WOMEN AND TERRORISM: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF PEACE BUILDING EDUCATION

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Abstract

Women’s involvement in terrorism activities has increased over the past 10 years. The role of women, which was initially as supporters of acts of terrorism, has transformed into perpetrators of terrorism. This article focuses on the factors of women’s involvement in acts of terrorism as well as peace building actions to overcome it. This research is a literature research using an interdisciplinary approach. This study concludes that women’s involvement in acts of terrorism is not only in the name of religion, but also due to various aspects of life such as ideological doctrine, political, economic and personal factors. Peace building efforts towards women’s involvement in acts of terrorism can be a solution in tackling radicalism. The approaches needed include the deradicalization, religious and ideological, psychological, economic, socio-cultural, legal and political approach. The use of information technology and community-based approaches are also important factors in tackling this problem.

Keywords:
Women, Terrorism, Interdisciplinary approach, peace building education

Abstrak

Keterlibatan perempuan dalam aktivitas terorisme meningkat selama 10 tahun terakhir. Peran perempuan yang awalnya sebagai pendukung aksi terorisme bertransformasi menjadi pelaku terorisme. Artikel ini akan fokus pada faktor-faktor keterlibatan perempuan dalam tindakan terorisme sekaligus aksi bina damai untuk menanggulanginya. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kepustakaan dengan menggunakan pendekatan interdisipliner. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keterlibatan perempuan dalam aksi terorisme bukan hanya atas nama agama, melainkan juga disebabkan oleh berbagai aspek kehidupan seperti doktrin ideologis, politis, ekonomi dan faktor pribadi. Upaya bina damai terhadap keterlibatan perempuan dalam aksi teroris medapat menjadi solusi dalam menanggulangi radikalisme. Pendekatan yang dibutuhkan di antaranya adalah pendekatan deradikalisasi; pendekatan agama dan ideologi; pendekatan psikologi; pendekatan ekonomi; pendekatan sosial budaya; pendekatan hukum;
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INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is a global challenge that threatens the security and stability of the modern world. This phenomenon has been high on the international agenda, and governments in various countries are making great efforts to tackle the threat of terrorism. Acts of terrorism refer to the use of violence or threats of violence by individuals or groups to achieve the political, ideological or religious goals they adhere to.

Acts of terrorism have existed throughout human history, but in the era of globalization and modern technology, the threat of terrorism has undergone significant changes. The emergence of international terrorism networks and online radicalization has seriously impacted the spreading of extremist ideology and recruiting of terrorists. Terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Boko Haram have carried out brutal attacks in various parts of the world, killing thousands of people and causing great material loss.

The question arises is what drives individuals to engage in acts of terrorism? Factors influencing individual radicalization can vary, including political discontent, social injustice, group identity, and the influence of false or extreme religion. In addition, poverty, lack of education, and political instability can also play an important role in creating an environment conducive to terrorism growth.

To overcome the threat of terrorism, international cooperation in intelligence, law enforcement and community empowerment is very important. Countries and international institutions work together to exchange information and take preventive measures to prevent terrorist attacks. Apart from that, rehabilitation and deradicalization programs are also needed to help individuals involved in terrorism to return to society constructively.

A deep understanding of terrorism and the factors that influence it is important in fighting this threat. Therefore, scientific research and academic literature related to terrorism are invaluable. It can be concluded that terrorism is a serious challenge that requires a global response. Through deep understanding, international cooperation, and effective deterrence, we can hope to reduce the threat of terrorism and create a safer and more stable world.
Research results reveal various motivations and goals of terrorist acts. Starting from for economic gain, social prestige, ideological coercion, interpreting beliefs, or exploitation of religion, hegemony, culture, power, cultural domination and so on (Qori’ah, 2019). To achieve the desired goals, terrorists will use inhumane methods, and not even a few are willing to sacrifice themselves to commit suicide bombings.

