Fortifying from Radicalism: Campuses' and Students' Efforts in Indonesia and Malaysia

Mochamad Ziaul Haq
Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung
mziaulhaq@unpar.ac.id

Gerardette Philips
RSCJ Indonesia
gera.philips@unpar.ac.id

R.F. Bhanu Viktorahadi
Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung
torahadi@unpar.ac.id

M. Yusuf Wibisono
UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung
m.yusufwibisono@uinsgd.ac.id

Abstract

The development of radicalism has reached all corners of the world, including the Southeast Asian region. The main target for recruiting radicalism movements is young people, especially students. This paper examines the efforts of campus institutions and students in anticipating the influence of radicalism, especially in the campus environment. The study was conducted on students in Indonesia and Malaysia. The method used in this paper is qualitative, through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion (FGD), and document review. This paper finds that students in Indonesia and Malaysia have become aware of the rise of radicalism in their countries, so various responses have been followed to protect themselves from the dangers of this ideology. Efforts undertaken by the campus include a policy of disseminating an understanding of religious or Islamic moderation *wasatiyah*. Meanwhile, the efforts made by students to fortify themselves include independent efforts through an independent search for knowledge and learning in class, friendship relations, student discussions, and access to social media. All efforts made by campuses and students are part of instrumental actions using campus institutions as bureaucracy. This paper argues that radicalism as a collective action can be anticipated through collective social action, such as by utilizing available instruments.

Keywords: campus radicalism; instrumental social action; moderate Islam; student movement

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of young people in radical movements remains a growing concern in Asia, where there is an increasing domestic fear of terrorism (Hakim et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2019). The threat of domestic terrorism and the involvement of young people in acts of violence continue to attract world attention, from the presence of the Taliban (which means students) in Afghanistan, al-Shabaab (which means youth) in Somalia, and young jihadists who have joined the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Akhmetova & Jaafar, 2020). Charles Kurzman (2019) notes that terrorism has successfully attracted public attention. Out of the thousands of violent incidents that occur worldwide daily, the world's media efficiently filter out clues about terrorist motivations, then passes these incidents through cable services and satellite networks to news consumers who may not realize how rare terrorism is (Alam, 2020).

Because of this, in a short time, the discourse on radicalism among youth has become a prominent topic of discussion among public policymakers, intelligence agencies, and the world of academia, for example, Costanza (2015); Aiello et al. (2018); Pedersen et al. (2018). Therefore, it is understandable that youth radicalization has been widely discussed. However, the tendency to directly link religious radicalism with violent terrorism is based on the wrong premise, namely that the result of radicalization must be violence (Baran, 2004; El-Muhammady, 2018).

Thus, the involvement of young people, especially educated groups, in radical-extremist movements is not straightforward (Huriani et al., 2022). The influence of radical extremist movements in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, and Malaysia, is suspected to be the reason why these two countries became destinations. For example, the ISIS movement, proven through several studies, has spread to Indonesia and Malaysia (Golose, 2021; Rogozhina, 2016; Setia & Syarif, 2022).

Student radicalism in Indonesia has become a prominent issue following research findings that more and more educated young people are embracing radical paradigms such as establishing the Khilafah state or implementing *sharia*. In 2016, researchers from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) noted that radical movements had impacted campuses. This resulted in a recruitment program where students engage with radical discussion groups and student activist networks. LIPI senior researcher Anas Saidi argues that Indonesian youth are experiencing radicalization and are becoming increasingly intolerant, while hardline and radical groups have infiltrated many universities (Afadlal et al., 2005). The results of a 2017 survey by the Alvara Research Center show that there is a tendency for radical and intolerant attitudes among students. The survey found that 29.5% of students did not support the appointment of non-Muslim leaders, 23.4% supported Indonesia becoming an Islamic State under the Khilafah, and 23.5% agreed with the existence of ISIS (Rahma, 2019). This survey was conducted at 25 universities throughout Indonesia and involved 1,800 respondents. The most shocking news came when the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) published its research findings in 2018. These findings pointed to seven leading state universities infiltrated by radical groups, with many students sympathetic to religious radicalism (Alius, 2019). This research shows that the threat of radicalism among students in Indonesia is real and concerning.

