


School of D-RAD: An Effort of Deradicalization for Former Terrorism Convict

Ali Masyhar

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2317-7517> 


Faculty of Law, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Muhammad Azil Maskur

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5959-8332> 

Faculty of Law, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Eram Tunggul Pawenang

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2288-4324> 

Faculty of Medicine Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Nadhira Madania Dimarti

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-1390-7103> 

Faculty of Law, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Muhammad Azam

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9730-1201> 

Al-Iraqia University, Baghdad, Iraq

✉ Corresponding email: ali_masyhar@mail.unnes.ac.id

Abstract

This article presents the implementation and observed outcomes of the School of D-RAD, a community-based deradicalization initiative designed to support the social reintegration of former terrorism convicts in Indonesia. The program was implemented in collaboration with the



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Persaudaraan Anak Negeri (Persadani) Foundation and involved 30 former terrorism convicts as participants. Using a community service approach, initial problem mapping was conducted through focus group discussions and preliminary questionnaires to identify participants' psychosocial conditions, perceptions of diversity, and vulnerability to ideological re-exposure. The initial data indicated that approximately 20–30% of participants still perceived a potential risk of re-exposure to radical ideology, primarily influenced by economic constraints, social stigma, and limited post-release support. Based on these findings, the School of D-RAD was designed using a familial, dialogical, and peer-based mentoring model grounded in informal and non-formal education principles. Program implementation emphasized reflective dialogue, peer tutoring, interactive activities, and psychosocial support to create a non-hierarchical and supportive learning environment. Evaluation was conducted through post-test discussions using case-based analysis to observe changes in participants' understanding and responses to issues related to radicalism and violence. The results show observable improvements in participants' openness to differences, tolerance, empathic reasoning, and reduced tendencies toward takfiri thinking. Post-program monitoring conducted by Persadani further indicates sustained participant engagement and strengthened social relations within the community. These findings illustrate how community-based, participatory approaches can function as a complementary mechanism in post-release deradicalization and reintegration efforts.

KEYWORDS *deradicalization, community-based reintegration, religious moderation, peaceful society*

Introduction

The terrorism recidivism in Indonesia has shown that the deradicalization process hasn't fully effective in assuring that ex-terrorism convict able to function as a productive citizen. Although the deradicalization program has been enforced since the conception of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) in 2010,¹ many researches have shown that some ex-terrorism convict still have vulnerability to a radical ideology re-exposure, especially due to the weak social support and the lack of community-based educative approach.

A discussion of deradicalization inevitably requires clarity regarding how terrorism itself is conceptualized. Despite extensive global efforts, there is still no universally agreed definition of terrorism, even within the United

¹ Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme, "Peraturan Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme Republik Indonesia Nomor 3 Tahun 2025 Tentang Rencana Strategis Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme Tahun 2025-2029" (2025).

Nations. Thus, the difficulty lies in the fundamental values at stake in the acceptance or rejection of terror-inspiring violence as means of accomplishing a given goal. Interestingly, terrorism is a global phenomenon which is easy to recognize, but yet difficult to define. At the World Summit on terrorism in New York on September 14, 2005, terrorism, “in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose,” was condemned. Historically, the dispute over the meaning of terrorism arose when the laws of war were first codified in 1899. As such, different legal systems, scholars, international organizations, and government agencies use different definitions of terrorism, sometimes based on their socioeconomic and political conditions.² In academic literature, terrorism is commonly understood as the strategic use of violence by non-state actors to communicate political, ideological, or religious messages. Bruce Hoffman emphasizes that terrorism is designed to create fear beyond its immediate victims, functioning as a psychological tool to influence broader audiences.³ Meanwhile, Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman’s comparative study of over 100 definitions identifies recurring core elements: political motivation, intentional violence, threats directed at civilians, and symbolic communication.⁴ These scholarly perspectives highlight that terrorism is not merely physical violence but a form of coercive communication, which explains why ideologies, narratives, and group dynamics play such central roles in radicalization processes.

In Indonesia, terrorism is legally defined in Law No. 5 of 2018, which frames terrorism as acts using violence or threats of violence that create widespread fear, cause mass casualties, or disrupt vital state infrastructure for ideological, political, or security-destabilizing purposes. This statutory definition guides the identification, prosecution, and monitoring of terrorism offenders. However, by focusing primarily on violent acts, the legal definition tends to capture only the visible manifestations of radicalization, while earlier cognitive and social processes may remain unaddressed. Consequently, deradicalization programs—including community-based interventions such as School of D-RAD—must recognize that ideological commitment, identity crises, group loyalty, and social marginalization often precede the commission of terrorist acts.

