

ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND FAMILY EXTREMISM IN INDONESIA:

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN CONSERVATIVE FAMILY MUSLIM EDUCATION

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Abstrak

This article aimed to examine how Islamic education was taught in Muslim families and to what extent education in those families supported extremism, one suspected of involvement in some religious extremist cases in Indonesia. Considering the participation of all family members, such as husbands, wives, and children, simultaneously in some suicide bombing cases, it is essential to examine parental education levels, roles, and functions in such families. This study highlights the shift in the traditional role of wives, who were previously underappreciated but now play a significant role in shaping the family's religious beliefs. The primary focus of the study is to examine how families can become a means of spreading extremist ideologies. The study gathered data through a literature review and in-depth interviews with families suspected of involvement in extremist activities in Indonesia. The findings showed that families could serve as a conduit for the propagation and dissemination of extremism, with women, particularly wives, and children, occasionally being susceptible to indoctrination under the guise of education. In contrast, at other times, wives act as agents responsible for transmitting extremist ideologies.

Kata Kunci : *Islamic education; extremism; Family; radicalism*



A. Pendahuluan

For over two decades, the Indonesian government has grappled with the spread of radicalism and terrorism in various aspects of life, including within Islamic educational institutions. It has become common knowledge that Islamic education is the most sought-after keyword by many parties since the global terrorism issue has escalated. The fundamental question is whether Islamic education promotes extremism (Hefner, 2015; Park & Niyozov, 2008). That is why Islamic educational institutions or education, in general, have become an international topic of discussion under the label of fundamental schools since September 11, 2001 (Pohl, 2006). In Indonesia, research related to so-called radical Islamic education has been conducted by many researchers. For instance, the radicalization of Islamic education in Islamic higher education institutions and universities (Afrianty, 2012), in Madrasahs/schools (Shaleh, Zamroni, Mukminan, Ashadi, et al., 2020), and Islamic boarding schools (Malik, 2017).

Those researchers view Islamic education as promoting religious radicalism and extremism for various reasons. Afrianty (2012), for example, claimed that higher education institutions are considered radical because among the perpetrators of extremism are alumna and students from those Islamic higher education institutions. In addition, Shaleh (2020) concluded that schools and madrasahs are considered radical based on the findings that some students and teachers have been exposed to radical (Park & Niyozov, 2008; Shaleh, Zamroni, Mukminan, Zakaria, et al., 2020). On the other hand, Malik (2017) pointed out that radicalism in Pesantren is influenced by the infiltration of conservative Islamic group movements in those institutions (Malik, 2017; Mietzner & Muhtadi, 2018). In addition, the epistemological aspect of Islamic education is also suspected as a source of religious extremism. Amra Sabic-El-Rayess concludes that there is a new relationship between the stagnation of knowledge practices in Islam and the current rise of radicalization. Extremists distort the Islamic narrative by emphasizing an idealized version of the Islamic caliphate divorced from certain rationality (Sabic-El-Rayess,



2020). Therefore, knowledge and education in Islam have undergone a shift towards a narrow understanding of religion (exclusivism) without rationality. This study continues the academic concerns of previous researchers regarding the relationship between Islamic education and religious extremism, albeit in a particular locus, namely families exposed to radicalism.

Islamic education, in this study, is loosely defined to encompass all formal and informal ways of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge is broadly understood as everything that is produced and revealed or religious knowledge. Meanwhile, radicalization refers to rigid interpretations and practices of Islam that are intolerant toward others (Sabir-El-Rayess, 2020). Therefore, this research highlights informal education in Muslim family environments by exploring the role and position of wives or women in educating family members. So far, empirical studies on Islamic education or teaching, especially in families suspected of terrorism, remain scanty. It is due to difficulties in accessing such families. Although factually, some incidents of radicalism that led to religious extremism and violence have significantly involved families and wives (women) in Indonesia. For example, the bombing of a church in Surabaya was carried out by one family that involved wives and children in 2018 (<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1191795/> accessed on 09/01/2023).

Throughout 2019 and 2021, several cases of women and families involved in violent extremism occurred. The incidents included the 2019 attack on the coordinating minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs in Banten, where wives and husbands were involved. Another incident was the suicide bombing at the Medan Police Headquarters by a wife and religious teacher. In 2021, a wife was involved in a suicide bombing in front of a church in Makassar

(<https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2021/03/29/100000165/> accessed on 01/09/2023). While some of this information is based on factual data, I contend that Islamic education is not directly linked to some of these cases of violent extremism. Mark Wood Ward argued that Islamic education in Indonesia is not responsible for the rise of radicalism, given the inadequacy of evidence.



