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DERADICALIZATION PROGRAMS IN INDONESIA: PERSPECTIVES OF FORMER TERRORIST CONVICTS

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Abstract

The widespread menace of terrorism on a global scale has been universally recognized as a substantial and urgent problem. The Indonesian government should prioritize the prevention of radicalization, particularly through deradicalization programs for convicted terrorists, in its fight against terrorism and radicalization. This study primarily aims to examine the performance of deradicalization programs by exploring the perspectives of individuals involved in acts of terrorism throughout three distinct periods. The data of this study was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. This study reveals several aspects that influence the impacts of government-led deradicalization initiatives. The affecting factors include the level of an individual's motivation to be involved in terrorism, the employed approaches, the appropriate strategy and operational procedures, coaching materials, figures involved

in program coaching, and the applied methods. This study offers insight in which deradicalization programs out of prisons requires synergy with other related parties by involving existing stakeholders. The related parties can offer support and facilitate the availability of resources that ex-convicts require in accordance with their respective authorities.

Keywords: Deradicalization, Preventing Radicalization, Terrorist Convicts, Program Impacts, Terrorism

A. Introduction

The global threat posed by terrorism is widely recognized as a significant and pressing concern. Indonesia, in turn, faces great difficulties in the fight against terrorism, which cannot be overcome only by strengthening the powers of counterterrorist agencies. In the ongoing fight against radicalization and terrorism, the Indonesian government should prioritize the prevention of radicalization, particularly among the youngest and most vulnerable, and the establishment of disengagement or deradicalization programs for both convicted terrorists and returnees (Allais, 2022). Approximately 20% of former terrorism prisoners tend to reengage in terrorist activities after their release from correctional facilities (Riyanta et al., 2021).

The deradicalization process, which is regarded as the most effective method for eradicating terrorism cases in Indonesia, is less than optimal with indicators of the many acts of terrorism occurring in Indonesian territory (Ipandang & Umiarso, 2021; Subagyo, 2021). The allocation of government facilities and resources for rehabilitation and deradicalization programs is significantly limited. The limited number of government rehabilitation programs in correctional facilities (Muluk *et al.*, 2019; Schulze, 2008) poses a significant risk of

recidivism among former combatants and convicts, leading to a resurgence of acts of violence (Ismail, 2014).

Research on deradicalization programs in Indonesia has intensified in the last few years. Numerous scholarly studies have been undertaken to examine deradicalization programs in Indonesia, encompassing many different perspectives. These studies extend beyond the analysis of deradicalization programs exclusively targeting former terrorists since they also encompass efforts aimed at students. The investigations can be categorized into three distinct categories.

First, studies that examine deradicalization programs from a values perspective. These studies examine the deradicalization program from the aspect of human rights values (Hilmy, 2013), civic values (Biyanto, 2019), values of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (Ipandang & Umiarso, 2021), and universal values of Pancasila (Setiyono & Natalis, 2023).

investigate Second. studies deradicalization a process standpoint. These studies programs from evaluate deradicalization program from the aspect of deradicalization efforts (Febriyansah et al., 2017), outcome of the program (Zuhri, 2017), the role of spouse in the process of deradicalization (Fikriyati, 2018), deradicalization Indonesian deportees for (Anindya, 2019). program implementation and challenge of the program (Widya, 2020), implementation of an economic empowerment program for the wives of ex convicted terrorists (Ramadhyas et al., 2020) economic empowerment is necessary to be implemented as deradicalization effort for ex-terrorist prisoners' families besides the one for the perpetrator or former perpetrators of criminal terrorism acts. Economic empowerment which

is carried out by the National Counterterrorism Agency of Indonesia (BNPT, re-education for terror convicts (Rufaedah *et al.*, 2020), implementation of the pentahelix model in the program (Subagyo, 2021), efficient rehabilitation (Sirait et al, 2021), deradicalization efforts in Indonesia have moved Islamic radicals toward a different radicalism (Muhammad & Hiariej, 2021), role of non-state actors in deradicalization (Riyanta *et al.*, 2021; Sila & Fealy, 2022), counter-narrative strategies in deradicalization (Setiyono & Rasyid, 2022) competencies needed for staff working with terrorism offenders in Indonesia (Sukabdi *et al.*, 2022).

Third, the study of deradicalization programs in educational institution settings. These studies investigate the emergence of radicalism among Muslim students in state universities, as well as their efforts to participate in self-deradicalization (Sirry, 2020), deradicalization strategy in religion through strengthening the understanding of Pancasila at Islamic boarding madrasahs (Ihsan & Fatah, 2021)including Madrasah Aliyah (MA, the magnitude of the influence of character education and teacher attitudes for deradicalization in junior high school (Chairunnisa & Istaryatiningtias, 2022) raise public awareness and change public perception. This study aimed to assess the magnitude of the influence of character education and teacher attitudes for deradicalization. Methodology: This study used the mixed method research design. combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collection techniques included questionnaires and surveys. From the population of 257 students of 8 junior high schools in Pondok Aren Regency, South Tangerang City, Banten, Indonesia, a sample of 147

respondents was selected through purposive sampling method. Data analysis utilized the descriptive statistics used SPSS. Findings: The average score from 147 respondents shows that most respondents gave a high score toward character education in deradicalization. The endogenous variables of character education and teachers' attitudes toward deradicalization had a greater contribution (53.7%, deradicalization of educated youth (Suyanto *et al.*, 2022) and role of a study center to reduce religious conservatism and radicalism in some *pesantren* (Wildan & Muttaqin, 2022).

