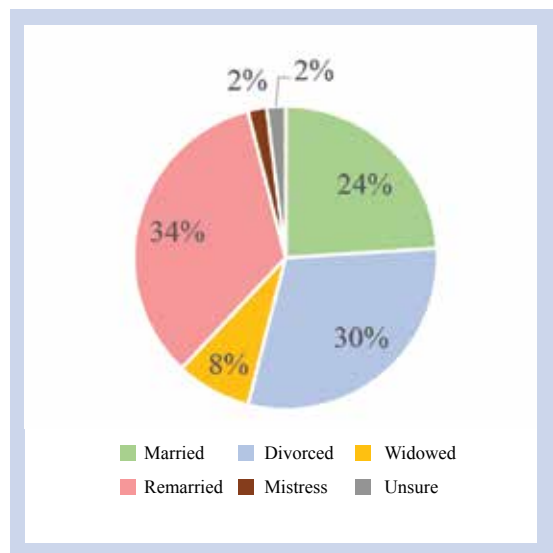
The study also categorised the parenting styles of the participants' caretakers into four types:

a. Uninvolved parenting – where the parent is neglectful, indifferent to participants, or low in responsiveness.
b. Permissive parenting – where the parent is lenient, makes few rules and is indulgent towards participants' behaviours.
c. Authoritative parenting – where the parent sets clear rules, is highly responsive, demanding and sets high expectations.
d. Authoritarian parenting – where the parent is low in responsiveness, sets strict rules and has high expectations, and expects obedience from the participants.

Participants whose parental figures had died and they did not have a caretaker were termed as N/A for this domain.

The participants reported uninvolved parenting to be the most common parenting style amongst their caretakers, followed by permissive parenting styles. 58% of participants' fathers and 38% of participants' mothers were reported to be uninvolved in their parenting. Additionally, 13% of their fathers and 26% of their mothers were found to be permissive in their parenting (Figures 3 and 4).

Mothering and Childcare

About a third of the participants were themselves parents, with 34% mothers currently with children. There were also participants who previously experienced abortion or miscarriage.

Peers

The majority (68%) of the participants had only criminal or antisocial peers, and 22% reported they had both prosocial and criminal/antisocial peers (Figure 5). For the purpose of this study, criminal/antisocial peers are defined as peers who previously engaged in criminal activities or were co-accused with the participants. They also include peers who had supportive attitudes towards crime. Prosocial peers are defined as peers not engaged in any criminal activity and supportive of a positive lifestyle.

Intimate Relationships

As for the type of intimate partners that the participants had, more than half reported that they had criminal or antisocial partners, and only 10% had prosocial partners (Figure 6).
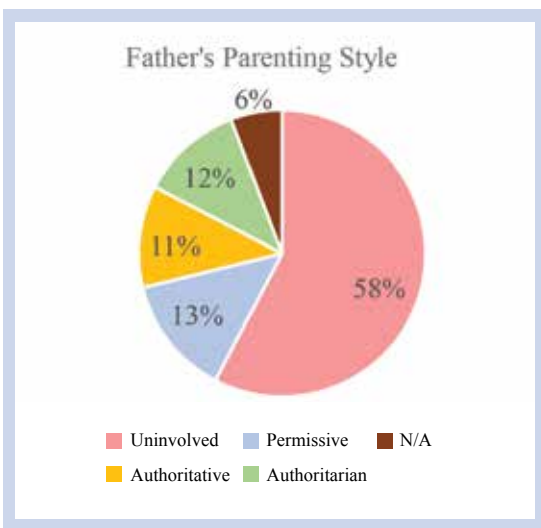
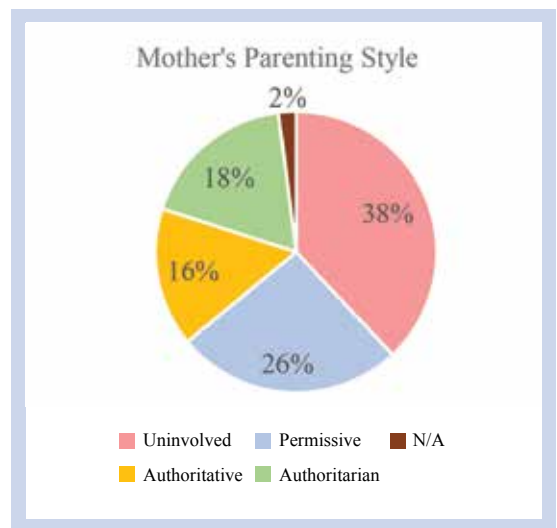**Figure 3. Father's Parenting Style**

Figure 4. Mother's Parenting Style

Figure 5. Presence of Prosocial or Criminal/ Antisocial Peers
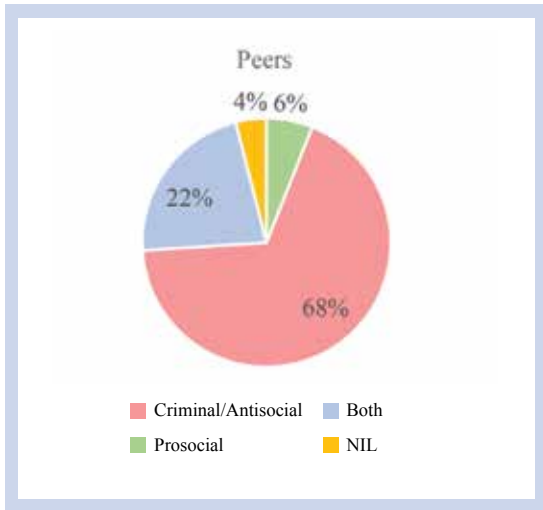
Figure 6. Presence of Criminal or Prosocial Intimate Partners
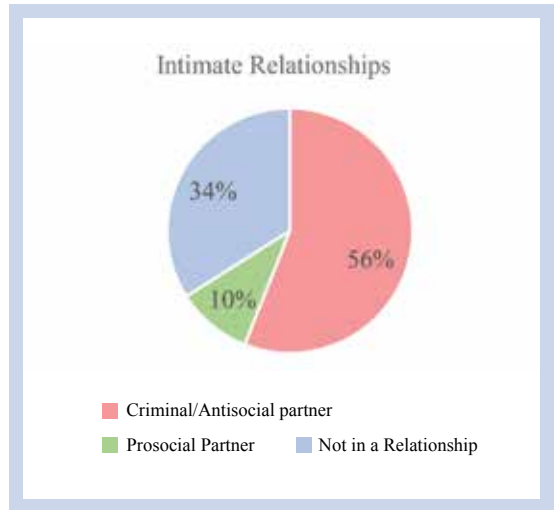
Abuse

42% of participants had previous experiences of abuse, with the most common form of abuse being physical violence, followed by sexual abuse (Figure 7). 86% of those abused had been victimised by family members or intimate partners. Almost half of those abused also reported experiencing more than one form of abuse.

Intrapersonal Factors

Intrapersonal factors are those that exist within the individual themselves, viz., drug use, mental health and self-harm, anger and aggression, and attitudes towards offences.

Drug Use

54% of participants had previously consumed drugs, with methamphetamine being the most reported drug consumed.

Figure 7. Types of Abuse

Figure 8. Attitudes Displayed towards Offences Committed

Mental Health and Self-harm

22% of participants reported having mental health needs, with depression and trauma being more significant amongst them. Additionally, 24% of participants also reported engaging in self-harm behaviours, attempting suicide or both.
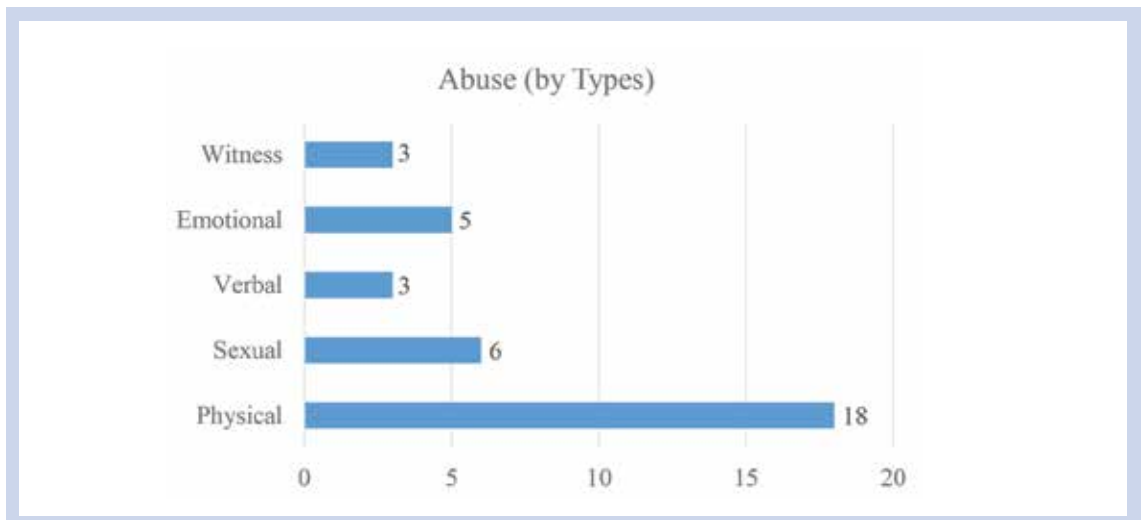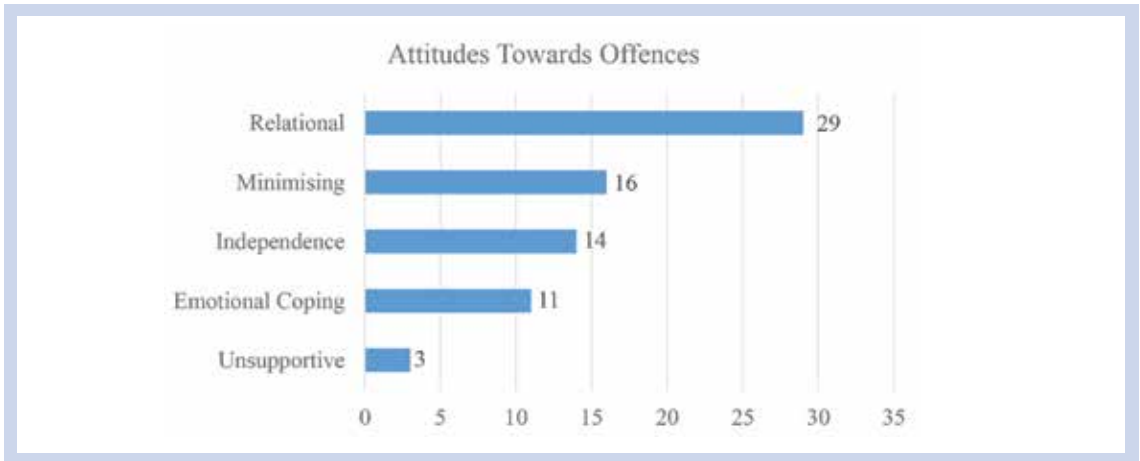
Anger/Hostility and Aggression

Anger and hostility was defined through participants' self-reporting of their own aggressive behaviours, together with the institutional offences committed. The study found 52% of participants to be or had been aggressive, with 15 being physically aggressive, three being verbally aggressive and eight being both physically and verbally aggressive. The study explored the applicability of the "harm-and-harming" woman theory and assessed if abuse was present for the participants. Of those who displayed aggressive behaviours, 65% were previously abused.