On the other hand, Islamic education institutions, mainly under the auspices of mainstream Islamic organizations, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, are known to promote moderate Islam (Woodward et al., 2010). Therefore, this study does not investigate Islamic education in Islamic educational institutions but instead examines Islamic education in the family communities of suspected terrorists, using the terms "family extremism" or "family conservative." However, the involvement of families in incidents of violent extremism in several places in Indonesia has prompted the search for the role of the family in this context, particularly the role of the wife's education in the family and the relationship between family members in nurturing and transforming religious, moral values within the family.

The involvement of women (wives) and families in several cases of violent extremism is a new phenomenon in the study of terrorism in Indonesia. In this regard, most perpetrators involved in terrorism cases have been male. Based on records from the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), the role of women (wives) in many instances of violent extremism is significant, with over fifty (50) women (wives) charged with involvement in acts of violent extremism and more than ten (10) families identified as involved in violent extremism from the mid-2000s until now. Hence, it calls for an investigation into the role of families in this context, particularly the role of wives' education within the family and how the relationship between family members can foster and transform religious and moral values within the family. The role of women (wives) in such actions is very diverse, including direct involvement as suicide bombers, fundraisers, ideologues, spies, and hiding suspected terrorists. This data is supported by a 2017 report by the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), which reveals a trend in the changing role of women within the networks of Jamaah Islamiyah over four decades (Kholifah, 2020).

Referring to the cases of violent extremism involving women (wives) and children mentioned above, it is evident that radicalization has shifted from male perpetrators to female perpetrators and from individual acts to community (family) acts. Given this phenomenon, it becomes crucial to explore the push and pull factors that contribute to the involvement of women (wives)



and families in cases of violent extremism. Therefore, the research question is whether these women and families are victims or perpetrators of extremism. If they are victims of indoctrination by their husbands (main perpetrators), how do women and families transform into radicals? Thus, this study investigates how Islamic education is taught in Muslim families and to what extent education within families supports extremist attitudes, particularly in conservative Muslim families of suspected terrorists.

Values and Morals in Muslim Family Education in Indonesia

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim-majority country, with approximately 88% of its population identified as Muslim (Fahmi, 2015). Therefore, thousands of Islamic educational institutions are available in Indonesia to serve the educational needs of the Muslim community. However, Indonesian society recognizes formal education and informal and non-formal education. One form of informal education is family education. Although family education is not as popular as formal education, it is equal to or even greater than traditional education. Therefore, most Muslim families in Indonesia acknowledge that the family is the first primary school for their children. In other words, the home, in the sense of the family, is a space for moral education and instilling Islamic values in family members. In practice, family education is greatly influenced by the background of the family (Marsinta Arsani, 2020). J. Mark Halstead (2007) stated in his editorial that there are at least three main types of moral values in Islamic moral education, namely *akhlaq* (moral values), *adab*, and good character qualities.

(Halstead, 2007). The three core Islamic values underlie Islamic education practices in most Muslim families in Indonesia. However, implementing Muslim family functions may vary and have unique features in each family. For example, Javanese Muslim families describe their educational practices within the family using three approaches: *Asah* (train), *Asih* (love), and *Asuh* (educate) (Pujihavuty et al., 2021). The similarity is that parents primarily carry out the family function (Adi, 2012). Most Indonesian Muslim families consider fulfilling the family functions as the primary obligation of parents. Each family function contains information



about the teachings and practices of activities carried out within the famil (Pujihasvuty et al., 2021).

The concept of Indonesian Muslim families has undergone some changes in Indonesia, but it is still somewhat maintained (Muslimin, 2019). In other words, the structure and culture of Indonesian Muslim families still uphold patriarchal values based on Islamic moral principles (Muslimin, 2019). Indonesia, which has fanatical beliefs, indicates that values and morals in Muslim family education in Indonesia still play an essential role in building and shaping strong and harmonious Muslim families. Sometimes, it can create imbalances in the relationship between husbands and wives. In this context, Muslimin (2019) advocated that Islamic moral values such as Tawhid, global brotherhood, and empathy are sometimes cited as reasons why families feel obliged to be collectively involved in some cases of extremist violence in Indonesia. Despite this, Muslim families in Indonesia still conventionally adhere to these moral values, which remain an essential factor in building and shaping strong and harmonious Muslim families. In some cases, this can lead to imbalances in the power relations between spouses (Rosdiawan, 2018).

