

Women Involvement in Terrorism Acts in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the increasing number of women's involvement in acts of terrorism in Indonesia. The participation of women in acts of terrorism raises anxiety in Indonesian society and shows an increasing development of radicalism against women. They act as protectors and currently serve as combatants and are directly involved in acts of terrorism such as being suicide bombers. This phenomenon is a threat to Indonesia's national security and must be immediately anticipated by the Indonesian Government. Therefore, the research describes strategies that can anticipate threats to national security, such as acts of terrorism that use women as the main actors. This research is strengthened by data sourced from interviews, literature studies, and official documents from the Densus 88 and BNPT. The results of this study explain that the involvement of women in the activities of radical terrorist groups is a new trend to avoid the suspicion of security forces. Several factors influence women to be involved in the actions of radical terrorist groups, such as due to marriage, friendship, and social media ties. In overcoming the tendency of women to be involved in acts of terrorism in Indonesia, several strategies are needed that can be applied, such as through a humanitarian approach, an academic approach, and assistance in improving literacy for women.

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INTRODUCTION

The current strategic environmental transformation poses threats that can threaten the sovereignty and security of the state, such as the development of radicalism and the occurrence of acts of terrorism carried out by groups that want fundamental changes by disseminating ideas, thoughts, and actions against the nation and state. Radicalism has an understanding that desires to make fundamental changes to the ideological and social conditions that occur by using various means such as violence, anarchism, and extremes to create resistance (Hasani & Naipospos, 2010).

Meanwhile, terrorism is seen as the use of violence or the threat of violence that violates the law, motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs to create fear and coercion against the Government and society (United States Government US Army, 2021). According to Hasanuddin, Director of the Alvara Research Institute explained that someone who enters the circle of radicalism has several stages to go through, such as: starting to be exposed to understanding, then becoming radical after being exposed to attitudes, and finally becoming a terrorist after being exposed to actions (Tahir et al., 2020). So it can be concluded that the embryo for terrorism begins with an intolerant attitude and becomes a radical one. Brian M. Jerking argues that terrorists do not fall from the sky but come from beliefs that they consider vital and become radicalized, then become terrorists (Bakti, 2016).

Indonesia, a country with the largest Muslim population, is a convenient place for terrorist groups to spread radical ideology and carry out their acts of terror. Based on official data released by the National Police Headquarters, it was recorded that in 2020 there were 228 cases of terrorism arrests in Indonesia (Adyatama, 2020). The number of cases shows how the massive development of radicalism has occurred in Indonesia. In early 2021, two acts of terrorism occurred in Indonesia, the first being a suicide bombing at the Makassar Cathedral Church, South Sulawesi, on Sunday, March 28, 2021, by a married couple named Lukman and Yogi Sahfitri Fortuna. Then the second act of terror was on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, namely the shooting action by Zakiah Aini in the area of the National Police Headquarters.

What needs to be observed from the two acts of terror in early 2021 is the involvement of women in terror acts. In the first act of terror at the Makassar Cathedral Church, it was discovered that the perpetrators were a married couple. Then, in the second act of terror that occurred at the National Police Headquarters, the main perpetrator was a young woman aged 25 years. The two acts of terrorism in early 2021 add to the length of the phenomenon of terrorism cases involving the role of women as the main actors in Indonesia.

The involvement of women in acts of terrorism is not the only time. Previously in December 2016, Densus 88 had arrested two women, Dian Yulia Novi and Ika Puspitasari. The two women are former Indonesian migrant workers and have been indoctrinated and joined the radical group ISIS and both plan to carry out suicide bombings in two separate places, namely the Presidential Palace in Jakarta and a place in the province of Bali (Tribunnews.com, 2016). In August 2017, Anggi Indah Kusuma planned a bombing at the State Palace in Jakarta. Then in May 2018, there was a suicide bombing at the Surabaya church carried out by a family consisting of Puji Kuswati and her daughters, Fadilah Sari and Pamela Riskika, and two sons named Yusuf Fadil and Firman Halim.

