Radicalism Assessment as a Concept of Countering Radicalism through Social Media in Indonesia

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Abstract: Radicalism is often associated with violent ideas and is considered to be a breeding ground for terrorism. This is because radicalism is an attitude that seeks a complete overhaul of established values and norms and often resorts to violence to achieve its goals. Meanwhile, some view counter-radicalism efforts as an authoritarian approach by the government and contrary to international human rights. The government is not targeting critical ideas but rather those inciting hatred, hostility and violence, leading to terror. In Indonesia, countering radicalism cannot rely solely on repressive measures, but preventive strategies should be implemented by identifying its perpetrators. This includes addressing radicalism in cyberspace, such as social media, where hate speech and incitement are often spread. Therefore, it is essential to have a rigorous assessment process to identify and evaluate potentially radical actions. This process measures the level of exposure to radicalism among those propagating radical content on social media, which determines whether they will attend a deradicalization Islamic boarding school or face the criminal justice system. In conclusion, this study ensures that measurable action is taken against the spread of radicalism on social media.

Keywords: assessment, radicalism, concept of countering, social media, Indonesia.

激进主义评估作为印度尼西亚通过社交媒体打击激进主义的概念

摘 要：激进主义常常与暴力思想联系在一起，被认为是滋生恐怖主义的温床。这是因为激进主义是一种寻求彻底改革既定价值观和规范的态度，并且经常诉诸暴力来实现其目标。与此同时，一些人认为反激进主义的努力是政府的专制做法，有悖于国际人权。政府不是针对批评性的想法，而是针对那些煽动仇恨、敌意和暴力、导致恐怖的想法。在印度尼西亚，打击激进主义不能仅仅依靠镇压措施，而应该通过查明肇事者来实施预防战略。这包括解决网络空间中的激进主义问题，例如经常传播仇恨言论和煽动言论的社交媒体。因此，必须有一个严格的评估过程来识别和评估潜在的激进行为。这个过程衡量那些在社交媒体上传播激进内容的人接触激进主义的程度，这决定了他们是否会进入去激进化的伊斯兰寄宿学校或面临刑事司法系统。总之，这项研究确保采取可衡量的行动来防止激进主义在社交媒体上的传播。

关键词：评估、激进主义、反制概念、社交媒体、印度尼西亚。
Introduction

Radicalism is an ideology that advocates extreme or violent social and political revolution. When these perceptions and actions are based on ideologies and beliefs derived from religious teaching, they become more extreme [1]. Although radicalism itself is not necessarily a problem, it can become problematic when these ideas turn into violent movements, especially when individuals involved resort to violence to achieve their fundamentalist goals [2]. This aligns with Bjelopera’s assertion that radical individuals or groups may seek change through extreme methods. For instance, violence is a form of action based on radical or extremist beliefs. In other words, when the belief of an individual evolves to include violence, they have the potential to become a terrorist [3].

Radical actions and beliefs are characterized by several traits, including intolerance, such as unwillingness to respect the opinion and belief of other people. This also includes the existence of fanaticism (always feeling self-righteous and considering others wrong) and exclusion (distinguishing themselves from Muslims in general and revolutionary alongside tending to use violent means to achieve their goals) [4]. In Indonesia, religious radicalism marked by fanaticism poses a threat to the survival of different faiths, leading to actual, symbolic, and systemic violence. According to Endang Turmudi, radicalism becomes a challenge when it becomes an ideology and a movement [2]. In the research conducted by Rogelio Alonso et al., as an ideology, radicalism challenges the legitimacy of established norms and policies but does not automatically lead to violence. When radicalism intersects with politics and moments of uncertainty, it is more likely to manifest as violence or terrorism. Ridwan Arifin reported that terrorism is not just ordinary violence but crime that disrupts human peace and security [5].