In response to this, the Indonesian government is trying to involve various civil society groups to deal with the threat of radicalism, such as disbanding radical organizations suspected of having infiltrated the education system, both in high schools and universities. In 2017, through the adoption of a new law, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) dissolved Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), a transnational Islamic organization, for promoting the ideology of the Khilafah, which contradicts Indonesia's basic principles, namely Pancasila (Setia & Rahman, 2021). Leaders of educational institutions introduced policies to deal with the circulation of radical thoughts on their campuses. However, the effectiveness of government policies and campus leaders is questioned and often proven counterproductive (Anggraeni et al., 2019). For example, policies on several campuses that prohibit students from wearing the veil have sparked adverse reactions and even rejection by students and society, so university leaders are pressured to revoke the policy. The policy seems *top-down* and restrictive regulations are not always based on, or informed by, careful and detailed studies and research. This does not mean the government should do nothing or sit idly by. Specific policies and regulations, such as the prohibition or restriction of HTI on campuses, have effectively prevented the circulation of radical views among students. However, it should be noted that the nature of religious radicalism among students often results in implementing policies that only touch the surface of the problem without touching the core.

Meanwhile, in Malaysia, radicalism is not a new problem. Historically, radicalism among Malaysian students is also evidenced by their participation in radical movements. The participation of Malaysian students in the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989) and the Afghan Civil War (1989-2001) is one of the earliest evidence of student involvement in militancy outside Malaysia. From the 1980s to 1990s, Malaysian police also detected the movement of several Malaysian students to Pakistan and Afghanistan to join the jihad movement against the Soviet occupation (Talib et al., 2021). The exact number of Malaysian students who joined the Soviet-Afghan War is unknown. Even the Malaysian Embassy in Pakistan has complained about difficulties tracking student movements so far, because most have never reported to the embassy. When the war ended, some returned to their homeland and founded militant groups such as the Malaysian Mujahidin Group (KMM). Some of the KMM's founding members were former Afghanistan veterans, such as its chairman Zainon Ismail and Nik Adli Nik Aziz. The two fought during the Afghanistan War. The trend of sending students continued even after the First Afghan War (1979-1989). 1999, for example, Jama'ah Islamiyyah (JI) sent 13 students to Pakistan as part of its regeneration program. These students were members of the al-Ghuraba cell, consisting of children of JI members who were groomed to become future JI leaders (Freedman, 2009).

The involvement of students, lecturers, and teachers in Malaysia has become more evident in recent cases involving groups affiliated with Daesh. Daesh is a movement that aims to establish an Islamic state in Malaysia. Since February 2013, more than 340 Malaysians have been arrested by Malaysia's counterterrorism unit for various terrorism-related charges, and at least 40 students from schools, colleges, and universities have been arrested since the start of the operation in February 2013. Among the high-profile cases is Dr. Mahmud Ahmad, a former lecturer at the University of Malaya (UM); Aishah Atam, a graduate student at UM; and a high school student (El-Muhammady, 2018).

Because of this, the penetration of the Daesh movement and extremism in Malaysia is very serious and threatens the nation's sovereignty (Talib et al., 2021). For some people, the percentage of involvement is quite small and such incidents can be considered isolated cases. Thus, there is no need to exaggerate that this mindset is dangerous to national security. Extremism and terrorism must be treated seriously because they have exponential effects. Practically speaking, it only takes one person to launch an attack on a country. In June 2016, it took only two men to attack the Movida nightclub in Puchong, which caused panic across the country (Gunaratna, 2016). So, the presence of one extremist on campus is reason enough for the authorities to take precautions. One extremist is considered a potential threat. This potential threat can escalate into a real threat if we don't manage it immediately. Indeed, it is a severe mistake to measure the severity of a terrorist threat based on numbers and statistics. Its presence in our community provides reason enough for the authorities to take precautions before it escalates into a significant threat.

This paper will discuss student efforts in anticipating the influence of radicalism, especially in the campus environment. This then has implications for what are the factors that lead to the formation of student efforts in anticipating radicalism. In addition, this paper will also describe how the university's perspective is in preventing its students from falling under the influence of radicalism movements on campus, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia. This study is critical because there are similarities in the entry of radical ideas into the two countries.

In addition, this paper uses a sociological perspective based on Max Weber's theory of social action (Djedi, 2011). Max Weber has excellent merit in constructing social action theory. Two basic concepts are introduced by Weber, namely the concept of social action and the concept of interpretation and understanding concerning methods for explaining the concept of social action (Weber, 1993). In this case, Weber tries to interpret the actor's actions and understand the motives of the actor's actions.

Weber created an ideal type of social action to understand patterns in history and contemporary society. It creates ideal types of action, social relations, and power. He classified Individual action into four types: instrumental action, value action, affection action, and traditional action (Weber, 1993). *First,* Instrumental rationality is a rational action that will consider how we achieve a goal by considering the tools we use. For example, bureaucracy is a system that manages many jobs. Bureaucracy is a system that aims to gain efficiency. *Second,* Value-oriented actions are actions whose orientation is based on values or morality. *The emotional side dominates third, individual affection actions*, and *fourth,* Traditional action is action on a habit that is upheld as a value system that is inherited and maintained together. Or in other words, traditional actions are actions based on the habits of doing something in the past.

