The Roots and Dynamic of Radicalism among Students in Medan

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Abstract: This paper aims to explore intolerance or radicalism among students in the city of Medan. The phenomenon of radicalism of youth is an important phenomenon and attractive pattern of transnational, cross-cultural and cross-history. Moreover, radicalism is a sort of terrorism. Natana J. DeLong-Bas as quoted by Arza (2012) calls for driving a wave of youth such changes as the “Facebook generation” or “internet generation” because the massive and intensive use of social media in orchestration movement demanded a change. Tragically, during conducting this research, a high school student who has recently graduated attempted murder of a priest who preaches in Sint Yoseph Church in Medan. Police investigations revealed that the action of attempted murder is linked to an international terrorist network, ISIS. The sample of this study was high school students and university students in Medan including religious teachers with a total sample of 175 people (150 students and 25 teachers). As the samples are selected non-randomly, its conclusion does not represent the opinion of entire youth in Medan. The study reveals that there is no single explanation for the occurrence of radicalism among the youth. Although in general, it can be said that each religion (Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, and Buddhism) is less accepting of other religions in neighborhood relations, political relations as well as in economic cooperation. In other words, young generation in Medan was also less tolerant primarily due to a clash of religious beliefs and experiences of discriminatory treatment by other religious groups.

Keywords: Intolerance, Radicalism, Youth movement, Discrimination, Clash of religious beliefs

1. Introduction

Not only in the realm of bureaucracy, young people in Indonesia have been radicalized ideologically and become less tolerant. Currently, some prominent universities are controlled by hardliners organizations, said LIPI researchers in discussions on Thursday. Anas revealed in a study conducted in 2011 in five universities in Indonesia, UGM, UI, IPB, Airlangga University, and Undip showed increasing of conservative or religious fundamentalism, especially among the students in the state universities (Kompas / 18/02/16).

“The Pew Research Center” survey also revealed the same conclusion in 2015. This research revealed that about 4% or about 10 million citizens of Indonesia to support ISIS - the majority of them are young people. Survey Institute of Islamic Studies and Peace (LAKIP), led by Prof Dr. Bambang Pranowo October 2010 until January 2011, revealed nearly 50% of students agree on radical measures. The data mentioned 25% of students and 21% of teachers said Pancasila is irrelevant. While 84.8% of students and 76.2% of teachers agree with Shari'a law in Indonesia. The number who agree with violence for religious solidarity reached 52.3%, and 14.2% of students justify bomb attacks.

Intolerance also penetrated the public schools. Intolerance has strengthened in those schools. Throughout July to December last year, The Wahid Institute revealed some interesting data. For instance, out of the 306 students, who do not agree utter religious holidays, other people like to congratulate Christmas constituted 27%, and undecided compromises 28%. Students will retaliate destruction of their temples as much as 15%, undecided 27%. While those who do not want to visit a sick friend interfaith 3%, and 3% undecided. According to the data, the views of students in public schools in Jabodetabek is an open and tolerant. However, the tendency of intolerance and radicalism continues to strengthen.
Mohammad Siroji in the journal Muslim World (2005: 1) started his narrative with the quote "education is about an opening door, opening minds, and opening possibilities" when analyzing the roots of Islamic radicalism, particularly the FPI movement with the central figure Ja'far Umar Thalib. He explained that the educational background through which a person, the role of mentor to educate a person, and the type of knowledge acquired will open "the door, mind, and the possibility" of a person to act.

Siroji then concludes, through combination of formal and informal in Bangil, Jakarta, and Pakistan, as well as a non-formal education in the battlefield of Pakistan and Middle East, Ja’far was able to enrich his knowledge, develop his idea, broaden his network, and equip himself with real experiences in Salafi-Wahabbi movement (Sirozi, 2005:19). Some experts also agree that religion is a major source of identity and become the first reference for behavior, including dealing with others. Many scholars have emphasized the potential of religion as a major source of identity. Religion, therefore, seems to be an ideal means for an effective source of identity project (Brauchler, 2003:2).