Meanwhile, in a separate location in the Sidoarjo area, Puspitasari, a friend of Puji Kuswati, was killed in an explosion at the Wonocolo flat, Sidoarjo. Furthermore, in the same month, two female terrorist suspects of Dita Siska Melania and Siska Nur Azizah were arrested and had plans to attack police members at the Mobile Brigade Command Headquarters Kelapa Dua, Depok (Ikhsan, 2020). Moreover, in 2019, the Indonesian people were also shocked by the self-detonation action carried out by a mother and child, identified by her mother, Marnita Sari Boru Hutaeruk alias Solimah (wife of Asmar Husain alias Abu Hamzah). After a challenging

negotiation process, the team Densus 88 Antiterror surrounded his home in Sibolga, North Sumatra (Jawapos.com, 2019).

The participation of women in acts of terrorism as the main perpetrator creates concern in society regarding the dangers of developing radicalism towards women. Former Director of Enforcement of the BNPT, Petrus Golose, explained that terrorist groups began recruiting and using women to engage in terror acts in Indonesia. These women were recruited and placed into important positions in the war waged by the terrorist group Islamic State (ISIS) (Nurhayati, 2015). The involvement of women in acts of terror is inversely proportional to the view that women are creatures of tenderness and affection. According to terrorism observers, Harits Abu Ulya revealed that the purpose of involving women in terrorist acts is to obscure the traces of male terrorists, the existence of female terrorists so that they are separated from police observation (Qori'ah, 2019).

Leslie Dwyer and Elizabeth Rhoads explained that currently, the position of women in the radicalism movement could act as a logistics provider; liaison between group networks; tutor of children; da'wah and propaganda; managing social media; hide terrorists; bomb assembler; suicide bomb bride; and become combatants (Dwyer & Rhoads, 2018). The description explains that women have an essential role in radical terrorist groups, and this phenomenon needs to be watched out for because, based on data obtained from the Institute for Policy Analysis for Conflict (IPAC), from 2000 to 2020, there have been 39 women as prisoners related to terrorism cases in Indonesia (IPAC, 2020).

The tendency of women to be involved in acts of terrorism to date stems from the closeness of marriage and indoctrination through the internet or social media. Former Head of BNPT Suhardi Alius said that new members of terrorist groups do not need to come to Afghanistan to receive jihad education because social media alone can. Currently, many members of terror groups are indoctrinated through current technological developments, such as from the internet, social media, and private chat groups (Pinaridi, 2016). The indoctrination process has been felt in the case of Dian and Ika's involvement in the terror action plan at the Jakarta Presidential Palace and in Bali, both of which are active in various social media channels and also in the conversation application group managed by the ISIS-affiliated Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) group. In addition, Zakiah Aini, who was the perpetrator of the attack on the National Police Headquarters, was exposed to radical ideas sourced from the internet media and the religious study conversation group she joined.

The current development of radicalism that recruits men into terrorist groups and recruits women to be involved in terror group activities is a real new threat to the security of the Indonesian state. The recruitment of women aims to deceive the suspicions of the security forces, and this is something that the Indonesian Government needs to watch out for and anticipate, especially the authorities such as Densus 88, BNPT, BIN, and all ministries/agencies involved in assisting the prevention and eradication of terrorism. To overcome the threat of radicalism and the involvement of women in acts of terrorism in Indonesia, an effective prevention strategy is needed to deal with these threats. Therefore, this article will discuss how to analyze further the involvement of women in the network of radicalism groups and the people who influence them to be involved in it. Besides that, it also discusses practical strategies to overcome the threat of involving women in activities and acts of terrorism in Indonesia.

METHODS

In this article, the researcher uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell, the phenomenological approach is part of qualitative research that obtains data through observation and then analyzes and describes the phenomenon's experience (Creswell, 2016). According to Mawardi (2018), phenomenology is science-oriented to finding answers to visible facts.