The author uses Weber's ideas to analyze rational actions consisting of the actions of university actors or stakeholders and student actors as a community group in responding to the phenomenon of radicalism on campus. Through Weber's concept, the authors will describe actors' actions in anticipating radicalism in Indonesia and Malaysia.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods to collect data and deeply understand social phenomena (Silverman, 2015). This method emphasizes more profound descriptions, an element of phenomenological research that looks at phenomena from the point of view of social actors and understanding social processes rather than aspects of social statistics (Blaikie, 2018). In qualitative research, the logic used is abstractive inductive, namely the flow of thinking from the specific to the general, namely conceptualization, categorization, and description based on field data. The characteristics and procedures of the qualitative research are very relevant to the design of this study, namely mapping the model of the structure of social cohesion in a multireligious society. Of course, doing this requires deep data mining and an understanding of social processes. This research was conducted on students from four universities in two countries, namely in Indonesia with UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Parahyangan University Bandung, and Padjadjaran University Bandung.

Meanwhile, it was conducted in Malaysia for students from the University of Selangor (UNISEL) and the University of Malaya (UM). The data collection involves in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and document reviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with students who had joined radical movements on campus or in their country, lecturers, and university officials. Brief focus group discussions (FGD) were carried out to groups of students from both countries in the online meeting room, such as via Zoom. Finally, a document review was conducted on writings, articles, and reports on radicalism and students in Indonesia and Malaysia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Understanding the Meaning of Radicalism

Etymologically, the word radical is neutral. Radicalist, this adjective comes from the Latin, *radix* or *roots.* According to The Concise Oxford Dictionary (2004), the term radical means 'root', 'source', or 'origin' (Kennedy & Bourne, 2004). In a broader sense, the term radical refers to basic things, fundamental principles, issues and essentials for various phenomena, or it can also mean "unusual".*(unconventional*). Over the centuries, the meaning of the term radical has always been related to its origin, namely the root. Because it has a broad connotation, the word has many technical meanings in various scientific fields: medicine, botany, philosophy, psychology, even philology, mathematics, chemistry, and music.

However, after the September 11, 2001 tragedy, popularly known as 9/11, radicalism also changed drastically. "Global war against terrorism" is a phrase used by the Western media to legitimize the military-political actions of the United States and its allied countries in several Islamic countries. Since then, the Islamic world has become a focus of the West in the discourse on the theme of the "global war against terrorism". This is where the issue of eating about radicalism always sticks out to the public and raises pros and cons (Mari, 2021).

In the Indonesian case, the term radical is also not much different from the meaning in the dictionary above. The online version of the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) states that 'radicalism' has three meanings, namely *First,* radical ideas or trends in politics, *second,* understanding or flow that wants social and political change or renewal using violence or drastic, and *third,* extreme attitudes in political flow (KBBI, 2018).

Interestingly, referring to the 1990 KBBI, the term radical is defined as "overall," "all-out," and "advanced in thinking or acting. This means that here there has been a process of changing the meaning of this term, or there has been a deconstruction when referring to Jacques Derrida's ideas (Derrida, 2016). A diachronic aspect of working in words shows that history has worked to change the meaning or meaning. If initially, it meant "neutral" or even tended to be "positive," now the meaning of the term radical tends to change to completely "negative".

Besides the scientific repertoire mentioned above, Mitsuo Nakamura's writings also show the neutral or even positive meaning of using the term radical. In an article published in Asian Southeast Asian Studies,

Nakamura mentions that Nahdlatul Ulama is an organization with the character of "radical traditionalism". Nakamura deliberately chose radical traditionalism to describe the characteristics of NU as an autonomous and independent organization (Febriansyah, 2021).

At this point, it is easy to understand that the term radical means neutral. The term radical can have a positive or negative meaning depending on the context of space and time as the background for using the term. From here, it is essential to understand two things. *First,* Throughout propaganda by America or the West for nearly two decades—namely after 9/11 in 2001, plus the emergence of ISIS in 2014 until the death of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi not long ago—it is clear that the discourse on the global war against terrorism tends to reduce the term radical or radicalism is only aimed at certain religious groups (Setia, 2020). *Second,* Indonesia's Muslim population is the largest in the world. However, mainstream Islamic religious practices in Indonesia tend to be moderate and tolerant.

