

# Rethinking Concepts of De-Radicalization: an Effort to Mitigate Radicalism Through Education

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## ABSTRACT

A rise in radicalism and violence in Indonesia leads to important questions of how individuals be 'radicalized' that makes it difficult to combat radicalism. Hence, attempt to mitigate radicalism requires understanding the radicalization process and the concept of de-radicalization. This study aims at stimulating discussion on theories of radicalization and rethinking concepts of de-radicalization. This research addresses the question on how theories of radicalization process relate to efforts of de-radicalization through education applied recently in Indonesia. This study is a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of library research which uses theories of radicalization and concepts of de-radicalization as research data. This research critically analyses theories of de-radicalization on an attempt to mitigate radicalism through education. There are many models explaining the radicalization process toward an individual. Among the existing models of radicalization process, two influential models are Wiktorowicz's model and Sinai's model. Furthermore, based on researches of de-radicalization, concepts of Pressman and Golose give a comprehensive concept of de-radicalization and support efforts to mitigate radicalism through education. This study also proposes some strategies to mitigate radicalism in schools.

## Keywords:

rethinking;  
radicalism;  
radicalization; de-  
radicalization;  
education

## INTRODUCTION

A rise in radicalism and violence actions in Indonesia, despite the police achievement in arresting, neutralizing and rehabilitating ex-terrorists, leads to important questions of how individuals be 'radicalized' and why it is difficult to combat radicalism. Accordingly, effort to mitigate radicalism requires understanding the process of radicalization and the concepts of de-radicalization.

The concept of radicalization refers to the main source of terrorism. The term "violent radicalization" was introduced in Europe by policymakers after the bomb attacks in London and Madrid (Schmid, 2013). However, there are two meanings contained in this term: 1) in general it means 'radicalization to violence'; and 2) specifically it means a political violence known as 'terrorist violence against civilians' (Ibid, 2013). Since generally 'radicalization is perceived as an individual or group process of engagement in acts of terrorism' (Ibid, 2013), researchers deliberately use the term 'radicalization' instead of 'violent radicalization'.

Concerning theories of radicalization, researchers and authorities have proposed different concepts of radicalization, but none of the concepts can give a comprehensive definition of radicalization (Schmid, 2013). Many experts (such as Ashour and Della Porta & LaFree) define radicalization as a process distinguished by growing commitment to employ violence in political conflicts. On the contrary, authorities (such as the European Commission, US Homeland Security Institute) assert that radicalization is the process where individuals adopt extremist beliefs and behaviour. However, both academic and governmental definitions are unable to explain under what conditions such processes take place.

Moreover, researchers have disagreements on what 'radicalization' actually means, what triggers it and how to 'de-radicalize' those who are regarded as terrorists. Experts merely agree that "radicalization is a process" (Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011). Nevertheless, among researchers there is an ongoing debate concerning the process of radicalization. Some experts claim that radicalization mainly a top-down processes where members of terrorist organization mobilize vulnerable youths and turn them into followers (Hoffman, 2009). Other experts argue that radicalization principally as a "bottom-up process" in which individuals seek for an organization that permits them to follow an operation (Sageman, 2008). However, both models merely study radicalization process based on conditions where individuals become radicalized, leaving out those who were in similar situations but they did not experience radicalization (Barlett and Miller, 2012). Both models also fail to take account that there is no sole condition but "a mix of internal and external circumstances" that cause radicalization of individuals and turn them into terrorist (Kjok et. al, 2002).

This study is conducted to stimulate discussion and re-thinking concepts of radicalization because comprehending concepts of radicalization process is crucial to analyse the concepts of de-radicalization. In other words, this paper attempts to understand theories of radicalization process to reveal discrepancy on recent theories of de-radicalization and find religious teaching that hinder efforts to mitigate radicalism. More specifically, it will address the question: how does theories about radicalization process relate to the theory of de-radicalization through education that have been implemented recently in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This study uses the qualitative approach. In this study, the researcher uses a descriptive type of library research which uses theories of radicalization and concepts of de-radicalization as research data. Descriptive analysis is used by the researcher in order to describe the results of this study. This research presents briefly the need to comprehend radicalization process. Then it discusses theories of radicalization process and relate them with the concepts of de-radicalization that have been applied in Indonesia. Further, this research critically analyses recent theories of de-radicalization to identify issues dealing with efforts to mitigate radicalism through education.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Theories of Radicalization Process