In this study, the researcher determined the place of research at the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), The National Polices Densus 88 anti-terror squad. This place was chosen because it was considered relevant in answering the problems raised in this article. Researchers are directly involved in carrying out the data collection process and are directly involved with informants to conduct interviews and study documentation. Secondary data that the researcher will use are in the form of writings, regulations and the researcher use these as supporting documents. In conducting this research, the researcher became the main instrument. The researcher collected data and then grouped them based on the material to look for the relationship between them until the answer to the research was obtained, then a conclusion was drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Women's Involvement in Terrorism Actions in Indonesia

The involvement of women as the main actors in acts of terrorism in Indonesia is considered a new trend in the movement of radical terror groups in Indonesia. The involvement of women in radical groups has been going on for a long time, but only as supporters. Nevertheless, nowadays, women have taken a role in every real action of radical groups. A study says that a woman has various roles that are not always the same as a male actor. A woman can become an educator for her children and create a younger generation of terrorists. Besides that, she acts as a protector by hiding, rescuing, and providing a safe place for the perpetrators of terrorism; and become a combatant by contributing to acts of terrorism through the role of the fundraiser, transaction facilitator, and as the perpetrator of bombings (Cunningham, 2008).

The world's terrorist group that involves women in every act of terrorism today is ISIS. ISIS is a group movement that aspires to establish a state with a global Islamic caliphate system in the Middle East, but with its current development, ISIS calls itself the Islamic State and explains that its pattern of movement is no longer limited to Iraq and Syria. ISIS has bound the hearts of many people who do not understand the meaning of religion, they use propaganda techniques by utilizing technology, and this method is considered quite successful in increasing Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) to join ISIS.

The United Nations (UN) released that there have been 30,000 fighters from 100 countries to become ISIS Foreign Terrorist Fighters (Rahmanto, 2020). Meanwhile, based on data obtained from the Special Detachment 88 Anti-terror, it was stated that in 2019, 639 Indonesian citizens had joined ISIS in Syria, with the following details:

Identified				Unidentified	
Adult		Child		Men	Women
Men	Women	Men	Women		
234	125	84	62	133	1
505				134	
Total: 639 people					

Table 1: List of Indonesian Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Syria

Source: The National Polices Densus 88 anti-terror squad, 2019

Indonesian women who joined ISIS in Syria are usually invited by their husbands and also invite their children. Densus 88 detailed that 187 female Indonesian citizens were in Syria to participate in the ISIS group's struggle there, and the involvement of women in the activities of the ISIS terror group was one of their strategies. Other terrorism groups such as Jamaah Islamiyah, which is affiliated with Al Qaeda, prohibit women from carrying out acts of terrorism, but in contrast to terrorist groups such as ISIS, which claim that the obligation of jihad is carried out by everyone, both men and women. ISIS sees this phenomenon as an opportunity because it can reduce suspicion by the security apparatus. The difference in principles carried out by Al Qaeda, and ISIS in interpreting the role of women in each of their movements is based on changes in the ideology of Salafi jihadists, which they understand and accept the role of women in acts of terrorism (Wijaya, 2020).

Based on their functions, women who are involved in terrorism groups such as ISIS can carry out various functions, including First, to function as combatants or fighters on the front lines such as members of the Al Khansaa Brigade who are fighting to support ISIS in defending their territory; Second, being groomed as a jihadi bride, this function usually relates to marital relations with other members of the group to carry out suicide bomb attacks; and Third, it functions as a logistical preparation and funding for terror groups (AFP, 2015). Moreover, another function is a propagandist or recruiter for other women in various places to invite others to be involved in terrorist group activities disguised as religious studies activities. As in the case of the suicide bombing at the Makassar Cathedral Church, after the incident, three suspected perpetrators related to the incident were arrested, all of whom were female and identified as the motivator for the suicide bombers at the Makassar Cathedral Church (Republika.co.id, 2021).