Last, studies that examine deradicalization programs from the perspective of former terrorists. These studies examine experiences of deradicalization and disengagement and the perceived implication of the experiences on their identities (Syafiq, 2019), out-group contact in the process of leaving terrorism (Saloom, 2019), deradicalization program in the view of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) returnees (Rahmanto *et al.*, 2020), disengagement and social reintegration of former terrorists (Mubaraq *et al.*, 2022).

However, despite the growing interest in deradicalization programs, little research has been devoted to this topic that looks into ex-convicts' perspectives on these programs. A study from Mubaraq *et al.* (2022) examines disengagement and social reintegration by delving deeper into the backgrounds of former terrorists and their process of transitioning towards a more moderate ideology rather than focusing solely on deradicalization programs.

Hence, studies on the effectiveness of deradicalization programs that explore the perspective of former terrorists in Indonesia are still lacking. For this reason, research on the effectiveness of the government's deradicalization program through correctional institutions is essential. Building on the earlier work, the main aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of deradicalization programs through an investigation of the perspectives of individuals involved in acts of terrorism throughout three distinct periods.

B. Literature Review

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the deradicalization program is crucial in order to ascertain its level of success or failure. However, one of the most persistent issues associated with deradicalization efforts is program personnel's reluctance to disclose their findings regarding their successes and failures (Braddock, 2020).

Several studies have examined deradicalization programs. For example, Dechesne (2011) evaluated the existing deradicalization programs. The evaluation resulted in three main findings: firstly, deradicalization programs targeting right-wing extremism predominantly prioritize modifying behavioral patterns rather than altering ideological beliefs; secondly, there is presently an inadequate understanding of the underlying motivations that drive individuals to undergo deradicalization; and thirdly, the utilization of psychological insights to enhance the effectiveness of deradicalization efforts remains insufficient.

One interesting study was carried out by Dugas and Kruglanski (2014). This study examined empirical evidence from a sample of individuals who were previously affiliated with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a terrorist organization in Sri Lanka. The findings support the efficacy of

deradicalization programs that focus on addressing motivation and ideology. The study concludes that such programs yield more significant counterterrorist advantages compared to the mere detention of terrorists without any intervention.

Webber *et al.* (2018) have also undertaken a study on the LTTE in Sri Lanka. It suggested that group processes significantly impacted the probability of individuals undergoing deradicalization. The beneficiaries who had lost contact with those involved in extremist ideologies exhibited a notably reduced level of support for violent extremism compared to those who maintained connections with radical individuals.

El-Said and Harrigan (2018) systematically analyzed the counter-radicalization and deradicalization efforts in eight Muslim-majority states: Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. They concluded that deradicalization programs have proved more effective and successful when grounded in a deep understanding of the root causes that contribute to the emergence of violent extremism within a national or local context (El-Said & Harrigan, 2018)

Deradicalization programs can be effective, but not for everyone (Horgan *et al.*, 2020). Deradicalization can be successful only in terrorism convicts under the category of terrorism sympathizers instead of members of executioners/ideologists. This is mainly because the latter group plays an essential role in planning or spreading the violent ideology (Aprilianto & Zahidi, 2021).

Based on the previously mentioned research, it can be inferred that the concept of deradicalization remains insufficiently

fully understood, and a definitive approach to guarantee its universal effectiveness has yet to be developed. Therefore, it is crucial for Indonesia to establish its deradicalization programs that are tailored to its specific circumstances. The effectiveness of deradicalization programs in Indonesia can be evaluated through the utilization of guidelines derived from prior research conducted in other countries.

C. Method

Data collection was conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with several terrorism ex-convicts who have served their sentences and several officials from the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT, Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme) who have the task of preventing radicalism and deradicalization. The interviews were conducted from April to August 2021 at their homes and designated places.

The unit of analysis of this research is an individual, namely ex-terrorist convicts. The selection of key informants was carried out using the purposive sampling technique, which is the selection of informants who are considered capable of providing views and understanding of the problem. Triangulation is employed to avoid bias and researcher subjectivity throughout the data collection process. Data acquired through some particular technique and source has been compared with data obtained from other sources of information.

In this study, key informants, namely ex-convicts, are classified based on period, namely: a) the early period, namely prisoners arrested on April 17, 2003, represented by Mr. NA

from JI network members; b) the middle period, namely prisoners arrested on August 7, 2011, represented by Mr. KW from NII network members who had joined MMI and JAD; and c) the latest period, namely prisoners arrested on July 13, 2017, represented by Mr. AR from JAD network members. Classification is needed to determine the development of radicalization and deradicalization models from each period.

The following process is data analysis, which is the process of systematically searching and compiling the data obtained. The data analysis in this study employs the qualitative data analysis framework outlined by Miles *et al.* (2014), which involves three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The researchers began with data condensation through an inductive coding process, where patterns and themes emerged directly from the data. As Thomas (2006) identified, this approach anchors extensive raw text data onto themes or keywords for easy identification, links categorical segments to research objectives, and theorizes on underlying data patterns.

Following initial coding, the researchers categorized the emergent themes into a structured framework and cross-referenced them with existing literature to provide a robust context for interpreting the findings. The researchers conducted a comprehensive analysis by integrating coded data with previously established theoretical frameworks. We further discussed the results, highlighting the distinctive findings of the study and its similarities or differences in comparison with previous studies, thereby providing a thorough and meaningful analysis.