What is actually meant by 'radicalization'? Researchers and authorities propose several notions concerning radicalization which cannot give precise definitions. Many experts define radicalization as 'a process marked by growing commitment to use violent methods and strategies in political conflicts' (Della Porta and LaFree, 2012). Meanwhile, authorities define radicalization as 'the phenomenon of people accepting thoughts, notions and views which could provoke acts of terrorism' (the European Commission, 2008) and as 'the process in which an individual or group embraces extremist beliefs and conducts' (US Homeland Security Institute, 2006). Nevertheless, both academic and governmental definitions fail to give a comprehensive definition of radicalization. There are several problems with such definitions: first, it arises the question about how radicalization process happens; second, the focus of studies on radical 'thoughts, opinions and views' is too broad; third, radicalization may cause

other types of conflicts apart from terrorism. Accordingly, there is no universally accepted definition among researchers and authorities.

Furthermore, many researches on radicalization emphasizes on Islamist 'extremism and jihadist terrorism' (e.g. Taarnby and Horgan & Bradock) and this one-sided view is certainly unable to give a comprehensive definition of radicalization. Taarnby (2005) describes radicalization as 'the gradual individual development from law-abiding Muslim to militant extremist'. Whereas, Horgan and Bradock (2010) assert that radicalization as 'the socio-psychological process of progressive experienced commitment to political fundamentalist or radical ideology'. Similarly, Ongerling (cited in Schmid, 2013) claims that radicalization is a 'process of personal progress where an individual embraces extreme political or religious ideas, becoming assured of these extreme views'. There are some drawbacks of these definitions. First, they assert that an individual involves in terrorist organization as a consequence of incidents in the Islamic world, but it is not true since every country has different conditions and political interests (Pargeter, 2008). Second, these concepts do not refer to the actual meaning of radicalization that covers the root causes of terrorism which are diverse (COT, 2008).

The term 'radicalization' derives from the words 'radical' and 'radicalize'. In the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (Hornby et al., 1974: 691) the word 'radical' means "from the root or base, fundamental" and 'radicalize' means cause to become'. In the study of terrorism, 'radicalization refers to the origin source of terrorism' (Schmid, 2013). Since the causes of terrorism are diverse, there is no single definition that comprehensively explains the term 'radicalization'. However, most scholars agree that 'radicalization is a process' (Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011).

Schmid (2013) states that radicalization involves a process of socialization and it is a gradual, phased process. Whereas, Sinai (cited in Schmid, 2013) defines radicalization as 'the process where individuals begin to be exposed and then accept extremist ideology'. Moreover, Baehr (cited in Schmid, 2013: 18) proposes that radicalization is a personal process triggered by external factors, precipitates a socialization when an individual undergo internalization and adoption of views. Then influenced by these views, the person tries to conduct a radical change of the social order. If the views stand for radical ideology, in a certain period of time the individual will adopt political views which lead to legitimization of violence (Bott et. al., 2006).

There are many models explaining the radicalization process toward an individual, e.g. Schmid's model, Borum's model, Dalgaard-Nielsen's model, Moghaddam's Staircase model, Wiktorowicz's model and Sinai's model. According to Schmid (2013:4) there are three levels of analysis that cause radicalization that leads to terrorism. They are micro-level (i.e. the individual level), meso-level (i.e. the radical environment), and macro-level (i.e. the state role and society at home and abroad). Each level of analysis contains the socio-psychological roots of 'radicalization, socialization, mobilization to terrorism' (Ibid, 2013). He asserts that a mix of internal and external factors which trigger radicalization of individuals and groups of people into extremists. Whereas, Randy Borum (2003) proposes four steps of radicalization to terrorism. First step is a person or a group realized that an event or circumstance is not right. Second step is an individual or a group determine that the event or condition is unjust. Third step happens when the individual considers the event or circumstance is the cause of injustice. The final step is blaming the other.