Hilmi & Choiriyah (2022) see that three factors cause a person to become radical: First, Radicalism appears because there is a response to disappointment and dissatisfaction with the ongoing conditions. Second, because of this disappointment, a person is motivated to change the previously established order in the hope that it will be better according to his ideals. Third, because of their strong belief in the truth of the program or ideology they adhere to and believe in. In line with Hilmi and Choiriyah, Freeman, et al. (2021) also said that people who have economic, social, political, and religious complaints will look to new ideologies that they think can help overcome their situation.

The victims of terrorist acts are not only directly experienced by the parties who commit them, but several other parties become victims, such as the wife or family of the suspected terrorist. Even the wives are used as a mask for those who are the perpetrators. Terrorist acts will create a bad view of the perpetrators, especially if the perpetrators are women. The involvement of women in terrorist acts is a very troubling problem (Qori’ah, 2019). Komnas Perempuan (Women’s National Commission) stated that women as mothers are currently used to transmit radical ideology and prepare children to become martyrs. When women have been involved in acts of terror, it is necessary to carry out coaching efforts afterward. Considering that the women or wives involved are figures who influence family education, especially children.

Women’s involvement in acts of terror and violence in Indonesia has been seen since 2003, during the Nurdin M. Top case at the Marriot Hotel. Several cases involving women as bombers also emerged among jihadist groups in South Asia and Europe. This path of jihad became even wider when ISIS was born in 2013, changing the behavior and supporters of jihadists from the individual (male) model to that of women and families. The ideological process is also more in the private sphere (in family dining rooms) than assemblies (Marcoes, 2022).

Previous studies on radicalism and terrorism discussed more groups and movements played by men (Wildan, 2018; Ahyar, 2019; Zulfadli, 2019; Hasan, 2008; Ichwan, 2019). Several studies regarding the involvement of women in acts of terrorism have received less
attention. For this reason, this research will try to look at the involvement of women in acts of terrorism from the point of view of inter-multiperiodic studies.

However, based on the explanation above, is the actual involvement of women in terrorism cases a form of resistance for women who become perpetrators of terror and victims of radicalism narratives on issues of inequality that always construct women as weak and helpless creatures and lacking courage? Alternatively, part of his jihad with the lure of heaven is because he has fought for his religion. So based on this, this paper will reveal the factors and background of women’s involvement in acts of terrorism through an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach focusing on peacebuilding women who are involved in terrorism.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is library research, namely a study that focuses on collecting library data relevant to the theme of an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach (Case Study of the Peace Building Process of Women’s Involvement in Acts of Terrorism). The nature of this research is qualitative; data is described and analyzed by understanding and explaining it. Data sources by researchers are primary and secondary data. Primary sources are sources that provide direct data. The researcher used the book *Perempuan dan Terorisme: Ketidakberdayaan, Relasi Kuasa dan Stigma* (Women and Terrorism: Powerlessness, Power Relations and Stigma) by Leebarty Taskarina as the primary source. Meanwhile, secondary sources, namely from books, journals related to the problem under study.

The data collection method begins with finding and collecting various data that are relevant and related to the research. After the data was collected, the researcher completed the process of grouping and mapping the data. These data are selected, and then the necessary data is taken. In the next stage, the data that has been selected is then read again in detail to capture its essence.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Definition of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Approaches in Islamic Studies

An interdisciplinary approach is an approach to solving a problem that uses views from various relevant or appropriate allied scientific perspectives in an integrated manner.
Allied knowledge means that there are many versions (Rohmatika, 2019). For example, the Religion sciences family, the social-humanities sciences family, the law sciences family, and so on. Interdisciplinarity can also be defined as collaboration between one science and another to form a single unit with its method. In other words, interdisciplinary is a form of integrating one science with another to form a new science with new methods. For example, namely the combination of sociology and religion to become the sociology of religion, between psychology and social science to become social psychology and so on with other sciences.

The birth of the interdisciplinary approach is divided into two opinions. Some experts say that the interdisciplinary concept is rooted in the theories of Plato, Kant, Hegel, and Aristotle (Klein, 1990). However, others say that interdisciplinary is a twentieth-century phenomenon with the discovery of innovations in education, applied research, and activities that cross the boundaries of certain disciplines.