Teaching Islamic values and morals to family members is the primary obligation of every parent in Muslim families; thus, the role of parents in Muslim families dominates and even hegemonizes the entire educational process within the family. In the context of family education or informal education, family teaching moral values takes various forms, one of which is moral motivation. Among the intended moral motivations is intrinsic motivation, in which parents encourage family members to act because of their desire to fulfill religious obligations (Halstead, 2007). Religion and moral values in Islam are intertwined in the education of Muslim families in Indonesia. Therefore, according to Halsted, citing Ashraf (1988), faith and moral behavior are like two sides of the same coin, where ethical behavior implies faith and pure faith can produce moral behavior (Halstead, 2004, 2007).

Diversity in family education patterns and goals is common in Muslim families worldwide. Nevertheless, the family unit as part of the social microsystem is still influenced by the impact of global



issues such as war and terrorism (Darling & Turkki, 2009). This can then affect the views and roles of husbands and wives (women) when teaching moral values in the family. In some countries, the term family is believed to be the smallest social unit that plays an essential role in shaping the nation's character (Muslimin, 2019). Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, human development is influenced by environmental contexts. The reciprocal relationship between individuals and their environment shapes their behavior. In this context, the family environment is the closest socializing agent in every individual's life, making the family a significant influence in shaping one's character and habits (Navarro & Tudge, 2022). The effect can occur through educational relationships with indoctrinating patterns (brainwashing) (Nuraniyah, 2018), possibly penetrating any families.

For Muslims, the family is a limited private space in which fundamental Islamic values such as the belief system, moral knowledge, and tolerant attitudes are taught. Therefore, family education is not quickly intervened by external parties, which further strengthens the family's authority in shaping moral values that are built according to the only goals and needs of the family. Based on research findings, especially on families of former suspected terrorists in Indonesia, family education is insufficient in building contact between different religions to reduce prejudice and promote tolerance towards other groups. Thus, these families are generally known to be closed off (exclusive) from the surrounding community (Malik, 2017). However, the intolerance issue in Indonesia has often been associated with bombings and political events involving conservative Islamic groups, such as FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) (Assyaukanie, 2019). It can be illustrated by the case of the massive protests against Basuki Tjahja Purnama, the Governor of Jakarta, in 2017 (Wijaya Mulya & Aditomo, 2019).

Islamic Education and Family Extremism in Indonesia

So far, there is no convincing evidence regarding the relationship between Islamic education and the context of family involvement in cases of violent extremism in Indonesia. Nonetheless, Islamic education in any context and form has always concerned many scholars studying terrorism and Islamic group



movements. Currently, one's general outlook on Islam heavily influences the perspective of Islamic education. In this study, I expand this conversation by examining how Islamic education within families exposed to radicalism, particularly in the families of ex-suspected terrorists, and precisely how the role and position of the wife as a woman can be involved in cases of violent extremism. Sabic (2020) pinpointed that violent extremism or radicalism in education can be understood through what he calls the three-stage knowledge transformation theory in Islam, which includes defining knowledge and education in Islam as the first stage, narrowing knowledge and education in Islam to its religious and political purpose as the second stage, and narrowing knowledge and education, and its impact on radicalization as the third stage (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020). The conclusion drawn from this theory is that the shift in what is deemed valuable knowledge and desired Islamic education has played a significant role in the emergence of radicalism (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020).

On the other hand, exclusive education and family background tend to create anti-cultural sentiment and narrow interpretations of doctrine (Islamic values), ideology, and theology. Therefore, radicalism can easily influence an individual's character when it emerges within the family (Rajafi et al., 2022). In addition, Rajafi (2022) opined that the root of violent extremism in families is the dogmatic and authoritarian application of biases toward status differences. Additionally, one-way communication and anti-democratic values taught within the family contribute to this phenomenon. Furthermore, the unidirectional and anti-democratic communication taught within the family exacerbates the issue (Rajafi et al., 2022). Expanding on this view, the potential for violent extremism in families stems from the role of parents, especially fathers or husbands, as leaders in the family, as is the case in many devout Muslim families that support and nurture patriarchal culture in the name of a narrowly interpreted religion. In the context of this study, patriarchal culture and religion are often "hijacked" by certain individuals who are promoting their political ideologies.