Meanwhile, Dalgaard-Nielsen (2010) identifies six stages of radicalization: first, determining a problem as an injustice event; second, making a moral justification to use violence (religious, ideological, political); third, placing the blame on the victims as their fault; fourth, dehumanizing the victims using provocative language and depreciative symbols; fifth, putting out responsibility (God or authorities instructed the individual to conduct violence) or delegating responsibility (not the person but the group is responsible); sixth, minimizing the harmful outcomes (by using less harsh words or by comparing with other worse conducts). However, both Borum's model and Dalgaard-Nielsen's model have some weaknesses. Both models merely emphasize on social and psychological approaches to the radicalization research which base on a personal perspective. Moreover, Veldhuis and Staun (2009) note that such models are generally built on few cases where individuals really become terrorists, disregarding those individuals in similar circumstance who did not undergo all of these phases.

In addition, Moghaddam (2009) proposes Staircase model of radicalization process for both Western and non-Western Islamic communities. He utilizes a shrinking staircase to explain step-by-step journey to the top level, making a base floor and five higher floors to symbolize each stage in the radicalization process which at the top floor, ends up with terrorism. The base floor represents 'a cognitive analysis' of the structural conditions in which the individual Muslim asks such question like "am I being treated fairly?" (Ibid, 2009). The individual starts to think what he considers to be unfair. For Moghaddam, people generally consider themselves on this 'foundational level'. Those who are very disappointed with certain situation, climbing up to the first floor to make a change in their condition. On the first floor, the individuals enthusiastically try to restore those situations they consider unjust. Some of them experience their social mobility is obstructed and their protests are extinguished. Then these individuals move up to the second floor where they face external targets for assault. They begin to put the blame for injustice on others such as the US and Israel. Some individuals are radicalized in mosques and other meeting places and eventually they climb up to the third floor of the staircase. Within this stage they encounter a psychological detachment from society and moral commitment to the terrorist network. Also in this phase, they support the use of violence by the terrorists as they concurrently condemn the moral values of the government. Some individuals move up the fourth floor, where they accept radical ideology. Here they begin to value structures of terrorist networks. They eventually reach the top fifth floor and commit acts of terrorism.

Although Moghaddam's Staircase model answers the problem which cannot be explained by Borum's model and Dalgaard-Nielsen's model, i.e. individuals who underwent similar situation but did not become terrorists, this model also has some drawbacks. First, this model describes that radicalization primarily a bottom-up process in which individuals search for a solution of their unjust circumstances which turn them to be member of terrorist organizations. Certainly, this model fails to take account various factors, both internal and external factors, that leads individual to involve in terrorist actions. Second, this model merely emphasizes on Islamist extremism and this one-sided view is surely incapable of giving a comprehensive understanding of radicalization.

On the other hand, Wiktorowicz (2004) outlines a four-step process of religious radicalism: 1) 'cognitive opening' - an individual begins to accept new thoughts and



worldviews; 2) 'religious seeking' - the individual seeks religious teachings for justification; 3) 'frame alignment' – the radical group gives arguments that are logical to the individual and draws his attention; 4) 'socialization' - the individual undergoes religious teachings and events that enable indoctrination, identity-construction, and change of values. The first three stages are essential prior circumstances for the fourth step, i.e. socialization. In other words, when a person does not accept new thoughts, does not experience the 'movement message', or refuses the message after first encounter, the person will not involve in activities that encourage him to embrace the ideology and join extremist group (ibid, 2004).

"Cognitive opening" is the first moment when an individual becomes receptive to radical views. This can be caused by social, political, cultural, economic, many types of alienation, discrimination, and personal problems (such as individual encounters discrimination, loss of the family or victim of a crime). An identity crisis can precipitate the individual open to radical ideology. Although this external circumstance instigating a 'cognitive opening' of an individual exists, it does not instantly turn the individual to be extremist. Not everybody who feels similar disappointments may involve in radical groups, instead one may follow mainstream groups or do nothing at all. Even if a person determines to follow a radical group, other factors such as his capacity to conduct radical activities also influence his choice. Above all, the majority of Muslims are civilians who want to live peacefully in their countries.