Radicalism and conflict with religious nuances are complex and multidimensional. Religious radicalism in the perspective of political economy is due to the struggle for resources such as limited political power, economic, and natural resources (Hadiz, 2015; Pelly, 1984; Muryanto, 2013; Syaf, 2014; Simanihuruk, 2014; Fuller, 2010). This approach assumes that identity is only used as a political gasoline to reach and control the limited resources by the elite in general. The other approach assumes that the lines of religion and radicalism increased due to a clash of civilizations to maintain the sanctity of faith and religious beliefs (Huntington, 1996, Armstrong, Juergensmeyer, 2000, Castels, 1997, Ilyas, 2014). Meanwhile, other experts argue, strengthening the lines of ethnic and religious radicalism due to a weak role of the state in overcoming violence and provide basic rights of citizens. Weak even the failure of the state's role gave birth to the theory of 'black hole' which then exploited by terrorists, including organized criminal groups (Philips, 2014).

The historical dimension by other thinkers also contributed strengthen the lines of religion. The history of the three great religions of the world (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) have 'triple vision' in which the three different religions are fighting over the land/the holy city of Jerusalem as the root and starting point for the development of their respective religions at the same time at the same place of establishment of the houses the third holiest religion (Armstrong).

Furthermore, from a political perspective, the strengthening of intolerance (including) the fundamental religious movements caused by three variables, namely (1) the structure and political context, (2) framing and (3) the resources. The political structure is interpreted as opening up political space for any group identity (religion, ethnicity, and sexual orientation) were previously silenced authoritarian New Order regime.

2. Research Method

The sample of the study are students (high school and public-private universities) in Medan, which consists of 150 students and 25 religious teachers. The table below contains samples compositions in term of education level and university origin. Since the samples are selected non-randomly, its conclusion does not represent the opinion of entire youth in Medan.

Table 1: Representative and Total Respondents from University and High School level

| No | University / School           | Religion Dominant * | Students | Teacher |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------|---------|
| 1  | IAIN Medan                    | Moslem              | 25       | 5       |
| 2  | Universitas Nomensen Medan    | Catholic / Protestant| 25       | 5       |
| 3  | FISIP USU Medan               | Balanced            | 25       | 5       |
| 4  | Madrasah Aliah Negeri Medan   | Moslem              | 25       |         |
| 5  | SMA Negeri IV Medan           | Balanced            | 25       | 5       |
| 6  | SMA Sultan Iskandar Medan     | Balanced            | 25       | 5       |
|    | TOTAL                         |                     | 150      | 25      |
3. Methodology

3.1 Intolerance and Radicalism among Students in Medan

Radicalism is not the same and can not be equated with terrorism. Ahmad Syafii once declared that radicalism is more associated with the model attitudes and ways of expressing religious person, while terrorism explicitly includes criminal acts for political purposes. Radicalism is more related to internal religious problems, while terrorism is a global phenomenon which requires global action as well. But often also that terrorism is the follow-up of radicalism. However, the true radicalism is one stage or one step before terrorism. The difference between the two is very thin, in terms of Rizal Sukma (2004), "Radicalism is only one step short of terrorism."

The findings in the field of data showed that the mutual-trust (Question number 1 and 2) between religious groups among students in Medan is low trust. Only a small proportion of different religions respondents answered that they strongly agree (16%) that their neighbors can be trusted. The rest, who answered between agreeing and disagreeing were 36%, disagree constituted 17.1, and strongly disagree were 2.3%.

A number of respondents were undecided (between agree and disagree) which shows the relationship between religious groups marred doubt in the sense of mutual trust. When the combined percentage of answers (1) between agree and disagree (2) disagree and (3) strongly disagree, the total percentage reaches 55%. This means that over half of hesitation occurred in believing the different religious groups in residence or their neighbors. In other words, more than half of respondents compartmentalized within the confines of their faith because of lack of confidence or hesitation with their neighbors of different religions.