The Islamic education developed within a family environment that strongly adheres to patriarchal culture can potentially encourage indoctrinating practices in family education and teaching. As such, Islamic education within the family tends to be carried out authoritatively by the husband and wife as the holders of family authority. However, it should be conducted with a cooperative dialogical model supporting religious identity and fostering dialogical openness (Schweitzer, 2007). Based on this research, the majority of conservative Islamic families, especially families of suspected terrorists in Indonesia, apply an exclusive model of education. It accords with the understanding and behavioral model of religion that is applied rigidly and textually in most of these cultural families (Malik et al., 2016) given the meaning of conservative Islam is the rigid view of Islam based on the holy book or teachings, orthodoxy, and traditions that are considered the most correct. Such understanding is an early symptom of violent extremism (Sakai & Fauzia, 2014).

Since the terrorist incidents involving families in Indonesia, the values of Islamic education in conservative Muslim families are suspected of having undergone a shift in meaning. Often, these families misquote, misinterpret, and understand Islamic messages out of context. Nevertheless, teaching Islamic values has an important meaning for the goals and mission of most Muslim families in Indonesia. Childfund stated that education plays a significant role for children, providing opportunities to develop mental, physical, and social awareness (Marsinta Arsani, 2020). In this context, Islamic education is believed to play a significant role in changing a person's attitude towards others (the other) to become more exclusive, intolerant, and rejecting diversity (Saeed, 2007). However, Islamic education is not the only driving factor for changing a person. Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, many factors influence individual and group changes as a whole interconnected social system (Navarro & Tudge, 2022).

The choice of some Muslim families in Indonesia to become conservative and even to engage in some cases of violent extremism is more influenced by the macrosystem, mesosystem, and chronosystem environments, for example, global political issues



and situations of conflict, such as the conflicts in Syria, Palestine, and other Islamic countries. Such religiously nuanced global conflicts are acknowledged to have a greater impact and have drawn some conservative Muslim families in Indonesia to become involved (Kholifah, 2020). As a result, the symptoms of Islamic education conservatism in families generally grow initially with prejudices and stigmatization towards global conflicts. In turn, the Islamic education values that are built then become more colored by values of intolerance and claims of truth. Many people would agree that teaching tolerance is a family's responsibility. However, how should this responsibility be understood? (Almond, 2010). Every family has a different understanding of promoting tolerance and diversity, which is why society needs to understand and respect each family's diverse morals and values (Halstead, 2007). Understanding the task of educating for tolerance in families can differ significantly, as each family has its own unique morals and family values that determine their actions and functions. Therefore, the global political situation, particularly conflict situations as mentioned above, can play a decisive role in how families raise their children, transmit values, and contribute to the moral development of their offspring (Halstead, 2007).

The involvement of families in some cases of violent extremism in Indonesia can be explained through three social movement theories (Bayat, 2022), namely collective behavior, resource mobilization, and imagined solidarity (Rosdiawan, 2018). The involvement of conservative Muslim families in some cases of violent extremism in Indonesia can be explained through three social movement theories. These theories explain why individuals become involved in a group and move together. All three mention that collective action occurs after forming a collective identity composed of a sense of togetherness (common feeling) and solidarity. Based on this research finding, at least two moral values in conservative Muslim families bring about a sense of togetherness (common feeling) and solidarity. First, tawhid (belief in one God), called Iman in religious terms. Tawhid serves as a binding and connecting factor for every Muslim beyond skin color, country, nationality, language, and territory. Second, brotherhood among Muslims (Muslim brotherhood). Brotherhood in Islam is not only a



moral value that brings about a sense of empathy and solidarity as human beings but also a brotherhood in which every Muslim should help other Muslims. Therefore, brotherhood in Islam is likened to one body in which a Muslim must be able to feel what other Muslims feel.

The formation of social structures, including families, is believed to result from shared perceptions and emotions that encourage collective action. However, these structures differ regarding the factors influencing individuals to join a group and determine their collective actions. According to collective behavior theory, the primary driving factor for individuals in a group is the shared concepts, ideologies, perspectives, beliefs, and values that unite them. Additionally, the crowd theory, an extension of collective behavior theory, suggests that collective action can occur spontaneously due to shared perspectives. This theory reinforces field research findings that the involvement of Muslim families in some cases of violent extremism in Indonesia can be categorized as collective action driven by shared understanding and conviction in the claimed true values and ideologies.