However, radical groups do not merely wait for a prospective recruit to encounter a personal crisis. Once an individual undergoes a crisis of identity, s/he looks for explanation. For many Muslims, they try to find solution through their faith, or "religious seeking." At this phase, the person encounters a process of "testing phase," obtaining knowledge from various sources by using various ways. Some cases are personal-based: the internet, the books and other media. Others choose a network-based: discussing with family, friends and religious leaders, including radical ones. Both methods involve "a process of coaxing that is distinguished by discussion and debate, an exchange of views through which radical groups try to convince seekers that the radical ideology gives logical solutions to the problems" (ibid, 2004).

Although a person is trying to find different kinds of religious teachings, s/he will not directly involve in a radical network. A study held in the United Kingdom (Choudhury, 2007) concerning Muslim identity shows that many Muslims utilize their religion for self-empowerment, social participation and society engagement. In the process of indoctrination, "the individual is an active agent rather than a passive object" (Wiktorowicz, 2004; Beutel, 2009). Such a "testing phase" is precarious because the seeker is also susceptible to radical brainwash due to his lack of mainstream religious teachings. At this point the existence of radical ideology and networks are essential since religion is utilized to "reframe" one's worldview (Wiktorowicz, 2004: 9; Choudhury, 2007: 6), i.e. converts the individual to the radical views and makes him/her approve violent actions. Thus, it is not surprising that many researches indicate most terrorists did not have adequate religious knowledge (Sageman, 2008; Choudhury, 2007) and were secular individuals before following a radical group (Sageman, 2008). Hence, religious authority and valid religious knowledge are not only vital in preventing radical ideologies at ummah level (Muslim society) but also at the level of individual believer (Bulliet, 2006).

Ironically, arguments delivered by recruiters to legalize their violence conducts are lack of religious justifications. In fact, such reasons are grievance-based, focusing

on 'a pan-nationalist Muslim identity', not individual faith (Beutel, 2009). The proposition underlines this strategy is that Muslim recruits tend to voluntarily die protecting their repressed Muslim brothers rather than for theoretical political notions like "Islamic State" or a "Caliphate" (Lia, 2008: 3-4).

Finally, after an individual agrees with the radical ideology, the individual undergoes "socialization" process, in which s/he interacts with other group members and participates in radical movements. In this period the individual shifts from a seeker to a devoted member by internalizing the group belief and during the process s/he undergoes identity reconstruction. Radical networks fortify this process to alienate the individual from the mainstream society (Wiktorowicz, 2004).

This study agrees with Wiktorowicz's model in explaining the process of radicalization towards an individual. However, Wiktorowicz's model is based on 'human-to-human interaction', excluding the internet role (Beutel, 2009). Since terrorist groups use internet extensively for recruiting members and planning attacks (Elliot, 2007), such process significantly becomes a mix of human interaction and the internet (Beutel, 2009). Moreover, Wiktorowicz's research largely emphasizes on the individual process of becoming radical and less discussion on how other factors influence the individual to join radical movements.

Meanwhile, Sinai (2012:12) an expert on terrorism and counter-terrorism, divides radicalization process into three phases: (i) Radicalization, (ii) Mobilization (a type of active involvement), and (iii) Action (i.e. terrorism). For the Radicalization phase, Sinai proposes six groups of factors: 1) 'personal factors', for instance 'a cognitive opening' when an individual seeks for a political or religious ideology to tackle the individual's issues; 2) 'political and socio-economic factors', such as poverty, isolation, and discrimination; 3) 'ideological factors'; 4) 'community factors', for example the existence of radical social structure within individual's community; 5) 'group factors', for instance the existence of a radical network in one's community; 6) 'enabling factors' that give facilities and chances to be a terrorist. Whereas, the Mobilization phase consists of three main elements: (i) 'opportunity' (e.g. connection with a terrorist organization), (ii) 'capability' (e.g. the ability to use weapons), and (iii) willingness to perform activities for a terrorist group. Finally, the Action phase is the stage when a terrorist group select the target and conduct actual attacks.