Attitudes towards Offences

Relational factors were cited by more than half of the participants as reasons for their involvement in crime (Figure 8). Examples of narratives that surfaced and were categorised by the authors as relational reasons included: "It was to gain the approval of others as I value their opinions", "I accompanied my boyfriend as I valued the relationship", "It was to help my family member".

Situational Factors

Situational factors refer to external influences such as the environment affecting an individual, viz., education Level, problems in school, employment, and type of activities during leisure time.

Education Level

The majority of participants had low levels of education; more than half reported the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) that is usually taken by 12 year old students after six years of elementary schooling as their highest qualification (Figure 9).

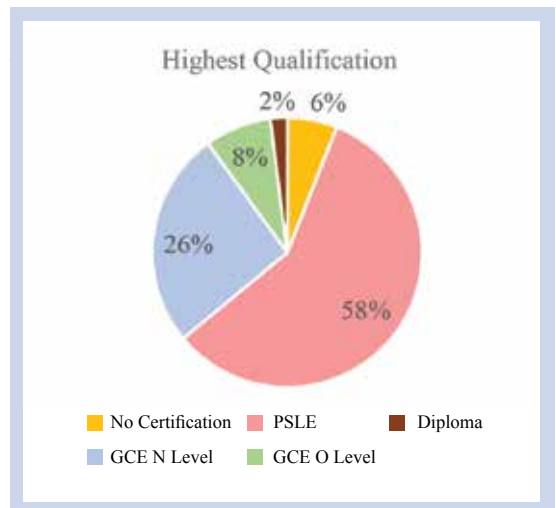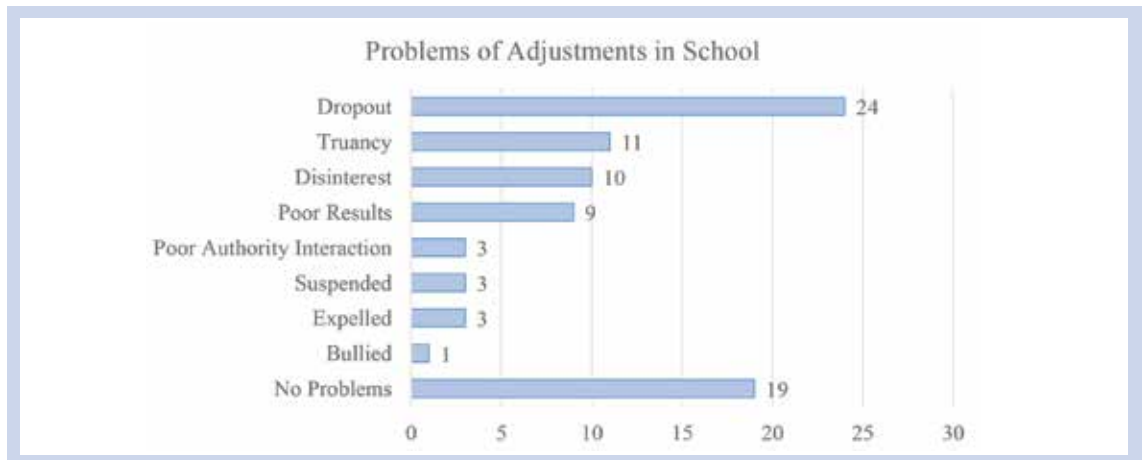**Figure 9. Highest Academic Qualification Attained**

Figure 10. Problems of Adjustment Experienced in School

Problems in School

Almost half of the participants had dropped out of school. Many reported other adjustment problems and delinquent behaviour in school, with the most problematic being truancy, a disinterest in studies, as well as poor academic results (Figure 10).

Employment

38% of participants reported having legal and regular jobs prior to incarceration, while 22% were involved in short job stints, going from one job to another within the past six months before incarceration (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Employment History

Type of Activities during Leisure Time

82% of participants were found to be idling or engaging in unconstructive activities such as clubbing, gambling or consuming drugs during their leisure time.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the risk-needs of female youth offenders in the Singapore context, and how the gender-responsive needs defined in WRNA relate to them. The results are thus discussed in terms of their consistency with these gender-responsive needs – relationships and the relational sense of self, abuse, anger and hostility. Some domains from YLS/CMI that were found to be important for the participants (i.e. family, peers, and lack of attachment to prosocial institutions) are also discussed.

Relationships and the Relational Sense of Self

Participants in the study reported having criminal partners and cited relational reasons for committing crimes. These suggest that the relational sense of self may also be applicable for female youth offenders in the local context. The need to gain approval and to maintain relationships with their intimate partners cited in this study is similar to the findings cited in overseas studies, where females commit crimes to strengthen relationships with antisocial partners (Ney et al., 2012). Studies

have shown that having a delinquent romantic partner influences youth likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviours (Zahn et al., 2010) as a way to gain attention or to strengthen their intimate relationships (Barry, 2013; Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rossol, 2002; Ney et al., 2012).

Abuse and Victimisation

Almost half of participants had a history of abuse, of which 86% experienced abuse from their family members and intimate partners. Abuse and victimisation during childhood often affect the physical and psychological well-being and influence youth offending and also offending during adulthood (Bowles, DeHart, & Webb, 2012), as they find maladaptive ways to cope with the effects of abuse, such as substance abuse (Bloom & Covington, 1998; Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2005; Chasser, 2016).

Anger and Hostility

About half of the participants reported engaging in aggressive behaviours, either by their own self-reporting or through the institutional offences committed while incarcerated. The methodology used in this study did not allow the authors to determine the reasons for the aggressive behaviours of the participants. However, the literature suggests that female youths who perpetuate violence are likely to have had violence committed against them (Herrera & McCloskey, 2001; Margolin & Gordis, 2000). This is consistent with the "harm-and-harming woman" theory (Daly, 1992), where violence is a way to regain power and control lost through episodes of abuse (Morton & Leslie, 2005).

Mental Health

Mental health needs such as depression, trauma and self-harm behaviours were present in about one-fifth of the participants in our sample. Studies indicate that mental health issues and self-harm behaviours are a result of prior victimisation and abuse (DeJonghe et al., 2008). Although the study

was unable to identify the correlation between mental health and abuse, addressing these issues is important as mental health issues may re-surface or escalate during incarceration (Bloom et al., 2005; Douglas, Plungge, & Fitzpatrick, 2009).

Family

Parenting Styles

Family factors figured quite predominantly for the participants in this study. The majority came from divorced or reconstituted families. This is indicated as a risk because when there are changes to the family structure, there is a shift in the parenting styles of the parents (Zahn et al., 2010). For example, single parents are less effective in supervising their children, due to the struggle to both provide for their family and supervise the children, leading them to be less involved in supervision, or permissive about their childrens' behaviours (Wright & Wright, 1993). This is supported by studies that found that parenting styles have a larger impact on youth offending compared to family structures (Piang, Osman, & Mahadir, 2017; Zahn et al., 2010).

The majority of the participants reported uninvolved and permissive parenting styles from their caregivers. When experiencing uninvolved parenting, youths tend to develop low levels of self-control and lack moral development (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Johnson, 2016). This is a result of parents' failure to monitor their behaviour, to recognise deviant behaviours when they occur and reform those behaviours (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Studies have found poor parental supervision to be a risk factor for youth delinquency or crime. In contrast, as explained by Derzon (2005), loving and supportive homes promote the resilience of youths and become barriers to the onset of deviant behaviours, indicating the importance of parenting styles in youth delinquency (as cited in Petrosino, Derzon, & Lavenberg, 2009).

Secondly, permissive parenting – whereby children are free to engage in whatever they want as and when they want – can also cause a sense of

entitlement, along with a lack of self-control, and a tendency to seek immediate gratification (Johnson, 2016; Phythian, Keane, & Krull, 2008). The lack of self-control means that the youth is more likely to succumb to temptation in order to attain immediate gratification from crime, should opportunities arise (Phythian et al., 2008). Such lack of parental controls may also contribute to youths' involvement in deviant peer groups and delinquency as they are most likely not to be held accountable for their actions (Johnson, 2016; Phythian et al., 2008).

Familial Criminality

One-third of the participants had family members with criminal antecedents. Studies have found that family criminality influences youths' criminality as younger members may want to imitate the behaviours of older antisocial family members (Farrington, 2010). Additionally, older family members have also been found to encourage delinquency behaviours as the family members themselves lead crime-filled lives (Farrington, 2010; Zahn et al., 2010).

Mothering and Childcare

Although mothering and childcare needs of the participants are not considered to be risk factors, they signal parenting needs of the youths. One third of the participants reported being mothers, and that their caregiving duties were disrupted due to their incarceration. Studies have found that incarcerated mothers face more distress than incarcerated fathers as mothers tend to be the primary caregivers, and lose confidence in their parenting (Miller et al., 2015). Parenting programmes have been reported to be helpful in improving parents' communication with their children and to improve parenting attitudes (Miller et al., 2015). Currently, there are parenting programmes available in Singapore prisons that the female RTs are eligible for.

Peers

The participants in this study often surrounded themselves with criminal peers as they expanded their social networks and replaced time spent with family with time spent with peers. This is consistent with research where social support from their close friends and extended family is perceived to be stronger than that from their parents (Bokhorst, Sumter, & Westenberg, 2010; Johnson et al., 2011). McCord, Widom, and Crowell (2001) found that peer delinquent behaviours, peer approval of delinquent behaviour, and time spent with antisocial peers are associated with youth delinquency (as cited in Shader, 2003).

Studies have suggested that female youths who hang out with predominantly male peers are at risk of partaking in delinquent behaviours compared to those who interact predominantly with other females (Webb, 2017). However, this study was unable to find evidence of such interactions as the data gathered in the assessment tool was only able to identify the presence of antisocial and prosocial peers, but not their gender.

Lack of Attachment to Prosocial Institutions and Conventions

The participants exhibited a lack of attachment to prosocial conventions, evidenced by their unconstructive use of leisure time, lack of regular employment and poor attendance in school. Female youths with weak attachments to conventional pursuits and institutions are more likely to engage in deviant behaviour as they do not feel a sense of belonging and are less concerned with losing time and the effort invested (Crosnoe, Erickson, & Dornbusch, 2002; Zahn et al., 2010). In contrast, prosocial attachment to schools and friends can act as a protective factor. Female youths who spend more time and feel belonged in schools are less likely to engage in deviant behaviours as they are concerned about losing the time and effort they invested in school (Crosnoe et al., 2002; Zahn et al., 2010).