It is also important to distinguish radicalization, violent extremism, and terrorism, as these terms describe different points along a behavioral continuum. Radicalization refers to the adoption of extremist ideas, which

² Duncan Gaswaga, “The Definition of Terrorism,” *The International Journal of Ethical Leadership* 2, no. 15 (2013), <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/ijel/vol2/iss1/15>

³ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Third (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

⁴ A P Schmid and A J Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature* (London: Transcasion Publishers, 1988).

may or may not lead to violence. Violent extremism reflects ideological commitment accompanied by a willingness to justify or use violence. Terrorism, however, constitutes deliberate acts of politically motivated violence aimed at influencing broader audiences. This distinction is crucial for designing interventions because individuals enter extremist pathways for different reasons—ideological conviction, emotional needs, group belonging, or material incentives. As Horgan notes, effective rehabilitation must account for these diverse motivational profiles rather than applying a single, uniform model.⁵

Integrating these conceptual clarifications into the discussion of School of D-RAD reinforces the relevance of a family-based, dialogical, and community-driven approach. Because terrorism is rooted not only in ideology but also in social identity and personal vulnerabilities, deradicalization efforts must address cognitive, emotional, and relational dimensions. Understanding terrorism's definitional complexities therefore provides a solid analytical foundation for evaluating how and why the D-RAD program fosters moderation, reduces vulnerability to re-radicalization, and supports sustainable reintegration.

The Semarang-based Persaudaraan Anak Negeri (Persadani) Foundation is a community comprising around 43 former terrorist convicts from various networks. However, the reintegration process for Persadani members still faces a number of obstacles, including limited economic access, social stigma, low self-confidence, and the lack of structured deradicalization education programs. Based on surveys and initial discussions with the foundation's management, some members do not yet understand the values of religious moderation and continue to show signs of exclusive thinking that could potentially lead to re-radicalization, thereby hindering efforts to create community peace.

The results of the problem mapping show three main issues: (1) lack of access to comprehensive anti-radicalism education; (2) high social stigma and psychosocial problems that hinder the reintegration process; and (3) limited life skills and economic empowerment opportunities. The government's deradicalization program does not fully cover these aspects, so a more holistic and sustainable intervention model is needed.

This gap has prompted the need for community-based program innovation through the establishment of the School of D-RAD as a forum for religious moderation education, ideological rehabilitation, and psychosocial strengthening for former terrorist convicts who are members of Persadani. This program is designed not only to improve moderate religious literacy, but also to build the capacity of participants as agents of anti-radicalism in their communities. Thus, the School of D-RAD is expected to become an adaptive, participatory, and sustainable model of community deradicalization.

⁵ John Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism (Political Violence)* (London: Routledge, 2014).

Method

A. Community Service Approach

School of D-RAD uses familial approach as the main assistance strategy. This approach is picked since it's in accordance to Persadani's character as a community formed through a strong interpersonal relationship and high reliability to each other. In the context of ex-terrorist prisoners, the family approach serves to create a safe, equal, and emotionally supportive learning environment so that participants are more open to accepting the process of value transformation and social reintegration. This approach is in line with the findings of recent studies which confirm that family, peers, and close social networks are important protective factors in the process of deradicalization and the reformation of a non-violent identity.⁶

In practical terms, the family approach is translated through two main activities. First, peer tutoring, which is a method where participants share knowledge, experiences, and understand the material equally. This method has been proven effective in increasing participants' motivation, engagement, and abilities in rehabilitation and reintegration programs.⁷ Recent national research also shows that the role of peer mentors can strengthen psychological adaptation, reduce anxiety, and facilitate positive behavioral change in correctional institutions. These success in peer tutoring is due to the fact that the person who is in charge as the tutor is in the same "level" and "group" as the participants.⁸ These findings support the use of peer tutors in D-RAD as a mechanism to increase participants' confidence and ownership of the learning process.

The second program that is used as a form of familial approach is interactive game which functions to lighten the mood and strengthen group dynamics. Interactive game is parallel to the group-based intervention research which emphasizes the importance of group cohesion, collective experience, and informal learning in a social rehabilitation process.⁹ Non-formal activities such as games, light discussions, and casual interactions help reduce participants' resistance, strengthen bonding, and open up space

⁶ National Institute of Justice, "Domestic Radicalization and Deradicalization: Insights from Family and Friend," National Institute of Justice, 2022, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/domestic-radicalization-and-deradicalization-insights-family-and-friends#0-0>.