Both Wiktorowicz's diagram and Sinai's model emphasizes the cognitive opening as the first phase when an individual opens to radical ideas. Wiktorowicz's findings focuses on the process of radicalization experienced by an individual; whereas Sinai's concepts give the external factors that endorse the process of radicalization towards an individual. Together these models can give a comprehensive concept of the radicalization process. Understanding the concepts of radicalization process is crucial to reveal discrepancy on recent theories of de-radicalization that have been applied.

## **2. Concept of De-Radicalization**

This study attempts to find discrepancy on recent theories of de-radicalization that cause programs of de-radicalization in Indonesia less effective. As a matter of fact, some ex-terrorists who underwent the programs of de-radicalization conduct terrorist actions in some parts of the country, e.g. in Samarinda (2016), in Singkawang (2016). Based on the existing researches on de-radicalization, there are some theories of de-radicalization that give a comprehensive concept of de-radicalization and description of de-radicalization programs that have been applied.

Schmid (2013: 29) and Clubb (2009) claim that like radicalization, de-radicalization is also defined as a process. It begins with 'assertive disengagement' (declare to detach oneself), followed by 'behaviour disengagement' (act of detaching oneself), then 'organisation disengagement' (leave the organization) and finally de-radicalization. Schmid (2013: 40), Bjorgo and Horgan (2009) conceptualize de-radicalization as 'any attempt that is intended to avoid radicalization'. This is the process of making less radical which employs both behaviour and ideology. Moreover, John Horgan (2010) describes de-radicalization as 'programs that are aimed at converting radical individuals in order to reintegrate them into society or prevent them from violence.' In this context, programs and policies directed to tackle some circumstances that trigger some individuals to terrorism. The programs include a package of political, social, economic, law and educational programs particularly designed to dissuade radicalized individuals from becoming terrorists.

Researches concerning de-radicalization programs prevail in both Muslim countries and the Western world (Ashour, 2009; El-Said and Harrigan, 2012; Vermeulen and Bovenkerk, 2012). Based on researches conducted in 34 countries, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN/CTITF, 2008) identifies nine kinds of national de-radicalization programs: 1) prison programs; 2) education; 3) encouraging inter-cultural dialogue and civilizations; 4) handling social and economic disparities; 5) worldwide programs to oppose radicalization; 6) the internet; 7) law reforms; 8) developing and sharing information; 9) training agencies in applying counter-radicalization laws.

These national de-radicalization programs have multiple objectives. Bjorgo and Horgan (2009) summarize the aims of the programs into eleven categories: i) Decreasing the number of terrorist members; ii) Diminishing violence and persecution; iii) Re-orienting ideology and behaviours of the radical members; iv) Re-socialize ex-terrorists back to regular life; v) Obtaining knowledge, proofs and witnesses in court; vi) Employing penitent ex-terrorists to make opinions; vii) Precipitating disagreements within the terrorist sphere; viii) Giving repentant individuals a way out from terrorism and 'underground' life; ix) Minimizing the use of repressive means and employing more considerate means in tackling terrorism; x) Minimizing social and economic costs used for supporting imprisoned terrorists for a long time; xi) Intensifying the government legitimacy.

Above all, based on the process of de-radicalization, Schmid (2013: 41) classifies the national de-radicalization programs into two general types: 1) 'personal de-radicalization', using religious and psychological counselling to make a change of view and 2) 'collective de-radicalization', using political dialogues to make behaviour change (e.g. cease fire, abolishing the use of weapons). An example of individual de-radicalization is conducted by Singapore government; whereas the other approach is utilized by Egypt government. On the other hand, Indonesian government implements these two models (Ranstorp, 2009).