Even so, the basic idea of interdisciplinarity has been stated to have emerged in the 20th century. Klein said that educators, researchers, or practitioners carry out interdisciplinary studies because these studies answer complex situations, address wide-reaching problems, and examine interdisciplinary scientific relationships.

In principle, the interdisciplinary concept involves integrating two or more disciplines where the resources of a single discipline must cover the problem’s scope to be solved. The concept of a continuum of integration, where at one end shows the relatively small impact of a discipline, and at the other end, several disciplines combine expertise to address specific problems (Rohmatika, 2019).

The meaning of the interdisciplinary concept can be mapped into three, namely:

1. The meaning of disciplinary integration that interdisciplinary research refers to research teams where these efforts must be combined in one unit.

2. Emphasizing continuous integrated research, interdisciplinary research implies the specific contribution of each researcher by a standard product.

3. Emphasizing the process of the product, especially the collaborative nature of an institution in an interdisciplinary approach (Rochani, 2020).

Whereas Multidisciplinary is an approach that reviews various scientific points of view, even though they are not allied. This means that multidisciplinary collaboration
between science, each of which has stood alone with its method as well. Multidisciplinary is the interconnection between one science and another, but each works based on its discipline and method.

The dynamics of Islamic studies development in Indonesia have experienced significant substance and study methodology developments in the last two decades. Islamic studies are increasingly touched by social issues such as gender studies, the environment, and diversity, thus giving rise to a global perspective. So, more than studying Islam, it must be reviewed in bits and pieces (Amin., 2006). Islam must be comprehensively reviewed with the right approach or methodology (Abdullah, 2000).

The importance of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in Islamic studies is to understand wisely better that all religions have historical-empirical vehicles that can be understood transcendentally-universally. For example, studying religious texts using sociological, historical, and normative approaches, such as the Al-Quran and Hadith, is sufficient to rely on a textual approach. However, it must be complemented by several approaches, such as sociological, historical, and even hermeneutic approaches.

Another example is understanding the Qur’an Surah Annisa verse 3 about polygamy; textually, this verse means that it is permissible for a person to practice polygamy. However, this must be a common concern if it is studied regarding local culture, the psychological study of a wife, social norms, and customs. Because if this is not the case, then it is feared that the family will not be sakina, mawaddah, warahmah, but new problems that will be more complicated in the end.

Developments in the field of Islamic studies and their approach will be in line with developments in science. Doing a certain emphasis and approach is intended to understand Islamic teachings comprehensively. This development is proof that Islamic teachings are always relevant to the times. In interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches, it is expected to be able to analyze social problems based on Islamic scholarship. However, Islam as a religion must have a dialogue with the reality of social life, whose concerns need to be approached from a developing scientific perspective.

B. Case Studies of Women in the Stigma of Terrorism through Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Approaches

Religion and religiosity are often significant factors in the birth of social terror and conflict. The conflict was caused by radicalism and religious militancy. Recently, the phenomenon of radicalism, terrorism, and extremism seems to involve more and more
women. The recent involvement of women in acts of terrorism, namely the suicide bombing in front of the Makassar Cathedral (28/3/2021). In this case, YSF and her husband, L, were declared dead in a suicide bomb explosion. Then, the second case occurred in a woman with the initials ZA who was shot dead by Polri officers at the Jakarta Police Headquarters after acting with a ‘soft-gun’ pistol on several security officers there. ZA is called a ‘lone wolf,’ a ‘wolf’ who works alone, even though there is a ‘mastermind’ behind who directs it.

The two cases above show that extremism and radicalism can not only be carried out by men, but women can also be more courageous in carrying out acts of terrorism by sacrificing their own lives or that of others.

The involvement of women in acts of terrorism is no longer new to the world. Although previously, Mohd Adhe Bhakti, Researcher at the Center for Radicalism and Deradicalization Studies, analyzed that the role of women in acts of terrorism has not become the main actor but is only limited to assisting their husbands. Now the role of women is no less important than that of men, and has even become the main actor in criminal acts of terrorism.