So far, even though there is still a potential for confusion or bias in political meanings related to the term radical, the essence of the government's message has been relatively straightforward. The government's goals and targets regarding using this radical term, among others, are: *First,* aimed at particular groups who incidentally intend to replace Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution with another system, namely the Khilafah System. *Second,* This term is used to refer to the political activities of certain groups that are extreme, which not only do not hesitate to use violent means to impose their will, but furthermore, not infrequently, they also carry out acts of terrorism.

Perceptions of Indonesian and Malaysian Students on Radicalism

Based on the data collection that has been carried out, primarily through in-depth interviews and FGDs with students in Indonesia and Malaysia regarding their understanding of radicalism, it is concluded that groups of Indonesian and Malaysian students agree radicalism is negative behavior. This causes the bias in the meaning of the definition of radicalism to be rejected. This shows the position of radicalism, which is always considered to invite debate so that the term's meaning raises problems. Many groups, especially Islamist groups such as Hizbut Tahrir, think that the definition of radicalism used so far is wrong because it is interpreted unilaterally, harming Muslims, so its meaning must be deconstructed (Riyan, 2022). However, the perceptions of Indonesian and Malaysian students show that the meaning of radicalism is not detrimental to Islam but, indeed has a negative connotation that is usually carried out by specific movements or certain groups that are identical to Islamic identity.

"When asked about radicalism, of course, I agree that this is a negative attitude and movement that wants to fight for an Islamic state. This is not a solution because it could lead to disintegration and major global conflicts. That's why I don't hate radical people, but I wouldn't say I like their movement that wants to replace the state system that has been agreed upon. For example, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) was agreed upon in the Indonesian context. So, it's still radicalism for me even though much of the discourse is always negative." (Solehudin, UIN Bandung, Interview, January 2023).

Thus, the student's expression refers to the meaning of radicalism as an effort by a particular movement that wants to change a specific state system. This is considered very damaging and will endanger the community through side effects such as disintegration. "If the Khilafah (Islamic State) is established, then of course what will happen is prolonged conflict, especially those who are not Muslim, such as Christians and Hindus, Buddhists, and other non-Muslim beliefs." (John, UNPAR, Interview, January 2023). Similar to the opinion of other students that radicalism is more in the pattern of a movement to indoctrinate society so that they participate in establishing an Islamic State (Khilafah). "The essence of the goal is to want all groups to help establish the Khilafah, or radicalism is like a political movement." (Adnan, UNPAD, Interview, January 2023). Because of this, some students revealed that radicalism is part of a transnational political movement in religious movements with da'wah nuances, such as Hizbut Tahrir, ISIS, and Jemaat Ansharut Tauhid (JAT). This is because the movement's agenda wants to establish a state above the state; namely, it wants to establish an Islamic state (Khilafah) in Indonesia.

The interview results also show that radicalism is understood as a real threat that will contribute to conflict and disintegration, manifesting into intolerance. Intolerance is a social activity in the form of verbal or non-verbal to eliminate or justify an understanding or character of another person because it is considered wrong. This attitude of intolerance is part of the subject's subjectivity towards the object of interaction. This attitude, for example, has been experienced by several students in Indonesia, such as at UIN, UNPAD, and UNPAR,

who have received intolerance from other people or groups with the nuances of radical groups on their campuses.

"When I attended a study at a certain campus mosque, I listened to it for fun. Suddenly the speaker from a certain group of students said, 'People who don't want to help establish the Khilafah are people who are *kufr* for the blessings of Allah and disbelieve in the struggle of the Prophet Muhammad SAW'. Of course, I was surprised; what about me, who did not help establish the Khilafah state? Of course, this is intolerance." (Imran, UIN Bandung, Interview, January 2023).

In another form, this intolerant attitude targets the phenomenon of takfiri, or disbelief of other people. In a general understanding, this takfiri phenomenon often occurs in Indonesian public spaces, especially on social media. Political influence or the heating up of the situation before and after the 2017 and 2019 Indonesian Presidential Elections became the point where populism organizations rose to the wind and echoed the defense of Islam (Syahputra, 2019). As a result, social polarization still occurs and drags on religious issues, including the issues of *jhad* and *takfiri*. As a result, this understanding is the reason why UIN-Bandung students say intolerance is also part of an understanding of radicalism.

Furthermore, Indonesian students' understanding of radicalism is that groups and movements are naturally exclusivists. According to students, this characteristic is part of the phenomenon of radicalism. This attitude requires each individual to join and associate only with his group, assuming that other groups or movements are wrong. The implication of exclusiveness is not being open-minded or not accepting differences of opinion. The interviews also show that differences of opinion in understanding religious issues for students in Indonesia are commonplace because with differences of opinion, Muslims can carry out ijtihad. Still, if a Muslim closes himself, then a decline in thinking happens. This is why students in Indonesia say that at the minor level, radicalism can be interpreted as an attitude of closing oneself from the latest thoughts in the Islamic world.