Meanwhile, D. Elaine Pressman from Public Safety Canada (Schmid, 2013: p.47) has summarized some factors based on an analysis of various de-radicalization projects: 1) 'De-radicalization factors', i.e. refusal of radical ideology, refusal of violence, substitution of violent means, and eagerness to de-radicalize; 2) 'Disengagement factors', i.e. consider violence as a false strategy, disappointment with the former religious leadership, change in ideology, disappointment with radical organization, and getting away from radical movements; and 3) 'Protection factors',

i.e. the influence of family/close friend/spouse which makes individual refuse violence, the influence of community that drives individual away from violent actions, replace one's perception of enemy to be more moderate, change of one's view about social alienation, and confirmation with non-violent notion.

On the other hand, Golose (2010) asserts that de-radicalization programs have many goals: 1) conducting counter terrorism, 2) preventing radicalization process, 3) preventing terrorist provocation, intolerance, and religious conflicts, 4) preventing dissemination of radical ideology within society and indoctrination of radicalism, 5) improving the knowledge of the society to reject radicalism and terrorist actions, and 6) enriching the knowledge of different interpretation of holy scripts. Moreover, he explains that efforts of counter terrorism have certain characteristics: soft power approach and cultural approach. Concerning programs of de-radicalization, Golose proposes six stages based on "Soul Approach": 1) input, 2) identification and classification, 3) integrated management, 4) soul approach and reorientation of motivation, 5) multiculturalism and self-reliance, 6) output. These programs are held through education of religion, culture, and social in the forms of reorientation of motivation, re-education, re-socialization, and assistance for ex-terrorist in social, economic and medical needs.

Both Pressman's model and Golose's model emphasizes on individual de-radicalization', utilizing religious and psychological advice to change individual's view and 'collective de-radicalization', employing political dialogue to attain behaviour change. Pressman's concept presents factors that affect process of de-radicalization while Golose's findings focus on soft power approach and cultural approach which is called "Soul Approach". Together these models can give a comprehensive concept of de-radicalization to formulate appropriate de-radicalization programs in Indonesia.

### **3. The Role of Education in De-radicalization Program in Indonesia**

Researches on de-radicalization programs in Indonesia are still limited. Even in the face of increasing radicalism and terrorist actions, Indonesia has no systematic grand design to deal with terrorism. The former Head of the Indonesian National Police's Special Detachment 88 (Densus 88) General Tito Karnavian (cited in Hasan, 2012) stated that 'any 'soft' and 'hard' approaches conducted so far were actually personal and ad-hoc initiatives – things that operate best under certain circumstance'.

Historically, almost all of the state's responses to radicalism and terrorism base on the 'hard approach' in which 'neutralizing the enemy' as the key. In other words, the state counters radicalism and terrorism by using 'an enemy-centric' approach (Ibid, 2012). It can be observed from the use of tactical operations and security apparatus in combating radicalism and terrorism. The 'enemy-centric' strategy views 'terrorism' as 'terrorist tactics', emphasizing on their operational behaviour rather than on the causes of terrorists' strategy and their existence (Ibid, 2012). The drawback of such approach is that it does not annihilate terrorism but persist the threat of terrorism for a long time.

Dealing with de-radicalization program in Indonesia, Golose (2010) supports the implementation of 'soft' approach and cultural approach which he calls "Soul Approach". Golose proposes six phases based on "Soul Approach": 1) input, 2) identification and classification, 3) integrated management, 4) soul approach and reorientation of motivation, 5) multiculturalism and self-reliance, 6) output. These programs are conducted through education of religion, culture, and social. Obviously, Golose emphasizes the role of education in mitigating radicalism. Moreover, analyzing



the common elements in various programs of de-radicalization, Pressman (2009) proposes the implementation of the 'soft' approach in many countries including Indonesia. These elements involve: 1) knowing terrorist motives (social, psychological, and economic factors) for following terrorist organization; 2) giving financial support to ex-terrorist families through educational assistance, stipend, and employment as deterrent of violence action; 3) replacing individuals from social networks and the surroundings that endorse radical views; and 4) involving family members (parents, spouses, relatives) to promote de-radicalization.