Ahmad Nurwakhid, the Prevention Director of Indonesia National Counter Terrorism Agency (NCTA), stated that approximately 33 million people in Indonesia are vulnerable to radicalization [6]. This figure was obtained from a survey conducted by various organizations, including the NCTA, the Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (TPCF), the Ministry of Religion Research and Development Center (Puslitbang Kemenag), the University of Indonesia’s Terrorism Study program, the National Research and Innovation Agency (NRIA), the Center for Indonesian Crisis Strategic Resolution (CICSR), Nasaruddin Umar Office, Nusa Institute, Daulat Bangsa, and Alvara Research Institute. The survey also found that the Radicalism Potential Index in 2022 was 10 percent [7].

Radicalism evolves from a belief system that considers certain values, ideas and perspectives as absolute truths while labeling the opposing viewpoints as incorrect and worth opposition. This can manifest in radical actions such as terrorist attacks, bombings, hostage-taking, assassinations, and other violent means to accomplish a particular mission [8]. It is crucial to adopt widespread and comprehensive action to prevent the spread of radicalism in Indonesia.

Irrespective of the Law on Terrorism Eradication, which imposes heavy penalties such as death, terrorism, and radicalism, still occurs in Indonesia. The radicalism movement is an embryo that develops into a terrorist movement. The recent suicide bombing at the Makassar Cathedral in 2021 is a clear indication that the threat of the Terrorism Law does not necessarily deter people from committing acts of terror. However, the same applies to acts of radicalism, with the implementation of several regulations to curb the spread of radicalism, such as strengthening the capacity of institutions responsible for countering terrorism. Irrespective of these factors, the problem has continued to escalate, leading to increased terrorist incidents nationwide.

The counter-radicalism efforts of the government are often criticized as authoritarian and a violation of human rights. However, the government is not merely targeting political dissent but rather combating dangerous ideas that promote hatred, hostility, and violence, thereby resulting in terror. Therefore, it is crucial to adopt a firm approach that is not infringe on human rights to effectively address the spread of radicalism in Indonesia.

1. Method

This legal research was conducted using normative and empirical juridical approaches. The normative juridical approach focused on examining legal principles, concrete and abstract, and comparative laws, vertical and horizontal synchronization, including legal history [9]. Furthermore, through this research, various rules (norms) related to the radicalism spread were identified. The empirical juridical method was used to investigate the social phenomena related to the dissemination of radical ideas, particularly through social media. This method was chosen because radicalism spread through social media involves legal norms and empirical considerations, with society as the target. Additionally, empirical data on the spread of radicalism, officially released by government institutions such as the NCTA and the National Police, were used to strengthen the analysis.

The flow of the research process can be described as Fig. 1 shows:
Data were collected through library and field research methods. The field research was conducted to collect primary data through interview sessions held with different respondents, including law enforcement officers, perpetrators, victims, and experts in criminal law and criminology. The instrument used was an interview guide prepared with reference to the legal issues examined. This stage was conducted in various regions and institutions, including the North Sumatra Regional Police, Jakarta Metropolitan Police, East Java Regional Police, South Sulawesi Regional Police, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, and the NCTA.

2. Discussion

2.1. Criminal Policy Concept for Countering Radicalism through Social Media in Indonesia

The issue of national disintegration is one of the most crucial in defense of Indonesia, where the other causes include radicalism, extremism, and terrorism (RET) [10]. Social media is frequently used to plan RET activities, communicate, spread radical ideologies, and collect funds for terrorist operations, including bombings. Social media platforms include Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Telegram. This highlights the growing sophistication of terrorist groups seeking secure, fast and efficient ways to accomplish their goals, such as engaging in amaliyah or bombing actions.

During an interview session held with the Regional Task Force Head for East Java of Densus 88 Anti-Terror Police, Commissioner Iwan Ristiyanto, it was emphasized that the internet and social media significantly impact the spread of radicalism. The modus operandi of terrorists has evolved, and they now rely heavily on social media platforms due to their flexibility and fast-changing nature. Terrorists use these platforms to spread their ideologies, recruit members, and plan heinous activities such as violence or bombings, thereby underscoring the crucial role of social media in these operations [11].