Presently, in the Singapore prison system, female RTs are able to pursue and further their education beyond primary school level and participate in workplace courses (i.e. Workforce

Skills Qualification) during their incarceration, which provide them with opportunities to build attachment to prosocial conventions. Undertaking education and employment courses also provide better educational and employment prospects when the female RTs return to the community.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. Firstly, data for this study was obtained from secondary sources, limiting the type and depth of information that can be acquired. The information obtained was descriptive and not based on statistical analysis. Since statistical analysis was not conducted, the study was unable to identify if the domains were statistically significant or if there were any correlations between the domains. For example, the methodology only allowed us to capture that the participants had anti-social peers, but the gender of these anti-social peers was not captured. This limited the inference that can be made as to whether gender of anti-social peers plays a role in predicting juvenile delinquency in female youths.

Secondly, gender-responsive domains highlighted in the literature (e.g. housing safety and self-esteem; socio-economic marginalisation) were not

measured in the assessment tool administered. The study aimed to explore the risk and needs of female youth offenders in Singapore, and took reference from WRNA. However, because WRNA was not used in the current study, it was difficult to ascertain whether the factors identified in WRNA were applicable to female youth offenders in Singapore.

Implications and Future Directions

Currently, female RTs undergo educational and employment courses. The data collated in this study suggests that these programmes can act as protective factors through the development of skills and function as social controls to increase their constructive use of time. It is postulated that future directions in programming and research can further influence female RTs.

Programme and Research Implications

The study identified areas of risk and needs that can be further addressed through future programmes (Figure 12). These are areas that the women's team in the Singapore Prison Service plans to address. Future research can also be conducted to provide a comprehensive profile of female youth offenders in Singapore.

Figure 12. Programming Needs and Objectives

S/N	Programming Needs	Objectives
1	Relationship with Parents	Involvement where possible of parents in areas of boundary setting and healthy parental relationship with the female youth offender.
2	Parenting/Childcare Needs	Education around sexuality and pregnancy, and skills to support young mothers to break the cycle of ineffective parenting.
3	Trauma Informed Practices	Coping strategies for female youth offenders who have undergone traumatic experiences (e.g. abuse, abortion).
4	Dealing with Abuse	Education around Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and on identifying early warning signs of abuse or coercion.

Conclusion

This preliminary study has shown that female RTs show several risk-needs consistent with the factors identified in the youth and female offending literature. Significant risk-need factors surfaced from the results include family dynamics, pro-criminal peers and abusive histories. Overall, the study demonstrates that programmes targeting female RTs should emphasise the importance of relationships and create open communication.

While there is existing literature on female youth offenders overseas, there is limited or no research conducted on the risk and needs of female youth offenders in Singapore. This study provides a foundation for future research efforts.

About the Authors

Premala D/O Mariappan graduated from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) with a Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology (Honours) degree. She joined the Singapore Prison Service in 2016 as a Research Officer with the Rehabilitation Evaluation Branch. Subsequently, she became a Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist with the Correctional Rehabilitation Services Branch (Women), providing risk-needs assessments and psychology-based criminogenic interventions to both adult and youth female offenders. Her scope of work also involves development of gender-specific criminogenic programmes, research and development of training for other stakeholders working with female offenders.

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4 Needs, 4 Findings, 3 Recommendations:
Gender-Responsive Guidelines for Working with Female Offenders in Singapore

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ABSTRACT

With growing awareness of and increased efforts to incorporate gender-responsive approaches in correctional practices, it is an opportune time to examine the current progress of gender-responsive practices in the Singapore Prison Service. This paper considers the gender-responsive literature on female offending and reviews local research and evidence-based practices. The findings are then integrated to develop the '4-4-3' – 4 needs, 4 findings, 3 recommendations – guidelines for working with female offenders in Singapore.

Background

Over the past decade, feminist scholars and gender-responsive researchers have been advocating the importance of addressing gender-responsive needs of women offenders (Blanchette & Brown, 2006; Rettinger & Andrews, 2010; Van Voorhis, Wright, Salisbury & Bauman, 2010; Wright, Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2007). In Singapore, with women offenders consistently representing about 9% of the prison population in the past few years, the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) has moved towards understanding the gender-responsive needs of local female offenders and incorporating gender-responsive practices in its operations (SPS, 2016a).

At present, gender-responsive staff training and programmes which aim to address gender-responsive issues, such as relational and trauma issues related to offending, are being developed and implemented (SPS, 2017b). This is a significant improvement from female offender programmes run in the past, which were modifications of programmes designed to meet the needs of male offenders. Concurrently, numerous local studies have also been conducted in the last decade to understand the profiles of women offenders in Singapore and to identify their gender-responsive needs (Chong et al., 2004; Lin, Kok & Ng, 2017; Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2013). It is therefore a timely opportunity to examine where research meets practice, in order to assess the current progress of gender-responsive practice in the SPS, to continue developing evidence-based practices

and offer insights regarding future directions. The authors of this article have therefore synthesised local research findings and developed the '4-4-3' guidelines to inform gender-responsive practices in the SPS.

Four Gender-Responsive Needs (G-RNs) We Need to Know

Feminist scholars contend that female offenders have risk/needs factors that differ from male offenders, as evidenced by their unique pathways to criminal behaviour, the offences which they engage in, their low threat of violence, and their unique needs (in comparison to male offenders) relating to substance use, mental health, victimisation and/ or abuse, and relationship issues (Blanchetter, 2004; Blanchetter & Brown, 2006; Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003; Covington, 2000; Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004; Rettinger & Andrews, 2010; Van Voorhis et al., 2010). Based on the literature reviewed and local research findings, four key gender-responsive needs are highlighted when working with female offenders.

G-RN 1: Substance Abuse is Used for Negative Coping

Women offenders have been found to be predominantly incarcerated for drug offences (Pollock, 1998). Drug offences committed by women (i.e., drug consumption) are also less likely to be related to antisocial rationalisations (Covington, 1998; Erez, 1998; Hardyman & Voorhis, 2004; Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1995), but are often responses to other major issues in their lives such as victimisation, eating disorders, sexuality issues, depression, or self-harming behaviours (Canale, 1996; Siegel and Williams, 2003; Wattanaporn & Holtfreter, 2014).

These findings resonate with local research where many female offenders have a history of drug consumption (Chong et al., 2004; Lin et al., 2017; Loh & Kaur, 2016). A 2016 female offender

profiling study found that 79.4% of 1030 female offenders had a history of drug use (Loh & Kaur, 2016). Consistent with overseas literature, local research investigating pathways to female drug offending have highlighted that female offenders in Singapore tend to use drugs to cope with their problems, for thrill seeking and enhancement purposes, for social acceptance, and to bolster their relationships with their intimate partners (Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2013). Similiarly, 76% of male offenders incarcerated also have a history of drug consumption (SPS, 2016a). However, male offenders differ from female offenders in terms of their reasons for taking drugs. Yeo, Kok and Lin's 2017 study of why male offenders with a drug taking history found antisocial peer influence, access to drugs, coping with boredom or stress (e.g. financial problems and unemployment), and pleasure-seeking to be the main reasons. Taken together, these findings suggest that females are more likely to take drugs for relational reasons than males.

G-RN 2: Mental Health Issues are Common among Female Offenders

Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and self-harm are more prevalent among female offenders (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Bloom et al., 2003; Fazel & Baillargeon, 2011; Fazel & Danesh, 2002; Kessler, 1998), and are strong predictors of women's recidivism (Benda, 2005; Blanchette & Motiuk, 1995; Brown & Motiuk, 2005), but not of men's (Benda, 2005). In particular, mental health issues (i.e., depression and psychosis) are significantly related to recidivism (Van Voorhis et al., 2010) and institutional misconduct (Wright, et al., 2007). Internationally and in Singapore, the majority of women offenders have a history of mental health problems and co-morbid issues prior to admission (Ax & Fagan, 2003, Chong et al., 2004; Singer et al., 1995).

A SPS mental health study in 2015 found mental disorders to be more prevalent in women (71.4% out

of 49 women sampled) than in men (21.3% out of 267 men sampled) (Leung, Hussain & Yeo, 2015). Likewise, women are more likely to display suicidal thoughts and self-harming behaviours than men. In addition, anxiety and depression are the two most common mental disorders experienced by female offenders in Singapore (Chong et al., 2004; Leung et al., 2015). Notably, mental disorders have also been found to be associated with aggression, indicating that offenders with psychotic symptoms, both male and female, are more likely to commit institutional misconduct. However, male offenders are found to be more verbally aggressive than females (Leung et al., 2015). These findings corroborate a recent SPS study which found that anger and hostility are predictive of gender-responsive risk/needs of institutional misconduct in female offenders (Lin et al., 2017). These gender-responsive risk/needs (i.e., anger/hostility, depression/anxiety symptoms, psychotic symptoms, child abuse, recent substance abuse, relationship difficulties and family support) are based on the subset of variables for assessing women in prisons that supplements the Women's Risk/Needs Assessment-Trailer tool developed by Van Voorhis and colleagues (2010). As life in prison is stressful and requires adaptation, the prison environment can exacerbate psychosis symptoms, thus resulting in adjustment difficulties and consequently institutional misconduct (Leung et al., 2015).

G-RN 3: Trauma and Victimisation is Common among Female Offenders.

Many incarcerated women have experienced some form of trauma in their childhood. Previous research has suggested that trauma and victimisation are stronger predictors of recidivism for women than for men (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004; McClellan, Farabee & Crouch, 1997; Morton, 2004). Child victimisation among females has been found to play a great role in the development of delinquency (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004), and to increase the likelihood of criminal conduct in adults (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Meanwhile, adult victimisation has been found to play a critical role in women's continuing criminal behaviour (Bloom et al., 2003; Covington, 1998).

There have been similar findings in local research. In a 2004 study of 208 female offenders in Changi Women's Prison, Chong and colleagues found that 49.5% had a history of abuse (including sexual abuse, emotional abuse and physical abuse), with many of them continuing to stay in an abusive adult relationship. These findings were echoed in a 2013 profiling study, whereby 54% of the total participants reported having some form of trauma history (SPS, 2013). Likewise, a local study investigating motives for drug use also found that 48% out of 129 female participants reported having suffered some form of abuse previously (Leung, Goh & Chionh, 2015).

G-RN 4: Dysfunctional Intimate Relationships Facilitate Offending

Correctional researchers have noted that female offenders are relational and tend to engage in unhealthy co-dependent relationships that facilitate their criminal behaviour by enabling the criminal activities of their antisocial partners (Koons, Burrow, Morash, & Bynum, 1997; Robertson & Murachver, 2007). Hence, the women were also more likely to be involved in abusive relationships or to turn to substance abuse to cope with relationship issues (Pollock, 1999; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). In addition, having unsupportive relationships influenced women offenders' likelihood of committing institutional misconduct (Wright et al., 2007).

Among Singapore's female drug offenders, dysfunctional intimate relationships have been identified as an important factor in initiating and maintaining offending behaviour, as well as drug relapse (Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2017a). Female offenders have reported using drugs to promote greater intimacy with their partners and to cope with relationship problems (Chong et al., 2004).

They are also more likely to abuse drugs with their partners and have greater affiliation with drug peers as compared to males (Goh & Leung, 2014). While male offenders with a drug history also cite antisocial influence as a prominent reason for their drug-taking, they are more likely to be influenced by their antisocial friends or antisocial colleagues than by antisocial intimate partners (Yeo et al., 2017). Although both genders identify antisocial peer influence as a significant risk/need for influencing drug use, the type of antisocial relationship is different. These findings thus suggest that criminogenic risk/needs may manifest in different ways for males and females.