⁷ I Nyoman Juliasa and Novia Christine Feoh, "Peran Peer Educator Dalam Mendukung Proses Rehabilitasi Narapidana Di Lapas Narkotika Kelas IIA Bangli," *Al-Zayn: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial & Hukum* 3, no. 4 (2025): 5109–17, <https://doi.org/10.61104/alz.v3i4.2077>.

⁸ Refky Apriliansyah and Herry Fernandes Butar Butar, "Dukungan Keluarga Sebagai Upaya Narapidana Beradaptasi Di Rutan Kelas IIB Takengon," *Al-Zayn: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial & Hukum*, 2025, 4027–36, <https://doi.org/10.61104/alz.v3i4.1966>.

⁹ Lucky Nurhadiyanto and Dzun Nun Samudra, "Rehabilitasi Penyalahguna Narkoba Berbasis Pendekatan Ikatan Sosial (Social Bonding Theory)," *Ikraith-Humaniora* 8, no. 2 (2024): 133–39, <https://doi.org/10.37817/ikraith-humaniora.v8i2>.

for more honest dialogue. Field findings in the D-RAD report also show that participants are more responsive to activities that are warm, interactive, and resemble a family atmosphere than to one-way learning.

This familial approach not only facilitates more natural learning about religious moderation, but also creates a supportive social environment, which a number of studies have identified as a central element in successful deradicalization. Family- and community-based programs have been shown to encourage behavioral change because they rely on emotional closeness, social support, and interpersonal trust—factors that are also central to the D-RAD approach. Therefore, the familial approach can be seen as a methodological innovation that combines the principles of peer learning, social bonding, and community support, making it relevant to the context of reintegrating former terrorist convicts in Indonesia.

The use of a familial, dialogical, and peer-based mentoring approach in the School of D-RAD program aligns closely with the principles of informal and non-formal education, which have gained renewed attention in recent years as effective mechanisms for adult learning, behavioral change, and social rehabilitation. Non-formal education is generally understood as structured learning that occurs outside the formal school system, while informal education refers to unstructured, everyday learning that takes place through social interaction, experience, and reflection.¹⁰ Both forms of learning are particularly relevant for community-based deradicalization programs because former terrorism convicts often engage more comfortably in flexible, experience-driven learning environments rather than rigid classroom-style instruction.

Recent international research affirms that adult learners respond more effectively to non-formal education models that value lived experience, participation, and dialogue. A UNESCO report highlights that non-formal education allows marginalized groups—including ex-offenders and conflict-affected individuals—to rebuild agency, identity, and critical awareness through community-led learning spaces that encourage openness and trust.¹¹ These features resonate with the structure of D-RAD, which emphasizes equality among participants and facilitators, co-created learning processes, and the integration of social experience into knowledge building.

From a theoretical perspective, Transformative Learning Theory, as expanded in contemporary studies, explains why informal and dialogical learning can reshape deeply held beliefs, including extremist narratives. Transformative learning involves a process where individuals critically reflect on prior assumptions, engage in open dialogue, and reconstruct

¹⁰ Alan Rogers, *The Base of the Iceberg: Informal Learning and Its Impact on Formal and Non-Formal Learning* (Leverkusen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.3224/84740632>.

¹¹ International Council for Adult Education, “Formal and Non-Formal Adult Education Opportunities for Literacy and Numeracy , and Other Skills for Acquisition and Retention : A 29-Country Review of the Concepts , Processes And” (Paris, 2016).

meaning through new experiences. A recent analysis by Illeris, reaffirms that adult identity transformation is most likely to occur in safe, supportive social environments where individuals can confront previous belief systems without coercion. This aligns with the D-RAD emphasis on creating a familial atmosphere, where participants feel psychologically secure to discuss sensitive ideological or personal issues. In such a setting, critical self-reflection becomes more accessible, enabling participants to reassess radical beliefs that were acquired through previous socialization processes.¹²

In the Indonesian context, non-formal and informal education have long been highlighted as essential components of community empowerment and behavioral development. Recent Indonesian studies show that community-based learning models—such as kelompok belajar, pesantren kilat, mentoring circles, and community literacy programs—contribute significantly to changes in attitude, identity, and social participation among adults.^{13 14} This finding supports the use of community-driven approaches for reintegrating former terrorism convicts, who often face stigma, identity loss, and limited access to formal education or employment.