Furthermore, a case study of de-radicalization and counter-terrorism in Indonesia conducted by Magnus Ranstorp (2009) identifies some factors that endorse the success of de-radicalization program and counter-terrorism: i) religious leaders (ulama) who can address anti-violence actions and get widespread public support; ii) teachers and religious leaders who can provide the logical and religious assistance for a tolerant and harmonious teachings of Islam; iii) interfaith dialog among different cultural and religious groups; iv) collaboration with pop idols who have huge fans from young people; v) state leaders who can tackle factors that propagate radicalism; vi) business leadership that offers financial support. However, Ranstorp's study merely base on the analysis of the 'soft' approach but fails to consider the 'hard' approach.

Interestingly, despite capturing suspected terrorist and applying strategical attacks, Indonesian government has implemented the 'hard' approach with 'soft' one through the de-radicalization programs. General Tito Karnavian (cited in Hasan, 2012) emphasizes the use of the 'soft' approach to tackle 'new terrorism' which he believes merely ideologically driven. The 'soft' approach focuses on persuasive methods and it has three objectives: convincing imprisoned terrorist to discard violence and leave his former environment will make him abandon radical ideology; motivating ex-terrorist to be an intelligence within his terrorist organization; and employing 'converts' in order to persuade other detainees and militants to collaborate with the government. A study carried out by International Crisis Group (ICG, 2007) shows that soft approach is very beneficial in encouraging many extremists to leave terrorism and cooperate with the government.

However, in Indonesia the de-radicalization programs conducted by applying soft and hard approaches cannot be implemented effectively without involving every aspect of society – particularly moderate Islamic organizations – to confront the spread of radical views at the grass roots' level. This can be observed from the fact that terrorist networks keep on disseminating radical religious doctrines and prejudices within Indonesian society, e.g. in Tangerang (2024) and in Gresik (2024). Accordingly, civil society's participation on efforts to mitigate radicalism by tackling dissemination of radical ideology through education is crucial.

The National Counter-Terrorism Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terrorisme, BNPT) realizes that civil society's support is crucial for countering terrorism effectively. The role of civil society is vital because the government has limited budget, technology and human resources to raise funds and develop de-radicalization programs. Indeed, civil society plays an essential part in the struggle against Islamist radicalism.

Indonesia has systematically changed from an 'enemy-centric' towards 'population-centric' approach (Hasan, 2012). In this way, the state's effort to apply both 'hard' and 'soft' approaches becomes the best strategy in combating terrorism. The 'hard approach' is described as operations that are conducted by the government that

emphasizes the use of security apparatus (the Police and Military) through infiltrations, tactical attacks, detentions, and killings. On the contrary, the 'soft approach' is considered as the role of the non-security apparatus (such as Education Ministry and Islamic organizations). Hence, this study attempts to propose de-radicalization programs to mitigate radicalism through education.

Attempts to counter radicalization through education involve schools and universities, specifically religious schools since they can be the target of radical groups as their potential sources. Mainstream Muslim organizations (such as the Muhammadiyah the NU, and al-Irsyad) and the more conventional organization (such as Persatuan Islam or Islamic Union), which manage various schools and institutions, are intended to initiate critical ways of thinking. They can promote democratic ideas and multicultural values among their students, who are the primary targets for terrorist recruitments. Religious authorities can perform a main role in rectifying fallacious perceptions of Islamic doctrines and confronting the notion that Islamist terrorists are heroes. On the one hand, they can diminish radical Islamist doctrine, and promulgate tolerant and peaceful Islamic teachings, on the other. Also, they can reformulate their da'wa methods by incorporating Islam peaceful messages. Moreover, the media (TV, radio, newspapers, Internet) also plays an essential role in dispersing right information and peaceful Islamic teachings. In such a way the religious authorities can counteract the spread of radical doctrines.

Furthermore, the state has carried out several programs to tackle the dissemination of radical doctrines in educational institutions. The government has established a curriculum that is designed at supporting character building and enhancing student competence. Also, the government has initiated educational regulations that encourages collaboration among different religious people, ethnicities, and cultures. Moreover, the government has held tutoring for teachers from different lessons, especially religious teachers. However, the government conducts insufficient supervision in applying the program. In addition, the program does not emphasize multiculturalism and tolerance between religious communities. Hence, despite the state's attempts to elevate the education quality and support harmonious religious teachings, in fact radical doctrines are still disseminated among teachers, students and the community.