Therefore, for students in Indonesia, radicalism shows a negative meaning, namely related to political movements that seek the establishment of an Islamic state and are followed by attitudes such as intolerance and exclusivism. Radicalism is not interpreted as an attitude or understanding that a Muslim must have very deeply about his religion, as echoed by Islamists. Radicalism is the negative attitude of a group of people to achieve political goals by establishing an Islamic state in ways such as anti-tolerance and anti-openness.

In line with Indonesia, students in Malaysia also agree that radicalism always has a negative connotation. They agree that radicalism is a political movement to establish an Islamic state, intolerance, and an exclusive attitude which is a negative attitude that Muslims should not have. This is because, in history, the Muslims were never taught by the Prophet or Companions to disrupt a particular country or nation, where that nation has existed steadily. The various conquests the Prophet and Companions carried out were a form of self-defense from harm directed at Muslims.

"Radicalism is a structured and systematic movement to replace the national system. We must be realistic that the Malaysian state system cannot be changed by another system, especially one based on the Islamic religion, especially with a series of efforts to disbelieve the government, other communities, and other Islamic groups. That cannot possibly change the country's system. Therefore, I always consider that radicalism is a political movement that is against the unity and unity of the common community." (M. Hafiy, UNISEL, Interview, January 2023).

However, Malaysian students' perception of radicalism also has different opinions. This is not in the sense of generalizing the understanding of all students in Malaysia, but only representatives of students on campus who were interviewed. They view radicalism as a movement that struggles to realize its goals using violence. In a sense, the understood radicalism movement always connotes acts of terrorism. This is evident from several interview answers stating that radicalism for them is a heinous act that can kill a person using a bomb attack or armed attack. Based on the interviews, an understanding was also found about the radical movements they knew, such as the Malaysian Mujahiddin Group (KMM) and Daesh (Talib et al., 2021). These two movements for students in Malaysia are a form of resistance to undermine unity in Negeri Melayu. Thus, the perception of Malaysian students about radicalism is also limited. This is also caused by the political dynamics in Malaysia, where radical political movements will be branded as extreme movements by the Kingdom of Malaysia.

Indeed, the meaning of radicalism in the perception of students in Malaysia is true. For example, Scott M Thomas explained that radicalism's premise is always tied to terrorism (Scott & Thomas, 2017). Even in the

West, the conception of radicalism often leads to extremist acts (Baran, 2015). This then returns to the issue of the definition of radicalism itself. However, as described in the theoretical framework, the term and meaning of radicalism fulfill at least two main concepts: political movements that wish to change the state system and groups that use extreme or violent means to propagate a particular ideology or ideology.

Thus, a good understanding of the concept of radicalism causes students both in Indonesia and Malaysia to become aware of and concerned about the radicalism movement that is spreading on campus. They become actively involved in activities to spread moderate Islam far from radicalism. By optimizing the role of students on campus, radicalism movements can be driven out and kept away from student life.

University Efforts to Fortify Radicalism on Campus

The outbreak of radicalism on campuses in Indonesia and Malaysia has caused the two countries to issue serious policies to counteract this phenomenon, such as deradicalization programs. As an essential part of the two countries, universities also issue policies to counteract campus radicalism. Some policies issued are coercive, and some are persuasive. The coercive policy revokes permit for student movements or organizations affiliated with specific radical movements. In Indonesia, one of these policies, for example, was issued by the university, the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) by disbanding the student activity unit of the Campus Dakwah Institute for *Harmoni Amal and Titian Ilmu* (LDK HATI) because it was considered affiliated with Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Prasetyanto, 2018).

In addition to coercive policies, there are also persuasive policies issued by universities. This policy is like outreach regarding the dangers of radicalism in the form of seminars, workshops, and scientific discussions. These socialization activities are always delivered in student orientation, national seminars, curriculum workshops, and national seminars.

One of the policies by persuading students implemented by universities in Indonesia and Malaysia is the socialization of a moderate or balanced understanding of religion, especially in Islam. Indonesia and Malaysia use the idea of moderate Islam or *wasatiyah* to stem radicalism and extremism. In Indonesia, this concept became known in 2019, especially when the Minister of Religion, Lukman Hakim Syaifudin, coined religious moderation. The concept of moderate Islam itself in Indonesia is then revealed in four official indicators, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture (Ministry of Religion RI, 2019). *First*, national commitment is significant in seeing the extent to which a person's attitudes, views, and religious practices and the implications for loyalty to the basis of nationality, especially loyalty to Pancasila and state ideology. *Second,* tolerance is an attitude of giving space and not disturbing or eliminating other people's rights in expressing their beliefs or opinions in public. Tolerance refers to being open, gracious, and gentle in accepting differences. *Third,* anti-violence is the antithesis of violence that radical groups often carry out. *Fourth,* Local cultural accommodation is an attitude of accepting the nation's local culture and traditions in religious life, such as accepting the practices of cultural accommodation with religious life as long as they do not conflict with certain religious teachings (Junaedi, 2019).