The significance of social learning mechanisms in non-formal education is also emphasized in recent international studies. According to studies on social learning and behavior change, individuals are more likely to adopt pro-social attitudes when they observe peers—especially those with similar past experiences—modeling empathy, tolerance, and non-violent responses.^{15 16} This is particularly relevant in the D-RAD context, where peer tutors are former terrorism convicts who share similar backgrounds with current participants, making the learning process more relatable and persuasive.

Furthermore, non-formal and informal education approaches are crucial for addressing the psychosocial dimensions of deradicalization. Many former terrorism convicts experience trauma, guilt, identity confusion, or social isolation after release. Former terrorism convicts in

¹² Knud Illeris, *Transformative Learning Theory And Praxis*, ed. Effrosyni Kostara, Andreas Gavrielatos, and Daphne Loads (London: Routledge, 2022).

¹³ Rithy Vann and Vicheka Rith, "Community-Based Social Education for Sustainable Development – An Indonesian Perspective on Collaborative Learning Models National University, Cambodia Gresik University, Indonesia," *Journal Noesantara Hybrid Learning* 3, no. 1 (2025): 10–19, <https://doi.org/10.70177/jnhl.v3i3.2174>.

¹⁴ Abdul Aziz et al., "Developing Self-Efficacy, Matterings, and General Well-Being through Community-Based Education in the Rural Area," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 11, no. 1 (2022): 272–79, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i1.21948>.

¹⁵ Wei Li, Qi Fan He, and Jian-Zeng Lan, "Empathy as a Mediator of the Relation between Peer Influence and Prosocial Behavior in Adolescence: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 54, no. 682 (2025): 682–703, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-024-02079-3>.

¹⁶ Fahmi Rohim, Riska Fitriani, and Arif Abdurrahman, "The Role of Peers in Students' Affective Development in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Social Studies Subjects," *Journal of Social Knowledge Education* 6, no. 1 (2025): 126–34, <https://doi.org/10.37251/jske.v6i1.1438>.

Indonesia frequently experience significant psychosocial difficulties, including trauma, guilt, identity threats, and social exclusion. These challenges can hinder their reintegration and increase the risk of recidivism if not properly addressed. Stigma from society and former peers often leads to isolation and negative self-perception, making psychosocial support essential. In D-RAD, the use of interactive games, group discussions, and casual conversations functions not only as educational tools but also as psychosocial interventions that reduce emotional barriers and promote mutual understanding.^{17 18 19}

Finally, the integration of informal and non-formal education theory strengthens the methodological justification of the School of D-RAD. It affirms that the program's emphasis on peer tutoring, dialogical reflection, interactive activities, and social bonding is not merely a practical choice, but one that is grounded in well-established and contemporary scholarship. By situating D-RAD within these theoretical frameworks, the article demonstrates that community-based deradicalization in Indonesia aligns with global research, responds to local needs, and supports ideological and psychosocial transformation through human-centered, culturally sensitive, and empirically grounded educational methods.

B. Implementation Stages

1. Problem Mapping

The problem mapping stage in School of D-RAD is done through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Persadani members as an early assessment to understand the needs, obstacles, and participants' priority. FGD was chosen because they are a participatory method that has proven effective in mapping community needs, especially among vulnerable, marginalized, or traumatized groups.²⁰ Recent studies confirm that FGDs not only elicit factual information, but also provide a space for participants to collectively express their experiences and perceptions, resulting in a more accurate and nuanced mapping of issues.²¹

In recent studies, FGDs are also recommended as an effective approach in community-based social intervention design because they

¹⁷ Zulfi Mubaraq et al., "Return of the Lost Son : Disengagement and Social Reintegration of Former Terrorists in Indonesia Return of the Lost Son : Disengagement and Social Reintegration of Former Terrorists in Indonesia," *Cogent Social Sciences* 8, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2135235>.

¹⁸ Any Rufaedah, "Coping with Stigma and Social Exclusion of Terror-Convicts' Wives in Indonesia : An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Coping with Stigma and Social Exclusion of Terror-Convicts' Wives in Indonesia :," *The Qualitative Research* 23, no. 6 (2018): 1334–46, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3118>.

¹⁹ Muhammad Syafiq, "Deradicalisation and Disengagement from Terrorism and Threat to Identity : An Analysis of Former Jihadist Prisoners' Accounts," *Psychology and Developing Societies* 31, no. 2 (2019): 227–51, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971333619863169>.

²⁰ Melanie Nind, "Participatory Data Analysis: A Step Too Far?," *Qualitative Research Journal* 11, no. 4 (2011): 349–63, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111404310>.

