

Title Beyond Terrorism: An Interdisciplinary Legal Study of The Motivation, Impact, and Solidarity of Lone Wolf Terrorism

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Abstract

Lone wolf terrorism is terrorism committed by individuals without direct affiliation with large terrorist organizations.

This phenomenon is increasingly worrying in various countries, including Indonesia. Attacks by self-radicalized individuals have a different pattern from conventional terrorism, as the perpetrators act alone and are difficult to detect by security forces. In Indonesia, the increase in Lone Wolf terrorism cases in recent years is due to the easy access to the internet and social media that spread radicalism. The city of Surabaya came under scrutiny after the terrorist attacks in May 2018, where several acts were linked to large networks such as Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). The government and local communities, such as the Community of Peace Fighters, have tried to prevent radicalization through deradicalization programs and monitoring of vulnerable individuals. However, the individualistic and disorganized nature of lone wolf terrorism makes it difficult to anticipate. This research aims to identify patterns of radicalization that can give rise to lone terrorists, who are not directly affiliated with terrorist groups. The method used is interdisciplinary legal research with a qualitative approach, which was carried out at the Surabaya Peace Fighters Community, which is under the guidance of the Special Da'wah Institute (LDK) of the Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership (PWM) of East Java. The results of this study show that there are so many external factors that make a person radicalized. One of them is ideological factors, social conditions, structural injustices that encourage them to rebel, and the most powerful is the understanding that radical actions are justified by religious teachings (Islam).

Keywords

Lone Wolf Terrorism, Radicalism, Threat.

I. Introduction

In its development, acts of terrorism are no longer limited to physical attacks such as bombings, but also include the spread of radicalism that can trigger future acts of violence. One aspect that is increasingly worrying is the rise of the Lone Wolf Terrorism phenomenon, where individuals can experience the radicalization process independently without having to join a particular terrorist organization. With the development of technology and social media, the spread of extremist ideologies has become more accessible, increasing the risk of individuals being driven to commit acts of terror without direct coordination with larger radical groups.

The understanding of Lone Wolf Terrorism is often characterized by ambiguous definitional boundaries, especially in distinguishing between politically motivated acts and acts driven by personal grievances or financial incentives. The fundamental difference in categorization lies in the purpose of the act of violence. In general, acts committed with the aim of supporting a broader political, ideological, or religious agenda are categorized as terrorism. In contrast, acts driven by personal vendettas or financial motives are more likely to be categorized as common crimes. This complexity is even more apparent in cases like Mir Aimal Kansi's attack on CIA employees, where the motive is not entirely clear. This case demonstrates the subjective nature of determining a

perpetrator's intent as well as the challenges of categorizing an act within the legal framework of terrorism¹.

As a growing phenomenon, Lone Wolf Terrorism refers to individuals who commit acts of terror without the direct involvement of a large terrorist organization. The uniqueness of this model lies in the independence of the perpetrators in planning and executing their actions. Nevertheless, the perpetrators often draw inspiration from extremist ideologies spread through propaganda, especially on digital platforms and social media. This phenomenon became increasingly prominent in the early 21st century, as law enforcement agencies faced increasing difficulties in identifying and preventing attacks carried out by individuals without clear networks².

Typological studies of Lone Wolf Terrorism have provided a broader and multidimensional understanding of this phenomenon. Pantucci in his research proposed four main typologies, namely: (1) the loner, an individual who has no contact with terrorist groups or networks; (2) the lone wolf, an individual who may have had a relationship with a terrorist group but acts independently; (3) the lone wolf pack, a small group that undergoes a radicalization process independently; and (4) the lone attacker, an individual who is actually part of a terrorist group but acts individually. Meanwhile, Borum further developed the analysis by proposing three spectrums of

¹ Stanislaus Riyanta, "Shortcut to Terrorism: Self-Radicalization and Lone-Wolf Terror Acts: A Case Study of Indonesia," *Journal of Terrorism Studies* 4, no. 1 (2022): 2.

² Tiara Firdaus Jafar, Arfin Sudirman, and Affabile Rifawan, "Ketahanan Nasional Menghadapi Ancaman Lone Wolf Terrorism Di Jawa Barat," *Jurnal Ketahanan Nasional* 25, no. 1 (2019): 73–91.

dimensions that determine the characteristics of a lone attacker, namely liveness (the level of involvement of other individuals in the radicalization process and material support), direction (the level of autonomy in decision-making), and motivation (the reason behind the attack, whether it is personal or related to a particular ideology). These three dimensions provide a comprehensive framework in understanding the complexity of individual terrorism³.