Based on several studies it is revealed that several factors cause women to fall into the valley of terrorism. First, generally women get their doctrine from their husbands, who are exposed to the ideology of religious radicalism first. Women who tend to obey Sami‘na Wa Atho‘na are shackled in a patriarchal circle in the name of religion, conditions of gender inequality, and social inequality in their environment. Second, it is assumed that the involvement of women will not get more sympathy from the community when carrying out their activities (Qori’ah, 2019). Women are usually less suspicious of security officers. For example, the successful bombing in Turkey was carried out by a woman who brought malnourished children to trick security forces. After the children were taken to the ambulance, the woman blew herself up and injured many people.

The involvement of women in acts of terrorism is indeed dominated by kinship. They are unconsciously recruited into terrorist networks by their fathers, husbands, brothers, uncles, and even sisters. Women are considered to have high selling value for perpetuating the virus of terrorism to the seed of life as a fetus that only exists in women (Muniroh et al., 2004).

The interest of women in joining terrorist groups raises several factors. Debbie said there were four main factors (Qori’ah, 2019), namely;

First, the religious factor. Elizabeth Polley found that many Muslims in Britain were influenced to join the ISIS group because they believed that: (1) the ummah (society, nation)
was being attacked; (2) a strong desire to build a new society; (3) religious obligations as a Muslim, and the opportunity to be part of and find purpose in the “caliphate sisterhood.”

In addition to the three things stated above, identity and being part of Muslims individually and within the ummah, with attitudes and perceptions of religious discrimination (Islamophobia) and the failure of multiculturalism, also play a role.

Second, ideological factors. Debbie explained the frustration of LaRose, who called himself “Jihad Jane,” when he was about to attempt the murder of the Swedish caricaturist Lars Vilks, who painted the face of the Prophet Muhammad with the body of a dog. Jihad Jane admits that she is obsessed with jihad from morning till night. He acts like he is unconscious. The 50-year-old woman was finally sentenced to 10 years in prison by a Pennsylvania United States district court.

Third is the political factor. Poverty, human rights violations, and discrimination cause pain among women and provide the potential for violent mobilization of politics against the state. Extreme radical methods narrated by terrorist groups have been used to attract women to fight for their rights which the state has ignored.

In the Indonesian context, political defeat for hardline, extremist, or other religious groups will encourage strengthening acts of terrorism committed by marginalized groups. They will use media framing that the state is ignorant of the group, which is the country’s majority. Because of this, the targets of terrorist acts by this group are state symbols or institutions. It can be a person (state apparatus) or a state property building.

Fourth, personal factors. Based on the case of Shannon Conley, Anne Speckhard, in her book Bride of ISIS, as quoted by Debbie, stated that ISIS attracts attention and motivates young Western women through the internet and persuades them to leave their country and become wives of fighters in the dangerous territory of the Islamic State called as caliphs, or to become domestic terrorists in their own countries, and ready to lay down their lives in the name of the “Great Jihad.”

On the other hand, Marcoes (2022) sees women’s participation in terrorism based on a gender perspective due to two things. First, just as men have embraced the ideology of the caliphate, which is oriented towards realizing a Sharia state, women have also embedded this ideology. When they become part of a movement, they are trained to practice the concept of a Sharia state in the local sphere, such as paying taxes, maintaining the secrecy of the action, and determining which enemies and friends. Women are increasingly being given wider space through radical organizations on a larger scale, such as ISIS. Women do
not only play a role in the domestic sphere and carry out reproductive functions but also as propagandists, preachers, and recruiters for ISIS (Affianty, 2017).