D. Results

Acts of terrorism are generally based on a belief or ideology that legalizes and justifies, as well as motivates, the means to achieve certain goals by using violence to cause fear and as many victims as possible in an irregular manner. For this reason, de-ideology or the reduction of extreme-radical ideology of terrorism is an important part of the assistance for terrorism convicts.

In the view of Mr. NA, a former terrorist convict who is now much involved by the government in the deradicalization program, the deradicalization program seems to be trial and error. Mr. NA suggested:

This is not right. There should be research, related to which activities are already good, which must be maintained. Meanwhile, what is lacking must be perfected, so there is continuity. There is an impression that the deradicalization program adheres to the principle that every year, the program must be different, but it should not be like that. (Mr. NA, Personal communication, May 25, 2021)

According to Mr. NA, several stages need to be considered in deideology, eradicating or suppressing ideas and beliefs that serve as the foundation for its radical organization. Mr. NA said:

If they argue that an Islamic state is not obligatory, then deideology cannot be accepted immediately. Here deradicalization, the first stage needs to lead to the human side first. For example, a discussion about whether it is permissible to kill humans? Is Indonesia a target for jihad? And other similar questions. At this stage, deradicalization is directed

at the view that the bombings carried out so far are not true. This must be accompanied by various arguments. After he accepts, deideology can only be done. Some deideology processes are successful, some are not. That takes time. If the prisoner is a cleric, then it cannot be immediately successful, it will take time. However, if the terrorist just joins in, deideology will usually be successful. (Mr. NA, Personal communication, May 25, 2021)

Mr. NA asserted that the intervention of understanding (deideology) as a deradicalization program for prisoners must be carried out by two elements: first, externally, religious leaders, national leaders, and academics. Second, internally, people who have lived with terrorists, such as fathers, mothers, wives, children, and close friends. According to Mr. NA, the intervention of understanding or ideology to the convicts must be carried out by both external and internal parties. Mr. NA also said:

Currently, the shortcomings of the deradicalization program are because it is mostly carried out by external elements, and even then, the interaction time between religious leaders and prisoners is still minimal. So far, BNPT has assigned religious leaders to meet with prisoners, sometimes only once a month. This is not effective. Therefore, it needs to be improved, but do not just talk about religion, if you only talk about religion, the prisoners will get bored. So it must be alternated. The prisoners are most happy if they are invited to talk about the fate of the family, that is, to discuss how the fate of the family in the future will be better. (Mr. NA, Personal communication, May 25, 2021).

Mr. NA's statement was confirmed by the case of ex-convict Mr. KW, who was arrested for preparing several bombs to destroy many buildings belonging to the government, the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), and Indonesian National Police (Polri) in Bandung in 2010. Mr. KW said that he experienced a gradual process of leaving radicalism. At that time, in Cipinang prison in Jakarta, where Mr. KW underwent rehabilitation, there were two groups of prisoners, namely a group of prisoners led by Aman Abdurrahman called Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) affiliated with ISIS and a group of prisoners involved in the Poso case and members of Jamaah Islamiyah (JI). The two groups have different religious understandings regarding whether the security forces include thoghut, a terminology in Islam that indicates a focus on worship that is distinct from Allah. The JAD group has a harsher opinion than the Poso and JI groups. In the perspective of the JAD group or ISIS group, all security forces are thoghut, which means they are mu'ayyan (indeed determined) as infidels. The decision is contingent upon the individual, although the JI group has been considering it. This is because there are warders who assiduously pray, read the Qur'an, and even fast and pray according to the *sunnah*.

Mr. KW then studied the opinions on the infidel status of security forces from these figures. At that time, he felt more receptive to the JI group's more moderate opinion, namely that security forces should not all be considered infidels. From then on, Mr. KW began to accept the Islamic greetings of correctional officers and also began to give Islamic greetings to correctional officers first. Sometimes, the five daily prayers are also led by correctional officers. Mr. KW also started to interact and discuss with them.

During his stay in Cipinang prison, Mr. KW participated in several deradicalization programs. First, the "Klinik Pancasila" program initially operated smoothly because it only mentioned a few points that were the meeting point of the program caregivers and the prisoners, such as the attitude of love for the country. The program commences with statements that assert: I am not different from you. Additionally, the program includes numerous actions that, upon completion, will award the offenders with points. For instance, prisoners will receive points if they wear a national team sports uniform. Similarly, if they participate in activities that support their program, watch the national team compete in sports, or attend flag ceremonies. Nevertheless, certain activities are not favorable; for instance, prisoners are required to hold the red and white flag and subsequently be recorded. Mr. KW maintains that this is disliked due to its apparent manipulation.

Second, the program from Search for Common Ground (SFCG), a non-profit organization that focuses on conflict management and peacebuilding. This organization is located in 34 countries and was established in 2002. According to Mr. KW, this program is good because it does not directly discuss ideology-related matters. According to Mr. KW, the prisoners were taught and interspersed with games containing material about conflict. The activity was successfully followed by the prisoners casually, not in a tense atmosphere. In this activity, they learned about conflict. Here, conflicts of ideology and interests are also studied. The SFCG activity was carried out for quite a long time, namely once a week for one year.

Third, visit programs for religious leaders or government officials. Several times, the prisoners received visits from religious figures and government officials, such as visits initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia. According to him, this program was less successful because the prisoners generally preferred to hear religious teachings from their own clerics (their group). The prisoners are generally part of the Salafi group, where they believe in the Salafi school of thought. Religious figures from the Ministry of Religious Affairs are generally not Salafi.