Several factors influence the involvement of women in terrorist group activities and even acts of terrorism, one of the most common factors is marriage, friendship, and brotherly ties. Based on an interview with the Director of Identification and Socialization of Densus 88 Anti-terror Police, almost all women active in networks of radical terror groups such as JAD are exposed to radical ideas through their husbands (Shodiq, 2020). In addition, kinship ties are also influential, for example, in the case of a mother in Bogor inviting her family to join radical group activities and go to Syria (CSIS et al., 2017). The involvement of women's role in radical groups also demonstrated in their activities establish a halfway house and accommodate families of prisoners, terrorists, or families of martyrs perpetrators of acts of terrorism, such as those delivered during a joint interview Head of the Regional Task Force The National Polices Densus 88 Antiterror Squad, Didik Novi Rahmanto as saying that:

"The existence of a halfway house which is a home for the families of prisoners or the families of perpetrators of terror acts, usually filled by wives and children and located in the vicinity of the detention centers of terrorism convicts, but their existence is only temporary and often moves. The shelters are interconnected with a network of radical groups and are fostered by radical terrorist groups" (Personal communication, 2020)

Various motivations or other driving factors influence the increased involvement of women as perpetrators of acts of terrorism, driving factors and triggering women to participate in radicalism, namely: 1) The religious factor in her that is so strong with the doctrine of enforcing the caliphate is an obligation; 2) ideological factors adhered to by individuals such as the doctrine of hijrah, jihad, and martyrdom; 3) political factors based on responses to state decisions through policies issued; 4) the propaganda factor by carrying out provocation or propaganda through social media or the internet and influencing women to leave everything they have and turn to join radical groups (Sumbulah, 2019). Based on cases of terrorism that often occur in Indonesia, the involvement of women is believed to have originated from the jihadist ideology echoed by the ISIS group or currently the JAD group in Indonesia. The ideology of jihad is believed to be an obligation that both men and women must fulfill. This belief has led to rampant suicide bombing cases involving or involving the role of women.

The participation of women in terrorist radicalism networks is currently being exacerbated by the development of communication technology that facilitates communication between group members and is also used in conducting propaganda to get involved in radical groups. Based on the case of the involvement of women who participate in radical group activities or even become perpetrators of acts of terrorism, they receive jihad indoctrination from the internet or private conversation groups such as what was done by the attacker at the National Police Headquarters in early 2021, and she was exposed to the doctrine of jihad through the internet or social media and motivated to carry out jihad attacks.

Communication technology in the form of internet media currently has a vital role in disseminating information related to all thoughts, such as radicalism which is spread easily through technological advances. The target of radical groups in carrying out propaganda on the internet is young people. According to terrorism observers, Al Chaidar, when interviewed, explained that:

"Currently radical group movements have entered social media such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and other social media as well as Whatsapp and have become a means for conducting propaganda, recruiting, and planning terrorist acts to be carried out" (Personal communication, 2020)

Based on data from the Indonesian Terrorism Database, the Center for Anthropological Studies, Malikussaleh University, explained that in 2018 there were 72,061 sympathizers from 280 ISIS Facebook groups in 34 provinces in Indonesia (Rahman, 2021). Sympathizers radical groups are currently using the internet and social media to learn terror attack methods and ways of using violence. Besides that, they are also used to collect funds, distribute logistics, and expand group networks (Wijaya, 2020). Radical groups such as ISIS-affiliated JAD use social media to target young people who are the most significant users of social media today, and this is a real threat to

recruitment using current technological developments in the form of internet media and social media in cyberspace, and it influences society, especially young Indonesians, to get involved in radical group activities and acts of terrorism, especially the involvement of women in it.

Strategy for Preventing Women's Involvement in Terrorism Actions

Talking about preventing women's involvement in acts of terrorism cannot be separated from the deradicalization program owned by BNPT (National Counterterrorism Agency). BNPT is the spearheading agency in countering terrorism in Indonesia and is supported by other agencies such as the National Police's Anti-terror Detachment 88, the State Intelligence Agency, and other Ministries/Institutions. In dealing with the problem of women's involvement in radical group activities or acts of terrorism, the handling must be different from men's involvement. Referring to several cases in Indonesia, many women have been indoctrinated and willing to become wives of terrorists and become the brides of suicide bombers, such as the Makassar Cathedral Church case, the Dian Novita case, and the Puji Kiswati case. They were recruited through marriage, and it was their husbands who instilled the radical ideology of extremism.