Low trust is for instance also revealed from an interview with an Islamic teacher respondents in Medan MAN, which states that the lack of mutual trust is due to lack of understanding and respect for the faith among religious groups. Related to elect leaders, including village heads though, why a Muslim should choose Islamic leaders as well because it is loaded in the faith, as an informal disclosed as follows,

"In Islam, non-Muslims should not be chosen as leader, although in the context of village elections. Because in the Qur'an the following is stated: "do not make your guardian of the infidels". Supposing that we chose leaders who are not of Islam religion, the leaders would then have the right to govern us by their own rules, and we could not refuse because it is a decree or order. In other contexts, there are leaders who are dzholim (evil). That lies the difference, resulting in another Hadith says "Obey your leaders (Muslims) though the zholim". We are not hostile to Islam leader we have chosen, and we hate and reject policies. It will be more severe if the leader does not know Islam, he would make the policy even worse, it will be greater ugliness. Then we are required to choose the leader of Islam and do not insult (menzholimi) leader we have chosen.

Karina Korostelina when analyzing the behavior of Osama bin Laden's radicalism concluded that Laden has stood out about the perception of social identity as a Muslim, a strong relationship to the social category as the Muslim community, which then affects social perception and temperament he showed to the outside world. Ideology and interpretation of bin Laden against Islam leads to the formation of Al-Qaeda in response to threats against the Muslim community of the Soviet Union at that time, and Americans in particular, because of the presence of their troops in Saudi Arabia and US aid to Israel (Pratiwi, 2010: 34 ).

Furthermore, the tendency of the same number was also found when respondents were asked whether "the majority of people of different faiths in residence/neighbors would help if someone needs help" (Question 2). Respondents who answered between "agree" and "disagree" (44%); and "disagree" (10.9%). When the percentage figures (1) between agree and disagree, and (2) does not agree accumulated, it will reach 54.9%. This means that more than half of respondents are less confident with their neighbors of different religions in assisting when neighbors of different religions need help. The further clarifies data on the previous question number 1, which shows the mutual trust among different religions is relatively low since over half are not willing to assist neighbors of different religions. The study also revealed that the radical group believed most of the respondents are already in Indonesia (Question number 3). Because the majority of respondents strongly agreed (34%) that these radical groups already exist in Indonesia. Followed somewhat agree (13.7%), between agree and disagree (40.6%). Fewer respondents disagree (8.6%) and strongly disagree (2.9%) for existing radical groups in Indonesia. The existence of radical groups in Indonesia also strengthened respondents
(Question number 4) which says that the presence of radical groups is not a foreign conspiracy again, as in the early days of the occurrence of acts of terrorism in Indonesia.

Despite the mutual trust between religious groups is relatively low and the presence of radical groups recognized already in Indonesia, the majority of respondents strongly disagree (74.3%) and disagree (15.4%) joining radical groups in Indonesia and strongly disagree (74.3%) and disagree (15.4%) joining radical groups in other parts of the world. This means that in spite of mutual trust is relatively low, the majority of the respondents refused to join radical groups in Indonesia and the world (Question number 5 and 6). In other words, the desire to join the radical groups in Indonesia and the world only done a small group of Indonesian citizens. In that sense, religious groups in Indonesia is less support the existence of radical groups that exist.

Not only do not want to join a radical group, the majority of respondents do not agree that colleges and schools in the city of Medan had infiltrated the radical movement. Because of the respondents revealed that the group who answered strongly disagree (34.9) and disagree (31.4%). This means that 66.3% of respondents do not agree that schools and colleges in the city of Medan have been compromised radical movement. While some declared hesitance, between agree and disagree (18.9%), answered strongly agree (4.0%) and somewhat agree (10.3%). The answers which are between agree and disagree accumulated to strongly agree and somewhat agree reached 33.2%. This means that nearly a third of respondents undecided and agreed that schools and colleges in the city of Medan had infiltrated radical movements (Question number 7).

