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Examining the use of education for certainty in an uncertain world: The educational impact of domestic threat.

A sense of global and domestic uncertainty, illustrated by the recent terror attack in Manchester, brings to the spotlight the role of education in national security. In 2012, Croft referred to schools as an emerging site of securitisation (p5); a phenomenon that has since increasingly grown. The challenge to security is often seen to be extremism, which in the work of Sewell and Hulusi (2016) is perceived as a response to uncertainty Preventing radicalisation to extreme positions in children and young people. Therefore, education is seen as a vehicle to provide certainty. This shift in education, firstly towards a form of security and secondly as a pillar for certainty is argued in my paper to be transforming the role of education, schools and the experiences of those attending.

Using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz,2014), my study explores the increasing use of education as a tool within security discourse. I analyse questionnaires and interviews with teachers and pupils to examine the impact of the paradigmatic shift in the purpose of education.

The most significant link created between security and education was made in the UK Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) This act defined a twofold statutory duty for all educationalists, from nursery to university, to identify and prevent radicalisation. In order to ensure adherence to this duty, it was then added to the Ofsted inspection framework (2015) which fail UK schools if not adequately addressed.

Identifying extremism involves the teachers' ability to recognise signs and safeguard a pupil against being radicalised. Preventing extremism involves the teaching of British Values; the support for 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs' (HM Gov,2013) To go against these values is the definition of extremism (Ibid.). However, it is here that the idea of education as countering uncertainty emerges. By inculcating a pupil with these clear values, they will be encouraged towards adherence to loyal citizenship, and thus away from uncertainty defined as a key feature of being radicalised (Sewell and Hulusi;2016).

However, this shift towards security and overcoming uncertainty through education raises concerns. Firstly, the notion of 'British' values ignore the potential for alienation felt among many pupils not-self defining as culturally British (Hoque,2015). Secondly, in a broader curriculum framework of certainty based knowledge, answers are defined as right or wrong, leading to a lack of development in critical skills (Syllabus:2015). This adversely results in increased pupil vulnerability to claims of certainty from internet sources and extremist groups. Thirdly, without the skills and acceptance of challenge, doubt and questioning, fixed values and unnegotiable answers result in a lack of resilience for pupils to respond to uncertainty. Therefore, in the face of global and domestic uncertainty,

it is not the learning of secure certainty by pupils that will build resilience, but rather a recognition of uncertainty and the development of analytical skills to be able to address it and respond accordingly.

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