Second, it is related to patriarchal culture and gender equality. So far, the patriarchal culture that develops in society places women in a low position, weak, and only supports men. Patriarchy gives women no freedom and is powerless with their potential (Banks, 2019). Women are often under pressure when what they do violates norms they are generally not allowed to do, such as playing a role on the battlefield. Through the path of jihad, women are motivated to prove their role and potential to be equal to men. In terms of terrorism, previously, women only waged jihad through non-vital channels through their role in multiplying offspring, being followers and companions of their husbands, and serving their needs. However, along with the expansion of the radical movement, many women began to be interested in taking steps in the vital jihad movement, in which they also participated in jihad directly on the battlefield, together with men and even bringing their children with them (Marcoes, 2022).

A similar opinion was expressed by Affianty (2017), where the injustice in the treatment of the state and social stigma against women, especially their access to opportunities in education, professional work, and political sectors, also encouraged them to join terrorist organizations.

C. The Power of Language in Social Media and Verbal Terrorism

The construction of terrorism occurs not only through group and family networks but also through the media. In research conducted by Asiyah et al., (2020) it can be seen that some women were interested in learning about jihad through the Internet, so they joined ISIS under the command of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) and married ISIS members for the spirit of jihad. These women’s meetings with their husbands also occur frequently on social media such as Facebook, Twitter and radical sites, including online jihad sites. Their role is not only as wives who support their husbands’ jihad, but they also have the motivation to become the main actors of jihad and commit acts of terrorism.

In a large jihadist organization like ISIS, women have an important role in recruitment and propaganda. Women’s position is in a complex realm, where they can simultaneously be wives, mothers, propagandists, recruiters, facilitators, supporters, planners, plotters and attackers (Phelan, 2020). Women have the power of language, which they use to attract the
sympathy of other members (especially women) to join the path of jihad (caliphate sisterhood). ISIS women use the approach of friendship and kinship. Their role is increasingly visible along with the development of social media, which is used as verbal terrorism propaganda (Affianty, 2017).

Social media is an effective medium for women to participate in movements in cyberspace actively. Social media can record the role of ideological jihadist groups connected with fellow sympathizers and their recruitment patterns. Social media can describe what is done and how member recruitment activities are carried out (Affianty, 2017). Through the track record of digital media, especially in terms of propaganda language, this pattern of women’s movements can be analyzed and mapped.

This jihadist woman looks technologically literate and intelligent in using digital media to preach. They make high-quality videos and online magazines and create Twitter accounts with interesting posts aimed at social media users who spend much time surfing cyberspace. Their tweets on Twitter, Tumblr and other media have proven capable of mobilizing young Muslim women to join ISIS. They also insert propaganda to carry out suicide bombings while giving beauty tips, otherwise known as “cosmo jihad” (Affianty, 2017).

ISIS also creates networks in the media and sees market share for groups in an identity crisis phase. Identity crises often affect young people looking for identity and encounter moral inequality and ideological differences in their environment (Heryanto, 2015; Wildan, 2018; Hasan, 2008; Hasan, 2018; Zamzamy, 2019). One of the groups experiencing this identity crisis is experienced by “fan girls”. Fan girl is a term for young people from various countries aged 15-32 years who come from disobedient Muslim families and converts. They are a group that thinks violent extremism is something “cool”. It was then accommodated by the ISIS group, which then carried out indoctrination and propaganda that the group’s goals were also cool and romantic. It convinced these youths that the extreme violence they were carrying out was “fun” (Affianty, 2017).

D. The Peace Building Approach: An Effort to Overcome Terrorism

Various peacebuilding approaches can be used in case studies of women with the stigma of terrorism; namely, as explained by Khamdan, nine approaches can be applied according to the conditions and situations in each peacebuilding process (Qori’ah, 2019).

First, the deradicalization approach. Handling terrorism convicts or members of terrorist networks skilled at taking advantage of opportunities is challenging. Hence, the
deradicalization process that is carried out requires many approaches according to the characteristics of the radicalization process that occurs and is experienced by a particular person or group (Khamdan, 2016). The implementation of the deradicalization program stems from the understanding that terrorism begins with a radicalization process, so fighting terrorism is more effective by breaking off the radicalization process.