Furthermore, more than half of respondents believe that radicalism was only one more step towards terrorism (radicalism in only one step short of terrorism). Most answered strongly agree (31.4%), somewhat agree (10.9%) and between agree and disagree (30.3%). This means that the respondents were also of the view that this radicalism could lead to acts of terrorism (question number 8). In other words, if the seeds of radicalism increasingly crystallize, it is not likely to deliver an act of terrorism.

Silber and Bhatt filed a model of radicalization, that explains the distinction between radical thinking (radicalization of thought) and radical action (radicalization of action). In that sense, it is not always someone who thinks radical automatically become perpetrators of radical action. Then what stimulus could change the minds of people towards radical action? Internet and imaginary relationship with the rhetoric of "good jihadists" and "jihadi cool" that has been crystallized in one's mind the role of being the main driver, which is a radical change thinking into radical action that is scary. Internet generation and the Facebook generations who immerse themselves in the virtual world at a certain level will change the minds of radical uploaded from the virtual world, and it was changed in a radical action in the real world.

It is described very interesting by Caroline Joan S. Picart in the article "Jihad Cool/Jihad Chic": The Roles of the Internet and Imagined Relations in the Self-Radicalization of Colleen LaRose (Jihad Jane) in the journal "Societas." This article examines in depth through autobiographies of Colleen LaRose, an American woman who turned into actors radical and perform (plan) terror act alone (lone wolf). Picart concluding act of terror alone that do La Rose due to the following factors (1) pre-existing mental, psychiatric, or structural factors; (2) the condition of being a misfit, unable to effectively integrate into society; (3) personal grievances conflated with perceived group resentments and imagined empathic identification; (4) the search for a fantasy lover-mentor; (5) the rhetorics of romanticizing the jihadi cool image. All reviews of these factors were magnified by the imaginative relations and concentrated enabled by the internet, leading to an increasing risk-taking behavior and rapidly transforming "monster talk" to monstrous action. Although many other factors have to be in place for misfits to transmogrify into lone wolf terrorists, as evidenced in the case of Colleen LaRose, interaction on the internet can Intensify imagined relations with a virtual community and embellish the rhetorics of jihadi cool, catalyzing the movement from radical thought to radical action.

The traumatic experience is called by James Jasper as moral shock or 'ketergoncangan moral.' Traumatic experiences Colleen La Rose described Picart occurred since La Rose adulthood; when she was raped by her biological father and then married several times with a partner who treated her very rudely. With more or less the same tone, Mira found someone involved in acts of terror motivated more by the influence of a leader/mentor. When the leader calls for jihad, the soldier must meet the call, with the belief that they left the field of jihad as unlawful if it has been dealing with the enemy. For those who chose the path of terror, they follow leaders who said that Jihad today is obligatory (fardlu ayn) for Muslims. They assess the country of Muslims are currently being colonized and oppressed. "If the conditions are that
there is no jihad, then all Muslims will be guilty and must be held accountable in front of God...”, “oppression requires defense, the keterjajahan need of liberation, keternodaan call purgatory, the hurt demand glory, it just to be completed by the Jihad ... ”(Aziz in Mira; 2010: 67).

Although the trust between religious groups is relatively low, yet respondents do not consider other religious groups as a threat. Only a small proportion of respondents strongly agree (5.1%), somewhat agree (5.7%), between agree and disagree (7.4) if other religious groups as a threat. Instead, the majority of respondents disagree (35.4%) and strongly disagree (45.1%) of other religions to be considered as a threat (Question number 9).

The findings of the same data were also evident when asked whether respondents agreed with the acts of violence that occurred disagreement/creed (question number 10). Acts of violence against other religions when there is disagreement/beliefs are less approved (16.6%) even strongly disapproved (73.7%).