Radicalism is the embryo of terrorism, aimed at a complete and revolutionary transformation of existing values through violent and extreme means. Rendy Adiwilaga and Agus Kurniawan stated that before the formation of radical character, the individual undergoes four stages. These include (1) Pre-Radicalization, where individuals go about their activities and routines as usual; Self-Identification, where individuals begin to identify themselves and adopt radical beliefs; (3) Indoctrination, where individuals intensify their commitment to the movement they are joining; (4) Jihadization, where individuals take action based on their beliefs, often seen or perceived as a form of jihad [12].

The lack of early intervention by law enforcement to prevent radicalization, which can occur from pre-radicalization to indoctrination, represents a gap in efforts to combat its spread on social media. Brigadier General Pol. Drs. Sentot Prasetyo, S.I.K, the Deputy Head of the Special Detachment (Densus) Anti-Terror Police, has acknowledged this issue and stated that the current policy aims to strictly enforce the law. To address this problem, law enforcement has adopted hard and soft preventative strategies. These strategies were implemented by the Directorate of Prevention, which operates upstream, with a focus on the roots of radicalism. However, no form of violence is employed when suspects are apprehended downstream. The action is performed in a humanistic and empathetic manner by the Directorate of Ideological and Social Media Affairs, who reaches out to the suspects and their families after the incident. To date, the Densus 88 Anti-Terror Police has never arrested anyone based solely on their status [13].

There is an increasing need to regulate radicalism on social media platforms in Indonesia due to the lack of binding regulations on its spread. This has led to various collaborations between platforms such as Facebook, Google, Youtube, Twitter, and Telegram to remove and delete terrorism- and radicalism-related content. Social media can be compared to a double-edged knife, which can make or harm someone. Most times, content removal occurs after being reported, thereby not guaranteeing the contentment of such ideologies.

These major foreign platforms are not bound by Indonesian policies; hence, they sometimes do not comply with the cooperation initiated by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics. For example, social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram are not public, unlike Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube. Therefore, they are unlikely to monitor the transmission of contents.

According to Article 1 paragraph (3) of the Indonesian Constitution, Indonesia is a state of law. This means that all actions and policies carried out by the government and its citizens should be in accordance with the law. In addition, state equipment and citizens do not need to act arbitrarily according to the law. Wirjono Prodjidokoro reported that a state based on the rule of law is one where the law is applied consistently
throughout its territory [14].

a) All state equipment, including the actions of the government toward its citizens and their respective interrelationships, does not need to be arbitrary but in accordance with the applicable regulations.

b) All residents should be subject to the applicable rules of law.

The state of law mandates all actions of the government toward its citizens and their interactions to be in accordance with the law. In addition, people should adhere to the relevant legal regulations, which means that clarity and adherence are crucial.

Radicalism is not regulated in Law 5 of 2018 on the Amendment to Law 15 of 2003 on the Stipulation of Legislation of 2002 on Terrorism Eradication. Article 12B, paragraph (3) of Law 5 of 2018 pertains to individuals who intentionally create, collect, and distribute written or electronic material for use in terrorist training. Additionally, Article 43A of Law 5 of 2018, which amends Law 15 of 2003, only references deradicalization programs in relation to terrorism eradication.

There is currently no legal framework for regulating radicalism, particularly through social media. The only provisions related to online content in Law Number 19/2016 on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) are Article 27 paragraph (3), which addresses insults and defamation, and Article 28 paragraph (2), on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup (SARA) issues. This lack of regulation of radicalism through social media creates a legal void that is inconsistent with the principle of the rule of law and requires compliance with applicable legal policies by both citizens and state institutions. The absence of regulations on radicalism can lead to legal stagnation.

Law is an institution that guides humans to a just, prosperous, and happy life [15]. Based on the principle of law for man, this institution serves a greater purpose beyond itself, and when it fails to achieve this purpose, it needs to be revised. The law needs to be revised and improved when a problem arises rather than forcing humans to fit into the legal scheme. Progressive law recognizes that the law is not an absolute and final institution; rather, its effectiveness is determined by its ability to serve people. Therefore, the law is constantly evolving to serve the needs of society appropriately.