In addition to the above events and incidents, a factor certainly strengthened Mr. KW the most. He took the path of repentance and changed her behavior towards a peaceful life, namely when he attended a meeting with the victims of the bombing, who had to suffer from trauma and lifelong disabilities. Also, the suffering of the families left behind, such as being widowed due to the death of the husband who was a victim of the bombing, and not a few who left orphans. Mr. KW even felt empathy when he saw the families of the victims shedding tears in front of him. At that moment, she reflexively apologized on behalf of the *ikhwan* (brothers), even though she did not do it. From that moment on, he realized what he had done had hurt many people. That incident was one of the important factors that led him to migrate from the path of violence to peace.

In 2014, Mr. KW was granted conditional release. After his release from Cipinang prison, he joined Aliansi Indonesia Damai (AIDA), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that actively campaigns for peace. After deciding to go on *hijrah* (Islamic shifting journey) to the path of repentance, Mr. KW seemed to turn the corner by becoming part of the peace team

and spreading *ishlah* (reform) after a long life on the path of extremism.

After his release from prison, Mr. KW participated in a mentoring program designed for former inmates who have completed their sentences. This deradicalization initiative is facilitated by Counterterrorism Special Detachment 88 (Densus 88, *Detasemen Khusus 88 Antiteror*) and the BNPT. Since mid-2018, Mr. KW has been actively involved in encouraging other former prisoners to form a collective association, which eventually led to the establishment of the Genggam Perdamaian Foundation. This foundation comprises 11 former convicts working together towards reintegration and rehabilitation.

Since 2020, Densus 88 has played a significant role in supporting economic development activities for the members of the Genggam Perdamaian Foundation. They have provided financial capital and operational guidance to assist in establishing a coffee plantation business. The foundation has developed a 30-hectare coffee plantation located in the Subang area of West Java. This project not only aims to provide economic opportunities and stability for the former convicts but also to promote their successful reintegration into society.

After going through this long process, Mr. KW explained that he has now fully repented and experienced a paradigm shift and ideology. Mr. KW is no longer a member of the radical extreme group network and has accepted the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila. However, unlike him, other prisoners, although generally no longer want to re-commit acts of terrorism, some prisoners have not fully accepted Pancasila, let alone its practices. They also do not fully accept

state laws and regulations because they are considered contrary to Islamic law. They still want the application of *hudud* as in the Jakarta Charter (Piagam Jakarta). However, some have accepted some of the government's provisions, such as taking care of marriage certificates, applying for ID cards, and other administrations. Thus, actually, ex-militants are not completely free from radicalism, but gradually. Generally, they no longer want to be invited to carry out *amaliyah* (jihad) acts. Although they still want to do *jihad*, if they have sufficient strength and face the real enemy, such as in Afghanistan or Palestine.

According to Mr. KW, the failure of deradicalization is motivated by many factors, among others: the terrorist network still provides attention and financial assistance to the families of ex-convicts. Thus, they still depend on the network. As long as the ex-convicts still receive support and depend on the terrorist network, it will be difficult for them to break away. In addition, until now, the government has no mechanism to force terrorism convicts to participate in deradicalization programs while in prison or after release.

The primary challenges in providing guidance and monitoring to former terrorism detainees who have returned to the community have been the limited resources and a lack of coordination and collaboration with associated institutions, particularly in the context of development outside of prisons. In an effort to ensure the success of the deradicalization program outside of prison, it is crucial to work with the community and families rather than solely relying on the police and BNPT.

Mr. AR had a slightly different experience; according to him, he was initially detained at Mako Brimob (The Mobile Brigade Corps) Kelapa Dua prison in Depok, but after the prison takeover incident in early May 2018, all terrorist prisoners were transferred from Mako Brimob prison to Nusakambangan, Cilacap, Central Java, where they were immediately locked up in the High-Risk prison room. This prison employs an approach of cutting social interaction, resulting in the isolation of inmates from one another inside a confined and highly restricted environment. The room was 1.5 m wide x 5 m long, with a height of about 5 meters. Only basic bedding is provided in the room, as well as a toilet and shower that can only be used to urinate or defecate.

All the walls of the rooms are thick concrete cast, equipped with strong steel doors, and arranged in such a way, accompanied by guarding and control from super tight officers, so the possibility of prisoners escaping is nil. In addition, prisoners are only served very inappropriate food, not fulfilling the nutritional elements needed by the body. In such poor environmental conditions, most prisoners will soon become stressed, suffer mental and physical pain, and some even die.

In addition to the haunted conditions of the prison room, the prison building is also surrounded by coated wire fences, equipped with electricity, CCTV cameras, high-tech security systems, starting from doors that open and lock automatically, with 24-hour surveillance, telephone signal scramblers, and one man-one cell.

Mr. AR has been in the isolation room for about four months, which is designated for high-risk convicts, and has

conditions that are perceived as frightening. As previously explained, some of his fellow prisoners are stressed, have memory loss, experience mental disorders, and experience paralysis. Their rehabilitation process is felt as a place of punishment, not guidance. The vast majority of incarcerated individuals who experience solitary confinement at this facility have a significant reduction in body weight, resulting in a visibly leaner physique. Mr. AR asserts that the most excruciating experience is "loneliness" due to the absence of companions with whom to talk. According to Mr. AR, he occasionally engages in conversations with ants and lizards as a means of alleviating stress. Fortunately, he carries the Qur'an, which he frequently reads. The Qur'an itself serves as an encouragement for strengthening his mind and emotions.