In the Indonesian context, the phenomenon of Lone Wolf Terrorism poses new challenges in counter-radicalization and de-radicalization strategies. One example of a case that is often associated with this concept is the church bombings in Surabaya in 2018 that were carried out by one family. Theoretically, the act seemed to fit the characteristics of Lone Wolf Terrorism as it was carried out independently by individuals without direct involvement from a larger organization. However, upon further investigation, it was found that the perpetrators were part of an organized terrorist group, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), which is affiliated with ISIS. Thus, the attack cannot be categorized as Lone Wolf Terrorism in the true sense because of the involvement of groups and organizational structures in the process of planning and executing the action.

Although Lone Wolf Terrorism is often seen as a phenomenon that is difficult to detect, the development of technology and social media has accelerated the process of radicalization of individuals. In Indonesia, data submitted by

³ Avina Waliyanri and Muhamad Syauqillah, "Lone Wolf Terrorism Trends in Indonesia," *International Journal of Science and Society* 4, no. 3 (2022): 372–84.

LDK PWM East Java shows that there are at least 16 individuals who have been exposed to radicalism and have the potential to become independent perpetrators of violence.⁴ This fact shows that despite the seemingly peaceful environment, there are many individuals who are vulnerable to the provocation of extremist ideologies, especially through digital propaganda. As a result, these individuals can easily undergo a transformation from merely having intolerant views to becoming perpetrators of terrorist acts without affiliation with certain radical groups.

First, Previous research conducted by Elma Haryani⁵, examined the phenomenon of Lone Wolf Terrorism in young people in Medan, focusing on a 19-year-old attack on a priest at St. Joseph's Church. The results showed that radicalization in children occurs through free access to the internet, where they absorb extremist teachings without proper guidance. Lack of parental supervision, weak moderate religious education, and a social environment that is permissive of intolerance are the main factors that encourage radicalization. The perpetrators in this case acted alone without direct involvement with terrorist groups, but were motivated by online extremist propaganda. The study recommends state intervention in monitoring religious lectures and online hate speech, and emphasizes the importance of family-based

⁴ Andi Hariyadi, "LDK PWM Jatim Gelar Pesantren Mualaf Dan Pejuang Damai," *Klikmu.com*, 2024.

⁵ Elma Haryani, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Untuk Generasi Milenia : Studi Kasus ' Lone Wolf ' Pada Anak Di Medan," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 18, no. 2 (2020): 145–58.

moderation education to shape a more inclusive understanding of religion.

The research conducted by Elma Haryani discusses the lack of supervision from those who should play a role in providing boundaries and guidance, such as parents and teachers at school, which contributes to the radicalization of young people. This lack of control allows children to be exposed to extremist ideologies through the internet without proper assistance. Meanwhile, the research in this paper focuses more on external factors that are the main motivation for the emergence of Lone Wolf Terrorism. These factors include the spread of radical ideology, social conditions that trigger a sense of dissatisfaction, structural injustices that create feelings of marginalization, and justification of religious teachings used to justify acts of violence. Thus, this research seeks to understand Lone Wolf Terrorism from a broader perspective, not only from the legal aspects and individual surveillance, but also from the social, political and ideological dynamics behind it.

Second, research conducted by Beny Abukhaer Tatar⁶, discusses the phenomenon of women's involvement in lone wolf-type terrorism in Indonesia, which has shown an increasing trend in recent years. With a qualitative approach and literature study, the author elaborates that women's involvement in terrorism is no longer limited to being supporters, but has become the main perpetrators who move

⁶ Beny Abukhaer Tatar and Wahyu Sekti Retnaningsih, "Investigating the Phenomena of Women in Lone Wolf Terrorism in Indonesia," *International Journal of Science Education and Cultural Studies* 1, no. 2 (2022): 66–79.

alone without a formal organizational network. This study highlights the psychological and sociological factors that drive women to become terrorists, such as the search for justice, the drive for self-actualization, and the process of self-radicalization through social media. Cases such as Zakiah Aini and the armed woman at the State Palace are used as real illustrations of the pattern of lone wolf terrorism based on ideology and personal motivation. This research emphasizes the importance of special attention from the government to women's vulnerability to radicalization in order to prevent further involvement in acts of terror.