Satjipto [15] believes that the law should be a dynamic institution that constantly evolves to achieve a higher level of perfection. The law’s effectiveness can be measured by its ability to promote justice, welfare, and concern for individuals and society. In Satjipto’s view, the law is an ongoing process that is constantly improving and becoming better over time [15].

According to Marc Ancel, criminal policy can be defined as a deliberate and systematic effort by society to address crime [16]. This definition was proposed by Marc Ancel, who described it as the rational organization of the control of crime by society [17]. On the other hand, G. Peter Hoefnagels offers a slightly different definition, stating that criminal policy involves the rational and organized management of social responses to criminal behavior [18]. Hoefnagels also proposed several other interpretations of criminal policy, as follows:

a) Criminal policy is the science of response.

b) Criminal policy is the science of prevention.

c) Criminal policy is the science of designating human behavior as crime.

d) Criminal policy is a total reasonable response to crime [18].

Criminal law policy establishes clear and effective legal guidelines for the organizers and enforcers of court decisions. This is achieved by creating positive legal rules that help ensure that justice is tangible and accessible to society. Meanwhile, by establishing appropriate guidelines for the administration and implementation of justice, criminal law policy enhances the effectiveness and fairness of its system.

Mulder [17] stated that criminal law policy is the guideline for determining the following:

a. How far the existing criminal provisions need to be revised or renewed (in welk opzicht de bestaande strafbepalingen hersten dienen te worden)

b. What can be performed to prevent criminal behavior (wat gedaan kan worden om strafrechtelijk gedrag te voorkomen)

c. How the investigation, prosecution, trial and execution of criminal sanctions need to be carried out (hoe de opsorping, vervolging, berechting en tenuitvoerlegging van straffen dien te verlopen) [17].

The research highlights that the lack of specific regulations on radicalism in certain legal provisions leads to gaps needed for this heinous act through social media. However, countering radicalism through social media without these regulations will only result in content removal. Three key points are needed to address radicalism through social media: surveillance, law enforcement, and cooperation between platforms and communities through penal and non-penal approaches.

At present, supervision is conducted by various institutions including Densus 88 Anti-Terror Police, the Cyber Crime Directorate of the National Police Criminal Investigation Department, NCTA, and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. To achieve optimal results, it is necessary to integrate and unify the supervisory functions carried out by different institutions. While each institution retains its supervisory role, an integrated approach is crucial to ensure swift, accurate, and precise decisions.

To address the proliferation of radicalism, the Philippine government has taken various steps,
including monitoring and implementing counter-radicalism measures such as:

a. Monitoring Filipino Workers abroad;
b. Monitoring madrasas;
c. Countering radicalization;
d. Conducting online campaigns and counter-messaging.

The main functions of supervision include cyber patrols, profiling, and mapping. Cyber patrols are responsible for gathering data from various external sources, which are then subjected to thorough analysis and profiling. This process examines several aspects, such as the author, account authenticity, content location, IP address, and perpetrator coordinates. Additionally, mapping plays a crucial role in identifying when and where the content is uploaded, the platforms and channels it is typically shared on, the surrounding conversations, and its intended purpose. These functions enable law enforcement agencies to identify and analyze potential risks easily.

Enforcing regulations to combat radical content on social media platforms requires more than just taking down individual posts. Simply removing offending content without addressing the underlying issues could result in the proliferation of similar content. Therefore, as a mapping material, enforcement is carried out using two approaches, hard and soft, as in counterterrorism. Mapping also plays a critical role in guiding these efforts and ensuring they effectively address the root causes of online radical content.

### 2.2. Radicalism Assessment as a Concept of Countering Radicalism through Social Media in Indonesia

Terrorism from radical ideologies is a global phenomenon that falls into the extraordinary crime category. Radicalism, which achieves a total and revolutionary transformation by violently overthrowing existing values, is the root cause of terrorism. Some characteristics attributed to radical attitudes and ideologies, include:

a. Intolerance (refusal to respect the opinions and beliefs of others);
b. Fanaticism (always believing oneself to be right and others to be wrong);
c. Exclusivity (separating oneself from the rest of society);
d. Revolutionary mindset (inclination to use violent means to achieve goals).