After going through physical and psychological suffering, Mr. AR finally began to admit his mistakes; Mr. AR realized that acts of terrorism caused much pain to others because of the dangerous impact of bomb explosions. It is still fortunate that the bomb exploded by a friend who is still in his network and did not cause casualties. However, any act of terror has disrupted the lives of innocent people, especially when the victim is a Muslim of the same religion.

The awareness emerged after four months in the highrisk prison. Finally, to prison officials, Mr. AR admitted his actions, that the bomb explosion was a severe violation of the law, and he regretted his actions. Then, he also recognized the Republic of Indonesia and wanted to become a good and lawabiding citizen. His confession was proven by signing an oath of allegiance to the Republic of Indonesia, which was affixed with a signature and stamped, and kissing the Red and White flag (Indonesia's national flag) as proof of his loyalty to the Republic of Indonesia in front of the law enforcement officers on duty at the Nusakambangan prison.

After taking the oath of allegiance to recognize the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. AR was transferred to a maximum security prison, which is lower than the high-risk system but above the regular prison. Within the boundaries of this extremely secure penitentiary, he has more freedom and the opportunity to inhale very clean air. In the Nusakambangan prison environment, he has more freedom to interact with his fellow convicts in his social surroundings. He has the ability to participate in congregational prayer five times a day and attend the Friday prayer at the mosque. According to Mr. AR, there is a deradicalization program here. In this prison, Mr. AR received spiritual guidance from Islamic preachers (Da'i) sent by the Regional Office of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) or the government. The government's approach to deradicalization includes utilizing former terrorists who have undergone rehabilitation, particularly those considered to be senior figures in the radical groups, to engage with current inmates. These rehabilitated individuals are tasked with encouraging others to renounce extremist ideologies and accept the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) and Pancasila, the state ideology.

Mr. AR participated in several religious study sessions led by individuals who had previously been radicalized but were now viewed as having abandoned those extremist views, such as Ustadz Kiki. These sessions are designed to offer an alternative worldview and facilitate a process of cognitive and ideological reorientation. By engaging with former extremists

and receiving guidance from trusted religious figures, the program aims to provide a comprehensive approach to deradicalization that integrates personal transformation with broader ideological acceptance.

Mr. AR also receives books from Densus 88. For 24 hours, the prisoners' movements are monitored by surveillance cameras or CCTV. Here, he also received visits from his wife, children, mother, and father. Although he could not physically touch because of a barrier, he could see and talk using the telephone. For six months, he was in the maximum-security prison environment.

In October 2018, Mr. AR was transferred to a prison in Sentul Correctional Facility in Bogor Regency, West Java, which is categorized as Medium Security. Here, the conditions are more "exciting" than in Nusakambangan. Sentul Prison is a special prison for terrorist prisoners managed by BNPT. In this prison, prisoners are treated more humanely and receive education or undergo deradicalization in a fluid atmosphere with a more equal dialogue method.

The Sentul prison environment does not seem haunted. Sleeping rooms and other facilities for worship and sports are also well available. Daily meals are also quite guaranteed; at least, officers feed them with Padang Rice menus. Here, according to Mr. AR, there is a new deradicalization program that is more systemic.

Based on Mr. AR's story, while he was in Nusakambangan Prison, namely when he entered the High Risk and Maximum security category prisons, there was no such thing as a deradicalization process, except a little. However, after his move to Sentul prison, which is managed by BNPT, he only felt

that there was a completely different atmosphere. Although at first, he and other ikhwan thought that in Sentul, they would be led to an understanding that deviated from the Qur'an. However, after they went through it, it turned out to be different from what they had previously thought.

In Sentul, the prisoners are conditioned to learn together, and there are usually 12 to 17 prisoners for each batch. Every material provided is consistently delivered through equal and fluid dialog activities, not in the form of indoctrination. The presenters are always open to debate and criticism of their opinions, so the prisoners feel a pleasant learning atmosphere, like in college.

The deradicalization program implemented in Sentul is similar to the course material in the diploma program (2 years). The subject matter is given four days a week, with the following lesson schedule:

On Mondays, participants engage in National Insight sessions. These classes focus on deepening the understanding of national identity, history, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) principles. The content covers the historical evolution of Indonesia, the significance of Pancasila as the state ideology, and the roles and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. The objective is to foster a sense of national pride and responsibility and to reinforce the participant's commitment to the nation's values and laws.

Tuesday sessions are dedicated to Religious Insight, where participants receive education on moderate and tolerant interpretations of religion. These classes are designed to counteract extremist views by providing a balanced understanding of religious teachings. Instruction

often includes the study of religious texts, discussions on the principles of coexistence, and guidance from respected religious leaders. The aim is to promote a peaceful and inclusive religious outlook, aligning with the broader goals of deradicalization.

On Wednesdays, the focus shifts to Entrepreneurship. These classes aim to equip participants with the practical business skills and knowledge necessary to start and manage their own enterprises. The curriculum covers various aspects of entrepreneurship, including business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and operational skills. The goal is to provide participants with the tools needed to pursue self-sustaining economic activities, thereby supporting their reintegration into society and reducing the likelihood of returning to extremist activities.

Thursdays are reserved for psychology sessions. These classes address psychological aspects crucial for personal development and mental well-being. Topics may include emotional resilience, stress management, conflict resolution, and cognitive behavioral strategies. Psychological support is essential for helping participants address past traumas, develop healthier coping mechanisms, and build a positive self-image. This program component aims to support their mental health and foster personal growth, aiding in their transition to a more constructive lifestyle.