²¹ David L. Morgan, "Focus Groups as Qualitative Research," *Qualitative Research Methods* 1, no. 1 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984287>.

create a safe and equitable space for dialogue and help tailor programs to the social context of participants.²² This is in line with community intervention practices in social and psychosocial rehabilitation in developing countries, where needs analysis through group discussions has been shown to contribute to program success.²³ The same principle is also found in studies of family-based rehabilitation and peer support, which show that the direct involvement of participants in problem identification increases ownership and the effectiveness of interventions.

The implementation of FGD in the School of D-RAD is documented in activity reports through a series of open discussions that actively involve participants. The results of the FGD reveal the need to strengthen religious moderation, improve communication skills, provide psychosocial support, and improve group dynamics within the community. This information then forms the basis for the design of materials, learning methods, and family-based approaches used during the program.



FIGURE 1 Focus Group Discussion with Persadani Foundation

2. Program Design

The School of D-RAD program design is based on the findings of need/problem mapping obtained through focus group discussions with Persadani members. Based on the results of this mapping, the team designed an adaptive, participatory, and community-based curriculum. The School of D-RAD curriculum includes a series of materials that focus on strengthening religious moderation, improving interpersonal communication skills, managing group dynamics, and developing self-reflection skills to promote more peaceful interaction and non-violent social behavior. The curriculum structure is designed in stages to allow participants to build their understanding progressively, starting from an

²² Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research*, Fourth (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2024).

²³ Ana Maria Butura et al., "Community - Based Rehabilitation for People with Psychosocial Disabilities in Low - and Middle - Income Countries : A Systematic Review of the Grey Literature," *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 0 (2024): 1-16, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-024-00630-0>.

introduction to basic concepts to the application of moderation values in the context of everyday life. The curriculum is designed with a family-oriented approach, integration of peer tutoring activities, and the use of interactive methods that emphasize experience-based learning. The curriculum covers three core thematic areas, which are, religious moderation, ideological and psychosocial rehabilitation, and applied anti-radicalism learning. These themes are integrated across the stages of learning and are delivered through dialogical methods, reflective exercises, and experiential approaches. As the final stage of the education, the participants will go through the graduation. All participants are expected to graduate, because the core purpose of the school is to develop new understandings, and self-awareness, and improved readiness for reintegration.

The success of the School of D-RAD is determined through a post-test given to participants at the end of the program. This instrument is designed to measure the extent to which participants have improved their understanding of radicalism and terrorism, as well as changes in their perspectives on the values of tolerance, anti-violence, and religious moderation. Measurements are taken by comparing participants' responses before and after participating in the program, so that shifts in understanding or reinforcement of certain attitudes can be observed.

3. Program Implementation

a. Strengthening Religious Moderation through a Dialogical Approach

The program is implemented through activities that strengthen religious moderation, delivered in the form of reflective discussions, experience sharing, and open dialogues with facilitators and religious leaders who have moderate perspectives. The material focuses on the values of tolerance, respect for diversity, non-violent conflict resolution, and a more inclusive, peace-oriented understanding of religion. A dialogical approach is chosen to create an equal learning environment, so that participants feel comfortable expressing their views and experiences without pressure.

b. Ideological Rehabilitation, Psychosocial Support, and Stigma Reduction

The program also integrates elements of ideological and psychosocial rehabilitation through group mentoring, interpersonal discussions, and activities that encourage self-reflection. Participants are facilitated to discuss traumatic experiences, rebuild self-confidence, and strengthen social skills that support the reintegration process. In addition, the program also initiates efforts to reduce stigma through community involvement, increased public understanding, and the promotion of positive narratives about second chances for ex-terrorism convicts. This approach is carried out in collaboration with community leaders, local communities, and educational institutions.

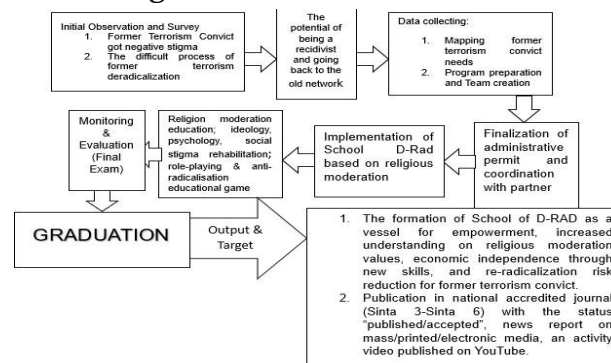
c. Interactive Games and Role-Playing

To strengthen participants' understanding, the program utilizes interactive activities such as role-playing and educational games designed to encourage critical thinking, empathy, and the ability to respond constructively to radical narratives. These activities are not

coercive or require participants to carry out specific campaigns, but rather provide a space for participants to test their communication, conflict resolution, and anti-violence messaging skills in a safe and structured context. This method is in line with the experiential learning approach that has become a hallmark of the D-RAD program.