Four Key Findings from Local Evidence-Based Practice

In the past decade, the SPS has conducted research to: (1) understand the profile of female offenders (Chong et al., 2004), (2) explore their unique offending pathways (Loh & Kaur, 2016); and (3) identify gender responsive risk/needs in order to better predict institutional misconduct and recidivism for female offenders (Lin et al., 2017; SPS, 2013). At the same time, SPS has been working to incorporate gender-responsive approaches in correctional practice by conducting practice-based research and piloting gender-responsive programmes. Four key findings from both local research and practice are synthesized and presented below.

Finding 1: Female Offenders in Singapore have Similar Gender-responsive Needs as Those Identified in the Literature

Over the past decade, local research practice has consistently indicated that risk/needs factors such as substance abuse, mental health, victimisation and abuse, relationship problems and parenting issues are prominent among women offenders in Singapore (Chong et al., 2004; Lin et al., 2017; Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2017a). These findings are in line with gender-informed literature and have thus established the need to consider gender-responsive needs in correctional practices when dealing with female offenders in Singapore.

Finding 2: Local Female Offenders Tend to Follow Four Pathways to Criminal Offending

Research conducted by the SPS (Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2017a) has shown that female offenders in Singapore tend to follow four pathways to criminal offending:

1. A relational sense of self that sees them prioritising unhealthy relationships or staying in dysfunctional relationships.
2. Having suffered abuse and/or victimisation that affects the way they form relationships and manage emotions.
3. Having a greater incidence of mental health problems that is closely linked to substance abuse.
4. Social and economic disadvantages such as low socio-economic status, low education levels and limited skill sets, adverse life conditions and lack of coping skills.

These four pathways may sometimes even overlap and manifest in complex ways that reinforce criminal offending. Consistent with overseas literature, female offenders in Singapore tend to exhibit patterns of abusing drugs to cope with negative emotions and to bolster dysfunctional intimate relationships due to the lack of adaptive coping skills (Loh & Kaur, 2016; SPS, 2016b). When combined with factors such as low education levels and limited skill sets, as well as negative self-perception and low self-worth, they may be driven to participate in criminal acts in order to feel valued by their loved ones (SPS, 2016b). This finding suggests an urgent need to address the maladaptive coping skills and relationship issues that underlie substance abuse in local female offenders.

While female offenders tend to present risk/needs that are more relational in nature, males, however, tend to present risk/needs identified in the Risk-Need-Responsivity model (Andrews et al., 2004). A 2017 SPS study of high-risk male offenders found that they tend to present with entrenched pro-criminal thinking, frequent association with antisocial peers, low education and income, and substance abuse history (Lin, Ang, & Ng, 2017).

Finding 3: Poor Anger Management and the Lack of Engagement in Constructive Activities are Risk/Needs Factors

Among the local female offenders, two criminogenic needs have been found to be predictive of institutional misconduct and recidivism: (1) problems with anger management and hostility is a significant gender-responsive risk that predicts institutional misconduct, and (2) a lack of engagement in constructive activities is an important gender-neutral need predictive of both institutional misconduct and recidivism (Lin et al., 2017).

In terms of anger and hostility, the association between institutional misconduct and the anger issues of female drug offenders suggests that they may be experiencing adjustment difficulties and cope by expressing their emotions in ways that violate institution rules (Lin et al., 2017). This finding gives support to Leung and colleagues' 2015 study which found that female offenders with suicide ideations and self-harming behaviours are more likely to commit institutional infractions. These findings together emphasise the importance of addressing mental health issues in female offenders in order to better manage them, and to provide appropriate mental health treatment as necessary to reduce risks of institutional misconduct.

Likewise, female offenders who lack engagement in constructive activities are also more likely to reoffend within two years of their release from prison (Lin, et al., 2017). This finding is consistent with mainstream gender-neutral literature that has shown that meaningful occupation of time is an important factor that mitigates the risk of offending (Andrews et al., 2004). Furthermore, a SPS study investigating the reasons for drug relapse and desistence amongst male offenders with drug history has also highlighted engagement in pro-social activities and how an individual spends his free time as important factors that influence drug relapse (Yeo et al., 2017). These findings suggest that local female offenders share the same criminogenic needs as male offenders in this area, and should be taught to spend their time meaningfully or to engage in constructive activities to reduce the risk of reoffending.

Finding 4: Familial Relationships Deter Drug Use in Female Offenders with Children

Profiling studies of female offenders in Singapore have shown that about 60% of female offenders have children, with the majority of them having children under the age of 18 (Chong et al., 2004; Lin et al., 2017). Interestingly, Loh and Kaur (2016) have found that family serves as a temporary protective factor that helps to promote short-term drug abstinence. A similar finding has also been made in the 2017 SPS study exploring why male offenders with drug history desist (Yeo et al., 2017). However, while males tend to cite family support in the form of receiving advice and encouragement as reasons why they do not take drugs (Yeo et al., 2017), many female offenders with children cite their responsibilities (i.e., caregiving duties, breadwinner role), feelings of guilt towards their children, and having family support as reasons for their temporary drug abstinence (Loh & Kaur, 2016). Likewise, as mothers generally serve as role models for their children through their caregiving roles, it is important to take early precautions to deter the occurrence of antisocial modeling and prevent intergenerational offending. As females tend to be relational, these findings indicate the

need to pay more attention to meeting the needs of incarcerated women with young children to deter the risks of both recidivism and intergenerational offending.

Current Gender-Responsive Practices

Over the past decade, SPS has incorporated and implemented gender-responsive practices that attend to females' pathways to offending. The gender-responsive practices include:

1. Developing evidence-based gender-responsive programmes and processes in the female environment which address relationship, trauma, mental health and substance abuse issues, e.g. the 4C program (Catch it, Check it, Change it, Cast it) – a cognitive restructuring programme that aims to reduce the risk of drug relapse in female offenders by providing holistic gender-responsive intervention in relationships, trauma, mental health and drug addiction.
2. Implementing staff training and encouraging collaboration between operations and rehabilitation staff, i.e. the Gender-Responsive Integrated Training – a training programme for staff working with female offenders to enhance their knowledge of gender-responsive issues and confidence in handling gender-responsive issues relating to mental health, abuse and trauma – to equip staff with skills to de-escalate conflict and deal with offenders' negative emotions.
3. Conducting family and parenting programmes that address the relational needs and parenting roles of female offenders.
4. Organising community interventions that support women offenders during incarceration and when they are out in the community to facilitate successful rehabilitation and reintegration, e.g. Free for Good, where successful and inspiring female volunteers from the working world act as mentors to female offenders both during their incarceration and when they are in the community, to provide them with support services and help them reintegrate successfully into the community.

Three Recommendations for Practice

While SPS has made much progress in terms of providing gender-responsive programming for female offenders, the following recommendations are made to augment the current gender-responsive practices in view of overseas and local research findings.

Recommendation 1: Emphasise Leisure/ Recreation as a Gender-neutral Risk Factor

Findings from local research have highlighted the importance of engaging in constructive activities during leisure time for female drug abusers to mitigate the risk of committing institutional offences and reoffending (Lin et al., 2017). Local interventions for female offenders have components that target leisure/recreation as one of the criminogenic needs to be addressed. Nonetheless, it is important to emphasise this domain while working with female offenders, and encourage them to learn skills to structure their time meaningfully while in prison and when they are out in the community.

Recommendation 2: Address Anger and Hostility Issues in Female Offenders

As anger/hostility has surfaced as a significant gender-responsive risk/need, local female offenders need to be better equipped with anger management and impulse control skills. Concurrently, staff should be better informed of issues potentially faced by female offenders (e.g., the presence of any psychotic symptoms, suicide ideations or adjustment issues) and undergo training to deliver effective interventions and learn to better manage and support female offenders during their incarceration.

Recommendation 3: Utilise Both Gender-responsive and Gender-neutral Approaches

While local research and practice has established that the consideration of gender-responsive needs is essential in the local female offender population, it is important to recognize that not every female offender will follow women's pathways into crime. To illustrate, a meta-analysis by Gobeil and colleagues (2016) has revealed that participation in either gender-responsive or gender-neutral interventions are equally effective. However, female offenders who followed women's pathways into crime displayed the greatest risk reductions in reoffending following participation in gender-responsive programming as compared to others who did not follow women's pathways into crime. These findings serve as a reminder that consideration of gender-neutral risk/needs factors and interventions remain relevant, whereby effective implementation of either gender-neutral or gender-responsive interventions depend on the priority and needs of the women offenders (Gobeil et al., 2016).

Conclusion

This article has highlighted prominent gender-responsive issues that are found in the literature and local research undertaken by the SPS. In view of the overseas and local research findings, three recommendations are proposed. Taken together, these findings form the '4-4-3' gender-responsive guidelines for working with female offenders in Singapore.

4 Gender-responsive Needs to be Addressed:

1. Women offenders tend to abuse drugs to cope with their problems.
2. Mental health issues are common among female offenders.
3. Trauma and victimisation are common among female offenders.
4. Dysfunctional intimate relationships facilitate female offending.

4 Key Local Findings to Inform Practice:

1. Female offenders in Singapore have similar gender-responsive needs as identified in the literature.
2. Local female offenders tend to follow four pathways to criminal offending that include: engagement in non-empathic relationships, the presence of abuse and victimisation, mental illness in relation to substance abuse, and socio-economic disadvantages.
3. Poor anger management and the lack of engagement in constructive activities are risk/needs factors to be addressed.
4. Familial relationships deter drug use in female offenders with children.

3 Recommendations for Practice:

1. Emphasise leisure/recreation as an area of intervention.
2. Address anger and hostility issues in women offenders.
3. Utilise both gender-neutral and gender-responsive approaches while working with female offenders to best match their needs.

In sum, SPS has been taking great strides towards gender-responsive programming for female offenders. Rehabilitation programmes and the prison environment are being restructured to attend to gender-responsive risk/needs. Staff members are being trained and equipped with the relevant gender-responsive knowledge and understanding of women's pathways to offending. Finally, a comprehensive multi-pronged approach is used to transform female offenders during their incarceration so that their serving time becomes meaningful.

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The BSC Brief:
Behavioural Insights for the Home Team

What Drives Protesters:
An Analysis of the motivational factors behind the 2019 Hong Kong protests

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ABSTRACT

The 2019 Hong Kong anti-extradition bill protests have persisted as one of the largest-scale and longest-lasting political movements in the history of Hong Kong. This brief draws from psychological principles of motivational behaviour to investigate the key factors underlying this unprecedented event. It also looks at how the actions of state and law enforcement agencies can have significant impact on the trajectory of protests.

Introduction

Beginning in March 2019 as a series of peaceful demonstrations against a proposed extradition bill that would have allowed the authorities to detain and extradite individuals to Taiwan and China, the protests in Hong Kong have now become one of the largest-scale and longest-lasting political movements in the territory's history (Hale, 2019). Even though the Hong Kong government formally withdrew the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 in early September (Yu, 2019), the protests continued with increasingly violent clashes with law enforcement officers.