To Mr. AR's knowledge, the religious or Islamic curriculum is prepared by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, while experts from the University of Indonesia design general knowledge. For example, the psychology material was delivered by Prof. Hamdi Muluk. They are taught how to apply

the proper methods to remove the terrorist stigma after being released from prison. This psychology session is usually used by the prisoners' friends as a place to vent.

Mr. AR's view of Islam changed after an in-depth explanation of its nature, which is *rahmatan lil alamin* and peace-loving. Mr. AR realized that the methods of *da'wah* that deny human values are contrary to the teachings of peace-loving Islam, even against the teachings of Islam, which glorify humans.

Mr. emphasizes that, along with religious understanding, having a strong grasp of national history is equally important. For example, Mr. AR just found out that the history of the birth of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila, kiai (knowledgeable figures in Islam, usually used among the ethnic Javanese people) played a major role in guiding it. This means that kiai, who are the role models of Muslims, are the true fighters who brought Indonesia to the door of independence. The participation of Kiai was crucial in reaching a consensus on Pancasila as the foundation of the state. Mr. AR contemplated that opposing Pancasila is similar to opposing kiai/ulama, who is regarded as the successors of the Prophet in Islam. Mr. AR concluded that by studying the history of the birth of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila given in the Sentul deradicalization class, he finally realized that what he had received from the network leaders about the basis of the state was not correct, so he considered Pancasila a product of the infidels and their followers as thoghut.

Most teachers or tutors are brought in from the campus, such as lecturers from Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta and the University of Indonesia.

In addition to being given knowledge of the four subjects above, the prisoners are also equipped with professional skills according to their interests and talents, such as sewing courses, automotive expertise, calligraphy crafts, and electricity. Each is given by professional tutors in their fields at the end of the week.

In addition to being taught knowledge about moderate Islam, national values, and skills, the prisoners in the Sentul deradicalization program are also equipped with the knowledge to prepare themselves if they return to society. Thus, They undergo thorough preparation prior to reintegrating into society, ensuring they are consistently equipped to confront any potential challenges that may arise post-release, therefore assuming the designation of former terrorist prisoners.

Mr. AR was sentenced to 5 years in prison, from high risk, maximum security, and medium security levels. He can tolerate all of those things. He is proactive in navigating the full legal procedure and strives to become a law-abiding citizen. He vowed to be loyal to the Republic of Indonesia and recognize Pancasila as the basis of the state. After calculating the period of detention and all remissions (pieces of sentence) received, Mr. AR practically served his time in prison for three years and seven months. In December 2020, he officially left the detention center, heading to his family home and hometown in Ciparay Village, Bandung Regency, West Java Province, where he was born and raised.

E. Discussion

The findings of this research also confirm the influence of push and pull factors that encourage the reorientation of terrorism convicts. Some of the factors included in the push category are the emergence of new awareness in understanding religion and nationality after participating in the program, the friendly attitude of prison officers and coaches (speakers), the desire to reunite with family, especially children and wife, and economic assistance after leaving the prison. At the same time, some factors that include pull (encouragement) are disappointment with the behavior of network leaders who are considered not in accordance with Islamic values, the severity of the sanctions that must be served while in prison, and guilt for actions that can cause suffering to fellow Muslims.

This finding is in line with the finding from Kenney and Hwang (2021) that the most common pull factor among activists from two different Salafi-jihadi groups in Britain and Indonesia is the presence of alternative social networks. Individuals who have previously engaged in acts of terrorism encounter multiple threats to their personal identity due to their status as former convicts associated with terrorism. These threats arise from both their former comrades and the broader society (Syafiq, 2019).

Therefore, developing meaningful relationships with individuals such as new friends, mentors, and supportive family members who actively challenge one's perspective and assist in developing new identities plays a crucial role in facilitating disengagement and subsequent reintegration into society.

The treatment of prisoners in prisons or deradicalization programs in Indonesia has developed and improved yearly. Around 2010, deradicalization was carried out by outsiders (NGO), with the permission of the prison, with a program that had been prepared, they invited prisoners to abandon extreme-radical understanding and attitudes, acts of terrorism violence, and return to accepting the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila. Through a deradicalization program, the government should monitor ex-terrorist convicts, help them reintegrate, and provide counseling and employment opportunities to prevent recidivism (Sirait *et al.*, 2021).

Two types of deradicalization programs are currently running. First, deradicalization programs in prisons. including rehabilitation, re-education, and resocialization, are summarized in four main materials: fostering religious understanding, national understanding, psychological guidance, and entrepreneurship. Second, the deradicalization program outside the prison is an effort to help the community accept prisoners and live normally with them or reintegrate them. One of the reintegration activities is to provide a stimulus for developing business activities for the future of ex-prisoners families. Ex-convicts are encouraged to form associations or organizations to facilitate these business activities, which can then form business entities.