Individuals can be motivated to join terrorist networks because of domestic, international, and cultural factors. Domestic factors such as poverty, injustice, and dissatisfaction with the government can lead to feelings of marginalization and frustration among individuals, making them vulnerable to the ideology of terrorist groups. Similarly, international factors such as global injustice, arrogant foreign policies, and modern imperialism by dominant nations can also contribute to the radicalization of individuals. The cultural factor closely related to the shallow understanding of religion and the literal interpretation of Holy Scriptures tends to fuel radical attitudes and ideologies. These factors often motivate radical attitudes and ideologies.

a. Individuals with radical tendencies are subjected to the following four stages:
b. Pre-radicalization is when an individual engages in normal activities and routines.
c. Self-identification is when an individual starts to identify with radical ideologies.
d. Indoctrination is when individual intensifies and focuses their beliefs on the movement taken.

**Jihadism** is when an individual engages in actions or acts based on their conviction as a form of *jihad*.

Radicalism is marked by an unyielding and extreme devotion to belief or ideology, which typically involves rejecting compromise and vehement opposition to opposing beliefs. It often stems from religious polarization, resulting in anti-cultural sentiments and narrow interpretations of doctrines, ideologies, or theology. In Indonesia, radicalism is attributed to the lack of integration of nationalist values rooted in pluralism by various groups.

Radical groups can be viewed in three patterns, namely [19].

a. The method for conveying and framing ideas to the public (framing);
b. The mobilization of movement sources (mobilizing);
c. Tactics and strategies (making decisions).

Commitment to a radical movement refers to an organizational involvement level. According to Golose, it is divided into five categories.

a. *Hardcore* members possess the most profound commitment levels. These individuals have often been affiliated with the group for an extended period and are frequently involved in planning or executing violent actions.
b. *Activists* are members who may not have a long-standing affiliation with the group and whose lives are not entirely centered on the organization.
c. A *newcomer* is a member who recently joined the group and has not yet established strong connections with other layers within the organization.
d. *Supporters* are individuals who have weaker ties with the organization and do not have a regular membership status. They may only offer intermittent aid to the radical group, such as providing shelter or protection to members or contributing funds.
e. *Sympathizer* refers to those who are not actively involved with the radical organization but identify with the goals and ideologies of the group. These individuals passively support the group by not disclosing information they may have to law...
enforcement. It is crucial to understand that even though sympathizers are not directly involved, their passive support can still contribute to the harmful actions and agenda of the group.

It is essential to recognize that not all ideas linked to radicalism are unlawful. For instance, individuals who are passively involved with radical organizations fall under the category of sympathizers. At the newcomer stage, they are members who have recently joined the group and have little connection with other organizational groups. Therefore, using a criminalization approach can worsen radicalization by catalyzing those who feel marginalized. This means that the government needs to take a repressive stance, because families of those exposed to radicalism may develop hostility and even resort to attack the government.

The counter-radicalism approach does not need to rely solely on repression. Instead, it should start with detailed identification to ensure that law enforcement targets individuals who spread radicalism without later backfiring against the government. The assessment process plays a crucial role in evaluating the level of radicalism in an individual. In the case of radicalization on social media, this process determines the exposure to radicalism and the appropriate response. This will determine whether the perpetrators need to be rehabilitated in a deradicalization boarding school or criminal justice system. A comprehensive approach to counter-radicalism should prioritize identification and assessment before taking action.

Radicalism spread through social media encompasses different aspects, including intolerance, fanaticism, exclusivity, and revolutionary violence. These elements may intersect with other legal regulations within the same domain. Therefore, punishment for radicalism propagated through social media needs to be enforced. It serves as an early detection mechanism and helps to purify the platform from those who disseminate radical speech.

