

The Importance of Information in Psychological Operations for Counterterrorism

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Abstract : Terrorism is not a new phenomenon to the world, yet it remains difficult to define and to counter. Countering terrorism requires several measures that must be taken at the same time. Counterterrorism strategies of most countries depend on military measures. However, those strategies should also focus on nonlethal measures, such as economic, political, and social measures. The psychological dimensions of terrorism must be understood, evaluated, and used in countering terrorism. This study suggests that psychological operations, as nonlethal military operations, can be used to influence individuals not to join terrorist organizations and to facilitate defections from terrorist organizations. However, in order to implement effective psychological operations, one has to have appropriate intelligence about terrorist organizations. Examining terrorist organizations help us to identify their vulnerabilities and obtain this intelligence. This article concludes that terrorists' motivations, terrorist organizations' radicalization, recruitment, and conversion processes, ideology, goals, strategies, and general structure form the intelligence requirement for psychological operations in counterterrorism. The methodology used in this article is a mixed method.

Keywords : psychological operations, terrorist, counterterrorism, terrorism

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