Indonesia has shown a close collaboration between the government and the community via its entrepreneurship programs, which, to a certain extent, is successful in preventing radicalization and extremism, simultaneously combating terrorism. Through its seaweed projects, the women were empowered economically and became financially resilient, subsequently succeeding in uplifting the families' earnings and providing a better quality of life for their family members. The women also, empowered through the entrepreneur experiences, became confident, knowledgeable, and skillful and began to enlighten their family members about the dangers of terrorism. This entrepreneurship provides a wide range of benefits to the community. The partnership between both parties proves effective in combating the spread of terrorism in Indonesia (Zakuan & Seniwati, 2021) acts of terror in Indonesia have developed into the "lone wolf" model and terror involving women and children. The acts of terror with such modes are hard to detect and likely to cause fatalities. Radicalization is found to occur among Indonesians at an early age. The facts show that radical understanding has been incorporated through pre-school and elementary schools. The phenomenon shows that radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia must receive serious attention. Rehabilitation becomes very important because the facts show that the terror actors, even already serving a prison sentence, often repeat their offences. One of the programmes of the Indonesian government is to prevent radicalism and terrorism by conducting deradicalization. In Indonesia, the deradicalization programme consists of four parts: identification, rehabilitation, re-education and reintegration. The rehabilitation stage is very important because, at this stage, a process of improvement is carried out to terrorists with radical understanding. However, terrorist rehabilitation programmes in Indonesia are still not ideal. This is shown by recurrent terrorists who have previously been sentenced and rehabilitated. The terrorist rehabilitation

programme in Indonesia does not have a strong legal basis and is not integrated into a particular system or model. Given its complexity, terrorist rehabilitation cannot be carried out by only one institution. The implementation of terrorist rehabilitation programmes requires collaboration between governmentinstitutions such as the National Counterterrorism Agency, Indonesian National Police, Correctional Institutions, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs, Nongovernmental Organizations, and the communities. The collaborative governance approach by Emerson (2012).

The strategy and framework of deradicalization in Indonesia continue to be refined in terms of paradigm, material, material providers, and methods. Deradicalization programs must incorporate formerly convicted terrorists who have transformed into agents of change and role models (Widya, 2020).

Deradicalization efforts in prisons are carried out with hard and soft approaches. Deradicalization is not enough with just a legal approach; by arresting and sentencing them, but also fostering them to abandon the extreme-radical ideology they believe in. In this perspective, prisoners should not only be considered as perpetrators of terrorism who must be tried but also need to be seen as victims.

The deradicalization program in Indonesia uses the paradigm of terrorist convicts as victims of radicalism. This is based on the fact that many of them do not have an accurate understanding of jihad, *daulah*, or Islamic caliphate, the history of the establishment and formation of the Republic of Indonesia, and existing laws and regulations. So far, they have received information that is different from what the

government and the majority of Muslims understand.

As stated by Mubaraq *et al.* (2022), numerous prior studies on terrorism merely viewed terrorists as perpetrators or subjects rather than victims or objects. They are victims of radical ideas and ideologies that are colored by hatred, hostility, and revenge. They are unconsciously invited and directed to behave and act according to the wishes of the leadership of the terrorist network or group.

Terrorist convicts should not only be punished according to court rulings but also receive guidance. It takes a special way to change their perceptions about the socio-political realities that exist in the Islamic world, changing what they believe about religious understanding in accordance with the teachings of Islam, which is *rahmatan lil alamin*, so that they do not easily accuse those who have different opinions as enemies, by eroding the roots and sources that cause them to become radicalized (Khamami *et al.*, 2019).

The punishment given to convicted terrorists while in prison is generally effective in providing a deterrent effect to effectively encourage disengagement, namely changes from the tendency to behave violently to non-violence, changing their attitudes to no longer want to be involved in acts of terrorism, but not yet to change ideology. An approach that considers terrorists as victims will focus more on fostering or deradicalizing the terrorists.

The government involves internal and external parties in the prisoner development program. Internal parties are the closest people, such as parents, wives, and children, as well as friends who have been known to be close to the convicted

terrorist. Women play a crucial role in deradicalization programs because they can persuade their husbands of the negative consequences of relying on terrorist groups for their family's survival (Fikriyati, 2018; Ramadhyas *et al.*, 2020). Internal parties have a tendency to be more able to influence convicted terrorists so that the deradicalization program for convicted terrorists is simultaneous with the fostering of their families. The external parties involve experts, practitioners, and competent lecturers from various universities.

The deradicalization program in prisons consists of religious insight, nationality insight, psychological development, and entrepreneurship. The coaching or deradicalization efforts use a discussion or dialogue approach without a patronizing impression. This method is relatively acceptable and has succeeded in raising awareness among prisoners. This concept is no different from other countries' programs, where deradicalization is a hegemonic project of nationalism, multiculturalism, and non-violence (Muhammad & Hiariej, 2021).

The research results based on interviews with exconvicts, as mentioned above, concluded that the conversion process or turning point of ex-convicts was influenced by several main things. First, think about the fate of the family. In addition to radical doctrine, ex-convicts, since being caught and serving their sentences, generally also think a lot about the condition and fate of their parents, wives, and children. Second, a sense of humanity. After hearing the suffering or fate of the victims, what they experienced, and interacting with them, the ex-convicts showed empathy towards the victims. There was regret for attacking fellow children of the

nation, even the majority of fellow Muslims. Third, changes in religious understanding. When undergoing guidance in prison, they also get a different view from what they have received. This makes them no longer understand the truth monolithically. Fourth, changes in the understanding of nationalism. Previously, ex-convicts considered the state and government as un-Islamic or deviating from Islamic teachings. With the discussion material, this view changes gradually while undergoing the deradicalization program; until then, it can accept nationalism.