As part of its implementation, the School of D-RAD program is carried out based on an activity roadmap that has been prepared since the planning stage. The roadmap contains the sequence of program implementation stages, starting from needs mapping through FGDs, curriculum development, learning sessions, group mentoring, to evaluation through post-tests. Each stage is designed to be interconnected to ensure that the learning process is gradual, structured, and responsive to the needs of participants. The roadmap strengthens the program's implementation and ensures that the interventions are not only systematic but also adaptive to the dynamics of the group during the process.

Figure 2 School of D-RAD Roadmap



The School of D-RAD program concluded with a graduation session involving all participants, as documented in Figure 3.



Figure 3 Antiradicalism Seminar and Graduation of School of D-RAD Participants in Lerep Village, Ungaran

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the School of D-RAD program are conducted through two approaches, namely initial assessment based on questionnaires and final evaluation through post-tests in the form of structured discussions. Although the program does not conduct formal pre-tests, initial data on participants is still obtained through questionnaires distributed before the activities are carried out. The questionnaire serves to identify participants' perceptions, basic level of understanding, and attitudes toward issues of radicalism, violence, and diversity. This information is used as an initial overview of the participants' conditions and helps to adjust the mentoring strategy during the program.

The final evaluation is conducted through a post-test in the form of an in-depth discussion on specific cases of radicalism or terrorism. In this session, participants are asked to provide their views, analysis, and assessment of the context and issues raised. The discussion approach was chosen because it is in line with the character of the program, which emphasizes dialogical, reflective, and participatory learning. This method also allows the team to observe changes in participants' understanding more comprehensively, including the development of critical thinking, the ability to respond to narratives of violence, and their tendencies towards values of tolerance and religious moderation. The results of this process are then used to assess the effectiveness of the program and provide direction for improvements in the next stage of activities.

Result & Discussion

A. Effectiveness of the School of D-RAD Program Implementation

The effectiveness of the School of D-RAD program was analyzed by comparing participants' initial profiles through pre-activity questionnaires and post-test results through analytical discussions. Although the program did not conduct a formal pre-test, the initial questionnaire given to 30 participants was able to provide a basic profile of their psychosocial conditions, perceptions of diversity, and level of vulnerability to exposure to radical ideology after their detention. The questionnaire findings showed that around 20-30% of participants still saw the possibility of being re-exposed to radical ideology. This vulnerability was mainly influenced by economic limitations, lack of post-release social support, and minimal ongoing state intervention. These conditions are in line with global research confirming that economic pressure, identity uncertainty, and social marginalization are strong factors that increase the risk of ideological relapse for ex-terrorism prisoners.²⁴

In addition, the initial questionnaire revealed several common patterns regarding the psychological burden of participants, such as feelings

²⁴ John Horgan and Kurt Braddock, "Rehabilitating the Terrorists ? : Challenges in Assessing the Effectiveness of De-Radicalization Programs," *Politics and Governance* 2010, no. 22 (2010): 267–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546551003594748>.

of helplessness, social stigma from the surrounding environment, and difficulties in rebuilding social relationships. The literature also shows that public stigma against former terrorists can hinder the reintegration process and reinforce the tendency to return to old groups that provide a sense of security, raising concerns about fairness and justice in post-release treatment.²⁵ Therefore, these findings emphasize the urgency of community-based assistance programs such as the School of D-RAD, which not only provide moderation education but also a supportive and non-repressive social space.

Although the findings only describe around 20–30% of participants, in the issue of preventing extremism, even a small number cannot be considered insignificant. Even one person who remains vulnerable to radical ideology poses a major challenge because it indicates a gap in social reintegration which, if not addressed, can have a significant impact on efforts to prevent radicalization.

With the context, the initial data of 20-30% of participants shows a re-radicalization can not be claimed as just a failure of the previous re-radicalization process, instead as an empirical view on the complexity of social reintegration of former terrorist convicts. Previous studies show that a person with a track record of extreme involvement tends to bring ideological, emotional, and relational residues which need a safe zone to be processed through dialogues.^{26 27 28} This initial finding became an important foundation for the implementation of School of D-RAD, especially in designing the informal learning and community-based learning which makes it possible for participants to reflect their experience without institutional pressure.