Second, religious and ideological approaches. This religious and ideological approach emphasizes religion as a source of peace and compassion because no religion teaches violence and rejects compassion. Islam, for example, comes from the root word salam in Arabic, which means peace. Therefore, if Islam is accused of being a religion that teaches radicalism and terrorism because of the role doctrine, then what must be corrected is not the verses of the Koran or the hadith but the understanding of a person or group who interprets the verses of the Koran and hadith.

Third the psychological approach. The psychological approach is carried out to analyze the personality aspects of the perpetrators and members of terrorist networks or radicalism sympathizers. Personality characteristics can be seen from the motivation of a person’s involvement in terrorism, the process of joining terrorist groups, the drive for fanaticism to die as martyrs, the existence of pressure from groups to carry out group missions, and the rationalization of justification for violence.

Fourth, the economic approach. This approach starts from the assumption that someone loses optimism due to unfavourable economic conditions. In this condition, it is said that radicalism often manages to infiltrate by giving a false image of the benefits of life that can be achieved through jihad. Poverty in the context of radicalism is said to be able to foster a spirit of religious fanaticism that leads to radicalism and terrorism. The narrative often built is that people become poor because the state treats them unfairly.

Fifth, the socio-cultural approach. This approach focuses on encouraging sociocultural values so that they are not only understood but also internalized in the conduct of daily life. They are trapped in a social community that spreads radicalized values through social culture. People who hold fast to their cultural values will not have the heart to do evil to the country.

Sixth, legal approach. This approach puts forward legal principles that lead to respect for human rights (HAM). As a country based on law, recognizing and protecting human rights is important and must be realized in legal certainty that upholds the values of justice and expediency. Deradicalization programs that use a legal approach need to pay attention
to the application of human rights in handling acts of terrorism.

Seventh, political approach. This approach focuses on the causes of terrorism from a political perspective. Namely, there is a feeling of dissatisfaction with the performance of government law enforcement against disobedience or religious values, including aspects of gambling, prostitution, and perceptions of religious blasphemy, so they become the driving force for the birth of radicalism. The existence of ideals to build a state system and government system based on Islamic law.

Eighth, the information technology approach. This approach relates to radical media publications full of hoax category content oriented towards labelling hatred and hostility. The strategy of using information technology or the media makes cyberspace a new field for spreading radical teachings and collecting donations through various distributed propaganda.

Ninth, community-based approach. Efforts to return former terrorism convicts, especially women, to society are difficult. It concerns the negative stigma labelled on convicts by society and their families. The social stigma that has built up makes people fearful and wary because ex-convicts are seen as someone who must be suspected of repeating previous crimes (Taskarina, 2019).

Women under the stigma of terrorism must be studied multidisciplinary, using religious values that teach love, tolerance, justice, equality, brotherhood, humanity and peace. We must study these basic universal teachings in depth so that they become a shared awareness to be implemented in everyday life.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the concept of jihad echoed by terrorists is a wrong understanding because it has caused harm to many people and damaged the social order of a country. Terrorists who believe that being a martyr in jihad in the name of the religion of Allah (Islam) will be rewarded with heaven. Furthermore, now the perpetrators involve women in actions that contain acts of violence. Involving women is a form of acknowledgement by radical groups of inequality and injustice, which always position women as weak creatures. Thus, several factors include women’s involvement in acts of terrorism, including religious, ideological, political, and personal characteristics.
On the other hand, social media also has enormous influence and benefits for extremist groups. By being indoctrinated using the attractive language of jihad, they can spread their ideology widely and on target. With the help of the internet, which can connect people without time and region boundaries, radical groups gain new members through online recruitment patterns. Their target is aimed at people with a high interest in jihad or people in a phase of identity confusion. The paths they took varied from brotherhood, kinship to marriage.

To overcome terrorism and radicalism, an approach is needed as a peace-building effort towards women’s involvement in acts of terrorism, including the deradicalization approach; religious and ideological approach; psychological approach; economic approach; socio-cultural approach; legal approach; political approach; information technology approach; community-based approach.

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