Meanwhile, in Malaysia itself, the concept of Moderate Islam was first introduced by their former prime minister, Moh Najib Tun Abdul Razak, who was oriented towards the government's desire to create a more harmonious unity among multiracial, multireligious, and multicultural societies. Moderate Islam in Malaysia was later recognized in 1Malaysia's vision of racial unification (Rahman, 2021). It contains three main characteristics, namely: the principle of acceptance (tolerance), statehood (unity), and social justice (fairness) (Mujani et al., 2015). Tolerance itself is interpreted as an effort to respect differences; even though there are differences in religion and way of life, there is mutual respect and acceptance. The principle of freedom in carrying out this belief is the core of religious moderation. Even though it is entrenched in the Federal Constitution that Islam is the official state religion, adherents of other religions are not prohibited from practicing their respective religions in peace and harmony. Furthermore, the principle of statehood or unity and difference is maintained by adhering to the concept of moderate Islam, which reflects balance, namely, neither excessive nor diminished. Extremism will lead to destruction; therefore, the principle of national unity must be implemented. Finally, the principle of social justice interpreted in Islam as social rights and public interests is much more guarded than individual rights. Justice is essential to give birth to goodness or *wasatiyyah* in society. The principle of moderation aims to foster unity among people of different ethnicities. The principle of social justice can be seen in two main aspects.

First, Wasatiyyah in the division of political power and *second,* in the distribution of wealth (Husain et al., n.d.).

Overall, the two concepts of moderate Islam from these two countries have the same goal: to counteract radical efforts that will undermine the country's integrity. Interestingly, in the two concepts of moderate Islam, the two countries have some of the same principles or indicators regarding tolerance. This proves that the two nations' leaders share the same thoughts regarding issues that are also faced together, namely the issue of radicalism and extremism. Indeed, history has proven that these two countries are old brothers who always have similarities in culture, religion, and living habits. Therefore, this similarity allows cooperation in anticipating and solving radicalism problems (Akhmetova & Jaafar, 2020).

The implementation of socialization of religious moderation has been carried out both on campuses in Indonesia and in Malaysia. In Indonesia, UIN Bandung has held religious moderation seminars for its students. The seminar aims to shape the attitudes and character of students who are critical and open to every national difference (Muhammad, 2023). At UNPAD Indonesia, students are also involved in student missionary competitions by participating in religious moderation seminars. Apart from that, at UNPAR Indonesia, campuses also promote religious moderation through their *dies natalis* activities. Religious moderation is also discussed with the Catholic Church (Eduardus, UNPAR, 2022).

"The Catholic Church, which has a mission to proclaim its teachings, needs to take concrete forms to spread religious moderation values. One of the means of spreading the message is Catholic Religion and Moral Studies, in this case, textbooks intended for classes from 1st elementary school to 12th high school. There are three important points on how the PAK Curriculum 2013 textbook becomes a concrete form of advancing the value of religious moderation, namely describing the characteristics of religious moderation values and PAK textbooks, describing dialectics and the way the Catholic Church organizes religious moderation in textbooks, also emphasizing the importance of competence authority oversight function of PAK Curriculum 2013 teaching materials which contain the Church's official message about the characteristics and values of religious moderation" (Ivos Kocu, Interview, January 2023).

In line with Indonesia, several campuses also implement the idea of religious moderation. For example, at the University of Malaya, there are many studies and deepening of the idea of religious moderation, which are then published in various journal articles, including the writings of Abdul Halim Syihab and Asmawati Muhamad (2017) about the value of religious moderation *(wasatiyah)* for a plural society like Malaysia. According to both, religious moderation has long existed in the Malay world. Values *wasatiyyah* provide essential elements such as balance, justice, superiority, strength, honor, and peace, significantly impacting inter-religious harmony among the world's people.

Because of this, the responses of the two student groups were also very positive in responding to the presence of a policy of religious moderation at each university in their country. For Indonesian students, moderate Islamic ideas prove that Indonesian society has been a moderate society, does not like conflict, and does not like violence. The Indonesian students also believed that the idea of moderate Islam itself was a reinforcement that the process of Islam's entry into Indonesia was also carried out peacefully.