On the other hand, resource mobilization theory emphasizes the rational motives of actors that influence and encourage group mobilization. The existence of an ideology or a specific metaphysical concept, particularly eschatological aspects, becomes the driving force behind the group. However, its form will be greatly influenced by the actors' ideas or values (Rosdiawan, 2018). Value is defined as a belief that motivates a person's actions based on their choices (Arifin, 2016). Referring to the LVE (Living Values Education) approach as the theoretical foundation for developing Islamic education in the family, Islamic education is understood as the practical value of education within the family. This educational pattern then simplifies the values taught and becomes a source of action for individuals or groups. The next theory of imagined solidarity goes further into collective motives. According to this theory, group action consists of fragmented and non-homogeneous motives. Common perspectives can occur at one level of concept that works simultaneously in a particular context. Therefore, the formed group is very fluid. Its movements can metamorphose



according to the changing dynamics of motives that occur within the group (Bayat, 2022; Rosdiawan, 2018). According to this theory, families' involvement in violent extremism cases is more influenced by the constructed input of values by the family, by imagining incidents, conflicts, and wars in various parts of the Islamic world, where many Muslims become victims. Therefore, in this context, not only imagined solidarity occurs but also imagined war. All of these merge into a psychological family situation that is prone to generate collective action.

Critical Pedagogy in Conservative Family Muslim Education

The term "Islamic education" and "family extremism" in this study are not meant to stigmatize Islamic education in Muslim families but to examine the possibility of a relationship between the Islamic educational values taught in conservative Muslim families and several incidents of violent extremism critically involving families. Referring to the concept of critical pedagogy, both as a theory of critical consciousness and as a social movement, we can observe that the Islamic educational values taught in conservative Muslim families are dominated by religious teachings that are interpreted in a textual, rigid, exclusive, and even out of context manner, such as the glorification of certain historical events (Rapoport, 1983). The view above is supported by Bruce Hoffman, who states that sacred scriptures uniquely provide justification and legitimacy for acts of violent terrorism (Hoffman, 1995). Furthermore, Hoffman argues that what is most striking about religious extremist groups is their use of values and moral concepts as mechanisms for legitimacy and justification. For these groups, violence is, first and foremost, a sacramental act or a divine duty carried out in direct response to theological imperatives or demands (Hoffman, 1995). Therefore, the violence created is morally justified and necessary to achieve the desired goals. For example, jihad and martyrdom are often used to justify their actions.

Jonathan Fine, as cited by Rosdiawan, argues that the concepts of "jihad" and "martyrdom" dominate the background of extremist group thinking (Rosdiawan, 2018). This is similar to the findings of this study, that the call for "jihad" and the slogan of



"martyrdom" is present in the religious narratives of extremist and conservative families in Indonesia. However, the interpretation and practice of jihad and martyrdom sometimes deviate from their proper context. Therefore, positioning religion as a comprehensive source of religious terrorism is an unfounded conclusion, as stated by Mark Juergensmeyer, that "religion is not the problem." Similarly, John L. Esposito argues that giving simplistic labels like "Islamic terrorism" is a symbolic reduction of the problem (Rosdiawan, 2018).

However, this study concludes that dominant religious narratives in conservative Muslim families encourage them to engage collectively in violent extremism. Critical pedagogy practices challenge dominant norms that reinforce structural inequalities within any educational institution and empower learners to interrogate the social and cultural conditions that are meaningful to them (Campbell, 2022). Based on critical pedagogy theory, the educational process in conservative families shares similarities with a banking system, where parents determine the moral values considered right and wrong while minimizing their children's critical and creative abilities on the other side (Mogale & Malatji, 2022). Indeed, the fundamental message of Freire's critical pedagogy concept is that education should be an emancipatory act from oppressive practices through consciousness-raising, which Freire refers to as critical consciousness (Campbell, 2022).

In short, critical pedagogy is relevant to this study because it supports the participation of children and wives (women) within the context of the family as the closest and most vulnerable environment to exposure to radicalism. Therefore, with critical pedagogy, family members can neutralize dominant patterns and indoctrination of certain values contained in Islamic education in conservative Muslim families. This article argues that children and wives (women) in Muslim families involved in violent extremism cases tend to become victims of dominant relationships and patterns of indoctrination from husbands who have built conservative religious narratives within the family. Critical pedagogy can be a means for oppressed family members to



critically reflect on their social conditions that are under the control of others.