An informant Islamic teacher in MAN (Madrasah Aliyah) II Medan, who teaches Tafseer explains how the Prophet Muhammad achieved the respect of non-Muslims and also their relationships based on fiqih or Islamic law governing (the relationship between Islam and non-Muslims and researchers). So in the wars, there are causes why unbelievers should not be killed, the first for young children, two women, religious leaders, for example, pastors, places like hospitals, houses of infidels should not be crushed. So Islam is maintaining the dignity of human life at all, but instead, we see how the non-Muslim countries hypocrites facing Muslims or killing people like in the Iran and Iraq. They are used to kill.

Because indeed, Islam is constantly under threat of the infidels. However, infidels were divided up by these informants who had earned a master's degree from IAIN this field, namely the “infidel and infidels azzimi harbi”. This harbi infidels that we must reduce, wish to control us and impose our faith. While zimmi infidels are infidels who protect their reverence by paying taxes, and if we hurt them then we make a sin.

The same answer also appears when respondents are asked whether to agree on the act of damaging houses of worship of other religions if there is a dispute establishment of houses of worship. Most respondents disagree (24%) and even quite agree on what (68%) destruction of places of worship of other religions when there is a dispute establishment of houses of worship (question number 11). Similar findings also revealed that most respondents do not want to commit acts of discrimination against other religious groups (question number 12). The majority of respondents do not agree with the violence of radicalism and terrorism events that recently occurred in Indonesia and at the global level. When the question about the burning of the Temple that occurred recently in Tanjung Balai was asked (question number 13), mostly disagree (23.4%), and even the majority strongly disagree (66.3%).

An interesting finding was revealed when a majority of respondents disagree (18.9%) and strongly disagree (68.6%). Pancasila state ideology replaced with a particular religious belief (question number 16). Only a few strongly agree (2.9%), somewhat agree (2.9%) and between agree and disagree (6.9%). But when the respondents were asked whether to agree with the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia (question number 17) the percentage who answered strongly agree reached 22.9%, somewhat agree - 6.3% and between agree and disagree - 15.4%. While the less agreed range was 18.9% and strongly disagree - 45.7%. If the percentage who strongly agree (22.9%) and disagree (6.3%) accumulated, percentage figure reaches 29.2% of respondents agreed to the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia.

In other words, nearly a third of respondents agreed to the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. It could be interpreted that the tug-of-ideology of nationality between nationalists and religious are still relevant and lasting, including among students until now. The pull of national ideology at the level of secondary and university education reflect political tensions between Islamic and nationalist groups in the formulation of national ideology.

Furthermore, the majority of respondents strongly disagreed (49.1%) and disagreed (17.1%) when religious teachers play a role in shaping the behavior of intolerance and radicalism among students / i and student / i (question number 18). Only a small proportion strongly agreed (11.4%) and somewhat agreed (9.1%) that teachers of religion play a role in shaping intolerant behavior. More hesitation (between agree and disagree) reached 17.1%.

While the influence of the media in promoting intolerance/radicalism among (mainly) young people answered strongly agree (17.1%), somewhat agree (13.1%) by the respondents. This means that 30.2% of respondents believe social media served to increase radicalism. Meanwhile, the answer between agree and disagree or hesitation was in the range of 22.3%.
Furthermore, respondents who answered disagree reached 18.3% and strongly disagree - 29.1%. If both of them are accumulated, then the less agree and even strongly disagree role of social media in fostering radicalism reached 47.4%.