The initial data on the percentage of participants who are still vulnerable to a potential of re-exposure to radicalization functioned as the baseline which is relevant to read the dynamics during the implementation. This baseline gave an empirical context to understand an intervention based on assistance, dialogue, and social relation is crucial in a community service program that targets former terrorism convicts.

Post-implementation evaluation was conducted through a post-test in the form of case discussions. This form of evaluation was chosen because it provided an opportunity for participants to demonstrate their understanding, attitudes, and ways of thinking more naturally. The discussion used case studies of radicalism/terrorism designed to measure

²⁵ Tinka Veldhuis, *Prisoner Radicalization and Terrorism Detention Policy* (London: Routledge, 2021).

²⁶ Ahmad Fauzi, "Program Deradikalisasi Sebagai Upaya Reintegrasi Bagi Narapidana Terorisme Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Justitia : Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Humaniora* 8, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.31604/justitia.v8i1.1-10>.

²⁷ Matthew DeMichele, Pete Simi, and Kathleen Blee, "Becoming an Ex-Extremist: Stopping the Hate and Embracing a New Identity," *The British Journal of Criminology* 65, no. 2 (2025): 282–97, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azae035>.

²⁸ Nils Duits, Daphne L Alberda, and Maaïke Kempes, "Psychopathology of Young Terrorist Offenders, and the Interaction With Ideology and Grievances," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13, no. March (2022): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2022.801751>.

four main indicators: (1) religious tolerance, (2) openness to differences, (3) ability to understand other people's perspectives, and (4) ability to avoid takfiri thinking (the tendency to excommunicate those who are different). The results of observations in this session showed that all participants were able to demonstrate understanding and attitudes that met these indicators.

The participants not only showed the ability to explain the moderation material, but also provided concrete examples of how they would respond to everyday situations related to differences of opinion or provocative radical narratives. Some participants even began to suggest negotiation strategies, persuasive approaches, and more critical ways of evaluating religious information. These findings indicate a process of cognitive and affective change that was not solely caused by the delivery of material, but also by collective learning that validated their personal experiences. The dialogical, familial, and peer-tutor approaches in the program proved to be an important space for participants to rethink the values they previously held. This is consistent with the literature that ideological change in former extremists is more effective when done through social interaction in a supportive environment, rather than through a coercive approach.²⁹

The participants' increased understanding also reflects the program's success in building what Horgan calls "rebuilding cognitive pathways," which is a change in mindset regarding violence, identity, and social relationships.³⁰ Thus, the School of D-RAD has not only succeeded in increasing participants' understanding but also strengthened an important aspect of deradicalization: the participants' ability to reassess extremist narratives with a new and more moderate mindset.

B. Program Monitoring, Observation, and Sustainability Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of sustainability were conducted by the Persadani Foundation after the program ended through observation of community dynamics and participant involvement in follow-up activities. The results of the observation showed that the School of D-RAD program had a much better level of sustainability compared to a number of ad hoc deradicalization programs in Indonesia and other countries. This sustainability is demonstrated by the participants' continued involvement in community activities, strengthened interpersonal relationships, and the emergence of social support networks among participants. After the formal activities were completed, participants remained involved in group discussions, community activities, and informal mentoring, showing that

²⁹ A.R. Feddes, B. Doosje, and J. Reiter, "Radicalization and Deradicalization: A Qualitative Analysis of Parallels in Relevant Risk Factors and Trigger Factors.," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 27, no. 2 (2021): 268–83, <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000493>.

³⁰ Horgan and Braddock, "Rehabilitating the Terrorists?: Challenges in Assessing the Effectiveness of De-Radicalization Programs."

the program did not stop at the learning stage, but also produced lasting social change.

It is important to note that the sustainability evaluation referred to in this study does not constitute a formal or instrument-based assessment. Persadani's role in post-program evaluation was limited to maintaining continuity of engagement with participants as part of its existing community structure. As such, the assessment of sustainability relied on general observations of continued participation and social interaction, rather than on predefined indicators, systematic tracking, or longitudinal measurement.

Within the context of community service activities, sustainability is not always operationalized through standardized evaluation tools, particularly when the implementing organization functions primarily as a community network rather than a research institution. In this case, Persadani's position as a long-standing association of former terrorism convicts enabled ongoing contact with participants after the formal completion of the School of D-RAD program. The continuation of group discussions, informal mentoring, and community activities, already described in the program outcomes, was therefore interpreted as an indication that the program's effects extended beyond the scheduled learning sessions.