Family Extremism and Women

The term "family extremism" is relatively new in the discourse on terrorism in Indonesia. This term was deliberately chosen to describe several cases of involvement by family members, namely husbands, women (wives), and children, in acts of violent extremism in Indonesia over the past decade. Furthermore, this phenomenon can serve as a basis for examining how changes in education and teaching within families can allow for the growth of understanding and attitudes toward violent extremism. Women in the context of the family are the primary agents of family education, which is why in Muslim culture, mothers or wives are known as the first school. In other words, as women, wives of colour determine many things in the family, especially power relations with children and husbands. Based on this research, the construction of the relationship model within the family determines how education within the family is conducted. The relationship model within the family can also reveal the level of resilience and vulnerability of the family to exposure to radicalism. In turn, this study reveals what kind of family typology, particularly the role of women (wives), in promoting violent extremism.

Recently, it has been unclear how violent extremism is formed and transformed within the family. A preliminary assumption that has emerged is that this transformation occurs through power relations between the husband (as a suspected theorist) and the woman (wife) within a deeply patriarchal culture. The wife then continues this transformation with her children. As De Leede's (2018) view, cited by Azca et al., suggests, the issue of regeneration among activists is strongly linked to the traditional status and role of women as mothers and wives. Through their status and role as mothers and wives, women play a crucial role in sowing and nurturing a new generation of mujahideen (Azca & Putri, 2021). Nevertheless, with the same status, women (wives) are also considered to have the potential to become the forefront and closest line of defense in breaking the chain of radicalization and



the spread of violent extremism within the family at an early stage (Azca & Putri, 2021).

(Azca & Putri, 2021) advocate that, in their traditional role as mothers and wives, women can significantly influence and determine the trajectory of their children's lives. Women can provide a space for dialogue and a more open-minded perspective to their children through more personal means. However, some women choose to pass on narratives and extremist ideologies. This process determines how children reflect on themselves and form views about their future and the environment in which they grow up. Of course, this view needs to be reexamined to determine whether parenting patterns are the only determining factor in forming family extremism or whether other factors are involved.

Referring to John Paul Laderach's conflict transformation model, women can become agents of transformation at the individual, relational, structural, and cultural levels. At the individual level, women can promote awareness and critical thinking about social, political, religious, cultural, and environmental issues. Relationally, women can strengthen their roles in the family institution (Damayantie et al., 2022). Transformation within women can make it easier and faster to open doors for transformation in the family. Similarly, women always have space at other levels to play a role according to their experiences. Recognizing the availability of women's role spaces strengthens their position not only as agents of violent extremism but also as agents of peace.

Gender and Violence Extremism

Previous researchers and some Islamic scholars have mostly focused on the involvement of women as subjects or agents of violent extremism. With the increase in the involvement of women, children, and families in some cases of violent extremism, studies focusing on the involvement of women and families in terrorism cases have emerged. One such study was conducted by the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) in 2017 in its report titled "Mothers to Bombers: The Evolution of Indonesian Women



Extremists." The study found a trend of changing women's roles within the Jamaah Islamiyah network over four decades. In the early days of the establishment of Jamaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, around the 1980s, women increasingly showed their activity in information and technology fields. Even when many ISIS leaders doubted them, women carried out social mobilization in various ways, including becoming the wives of group leaders. It didn't matter how many wives they had, as polygamous family forms were believed by this group to be encouraged by Islam. When women's capacities and roles change, it will impact the construction of family values within that family.

Marcoes, in his article "Why do Indonesian women join radical groups?" as quoted by Kholifah in her report for the International NGO The Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN) Indonesia titled "Reading the Role of Women in Violent Extremism 2020," predicted the emergence of a discourse contestation on gender equality and empowerment within extremist groups (Kholifah, 2020). According to the report, many factors contribute to women's involvement in violent extremism. Internal factors include the dynamics and demand for "emancipation" to be equal with men who have long been privileged to carry out their amaliyah mission. The internet and social media presence enable them to demonstrate their capacity and uniqueness in deceiving the security sector, making it difficult to detect by security forces (Kholifah, 2020).