The tenacity with which the protests have been sustained warrants close attention, not only because large-scale protests very often have the proclivity to tip over into violence despite peaceful beginnings (Reicher, 2001), but, more importantly, because extended conflict with state agencies severely threaten a government's ability to bring about a reconciliation of differences and a full recovery towards peace and normalcy (Miller, 2001). In other words, *the longer the conflict between civil society and government, the deeper the wound and less recoverable will be the trauma, and the more enduring societal fault-lines are likely to be.* It is

therefore useful to study the motivational forces driving protesters to persistently act in defiance against their government and security agencies.

Understanding Motivations

Of the various psychological principles of motivational behaviour, expectancy-value models have long been a cornerstone of motivation science and decision-making (e.g., Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Vroom; 1964). Originally developed in the study of achievement motivation, the expectancy-value approach has been fruitfully employed within the field of education, developmental, and health psychology. According to the principles identified by Wigfield & Cambria (2010), motivation to perform an action comprises three core dimensions:

o **Efficacy** – how *able* are people in performing the particular action;
o **Expectancy** – how *effective* do people believe the particular action is going to be in bringing about their desired outcomes; and
o **Value** – what are these desired outcomes and how *desirable* are these outcomes to people.

Accordingly, the higher the value of each dimension, the stronger one's motivation will be to engage in the specified action in pursuit of desired goals.

Efficacy: How are Protesters Capable of Staging Large-scale Political Movements?

Legal and technological affordances are enabling Hong Kong protesters to stage large-scale political movements. Affordance is what the environment offers the individual (Gibson, 1966). Here, it is the law and social media which the protesters in Hong Kong have been using to their advantage.

First, based on the constitutional principle of 'One Country, Two Systems', the Basic Law in Hong Kong guarantees the Hong Kong people the right to lawfully engage in protests and processions (HK SAR Basic Law, 2017). Civil society in Hong Kong has been capitalising on this legal affordance and has frequently exercised the right to the freedom of assembly and speech by staging protests as a means of communicating grievances to the government. Prominent examples in recent years include: the *anti-Hong Kong express rail link movement in 2009*, where protesters rallied against the construction of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shen Zhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Lam, 2009); and the *Umbrella movement in 2014* which saw protesters oppose the proposed reforms of the Hong Kong electoral system, which they perceived as giving the Chinese Communist Party a stronger influence in appointing Hong Kong's Chief Executive (Parry, 2014).

Second, social media has been a key enabler in galvanising large numbers of participants (Kuo, 2019), allowing the present protests to surpass past protests in scale and longevity. Previously, large-scale protests typically lasted three to six months, with the number of participants ranging from several thousand to tens of thousands (Lam, 2009; Parry, 2014). The current protests have been going on for more than nine months as at end 2019.[1] At times, several hundreds of thousands of people

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[1] This article dates the start of the current protest movement to 31 March 2019, when for the first time, thousands took to the streets to protest the proposed extradition bill. Many media organisations, however, date the protest movement from 9 June, when as many as a million people in Hong Kong marched against the bill (Wu, Lai, & Yuhas, 2019; Kirby, 2019).

have marched, and according to protest organisers, more than a million on two occasions in June (Wu, Lai, & Yuhas, 2019).

Social media has been adeptly and strategically deployed not only to conceal identity, spread information, mobilise demonstrators and avoid detention, but also "as a tool in the battle for public opinion" (Shao, 2019). For example, protesters have circulated images of a female protester who was purportedly injured in the eye by police officers, and videos of alleged police brutality to rally the general public to support their cause.

Expectancy: Are Protests an Effective Means of Bringing about Desired Political and Social Outcomes?

Past successes have led many to perceive protesting as an effective means of bringing about desired political and social outcomes in Hong Kong. For many Hong Kongers, taking to the streets has become the action of choice when it comes to communicating dissent, dissatisfaction, or frustrations to the government (Kuo, 2019). Not only is this due in part to their ability to do so (based on the legal and technological affordances discussed), but importantly, because such actions have led to change in the past (Dapiran, 2017). For instance, protests in 2003 against the implementation of Basic Law Article 23 (which prohibits subversion against the Central People's Government of China) led to its shelving and the subsequent resignation of security secretary Regina Ip Lau Suk-yee (Heaver, 2018). Likewise, protests in 2012 against the introduction of national education in schools forced a back-down by then Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying, who thereafter announced that the proposals would be optional (Heaver, 2018).

Nevertheless, *protests may be effective only to the extent that they are sustained at least until the desired change has been brought into effect,* *even if this means resisting enforcement actions* (Louis, 2009). In other words, a protest that lacks momentum or is quickly quelled by enforcement agencies is not likely to be effective. In this light, learning from past movements has improved the effectiveness of the current protest actions in enhancing sustainability and momentum (Lam, 2019). For example, protesters have adopted a decentralised, 'leaderless' approach by reducing reliance on key ringleaders. Given the role that leadership plays in the direction and orchestration of collective action (Van Belle, 1996), the arrest of key leaders during protests in the 2014 Umbrella movement led to a sharp decline in protest momentum (Lee et al., 2014). In addition, the presence of leadership conflict then ignited the emergence of opposing factions within the protesters, thus diluting collective protest efforts.

In contrast, with the 2019 protests, the decentralized approach appears to have strengthened the commitment of protesters. Early in the protests, the spirit of camaraderie was readily apparent as protesters provided medical support to one another and engaged in clear division of labour. For example, some protesters were stationed to monitor police movements while others ran supply booths and provided medical aid (Lam, 2019). New principles such as "respect the role of the different groups", "we all lead", "no one is left behind" and "be water" (as in, to flow from place to place, building continuous pressure) were advocated and adhered to (Tattersall, 2019). Prominent activist organisations such as the Civil Human Rights Front have also avoided stealing the limelight or taking the lead in the protests (Lam, 2019). Such a change towards a decentralised, leaderless approach has strengthened the effectiveness of the 2019 protests by enabling protesters to persist for a much longer duration with a much stronger momentum hitherto unseen. In the words of a protester, "in the absence of a leader, we all hope to go the extra mile and be more devoted in our protest" (Lam, 2019).

Value: What Do Protesters Desire?

The protesters' desired outcomes may be understood as two-fold – a desire for ideological <u>and</u> material change. While efficacy and expectancy elements have contributed to the protracted protests in Hong Kong, the picture remains incomplete unless we also look at the reasons underlining the protesters' actions.

Ideologically, the people of Hong Kong (especially the youth) strongly desire the high degree of autonomy and self-governance as provisioned under the principle of 'One Country, Two Systems' (Cheung & Hughes, 2019). However, perceived encroachment by China in recent years (e.g., the lack of genuine universal suffrage in the Hong Kong electoral system; the regular imprisonment of Hong Kong democracy activists) has led to increased wariness and frustrations with the lack of democratic rule 'promised' to Hong Kong during its handover to China in 1997 (Gopalan, 2017). Indeed, the protests launched in recent years have had one common theme – resistance against the perceived encroachment of Chinese influence in the democratic governance of Hong Kong (Dapiran, 2017).

Furthermore, as shown by a December 2018 Hong Kong University survey of 1,000 participants aged 18 to above 70 years old on their ethnic identity, most people identify themselves as "Hong Kongers" (53%), and only 11% see themselves as Chinese. A striking 71% of those surveyed also indicated that they did not feel proud to be Chinese citizens (Hong Kong University, 2019). For many, *participation in protests therefore serves as an expression of a politicised, collective identity that is enacted in pursuit of one's ideological goals* (Shi, Neo, Ong, & Khader, 2014; Sturmer & Simon, 2004).

In addition, protesters may be motivated to pursue material change in society. The inability of young

Hong Kongers and those in the lower-income group to share in the city's economic success is often cited by Chinese state media as one of the sources of frustration with the Hong Kong government (Lee, 2019). Notwithstanding this, however, interviews with protesters have suggested that such material concerns may be subordinated to the primacy of ideological motivations underlining the protests (Siu, 2019).

State and Ground Responses to Protests Influence Protest Trajectory

With the available evidence showing how highly motivated the protesters in Hong Kong are in pursuing their actions, state responses (by politicians) and ground actions (by enforcement agencies) are crucial in determining the trajectory of the protests. In the case of the 2019 protests, institutional responses appear unfortunately to have further exacerbated protest momentum and escalation. First, the scheduling of the second reading of the extradition bill despite peaceful protests from March to early June 2019 signalled a dismissal of the protesters' voices (Sum & Lum, 2019). Second, the tactics widely perceived to be excessive, brutal, and even unlawfully employed by law enforcement agencies have served only to strengthen protesters' resolve to retaliate (Yu, 2019).

From a psychological perspective, such reactions are predictable when people perceive their cherished values (democracy and autonomy in this case) as being curtailed and threatened by external agents (Atran, Axelrod, & Davis, 2007). As a result, perceived responses from the state and enforcement agencies serve only to bolster protesters' belief that continued escalation – and not de-escalation – is necessary to achieve their desired outcome, thereby fuelling rather than attenuating sustained, violent protests (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). More importantly, protesters' perception

that the justice department and law enforcement agencies' actions are politically motivated (Su, 2019) have further exacerbated their reactions against law enforcement officers on the ground. Such perceptions – whether true or not – undermine legitimacy of law enforcement agents and thus further justify, in the eyes of the protesters, the use of violence as an acceptable mode of response against harsh tactics by the police (Jackson, Huq, Bradford, & Tyler, 2013).

Indeed, psychological research on the effectiveness of collective action has shown that, although peaceful rather than violent collective action generally tends to be more effective in mobilising supportive public opinion, perceived illegitimacy (e.g., excessive use of violence) or corruption of a government or authority (e.g., politicisation of law enforcement) drastically changes the equation such that violent and extreme actions are deemed more effective or even necessary in bringing about necessary change (Della Porta & Vannucci, 1997; Thomas & Louis, 2014).

For example, a series of initially peaceful protests against the Libyan government in 2011 escalated into a civil war after a violent crack-down on protesters and then-ruler Colonel Gaddafi's threat to "*cleanse Libya house by house*" until the insurrection was crushed, signalling that he was not about to give in to protesters (Blomfield, 2011). On the contrary, although Algeria also experienced large-scale protests at about the same time as Libya (the Arab Spring), protests did not escalate nor gain momentum in part because of the Algerian government's non-violent response, and the implementation of concessionary measures to address socio-economic concerns (Brown, 2011; Del Panta, 2014). That allowed the regime in Algiers to survive, at least until fresh protests erupted once again in February 2019 demanding the resignation of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika,

who stepped down after two months of massive street protests (Michaelson, 2019).

Conclusion

Using a robust psychological framework, we can explain the persistence of the 2019 Hong Kong protests in terms of the capability of protesters to mount a large-scale movement afforded by existing legal institutions and technology, their belief that protests are effective in bringing about desired change based on past successes and lessons learnt from previous actions, and their strong commitment to the ideological and material change that they desire to enact in society. Importantly, the actions of state and law enforcement agencies also have a significant impact on the trajectory of protests.