Meanwhile, Malaysian students have an idea of *wasatiyah* (Moderate Islam) as a government breakthrough that is advancing in fighting the rise of ISIS *(Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)* agents in his country. However, the ISIS movement is a dangerous thorn that must be confronted with an understanding that connotes Bumi Putera Malaysia (Mujani et al., 2015). In addition, Malaysian students also believe that the problem of radicalism is a global problem that will not only affect their country but also affect other countries, especially neighboring countries that are predominantly Muslim such as Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam; therefore for Malaysian students, there is cooperation to fight extremist ideas should be able to do the three countries.

In the concept of social action, according to Weber, the actions taken by the university are in the form of instrumental social actions. These, namely rational actions, take into account specific tools. This action is closely related to the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is a government system that aims to facilitate or streamline human needs. Universities themselves are part of the modern bureaucracy. The use of university bureaucracy in protecting students from the dangers of radicalism is part of instrumental social action. The campus uses specific tools and media, such as facilities and infrastructure, to carry out religious moderation seminar activities, a form of instrumentally rational action.

Student Efforts to Fortify Themselves from Radicalism

Apart from the efforts made by the university, efforts were also made by students independently to protect themselves from the dangers of radicalism. This becomes a form of implementation of social action by individual actors in Weber's concept. Some of the efforts carried out by students independently based on the results of interviews and FGDs are as follows: *First,* independent learning and information in the classroom, *second,* friendship relations, *third,* student discussion, and *fourth,* the influence of content from social media.

First, independent learning and information in the classroom. Efforts mostly carried out by students independently are learning and obtaining a lot of information through learning in class and outside the classroom. Activities such as reading books and attending lectures in class remain a mainstay for students to gain knowledge about the dangers of radicalism and religious moderation.

In addition, general and compulsory courses on Indonesian campuses, namely Islamic Religious Education or Religious and Moral Education courses, are a mainstay for students to obtain information and knowledge about religion. Also, through this course, students ask many questions and discuss religious trends and movements that have radical connotations. Similar to the situation in Malaysia, the presence of Islamic Worldview and Faith Essentials and Islamic History and Civilizations courses provide in-depth information regarding Islam and Islamic movements that play a role in peace and conflict today. As a result, many students in Indonesia and Malaysia feel helped by the presence of these courses and have come to understand Islamic topics and the dangers of radicalism.

Second, friendly relations. Another effort students in Indonesia and Malaysia made to counter radicalism's dangers is to make good and positive friends. Many students commented that the quality and type of genuine friendship (inclusive) is a solution to avoid radicalism. "Whom we make friends on campus will save ourselves from the influence of radicalism" (Dilawati, UIN Bandung, Interview, January 2023). Students agree that radicalism is synonymous with exclusivity; radical people refuse to associate with other groups or movements or don't want to accept other people's ideas or opinions. Therefore, through an open friendship process, one will avoid invitations from radical groups. "If we are always alone, don't want to socialize, don't want to hear Islamic teachings from other groups, we can immediately accept invitations from radical people to join their groups" (Adnan, UNPAD, Interview, January 2023). Hence, when a student makes friends with other students who have a genuine understanding, it will affect the student's inclusive attitude and prevent him from the dangers of radicalism.

Third, student discussion. Discussion activities are mandatory activities for students and are very typical among students. For Indonesian and Malaysian students, student discussion activities also always discuss the dangers of radicalism among students. In Indonesia, there are student movements that are known to be moderate, such as the Islamic Student Association (HMI), the Indonesian Islamic Student Association (PMII), and the Muhammadiyah Student Association (IMM), which are keen to carry out student discussions related to topics of radicalism and religious moderation.

Meanwhile, in Malaysia, students are also active in student discussions. For example, this is with their participation in a student organization based on Islamic da'wah on their campus, namely the UNISEL Islamic Study Student Club (KMPI). Like student activity units in Indonesia, KMPI UNISEL is active in holding Islamic discussion studies, especially those related to harmony and peaceful Islam. The influence of KMPI on students is even greater when the student organization also offers in-depth discussion studies on Islam. Muhammad Hafiy—the chairman of the KMPI said that in certain situations, the KMPI often discussed the history of Malay-Archipelagic Islam. Therefore, the relationship between Indonesian and Malaysian Islam is common knowledge together (Muhammad Hafiy, Interview, August 15 2022).