A team of experts is required to assess suspected radicalism on social media, comprising religious, legal, language, and psychological professionals. These four experts will assess whether the actions of the suspect on social media have a high or low radicalism. The religious expert verifies whether the actions of the suspect are consistent with religious teachings. Subsequently, the language expert conducts content analysis to identify any radicalism in the spread. Psychologists analyze the mental state and thought processes of the suspects. Finally, legal experts evaluate the legal implications of the actions portrayed by the suspect, which potentially result in criminal punishment.

The assessment process identifies the radicalism, categorizing them as hardcore, activist, newcomer, supporter, or sympathizer. The outcome of this analysis will determine the appropriate deradicalization approach for the perpetrators. For instance, supposing a perpetrator has expressed support for ISIS and made derogatory remarks against the government as an infidel and tyrannical regime, but lacks the means to construct bombs or any affiliations, and is cooperative upon arrest, they will not face trial but will be sent to an Islamic boarding school for deradicalization.

The deradicalization Islamic boarding school approach is a semi-soft procedure that eradicates radicalism by educating and guiding the perpetrators. This approach is centered on dialog and is far from the notion of prison. The perpetrators will be given personalized guidance and support in the boarding school. Furthermore, an assessment will determine when they are ready to return home or continue studying to ensure successful deradicalization at the Islamic boarding school.

The criminal justice system can be used to prosecute individuals categorized as hardcore perpetrators and those affiliated with terrorist organizations. This approach enforces the law unequivocally and can discourage other radical propagators from engaging in similar actions. As a result, reducing radicalism suppresses terrorism and contributes to more excellent stability and security.

To prevent recidivism and promote rehabilitation, deradicalization programs should be incorporated into the criminal justice system for perpetrators. The aim of such programs is to rectify the mindset of those involved in radicalism and prevent future offenses upon their release. In this regard, soft approaches, such as the dissemination of positive and counter-terrorist messages through social media by the government, are crucial for countering terrorism.

Based on the interview with Iwan Ristiyanto, popular social media platforms in Indonesia include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram, and the Turkish-owned messaging app BIP. However, the services offered by these platforms have not been checked by the Densus 88 Anti-Terror Police. While the Indonesian police can request data from social media platforms operating within the country or those with branches in Indonesia, obtaining data from foreign-owned platforms operating outside the country can be challenging. This is because these platforms are owned by foreign countries and operate without any branches in Indonesia [11].

Deradicalization programs are crucial in combating terrorism, and they focus on three key factors, including being humanistic, using a soulful approach, and reaching out to the grassroots. According to these programs, the fight against terrorism should prioritize the enforcement of human rights and create prosperity, equality, and justice for all members of society, including terrorism suspects or convicts. This approach emphasizes the need for communication and education.
instead of violence, and intimidation between law enforcement officials and terrorism suspects, or convicts. Reaching out to the grassroots is also crucial not only to target terrorism suspects and convicts but also sympathizers, and those exposed to radical ideas. The program also instills multiculturalism in a broader society [20].

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, efforts to counter radicalism cannot depend solely on repressive measures. Therefore, it is essential to have a thorough identification process to ensure that the law enforcement actions by the government against radicalism are precise and do not have negative consequences in the future. The assessment process entails identifying the radicalism in an individual. An example is evaluating the perpetrators act of radicalism on social media to determine the extent of their exposure to radical ideas. This determines whether the perpetrators will be guided into a deradicalization Islamic boarding school or the criminal justice system.

The current legal limitations in Indonesia in tackling terrorist radicalism are that there are no laws that strictly regulate terrorist radicalism; therefore, massive countermeasures for terrorism cannot be carried out. However, if law enforcement is carried out thoroughly, it is feared that Indonesia will be judged as an undemocratic country because it mixes criticism and repression with social media with the stigmatization of radicalism. Based on this, it is better if in the future Indonesia makes changes to Law no. 5 of 2018 concerning Amendments to Law no. 15 of 2003 for the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism by criminalizing the spread of radicalism as a crime, but still paying attention to preventive measures such as radicalization assessments and radicalism Islamic boarding schools.

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