While the analysis does not suggest that state and law enforcement agencies ought to comply with the demands of the protesters, it does point to the value of constructive dialogue at the onset of any grievance – a more optimal approach may be to *prevent*, rather than to react to a brewing civic unrest. As Lord John Alderdice, former member of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, has noted, the pursuit of true reconciliation requires that people feel valued and respected so as to be receptive to dialogue (The Commonwealth, 2013). This entails acknowledging the positions of each side, ensuring fair treatment and mutual understanding, and above all, emphasising the role of civility in building lasting relationships. Moreover, violent ground escalations are often a reflection of more fundamental discontent within society. Governments thus have to, in the words of Singapore's Home Affairs and Law Minister K Shanmugam, *"get the basic issues right in society"*, lest public trust in state institutions and law enforcement erode (Darke, 2019). This is particularly important in democratic societies where governments are entrusted by the people to

represent them and act in pursuit of their collective interests, which can include both bread and butter matters of survival and livelihood, as well as higher-order ideals such as values, identity, and norms.

On a final note, although the original cause for the protests in Hong Kong – the extradition bill – has been officially withdrawn, many in Hong Kong feel that deep fault-lines have already been etched. Indeed, according to Claudia Mo, lawmaker and convenor of the pro-democracy camp, the reversal was "too little, too late".

It took [Carrie Lam] three months to officially use the word 'withdraw'. This is too little, too late – the die is cast, grave mistakes have been made. Hong Kong's wounds and scars are still bleeding. This will leave a lasting mark in Hong Kong's history" (in Chan, 2019).

It remains to be seen how Hong Kong society will recover and progress from this prolonged confrontation.

About the Author

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The **Home Team Behavioural Sciences Centre** (HTBSC) was established in 2005 to use behavioural sciences to support the Home Team's operational work. HTBSC strives to be a path-finding centre of excellence for behavioural sciences research and training in the areas of crime, safety, and security. The centre serves to equip Home Team (HT) officers with the knowledge and skills to deal with issues relating to human behaviours, so as to complement their operational effectiveness as well as enhance their efficiency. Key specialised psychological research branches of the HTBSC include:

- Crime, Investigation and Forensic Psychology (CIFP)
- Operations and Leadership Psychology (OLP)
- Extremism and Terrorism Psychology (ETP)
- Resilience and Safety Psychology (RSP)

With time, HTBSC seeks to be a nexus connecting HT departments, academia and international experts, to offer a dynamic fusion of ideas and practical solutions for HT officers striving to make Singapore a secure home.

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Against the Odds:
How Effective is Protest?

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ABSTRACT

If there is one theme, beyond corruption and a host of economic and social grievances, that has driven protests – large and small, local, sectoral and national – across the globe, it has been a call for dignity. Reflecting a cyclical global breakdown in confidence in political systems and leadership that has ushered in an era of defiance and dissent about to enter its second decade, the quest for dignity and social justice links protests in Middle Eastern and North African countries like Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria and Sudan, to demonstrations in nations on multiple continents ranging from Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Haiti to France, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Pakistan and Hong Kong. The protests are the latest phase of an era that erupted in 2011 and unfolded most dramatically in the Middle East and North Africa with the toppling of the autocratic leaders of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Eight years on from those Arab revolts, protesters, determined to secure recognition and their place in society, underline lessons learnt by no longer declaring victory once a leader is forced to make concessions or resign as was the case in 2019 in Algeria, Sudan, Lebanon, Iraq and Bolivia. They have also learnt not to fall into the trap of easily exploitable sectarian ethnic, religious and social divides like in Iraq and Lebanon. That and the realization that street power needs to be sustained until the modalities of transition are in place is key to enhancing the chances of protest producing tangible change. Equally important for the future of protest as an effective tool in a world in which powerful external forces often support vested domestic interests to thwart change, is protesters' ability to recognize a common interest that transcends ideology, class, sect and ethnicity. That may be universally true but often poses the greatest challenge in the Middle East and North Africa. So is the fact that transitional authorities often inherit weak, hollowed out institutions that need to be rebuilt to undergird the transition to politically, economically and socially more equitable governance.

The King is Dead, Long Live the King

Protest is back on the front burner several years after revolts in the Middle East and North Africa were largely either squashed or reversed or disintegrated into civil wars, and protests elsewhere lost steam and fizzled out. In the past year, protesters have occupied streets in cities ranging from Hong Kong, Santiago de Chile, La Paz, Port-au-Prince, Paris and Moscow to Khartoum, Algiers, Amman, Beirut and Baghdad. This time round, the most immediate difference from the 2011 protests is the demand for systemic change rather than a simple replacement of government, and the resilience of protesters in sticking to their guns and maintaining control of the street until a transition process is in place.

When protest over the past decade did not erupt onto streets, it was embedded in culture wars that continue to wrack countries like the United States (Hunter, 2017), Germany (Imam, 2019) and India (Dutt, 2018), the result of the struggle between liberals and mainstream conservatives on one side of the divide, and, populists, extreme nationalists and far-right wingers on the other. These culture wars, like the protests, reflect an existential fear that changing demographics, technological change and responses to climate change are either further pushing groups to the margins of society in an inequitable political and economic system, or about to do so.

At the core of the protests themselves is a clamour for transparent, accountable rule delivering public goods and services, even if some are framed as battles for environmental and economic issues and against corruption rather than for democracy, or in terms of nationalism, racism and opposition to migration. The sparks differ from country to country. As does the political environment. And the stakes at various stages of the game vary.

Yet, the fundamental drivers are universal.

In 2019 Algeria and Sudan, the protests have been about an end to corrupt autocracy and more inclusive rule (Bellaloufi & Vincenot, 2019; Magdy, 2019). In Kashmir, the rub has been imposition of direct Indian rule and failure to ensure that the region benefits equitably from economic growth. In Russia, deteriorating standards of living and environmental degradation are drivers (Barber, 2019), while a younger generation in Hong Kong is rejecting Chinese encroachment in advance of incorporation into a totalitarian system (BBC News, 2019).

The different motivations notwithstanding, the protests, then and now, and the rise of civilisationalism [which argues that a country represents not just a historic territory or a particular language or ethnic-group, but a distinctive civilisation (Rachman, 2019)], populism, and racial and religious supremacism, aided by

fearmongering by ideologues and opportunistic politicians (Mehta, 2019), are two sides of the same coin: a global collapse of confidence in incumbent systems and leadership. The various experiences in different parts of the world suggest that the political struggles underlying the protests are long rather than short-term battles that likely will continue to be fought on and off the street.

Revolts in Waiting

These divisions also suggest that it is only a matter of time before other powder kegs experience explosions of mounting public discontent. Iran erupted in November 2019 with mass protests against fuel price hikes that in some cases evolved into demands for systemic change (Daragahi, 2019). Fuel prices similarly fuelled anger and protests in government-controlled areas of Syria.

"Is it so difficult to be transparent and forward? Would that undermine anyone's prestige? We are a country facing sanctions and boycotted. The public knows and is aware," laments Syria is Here, an anonymous Facebook page that reports on economics in government-controlled areas. London-based Syrian journalist Danny Makki, who travels to Syria regularly, has warned that the country is "a pressure cooker" (El Deeb, 2019).

Similarly, authorities in Egypt were unable to stop an online petition against proposed constitutional amendments that could extend the rule of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi until 2034 from attracting hundreds of thousands of signatures despite blocking its website. The petition, entitled Batel or Void, prompted the government to block some 34,000 websites in a bid to prevent it from becoming an opposition rallying point, according to Netblocks, a group mapping web freedom (Netblocks, 2019).

Protests erupted months later when Mohamed Ali, an Egyptian businessman, actor and former Egyptian defence ministry contractor who lives in voluntary exile in Spain, posted videos on his Facebook page that went viral, accusing Al-Sisi and his

government of corruption and the theft of millions from the country's budget for luxury investments and illicit business. Ali's allegations resonated in a country where, according to Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), 32.5 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2019). The protests were brutally squashed. However, researchers Alessia Melcangi and Giuseppe Dentice (2019) caution:

> *The protests have… shown that stability in Egypt should not be taken for granted and that the economy plays a fundamental role. In fact, Egypt's economy is gradually developing at the macro-economic level…. The Egyptian people have not benefited from this positive trend and have grown increasingly frustrated in recent years due to government-imposed austerity measures, cutbacks in the subsidy system…. These measures have produced anger, frustration, and discontent among broad sections of the population, which could lead to the emergence of protests coming from the most disadvantaged classes.*

The protests as well as multiple powder kegs pinpoint the fragility of hopes of Middle Eastern autocrats that China's model of successfully growing the economy, creating jobs and opportunity, and delivering public goods coupled with increased political control and suppression of rights, could prove to be a sustainable model in their own backyard. The fragility is enhanced by the tendency of autocrats to overreach in ways that distract from their core goals (Dorsey, 2019c).

Retaining Street Power

Across the globe, the evolution of protesters' demands, from regime change during the 2011 popular revolts to systemic change in the 2019 uprisings, constitutes a far more fundamental attack on crony capitalist illiberal and autocratic rule and economic systems perceived as inequitable. In the Middle East and North Africa, it amounts to an assault on a repressive security state, challenging the system's key pillars: institutionalised nepotism, corruption and exploitation of sectarian, ethnic and tribal differences to position the state as the key distributor of benefits in exchange for loyalty.

The region's rankings illustrate the regimes' failure. Sixteen of the world's 21 Arab countries ranked below the global mean of 43 on a 0 to 100 scale on Transparency International's 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index (Fatafta, 2018). The World Bank has suggested that politically connected firms enjoy economic privileges in various Middle Eastern nations, hampering the growth of younger, smaller firms that should act as engines of job creation (World Bank, 2015).

The six energy-rich Gulf monarchies account for more than half of the Arab world's combined gross domestic product (GDP) despite making up only 15 percent of its population (Bahout & Cammack, 2019). Yet evolving demographics, technological change, greater connectivity, globalisation, and changing energy markets mean that their wealth and social contracts offering cradle-to-grave welfare states no longer enable them to create enough jobs and opportunities or ensure equitable macro-economic management. Rulers have no choice but to embrace the risk of economic diversification and social change.

Meeting protesters' demands and aspirations that drive the demonstrations across the region irrespective of whether grievances have spilled into streets is what makes economic and social reform tricky business for autocratic rulers in the Middle East and North Africa. It is where what is needed for reform to have a sustainable effect bounces up against ever more repressive security states intent on exercising increasingly tight control.

Sustainable reform requires capable and effective

institutions rather than bloated, bureaucratic job banks, and decentralisation with greater authorities granted to municipalities and regions. Altering social contracts by introducing or increasing taxes, reducing subsidies for basic goods and narrowing opportunities for government employment will have to be buffered by greater transparency that provides the public insight into how the government ensures that the people benefit from the still evolving new social contract.

A 2019 annual survey of Arab youth concerns about their future suggest that the region's autocracies have yet to deliver expected public services and goods (ASDA'A BCW, 2019a). The survey also indicate that youth attribute greater importance to jobs and social freedoms than political rights, a sentiment that could prove to be tricky for autocrats attempting to square the circle between the requirements of reform and youth expectations.