This understanding of sustainability aligns with community service and social reintegration literature, which emphasizes relational continuity over formal outcome measurement in post-intervention contexts. Rather than treating sustainability as a fixed endpoint, community-based programs often conceptualize it as the persistence of social ties and mutual support mechanisms that remain active after external facilitation ends. In this sense, Persadani's post-program engagement reflects a form of social sustainability grounded in community presence and shared identity, rather than in evaluative instrumentation.

Accordingly, Persadani's post-activity role is better understood as maintaining a supportive social environment that allows the outcomes of the School of D-RAD to be sustained through everyday interaction. This approach does not claim comprehensive impact assessment, but highlights the importance of community anchoring in supporting longer-term reintegration processes.

In contrast, the literature on government deradicalization programs in a number of countries shows that ad hoc programs, such as short lectures, instant counseling, or short-term workshops, have low effectiveness in the long term. One of the main weaknesses of ad hoc programs is the lack of post-activity mentoring that serves as a "social bridge" for participants when they return to society. Some studies even report the failure of deradicalization programs when participants do not receive stable

community support, causing them to return to their old environments that provide a sense of belonging.³¹

In this context, the School of D-RAD run by the Persadani community presents a more comprehensive and relevant alternative model. The existence of a family-based community provides a long-term support structure that ensures participants do not feel isolated after the program ends. The foundation's observations show an increase in social cohesion among participants and the formation of a sustainable pattern of mutual support. This community-based approach is in line with the latest literature recommendations, which emphasize that deradicalization interventions involving family, peers, and social networks are more effective in the long term.³²

Thus, Persadani's monitoring and evaluation show that the School of D-RAD has not only succeeded in increasing participants' understanding of religious moderation, but also has had a significant sustainable impact through community strengthening, long-term psychosocial support, and the integration of participants into healthy social networks.

This community-based monitoring approach is in line with the findings in this community service and social reintegration which emphasizes the importance of relational sustainability in supporting the long-term behaviour change. Instead of relying on one-time interventions, program sustainability is underpinned by ongoing social relationships and a sense of community ownership of the mentoring process. Therefore, Persadani's role in post-activity evaluation is better understood as an effort to maintain the continuity of social mentoring, rather than as a formal instrument for assessing program success.

Conclusion

The School of D-RAD program implemented in collaboration with Yayasan Persadani demonstrates that community-based, family-oriented, and dialogical mentoring approaches can produce significant impact in preventing re-radicalization among former terrorism convicts. The need mapping conducted through FGDs and initial questionnaires revealed that a portion of participants still possessed vulnerabilities to re-exposure to radical ideology, particularly due to economic pressure, social stigma, and the lack of sustained support from the state. Although the percentage appears small at around 20–30%, even a single individual who shows a tendency to return to radical exposure remains a serious concern that requires continuous intervention. The program's design, which emphasizes a familial approach, peer tutoring, and religious moderation education, proved effective in creating a safe environment for participants to engage in

³¹ Haula Noor, "From Villain to Hero : The Role of Disengaged Terrorists in Social Reintegration Initiatives," *Politics and Governance* 12, no. 7838 (2024): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.7838>.

³² Nind, "Participatory Data Analysis: A Step Too Far?"

dialogue, reflect on their experiences, and develop more moderate patterns of thinking. The structured implementation of the program, aligned with the activity roadmap, allowed participants to undergo a gradual learning process. Meanwhile, the *post-test* evaluation conducted through case-based discussions indicated improvements in religious tolerance, openness to differences, the ability to understand others' perspectives, and reduced tendencies toward *takfiri thinking*. These findings strengthen the argument that ideological transformation is more effectively achieved through supportive social interaction rather than coercive approaches or one-way lectures. Post-program monitoring and observation conducted by Yayasan Persadani show that the School of D-RAD has a stronger level of sustainability compared to many ad hoc deradicalization programs. Participants remained actively involved in community activities, continued supporting one another, and exhibited positive psychosocial development after the program concluded. This success highlights the importance of community-based mentoring models that integrate education, emotional support, and long-term social networks as key components in preventing re-radicalization. Thus, the School of D-RAD can be said to make a tangible contribution to the social reintegration of former terrorism convicts through a humane, participatory, and sustainable approach. The program also underscores the need to develop deradicalization models that focus not only on ideological change but also on building social ecosystems that support long-term transformation toward sustainable peace and reintegration oriented in justice. The findings presented in this article are expected to serve as a foundation for developing similar programs in the future and to enrich the discourse on effective deradicalization models in Indonesia.

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