According to Kholifah's report, the involvement of women in violent extremism circles is caused by the issue of gender equality struggle within it. This thesis concludes that women's position and role in this context often become agents of violent extremism. This perspective differs from the findings of this study, which see women, in this case, wives, as victims exposed to radicalization through marriage relationships. Then, the position of women becomes more vulnerable when bound by power relations built within the family. Therefore, even though wives ultimately become involved in incidents of violent extremism, whether as information agents, couriers, or executioners (martyrs), it is not due to the desire of women or wives to be equal with men, as desired by gender

activists in general. Rather, their involvement results from the family's husband-wife relationship that prioritizes role division in the name of religion, interpreted out of context. For example, the husband's doctrine is the family's leader. The wife must be obedient to her husband completely. She cannot object to any orders from her husband, etc. There is nothing wrong with these religious teachings. The problem is that these religious messages and purposes are exploited and used as legitimacy by certain parties to influence, control, and hegemonize the position of wives for their interests. In addition, wives' low religious literacy level makes women increasingly vulnerable to the hegemony of their husband's religious literacy in the family.

Thus, women's involvement in violent extremism is largely due to power relations on the one hand and doctrines on the position of women that are taken for granted and interpreted in black-and-white terms on the other hand. Therefore, the unequal position in the relationship between wives and husbands in conservative Muslim families is not seen as a form of injustice but as something accepted as a form of goodness. As a result, the struggle for gender equality within the family is not accepted. The concept of gender is rejected from the outset by such families because it is a secular movement based on individual freedom in Western culture. Based on these facts, the notion that one driving factor behind women's involvement in cases of violent extremism is part of the struggle for gender equality goes against the views of conservative families that reject gender equality as a concept.

The Role of Women and Family in the Circle of Extremist Networks

The role and position of women in the circle of extremist group networks are heavily influenced by rigid interpretations of how to be a woman, which makes them vulnerable. Therefore, the Islamic education narrative impacts women's understanding of their roles and relationships with their environment. Based on the findings of this research, the involvement of wives (women) and families in the circle of extremist group networks is initially passive, making women more susceptible to indoctrination from their closest subject, their husbands. In the next stage, the



involvement of wives and families increases, and they become followers or members of study groups. Subsequently, wives become the main subject involved in the struggle alongside their husbands. Women have a dual potential in this context, as demonstrated by the study by Muhammad Najib Azca and Rani Dwi Putri (2021) that women are often caught in the cycle of violent extremism (within the family), which means that on the one hand, they can become agents of nurturing violence extremism, while on the other hand, they have the potential to become the key figures in breaking the chain of violent extremism within their families.

Based on the empirical data above, the circle of extremist group networks in this context indirectly becomes part of the Islamic education environment. For instance, religious study groups are often highlighted as one form of non-formal education that women commonly attend. Not all religious study groups are associated with extremist group networks, and even study groups for mothers are often used to socialize moderate religious narratives or for deradicalization (Rajafi et al., 2022). However, the existence of mothers' study groups in Indonesia is often considered vulnerable to infiltration by exclusive religious preachers. Although this assumption is not always correct, the mothers attending these study groups will likely directly encounter these preachers. Therefore, the position of mothers or women as followers of these study groups tends to accept for granted what is conveyed by the preacher without a deep understanding of their background, affiliation, and religious ideology.

B. Metodologi

The power relations between men and women (suspected terrorists) in the context of education in conservative Muslim families unwittingly place women within the circle of understanding of the Islamic extremist network they are unaware of. On the other hand, this condition allows preachers to take advantage of women's ignorance by providing religious interpretations that contain certain political agendas. Although this



is rare, field findings show that individuals or religious extremist groups have an agenda to continue building networks and spreading ideology.

Study groups in this context are educational environments with meaning and purpose, where values, ideologies, and beliefs are planted and shared. According to Philip W. Jackson, as conveyed by Arifin and cited by myself, "This environment is referred to as a hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is not a collection of thoughts written in textbooks or other written sources but habituation, that is, habits to behave in accordance with the values (Arifin, 2016). The study group functions as a medium for indoctrination where Islamic educational values are imbued into the followers' lives. According to the Living Values Education (LVE) paradigm, creating a value-based environment is more effective in shaping one's personality (Arifin, 2016). By using LVE as the theoretical foundation for the development of Islamic religious education, Islamic religious education must be understood as a practical value education. In this context, LVE provides a good perspective to see the substance and process of education, including how these values ultimately shape a person's character and become the family's identity. Identity development is an integral part of family socialization because this process plays a role in developing the values and morals that become the family's identity. In this regard, the family's capacity often becomes a place for socialization about the meaning and significance of the values held by that family.



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