

## **WHAT VARIABLES DO WE HAVE IN COMMON?: TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS ON VIOLENT RADICALIZATION**

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### Background

Radicalization and violent extremism are issues of concern in countries all over the world. Research is needed on the complex constellation of risk and protective factors that lead some individuals to support extremist groups and philosophies and, in rare cases, engage in acts of violence. Building an evidence base requires identifying unique social and political contexts that influence sympathy for violent radicalization. It is equally important to work internationally to identify risk and protective factors that transcend borders and can inform more widespread prevention efforts.

### Aims/Objectives/Issues of Focus

We aim to identify challenges in initiating, developing and maintaining transnational research partnerships on the topic of violent radicalization and present concrete recommendations and best practices to overcome barriers. Although we focus specifically on violent radicalization, we present a framework for identifying and working to resolve barriers to collaboration that are applicable to a range of topics in cultural psychiatry.

### Methods/Proposition

The authors reflect on their personal experiences engaging in multi-disciplinary, transnational research partnerships on violent radicalization that include researchers in North America and Europe.

### Results/Potential Outcomes

Researcher-specific attitudes and perspectives on violent radicalization are informed by the discipline in which she or he is trained, personal life experiences, as well as the historical and current social and political context in which she or he works. These attitudes and perspectives in turn influence the research process, including what research questions are asked, methods used, interpretation of study results, and implications of findings. Diverse, transnational partnerships frequently encounter tensions. We will argue that those divergences, beyond interpersonal and interdisciplinary perspectives, also reflect structural differences and the internalization of present social polarizations by the actors in the field.

### Discussion/Implications

Transnational collaborations require considerable self-awareness on the part of researchers and open communication to respectfully challenge and consider alternative points of view.

### Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Participants will be able to identify challenges in transnational research partnerships on violent radicalization
2. Participants will be able to identify strategies to overcome challenges and develop positive working relationships

### References

1. de Grijs R. (2015). Ten Simple Rules for Establishing International Research Collaborations. *PLoS Comput Biol* 11(10), e1004311. doi:10.1371/ journal.pcbi.1004311
2. Frounfelker, R.L., Frissen, T., Isabella, V., Rousseau, C. & d'Haenens, L. (2019). Exploring the discrimination-radicalization nexus: Empirical evidence from youth and young adults in Belgium. *International Journal of Public Health*. 64 (6), 897-908. DOI: 10.1007/s00038-019-01226-z