### Table 2: The Percentage of Intolerance among Students in Medan

| No | Question about intolerance and radicalism                                                                 | Strongly Agree (%) | Somewhat Disagree (%) | Between Agree and Disagree (%) | Less Agree (%) | Strongly Disagree (%) |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1  | The majority of people of different faiths in residence/my neighbors can be trusted                        | 16,0                | 28,6                   | 36,0                           | 17,1           | 2,3                    |
| 2  | Most of the people of different religions in residence/ neighbors will help if you need assistance         | 20,0                | 24,6                   | 44,0                           | 10,9           | 0,6                    |
| 3  | Are you sure radical groups already exist in Indonesia?                                                   | 34,3                | 13,7                   | 40,6                           | 8,6            | 2,9                    |
| 4  | Is the existence of radical groups in Indonesia a conspiracy of foreign countries?                         | 19,4                | 19,4                   | 30,9                           | 17,7           | 6,9                    |
| 5  | Do you agree to join radical groups in Indonesia?                                                          | 2,3                 | 3,4                    | 4,6                            | 15,4           | 74,3                   |
| 6  | Do you agree to join the radical groups in the world?                                                       | 1,7                 | 1,7                    | 4,6                            | 15,4           | 76,6                   |
| 7  | Do you agree schools and colleges in Medan had infiltrated the group / radical movements?                   | 4,0                 | 10,3                   | 18,9                           | 31,4           | 34,9                   |
| 8  | Do you agree with the statement that "Radicalism in only one step short of terrorism"?                    | 31,4                | 10,9                   | 30,3                           | 18,9           | 8,6                    |
| 9  | Do you agree that other religious groups as a threat?                                                       | 5,1                 | 5,7                    | 7,4                            | 35,4           | 45,1                   |
| 10 | Do you agree with other religious violence that occurred disagreement/creed?                               | 2,9                 | 3,4                    | 3,4                            | 16,6           | 73,7                   |
| 11 | Do you agree with the destruction of other religions worship place (mosque, church) for the establishment of houses of worship? | 2,9                 | 1,7                    | 3,4                            | 24,0           | 68,0                   |
| 12 | Do you agree with the discrimination action to other religious groups?                                      | 1,1                 | 2,9                    | 2,3                            | 19,4           | 73,7                   |
| 13 | Do you agree with the burning of the Temple which occurred in Tanjung Balai recently?                       | 2,3                 | 2,9                    | 5,1                            | 23,4           | 66,3                   |
| 14 | Do you agree that acts of violence committed by radical groups (e.g. ISIS) in Indonesia?                    | 15,4                | 0                      | 2,9                            | 10,9           | 85,7                   |
| 15 | Do you agree that acts of violence committed by radical groups (e.g. ISIS) World?                           | 6,3                 | 0,6                    | 2,9                            | 9,7            | 86,3                   |
| 16 | Do you agree Pancasila state ideology replaced with a particular religious belief?                          | 2,9                 | 2,9                    | 6,9                            | 18,9           | 68,6                   |
| 17 | Do you agree to the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia?                                         | 22,9                | 6,3                    | 15,4                           | 9,7            | 45,7                   |
| 18 | Do you agree that religion teacher role in shaping the behaviour of intolerance and radicalism among students / i and student / i? | 11,4                | 9,1                    | 13,1                           | 17,1           | 49,1                   |
| 19 | Do you agree that social media served to increase intolerance/radicalism among (mainly) young people?       | 17,1                | 13,1                   | 22,3                           | 18,3           | 29,1                   |

**Resource:** Researches
4. Conclusion
The level of mutual trust between religious groups among students in Medan is relatively low. Despite low trust, most respondents did not consider other religious groups as a threat and did not want to discriminate against other religions. However, it should be noted that most of the respondents refused to join radical groups both in Indonesia and the world. Even they condemned their violent actions including denouncing the destruction of houses of worship when the polemics about the establishment of them including burning monasteries and temples in Tanjung Balai recently.

An interesting finding was revealed when respondents largely agreed lacking basic Pancasila state is replaced by a particular religious belief. Nevertheless, when they were asked whether they agree on the establishment of the Islamic state in Indonesia, the percentage who answered strongly agree reached 22.9%, and somewhat agree 6.3%. If the percentage who strongly agree (22.9%) and disagree (6.3%) accumulated, presentation figure reached 29.2% of the respondents agreed to the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. It could be interpreted that the tug-of-ideology of nationality between nationalists and religious are still relevant and lasting, including among students and student until now. The pull of national ideology at the level of secondary and university education reflect political tensions between Islamic and nationalist groups in the formulation and implementing of national ideology.

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