This study proposes several strategies that can mitigate radicalism at schools. First, prioritizing the value of diversity at educational institutions. Schools serve as suitable places for building tolerance and diversity awareness. Attempts to enhance de-radicalization program can be conducted by elevating the capacity of teachers, principals, and education officers within the Education Ministry. Second, intensifying parent collaboration to assure that their children do not undergo discrimination or follow radical ideology. In addition, schools can also elevate the role of teacher forums. The teacher forum is a place where teachers can jointly find solutions to foster the value of tolerance and harmonious life. Third, establishing an internal performance audit pattern at schools. In doing so, the principles of accountability, transparency and non-discrimination services serve as the indicators of school success. Fourth, the government and school leaders hold tutoring for teachers to confront radical movement. Fifth, the principals formulate a school vision that supports tolerance and conduct Scout activities as compulsory extracurricular activities to build student character. Sixth, teachers incorporate local wisdom in their subjects delivered in classroom. School management supports multicultural awareness by endorsing

history education and promoting local content curriculum, for instance Javanese language and batik lessons. Seventh, developing character education based on Pancasila values in learning and daily life. Meanwhile, to prevent the spread of radical ideology through Rohis, mentoring is carried out by students and alumni under the supervision of teachers and principal.

Furthermore, the government can also involve moderate Islamic mass organizations, such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and al-Irsyad which run various educational institutions, to deal with the spread of radical doctrines at the grassroots. They can assist government by fostering tolerance, democratic and multicultural values among religious communities in schools. Also, religious authorities can conduct a major role in rectifying misinterpretations of Islamic religious teachings to mitigate extremist ideologies. Although 'the security approach' carried out by the state is useful for dealing with terrorist assaults, 'the soft approach' which include civil society participation known as 'the Population-Centric Approach' is further enhanced as an effort to increase awareness among the public to avoid the propagation of radical ideology.

### **Limitations**

This study has some limitations. The research is a qualitative study which utilizes a descriptive type of library research. Hence, in order to observe the implementation of de-radicalization notions, the study needs to be conducted in schools and universities. In doing so, the study can help the authorities in mitigating radicalism and encouraging interreligious tolerance. Also, this study emphasizes on a conceptual thought; therefore, it requires further research to get comprehensive understanding of de-radicalization theories

### **CONCLUSION**

This study has explored theories of radicalization and de-radicalization and has connected these theories to investigate how education plays an important role on attempts of mitigating radicalism. The paper has shown how understanding a comprehensive concept of radicalization process is essential to find discrepancy on the programs of de-radicalization. Also, the paper has shown the importance of civil society's participation on the accomplishment of the de-radicalization programs and counter-terrorism. More specifically, the paper has presented the important role of civil religious organization, such as the NU, the Muhammadiyah, in delegitimizing radical Islamist ideology and disseminating peaceful and tolerant Islam through education.

Moreover, this study reveals several strategies to mitigate radicalism through education. First, prioritizing multicultural principles (diversity) in schools. Second, cooperating with parents to avert discrimination and intolerance among students. Third, conducting school performance audits. Fourth, collaborating with moderate Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama to counteract the dispersion of radical views. Fifth, the Ministry of Education collaborates with civil to counter radical ideology by conducting training and peace education. Sixth, the government needs to apply education policies that promote awareness of the nation's history and endorse interreligious and intercultural tolerance. Seventh, supporting personality building based on Pancasila values and equipping the younger generation with skills and wisdom in facing the challenges of globalized world. Therefore, the government needs to utilize all means, namely formal education (for instance schools and universities) and informal education (for example religious meetings, mass media,

publications and the website). Moreover, at the regional level the government needs to implement policies on how curriculum-based schools endorse local wisdom to mitigate radicalism and motivate tolerance among religious believers and people of different cultures. Therefore, it is very important to conduct educational programs in which local traditions, such as folklore, traditional performances and craftworks, can be utilized as syllabus design and teaching materials embedded in school curriculum.

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