Fourth, the influence of social media content. Students in Indonesia and Malaysia mostly carry out efforts to fortify themselves from radicalism due to the influence of social media. The development of information and the digitization of knowledge impact everyone worldwide (Sutan et al., 2021); Indonesian and Malaysian students are no exception. Through social media, the two groups of students were very enlightened by information regarding the discussion of radical movements that entered the university. For example, in Indonesia, students feel that radicalism is a real threat that can change a person's mindset. This context is even more worrying when the release of Setara Institute states that one of the campuses being studied at this time, UIN Bandung is one of the campuses with the highest level of intolerance in Indonesia (Satria, 2019). As a result, an attitude of caution is formed in responding to every movement of campus organizations,

especially external ones. Therefore, social media is an effective weapon to see the extent of the dynamics of campus and student organization movements in Indonesia itself.

Figure 1. Anti-radicalism campaign on social media Instagram

Source: Instagram @harakatuna, 2023.

One of the social media accounts used by students in Indonesia, especially on Instagram, is Harakatuna. A media that is engaged in anti-radicalism campaigns and anti-Islamic radical movements on social media. This media has been active on Instagram, website, Tiktok, Twitter, and Facebook. Its followers, which reach thousands of followers, and its clear and sharp narration have caused many Indonesian students to frequently access Harakatuna content to protect themselves from the dangers of radicalism on campus.

Students in Malaysia feel the same; they are always active in using social media, especially accessing leading websites, so they are always up to date with information. For example, the active campus website at UNISEL also always presents various news content about the campus, including information related to student religious activities. Therefore the campus website for UNISEL students is considered very useful. Apart from the campus website, what is interesting for students in Malaysia is that they often access information that is happening in Indonesia. They even know information about the multi-volume movement over the blasphemy case by Basuki Tjayaja Purnama alias Ahok. Through this information, students in Malaysia also know about the fanaticism of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). They also become aware of the dangers of radical movements, such as in cases in Indonesia.

One of the sites that many students in Malaysia also visit is the website Flow.com. This site always presents news that upholds justice, freedom, and social solidarity. The site's primary focus on spreading social solidarity causes this site also to discuss a lot about equality and moderation in religion. For example, the news published on March 23, 2023, discussed the spirit of moderation in Malaysia. This news explains the tips of the people in implementing the concept of moderation in religion amidst the diversity of ethnicities and religions in Malaysia (Jeyakumar, 2023). When asked students in Malaysia, they answered that the existence of this site was beneficial in providing insights and paradigms to strengthen positive religious perceptions.

Figure 2. Campaign of Moderation in Malaysia through the site

Source: Aliran.com, 2023.

According to Weber's theory, the various self-fortification efforts carried out independently by students are part of actions oriented towards instrumental existence. Instrumental action is an action that utilizes specific tools or media that support the action. When students use reading media, attend lectures in class, use student organizations, take advantage of quality friendships, and follow the information on social media, they are part of using certain media to protect themselves from the threat of radicalism. Student actions are influenced by the existence of their institutions, namely universities, which also issue instrumental-based actions by their nature as a bureaucratic system. According to Weber, bureaucracy is part of facilitating public affairs to achieve effectiveness and efficiency.

CONCLUSION

This paper argues that the threat of radicalism to students on campus is genuine. This proves the results of previous studies on radicalism that entered the university environment, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia. Although some circles question the meaning of radicalism, this research reveals that there are no significant differences in understanding the meaning of radicalism, especially among students in Indonesia and Malaysia. They assume that radicalism is a negative phenomenon that always aims to replace a country's ideology through political movements. They also believe that the radicalism that has been found so far always instills values of intolerance and exclusivism. As a result, they consider this very dangerous.

Therefore, as the authority for implementing education, the campus responds to the rise of radicalism among students with various policies, such as disbanding student activity units affiliated with radical groups or through persuasive policies such as holding seminars, workshops, and scientific discussions. There is an idea of religious moderation in Indonesia, and Islam *wasatiyah* in Malaysia is used by campus authorities to socialize with students to help protect them from the dangers of radicalism. While students themselves also play a role in protecting themselves from the dangers of radicalism through various efforts ranging from independent learning and information in class, friendship relations, student discussions, and the influence of

social media content. These efforts are carried out consciously and with total commitment as part of their role as students and as the nation's next generation.

In the end, this paper is expected to contribute to the study of religion and radicalism and sociological studies. Max Weber's theoretical concept of social action is used to analyze students' responses to the rise of radicalism in Indonesia and Malaysia. Openly, this research shows that there is an effort to strengthen Weber's theory regarding the topic of actor social action. However, this study also has weaknesses, especially in revealing whether the data on campus and state policy efforts in fighting radicalism have been adequate and correctly on target or ineffective, so other solutions are needed to fortify students amid rampant radicalism.

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