A majority of youth surveyed, weaned on decades of reliance on government for jobs and social services, believe that their governments had unilaterally rewritten social contracts and rolled back aspects of the cradle-to-grave welfare state without delivering tangible benefits. Even more problematic for autocratic reformers, youth expect governments to be the provider at a time when reform requires streamlining of bureaucracies, reduced state control, and stimulation of the private sector.

A whopping 78 percent of those surveyed believe it is the government's responsibility to provide jobs. An equal number expect energy to be subsidized, with 65 percent complaining that governments are not doing enough to support young families while 60 percent expect government to supply housing. By the same token, 78 percent are concerned about the quality of education on offer, including 70 percent of those in the Gulf.

In a White Paper accompanying the survey, Afshin Molavi, a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Institute

of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, concludes that the survey shows that "the demands and dreams of young Arabs are neither radical nor revolutionary" and that they are unlikely to "to fall for the false utopias or 'charismatic' leaders their parents fell for".

Also contributing to the White Paper, Jihad Azour, the International Monetary Fund's top Middle East official, argues that "what is needed is a new social contract between MENA (Middle East and North Africa) governments and citizens that ensures accountability, transparency and a commitment to the principle that no one is left behind.... The latest youth survey makes clear that we have a long way to go" (ASDA'A BCW, 2019b).

The challenge protesters and youth pose in the Middle East reinforces the need to retain street power until the structures of a transition process and the power-sharing arrangements that undergird it are firmly in place. This is reinforced by the fact that many of the 2019 revolts in the Middle East and beyond have been initiated by activists operating beyond the confines of established political groupings and non-governmental organisations. Often viewed as leaderless, the activists organise through networks that rely on social media for their communications.

What demonstrators in the Middle East and North Africa have going for them, beyond the power of the street, is the fact that popular discontent is not the only thing that mitigates against maintenance of the pre-protest status quo. Countries across the region, characterised by youth bulges (Dorsey, 2019a), can no longer evade economic reform that addresses widespread youth unemployment, the need to create large numbers of jobs, and inevitable diversification and streamlining of bloated government bureaucracies.

Algeria is a case in point. Foreign exchange reserves have dropped from US$193.6 billion in 2014 (CEIC, 2019) to US$72 billion in 2019 (APS

Online, 2019). Reserves cover 13 months of imports at best in a country that imports 70 percent of what it consumes (Ghanem and Benderra, 2019). "If the state can no longer deliver goods and services, socio-economic discontent will rise further," notes Algeria scholar Dalia Ghanem. She recommends that to avoid such a situation, the state and its citizens renegotiate their relationship. "In the past the state provided, and Algerians abided. This is no longer economically feasible today, nor is it what Algerians appear to want as they seek more transparency, less corruption, and better governance of Algeria's resources" (Ghanem, 2019).

Attention in the years since the 2011 popular Arab revolts has focussed on the consequences of the Saudi-UAE led counterrevolution that brutally rolled back protesters' achievements in Egypt and contributed to the Iranian-backed military campaign of Houthi rebels in Yemen and the devastating subsequent military intervention in that country as well as civil wars in Syria and Libya.

Yet, the past eight years have also been characterised by issue-oriented protests (Dorsey, 2015) that often involved new, creative forms of expressions of discontent (Dorsey, 2018). They were often driven by groups most affected by governments' failure to deliver, like in Iraq where jobless university graduates and those who returned from defeating the Islamic State found themselves deprived of opportunities (Dixon, 2019).

Protests' New Politics

The need to cater to youth aspirations should have been clear once Tunisian fruit vendor Mohamed Bouazizi's suicide on the doorsteps of a governor's office in December 2010 went viral and sparked the 2011 Arab revolts. His was a cry for justice, freedom and economic opportunity, an act of desperation in the face of humiliation, a shout for dignity that resonated across the Middle East and North Africa and beyond. From Sao Paulo to Istanbul and from New York to Cairo, the outcry is against the indignity of crony capitalism and neo-liberalism

which ensure that rules are rigged in favour of elites to the disadvantage of the middle classes.

Writing on the basis of a 2019 workshop on Arab youth politics, scholars Sean Yom, Marc Lynch, and Wael al-Khatib (2019) conclude:

> [P]olitically, many have matured in an era where opposition parties, professional syndicates, and other registered entities long framed by outsiders as the vanguard of change have failed to perturb autocratic political orders. As the Arab Spring showed, spontaneous grassroots movements can topple the bulwarks of dictatorship in ways that complex NGOs and bureaucratized opposition cannot, given the latter's dependence upon state recognition and international funding. Socially, many tend to prize mobilizational networks that center not upon a single set of leaders or elite authority, but rather atomistic connections between protesters sewn together by common defiance of authority or shared pursuit of an issue.

Operating beyond the confines of existing organisational structures has, however, proven to be a double-edged sword. It often produced relatively quick success like in the 2011 Arab revolts in which seemingly entrenched leaders such as Tunisia's Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, Libya's Moammar Gadhafi, and Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh were toppled within a matter of weeks. Surrender of the street immediately after the toppling, however, enabled vested interests and counterrevolutionary forces to exclude the activists from the post-revolt political process and, with the exception of Tunisia, to ultimately reverse their achievements.

Protesters moreover were often unprepared for transition, having only vague notions of the nuts and bolts of what a more sustainable and equitable economic system would entail. "The road to overturn the system is very long. There is a need

to channel demands from the streets into structures and unions (old or newly emergent) and, most importantly, to not fall into the trap of…violence," advises Lebanese scholar Jamil Mouawad (2019).

The jury remains out on the second wave of protests sweeping through the Middle East in 2019. So far, protesters not only in Middle Eastern countries – Lebanon, Algeria and Iraq – but also across the globe in Chile, Hong Kong and elsewhere appear to have learnt the lessons of 2011 in terms of both retaining street power and not allowing demonstrations to be hijacked by government provocations or militants willing to engage in armed violence beyond escalations involving stone, brick and Molotov cocktail-throwing and damaging attacks on public buildings and commercial sites. Sudan, where protesters stood their ground despite a crackdown that in one day cost the lives of some 100 people (CNN, 2019), is so far the prime validation of the protesters' strategy.

Protesters only surrendered the Sudanese street in September 2019, five months after President Omar al-Bashir was forced to step down, once a transition process body had been agreed and a transitional sovereign council made up of civilians and the military was in place (Reuters, 2019). While most protests in 2019 appear to be leaderless, rejecting any and all elites, demonstrators in Sudan rallied around the Sudanese Professional Association (SPA), a network of banned unions, that anchored the protests and shaped demands at every stage of the revolt (Amin, 2019). It remains to be seen whether that is why Sudan achieved an agreed transition process while other protest movements that have forced the resignation of a leader still struggle to ensure that their demands for fundamental change are met.

More than a Lesson Learnt

Protesters' resilience is, nevertheless, more than one lesson learnt from the 2011 revolts. In tactical terms, it is fuelled by another lesson learnt: don't trust militaries, even if they seemingly align themselves with demonstrators. Distrust of the military prompted an increasing number of Sudanese protesters to question whether chanting "the people and the army are one" was appropriate.

More fundamentally, protesters' resilience also reflects a widespread sentiment among youth that theirs is a generational window of opportunity that will close as they grow older. That realization alongside a sense of nothing to lose in the face of lack of opportunity is what fuels the now-or-never character of the protests, emboldens protesters to hold their ground despite security force violence, and motivates them to ensure that promises are implemented before they allow public life to return to normal.

It is a picture that repeats itself across the globe with protests driven by the same fundamental distrust of systems and government and leadership and groping for more equal distribution of wealth and opportunity. In a recent commentary on Latin America, Alicia Barcena, the executive secretary of the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, notes that "inequality is the main cause of the disenchantment being felt by citizens throughout the region in the face of a stunned political establishment yet to understand that the current development model is unsustainable" (Barcena, 2019). She could have been speaking about the Middle East and North Africa, Russia, Georgia or in many aspects, Hong Kong too.

In many ways, the protests are likely to prove to be a success irrespective of whether they succeed in toppling leaders and/or changing political and economic systems. The protesters' ability to maintain street power for significant periods of times almost by definition broadens public awareness of issues, influences the political agenda, and changes public discourse. In doing so, they force governments to redefine the legitimacy of their grip on power and justify it in terms of delivery of public goods for which, at least in the court of public opinion, they are held accountable.

Based on extensive on-the-ground-reporting, scholar Dina el-Sharnouby (2019), has concluded that protesters' resilience is driven by a determination to force power sharing rather than a desire to replace one party holding power with another. As a result, it is a politics in which the importance of having an iconic leader or a clearly defined ideology is significantly reduced. Instead, it involves alliances, concepts of mobilisation that transcend political and ideological divisions and acceptance of multiple leaders with very different worldviews.

"Such a conception requires a new type of thinking and practicing of revolutionary politics… It suggests the rise of a new youth politics that is more inclusionary and revolves around the question of how to share political power", El-Sharnouby says. Effectively arguing that technological advances, including the power of social media, as well as globalisation, have changed political landscapes, she describes the wave of protests as in "search of a new politics of inclusion and new ways of organizing the masses" (El-Sharnouby, 2019).

El-Sharnouby's analysis sheds further light on protesters' refusal to rush into elections once their immediate goal of toppling a leader or initiating a process of structural change has been achieved. Elections in post-20ll Arab nations such as Egypt and Tunisia demonstrated that without a period of structural political reforms, polls reinforce the position of traditional political forces, whether the military or political groupings, rather than create space for the sharing of power with the protesters who opened the door to change.

"The challenge for the political subjects of the Arab revolts is…to find ways of organizing a…movement while contesting electoral democracy to open the way for a new form of democracy putting forward new conditions for sharing power meaningfully,", El-Sharnouby writes. The Sudanese protesters, "instead of striving for unity in which differences are suppressed because of a particular ideology or a hero figure that can bring about change…strove for unity in diversity, acknowledging and uniting the many leaders of the revolution" (El-Sharnouby, 2019).

A Tug of War

Most protests that, unlike in Sudan, do not rally around an organisational unit, have yet to translate initial success into institutionalised processes of change. If anything, the protests have often turned into competitions to determine who has the longer breath – the protesters or the vested interests-backed incumbent government.

In Algeria, Lebanon and Iraq, countries in which the leader was either forced to resign or agreed to step down, the authorities appear to be dragging their feet on handovers of power or agreed transitional power sharing arrangements in the hope that protesters determined to hold on to their street power until a political transition process is firmly in place either lose their momentum or are racked by internal differences. Reticent governments are also betting on the fact that the 2019 protesters do not enjoy the broad-based international empathy that their 2011 counterparts witnessed.

The current cohort of protesters, moreover, are potentially up against a more powerful array of external forces. In addition to conservative Gulf states Saudi Arabia and the UAE, powers like Russia and China have made no bones about their rejection of protest as an expression of political will. So has Iran with much at stake in Iraq and Lebanon, countries where anti-sectarian sentiment is strong among protesters, even if the Islamic republic itself was born in one of the 20th century's epic popular revolts.