Activities adopting a nationalist approach are generally not well-received due to their perceived manipulative form, such as the act of holding a red and white flag while being recorded on video. It is imperative to assess the effectiveness of the nationalist approach within the context of Indonesian efforts to combat terrorism. In the realm of policy, it is advisable to place greater emphasis on the indoctrination of the principles behind peaceful and nonviolent jihad as a method to counteract violent ideologies (Munajat, 2022).

As mentioned, Mr. NA realized his mistakes after he and his associates were arrested. According to Mr. NA, their arrest was due to the fact that their actions were a misinterpretation of jihad. Mr. NA specifically disagreed with the Bali bombing, asserting that it did not align with Islamic teachings of jihad because it occurred outside the designated battlefield and resulted in significant civilian casualties among Muslims (Abbas, 2005). Mr. KW, on the other hand, recognized terrorism as erroneous through a two-step process. Initially, Mr. KW observed that the leaders of the terrorist network he was part of failed to exemplify Islamic principles. Subsequently, after

meeting and witnessing the suffering of survivors of terrorist attacks, who generally endured both psychological trauma and physical disabilities causing lifelong suffering, Mr. KW's perception shifted.

Similarly, Mr. AR's awareness emerged during his rehabilitation in prison. Influenced by the guidance of rehabilitated former terrorists who had renounced extremist views, Mr. AR came to believe that terrorism inflicts immense suffering on others due to the harmful effects of bomb explosions.

During the rehabilitation process in prison, terrorists participated in a deradicalization program that has evolved over time. During Mr. NA's period, the process appeared to be trial and error, with no standardized approach, as various officials or speakers visited the prison to provide counseling. By the time of Mr. KW's involvement, the rehabilitation program was conducted in collaboration with external NGOs (rather than being solely a prison program). This program received mixed reactions from inmates; some found it effective, while others did not. In contrast, by Mr. AR's era, a comprehensive and integrated approach was implemented, encompassing mentoring, counseling, education, and empowerment, which proved effective for the inmates.

Based on the explanation above, ex-convicts generally assess the current deradicalization program as effective. The effectiveness of the deradicalization program is measured by the extent to which ex-convicts realize their mistakes, no longer commitacts of terrorism, abandon radicalism, and move away or detach themselves from their networks or groups. Deradicalization carried out by the government has included

pull factors, namely the opening of personal relationships of convicted or former terrorists with other people outside their group. This is in line with findings from Saloom (2019) that out-group contact is an important factor that motivates terrorists to leave terrorism and their own group. Also, the push factors, namely breaking ties with terrorism networks and replacing them with deideology through guidance in understanding diversity and national insight, encourage them to leave the network (Ali-Fauzi & Solahudin, 2017; Da Silva *et al.*, 2020).

At present, the stages of deradicalization in prisons are carried out in phases, not directly leading to deideologization. The deradicalization program begins with disengagement, a change from the tendency to behave violently to antiviolence. The next stage is deideologization, or efforts to change from radical ideology to accepting nationalism. In general, the deradicalization program effectively encourages disengagement, namely changes from the tendency to behave violently to non-violence. As for ideological changes, some exconvicts managed to change their views on Pancasila and the Republic of Indonesia. They then accepted Pancasila as the basis of the state and the Republic of Indonesia as a form of state. This aligns with the notion that the terrorists who have been put in jail for committing terrorism may turn into people with moderate ideology and return to their everyday lives in society (Mubaraq et al., 2022).

However, some other prisoners still refuse because they are considered not based on Islamic law, and this attitude change takes relatively longer and has a gradual process. This finding aligns with ICSR and Sarwono's study, which distinguishes the

terms "deradicalization" and "disengagement." Both are used in efforts to prevent and reduce radicalism (Chalmers, 2017; Neumann, 2010; Sarwono, 2012).

F. Conclusion

The new things found in this study are related to a number of important aspects related to the effectiveness of the deradicalization program. As is known, the government has implemented a deradicalization program for terrorism convicts in correctional facilities. The deradicalization program is carried out by the government more systemically by involving experts from various universities and institutions.

This study found several important aspects of the effectiveness of radicalization. First, deradicalization is highly dependent on the background or motivation of a person involved in terrorism; the deeper the ideological elements, the more deradicalization (deideology) requires process and time.

Second, for the effectiveness of deradicalization, an approach that places the actors of terrorism as victims is needed. Actors of terrorism are not only placed as criminals who need to be punished. But they are also victims of radical-extreme ideology, so they need guidance.

Third, the effectiveness of the deradicalization program is also influenced by business processes that carefully determine the materials provided, the actors involved in assistance, and the methods used. Prison guidance material includes religious understanding, national insight, psychology, and entrepreneurship by involving experts in their fields, while guidance outside the prison includes concern for the fate of ex-prisoners families, capital assistance, and business

guidance. Guidance also needs to involve external and internal elements. Meanwhile, the method is through equal and discursive dialog.

The effectiveness of deradicalization programs outside prisons requires synergy with other related parties by involving existing stakeholders, such as local governments and their social services, Regional Offices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS, *Badan Amil Zakat Nasional*) in Indonesia, religious institutions and mass organizations, business stakeholders, and others required parties. These institutions can offer support and facilitate the availability of resources that ex-convicts require in accordance with their respective authorities.

The primary limitation of this study is that it focuses exclusively on a small number of ex-terrorist convicts. The limitations of the data derive from the restricted time and limited availability of ex-terrorist detainees, hence restricting the number of interviewees among ex-terrorist convicts. Further study has the ability to explore the perspectives of several individuals who have previously been found convicted of committing acts of terrorism, including those who have been reconvicted for similar offenses.

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