Based on this phenomenon, it is complicated to explain, even though they act as perpetrators of radical groups or acts of terrorism, they are also victims of the ideology instilled by their husbands. Therefore, special handling of these problems is needed. In terms of countering terrorism in Indonesia, the BNPT has made efforts to handle it through hard and soft approaches. According to the Director of Identification and Socialization of The National Polices Densus 88 anti-terror squad, the handling of perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism takes precedence with a soft approach, in this case, building trust in all perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism, terrorist families, and ex-terrorist convicts so that they can invite and awaken others to return to the country Republic of Indonesia (Shodiq, 2020). However, if there is an intelligence report that the target of the operation has explosives or other evidence indicated to be an act of terrorism, then the arrest will be carried out, and law enforcement processes it, which is known as a preventive strike (Rahmanto, 2020). As of December 2020, Densus 88 Anti-terror Police has secured 956 people involved in terrorism activities (Shodiq, 2020).

In overcoming the problem of women's involvement in radical group activities and acts of terror in Indonesia, efforts are needed through a social approach by advocating for them to participate in society properly. The role of women is very strategic in counter-radicalization. Women can act as mothers, mentors, and community leaders and have the ability to detect changes in the behavior of those closest to them. They are mainly related to the mindset of their children. If a mother can resist radical ideologies, her child's mindset will be spared and not trapped in radical ideologies.

The rise in cases of women's involvement in radical group activities and acts of terrorism encourages efforts that need to be made to invite and embrace other women to be involved in counter-radicalism and deradicalization efforts. So that the case that often occurs when a woman who is the wife of the perpetrator of terrorism and is indoctrinated by her husband can be minimized and a woman has the courage not to follow their husband's radical doctrine. The importance of a gender perspective on gender equality in the strategy of preventing radical ideology of terrorism is that women can play their role in shaping norms and culture in their families so that gender equality can reduce exposure to radical ideologies in the family environment. In addition, efforts that need to be made to overcome radical ideas about terrorism

are through an academic approach by involving educational institutions through making studies related to moderate Islam in order to strengthen the character of Islam both behaviorally and ideologically so that it can have an impact on increasing awareness in one's personality, especially women to avoid radical ideology. Moreover, a program is also needed to empower women who have been involved in acts of terror through deradicalization, counter-radicalization programs, and assistance in the economic, social, political, and religious spheres (Sumbulah, 2019).

Regarding the problem of using information technology used by radical terrorist groups such as ISIS in conducting propaganda and targeting young people, therefore it is necessary to provide assistance to children from an early age and increase literacy skills for women in using social media so that they can have intelligence in using the internet to avoid the influence of radicalism (Sumbulah, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Involvement of women in radical groups and acts of terrorism in Indonesia has become a new trend carried out by radical groups such as JAD, which is affiliated with ISIS. Terrorism groups such as ISIS claim that the obligation of jihad is carried out by everyone, both men and women. The involvement of women is a strategy carried out and aims to disguise it from police observation. In Indonesia, the involvement of women in the activities and actions of radical terrorist groups is increasingly sticking out, based on various factors such as marriage, friendship, and brotherhood ties. In addition, it is also caused by the current advancement of information technology used by radical terrorist groups to carry out propaganda, recruitment via the internet and social media for young people, especially women, to join and be involved in radical group activities or to become perpetrators of acts of terrorism.

In overcoming the development of trends in the involvement of women in acts of terrorism, efforts must be made to minimize the threats and dangers from the development of radical ideologies and acts of terrorism in Indonesia. Efforts can be made by empowering women through a humanitarian or cultural approach through a strategic role in the family to counter-radicalize the family and dare to oppose radical ideological indoctrination. Furthermore, an academic approach involving educational institutions through studies related to moderate Islam strengthens the character of Islam both in behavior and ideology to increase one's awareness, especially women and their groups. Lastly, make efforts to provide assistance to children and increase literacy skills for women in using social media to have intelligence in using the internet to avoid the influence of radicalism, such as what has been running in the BNPT peace ambassador program.

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