Seeking to exploit mounting doubts in various parts of the world about the reliability of the United States as an ally as a result President Donald J. Trump's transactional approach towards America's allies and foreign policy flip flops, Russia backed

by China, has as part of its stabilisation effort in the wake of its intervention in Syria proposed to replace the US defence umbrella in the Gulf with a multilateral security arrangement. "Russia is seeking stability which includes preventing colour revolutions", says Maxim Grigoryev, director of the Moscow-based Foundation for the Study of Democracy, using the term Moscow employs to describe popular revolts in countries that once were part of the Soviet Union. Echoing Kremlin policy, Grigoryev describes Syria as "a model of stabilizing a regime and countering terrorism" (Dorsey, 2019b).

Russian military intervention in Syria has helped President Bashar al-Assad gain the upper hand in a more than eight-year-long brutal war in which the Syrian government has been accused of committing crimes against humanity. Russia has denied allegations that its air force has repeatedly targeted hospitals and other civil institutions (Hill and Treibert, 2019).

Russia's experience in Syria as well as in Ukraine appears to be guiding a more overt Russian role in Libya in the second half of 2019; Moscow had initially provided covert financial and tactical support to a militia led by would be strongman Khalifa Haftar. Some 200 Russian mercenaries, among them a substantial number of snipers, started making their mark in the civil war that erupted in the wake of the 2011 toppling of Libyan leader Moammar Ghaddafi (Kirkpatrick, 2019). The mercenary presence should be seen in the light of a Rand study of Russia's intervention in Syria as well as earlier interventions in Libya, Afghanistan and Yemen that suggests Russia could again interfere short of direct military engagement. Intervention in Libya "promises a high level of geopolitical benefit for Moscow", the Rand report concludes (Charap, Treyger, & Geist, 2019).

The reported presence of mercenaries and the report came on the back of two visits by Haftar to Moscow in the last three years as well as a widely publicised visit to Russia's only aircraft carrier when it was stationed off Libya's shores. Russia moreover reportedly supplied some 4.5 billion Libyan dinars ($3.22 billion) in newly printed banknotes to Haftar's parallel central bank in the eastern city of Benghazi. The bills were sent in four shipments in the first half of 2019.

Similarly, documents leaked to The Guardian (Harding and Burke, 2019) and MHK Media (Popkov, 2019), a Russian-language news website, by the London-based Dossier Centre, an investigative group funded by exiled Russian businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky, have disclosed Russia's behind-the-scenes role in Sudan in seeking to thwart the protesters. Laying out plans to bolster Russia's position across Africa by building relations with rulers, striking military deals, and grooming a new generation of leaders and undercover agents, the documents include details of a campaign to smear anti-government protesters.

The plan for the campaign appeared to have been copy-pasted from proposals to counter opposition in Russia to President Vladimir Putin with references to Russia mistakenly not having been replaced with Sudan in one document. It advised the Sudanese military to use fake news and videos to portray demonstrators as anti-Islamic, pro-Israeli and pro-LGBT. The plan also suggested increasing the price of newsprint to make it harder for critics to get their message out and to discover "foreigners" at anti-government rallies.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, a St. Petersburg-based businessman and close associate of Putin, complained in a letter to Bashir before the Sudanese leader was overthrown that he was not following Prigozhin's advice and adopting an "extremely cautious position". Prigozhin, who was indicted by US special counsel Robert Mueller for operating a troll factory that ran an extensive social media

campaign that favoured Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, was according to the documents, a key player in efforts to enhance Russian influence in Africa and counter Sudanese protests.

Ironically, despite China's insistence that it does not interfere in the domestic affairs of others and does things differently and is less heavy-handed than the United States, Beijing has opted to take its aggressive domestic anti-graft campaign international in a bid to address grievances driving protests or at least to ensure that it does not become a target. To achieve that, China has begun embedding inspectors from China's top anti-corruption body, the Communist party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, in Belt and Road projects in recipient countries (Weinland, 2019). The move helps China counter allegations that it exploits corruption in recipient Belt and Road countries to further its objectives (Stratfor, 2018).

The Day After

Retaining street power has proven to be a sine qua non for getting from A to B. In many ways, it is when the protesters and reformers' real challenges, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, kick in. Vested domestic interests as well as their external backers benefit from the fact that the state that the protesters and reformers want to reform is a house of cards populated by hollowed out institutions. "Authoritarianism has become the only glue keeping them together," notes scholar, diplomat and activist Ezzedine C. Fishere. Arab authoritarianism has "morphed into a complex strategy to cope with state weakness," he says, adding:

> *To repress social and political conflicts [Arab states] could not resolve and to silence demands they could not meet, Arab regimes turned to coercion… Gradually, regime survival became the overriding concern of these agencies, eroding respect for the rule of law and making human rights abuses common. This led to the further hollowing out of state institutions, now glued together by systematically administered fear"* (Fishere, 2019).

The emergence of the Arab security state may be the extreme end of the spectrum, but the problems it confronts are in many ways no different from those challenging governments across the globe. "People are angry at their political systems," says James Bosworth, a Latin America-focused analyst. "There's an anti-incumbent wave and governments haven't dealt with the roots of the problem, and those problems aren't going away. [Neither is] anger at the political systems… In many ways, governments are trapped. There will be more protests, and they'll be more violent in 2020" (Cancel, 2019).

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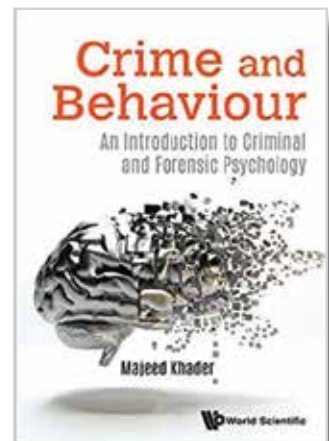

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By Majeed Khader

World Scientific Press, 2019, 460 pages, $68

The first textbook to provide a detailed overview of criminal psychology in Singapore, Crime Behaviour puts together ideas relating to crime, crime prevention, and criminal psychology, as it occurs in the Singapore context. While leveraging on psychology as an anchor, the book adopts a multidisciplinary perspective and examines the forensic sciences angle, legal issues, and the investigative perspectives of crimes. The chapters cover criminal justice agencies in Singapore, theories of crime, deception and lying behaviors, sex crimes, violent crimes, crime prevention, terrorism, and psychology applied in legal settings. Each chapter contains case studies of actual cases and ends with questions for discussion and research, making this a valuable text for courses in university and in law enforcement settings.

Majeed Khader is Chief Psychologist, Ministry of Home Affairs.

Who Are You My Country?

Edited by Winston Toh Ghee Wei, Theophilus Kwek, Joshua Jesudason, Hygin Prasad Fernandez

Landmark Books, 2018, 112 pages, $14.95

Available at NLB Libraries

From the 1930s to 1965, discussions about modernisation, race and civic responsibility were as common as they are today. The youth of colonial Singapore wrote passionately about these issues, seeking to enkindle the idea of a nation that did not yet exist. The poetry and stories that encapsulate how they saw Singapore have become more, not less relevant. In Who Are You My Country?, the youth of modern Singapore build on those stories and use them to create a vision for what our post-SG50 nation might look like. As the historical publications were to those students of the past, this anthology, it is hoped, will also be a shared space for the collective imagination of our Singapore.
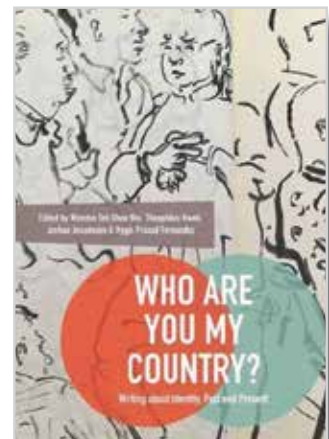
Joshua Jesudason is an Assistant Superintendent with the Singapore Police Force.

Journal Articles

Toward a Drug-free Society: The Singapore Approach

by Ng Ser Song

The Brown Journal of World Affairs (Fall/Winter 2019, Volume XXVI, Issue 1)

Illicit drug activities exact a high price on our society, from abusers to their families to the community. Singapore's historical experience with the scourge of drugs has been instrumental in shaping our harm-prevention focused approach as we strive towards building a safe and drug-free society here. This is achieved through three core pillars that target both drug demand and supply. Firstly, we conduct extensive Preventive Drug Education to educate and persuade people in Singapore to remain drug-free. Secondly, we work tirelessly to enact laws and enforce strict measures against drug offenders who would harm society through their actions. Thirdly, we engage in effective rehabilitation of drug abusers so that they can stay away from drugs and reintegrate into their families and the societal fabric. This tough stance against drugs has worked well for Singapore and kept the drug situation under control, enabling us to build a safe and secure home for our people.

Ng Ser Song is Director of the Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore. He was invited by *Brown Journal* to contribute an essay on Singapore's drug control policy.
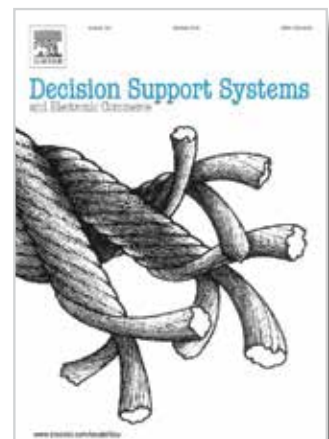
This article is available online at http://bjwa.brown.edu/26-1/toward-a-drug-free-society-the-singapore-approach/

Cyber Hygiene: The Concept, its Measure, and its Initial Tests

by Arun Vishwanath, Neo Loo Seng, Pamela Goh, Seyoung Lee, Majeed Khader, Gabriel Ong, & Jeffery Chin

Decision Support Systems, 128 (January 2020)

While policy makers to cyber security experts call for improving cyber hygiene, no one really knows what it means. In fact, there exists no scholarly research explicating the concept or its measurement. This research makes an important contribution by conceptualising cyber hygiene, operationalising it, empirically identifying its sub-dimensions, and developing an inventory for it. The research achieves this with a mixed-methods approach, where using a combination of experts and a convenience sample of Internet users, it develops the initial items reflecting the construct, empirically refines the items, confirms its dimensions, and validates its fit. The outcome is an 18-item Cyber Hygiene Inventory (CHI) that measures five distinct dimensions of user cyber hygiene. Finally, the research demonstrates why cyber hygiene matters. Using the CHI it shows how cyber hygiene significantly predicts aspects of human cyber interaction that are pivotal to cyber safety including user self-beliefs about technology, how they cognitively process information online, and their online banking behaviour.

Neo Loo Seng, Pamela Goh, Majeed Khader, Gabriel Ong, & Jeffery Chin are with the Home Team Behavioural Sciences Centre, Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore.

This article is available online at https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0167923619301897? token=62AEE52207A1D93 729FE3395411F2A257C5753EC80CC00B95803C66F4371C559FE8D41558C249CE4EA99DC0B0AB8DBFC

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All Home Team departments and agencies work together as one, in close partnership with the community, to keep Singapore safe and secure.

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