Third, research from Achluddin Ibnu Rochim⁷, which discusses the identification and analysis of acts of terrorism in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022 using a qualitative descriptive approach through online media observation. This research recorded 97 terrorism cases that were mostly driven by political motives, with the Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) group as the most dominant perpetrator network. The targets of the attacks show a relatively balanced distribution between civilian and non-civilian objects, such as government offices, places of worship, and other public facilities. This article also reveals that terrorism in Indonesia is not only influenced by religious ideology, but also closely related to dissatisfaction with political, economic and social conditions. The results of this study provide a basis for the formulation of more targeted counter-terrorism policies, including the need to intervene in

⁷ Achluddin Ibnu Rochim, Ute Chairuz Mochamad Nasution, and Eddy Wahyudi, "Identification of Terrorism Actions in Indonesia," *Society* 11, no. 2 (2023): 415–33.

the root causes of radicalism and improve intelligence strategies.

Based on the problems described, the main focus of this research is directed at understanding the dynamics of radicalization of individuals involved in lone wolf terrorism. The phenomenon of terrorism that is carried out individually without direct affiliation with an organized terrorist network shows its own complexity, especially in terms of personal motivation, psychosocial impact, and accompanying expressions of solidarity. Therefore, this research seeks to answer the main question: what is the pattern of radicalization experienced by individual perpetrators of lone wolf terrorism, especially in terms of motivation, impact, and forms of solidarity shown or felt by the perpetrators?

Furthermore, given the urgency of preventing radicalization from the earliest stages, this research also aims to identify effective and contextual counter-radicalization strategies. This is important not only as a response to acts of terror, but also as part of efforts to build social resilience against the infiltration of violent ideologies. Thus, the follow-up question highlighted in this research is: what kind of counter-radicalization strategies can be effectively applied to prevent the radicalization process of individuals, especially in the context of lone wolf terrorism that is increasingly difficult to detect?

This research aims to deeply analyze the radicalization patterns of individuals involved in lone wolf terrorism, focusing on the motivations, impacts, and solidarity attitudes that drive them to commit acts of terror. By understanding the factors that influence the radicalization process of individuals, this research is expected to identify how an extreme ideology

can develop in a person without direct involvement with a large terrorist group. In addition, this research also aims to explore how the impact of lone wolf terrorism affects society at large and how solidarity formed within extremist communities plays a role in strengthening individuals' radical beliefs.

In addition to analyzing patterns of radicalization, this research also formulates counter-radicalization strategies that can be effectively implemented in preventing the spread of extremism. Considering that social media has become one of the main tools in the radicalization process, this research examines how extremist narratives are disseminated and the mechanisms used to attract sympathy and support from individuals. With a more complex understanding of the dynamics of radicalization in the digital space, this research is expected to provide policy recommendations and intervention strategies that are more appropriate in preventing terrorism, especially for individuals who are vulnerable to the influence of radical ideology.

II. Method

This research uses an empirical legal research method, with a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to obtain relevant, timely, accurate, and complete information regarding the radicalization process of individuals involved in lone wolf terrorism⁸. The legal basis that will be used is Law Number

⁸ F C Susila Adiyanta, "Hukum Dan Studi Penelitian Empiris: Penggunaan Metode Survey Sebagai Instrumen Penelitian Hukum

5/2018 on the Criminal Acts of Terrorism, which provides a legal framework for countering and prosecuting acts of terrorism in Indonesia⁹.

This research focuses on the Pejuang Damai community, which is under the guidance of the Lembaga Dakwah Khusus (LDK) Pimpinan Wilayah Muhammadiyah (PWM) of East Java. This community is a very relevant subject because its members consist of ex-terrorist convicts. This gives the researcher a unique opportunity to understand firsthand how the process of polarization and the spread of radicalism can occur, even in the context of individuals acting alone without the support of a large terrorist group.

In-depth interviews allow researchers to obtain specific and quality information, because each question asked can be adjusted to the context of the respondent's answer, providing space for respondents to speak more openly and in depth. Thus, the interviews conducted produced nuanced data, covering various aspects that influence individuals towards radicalization, as well as patterns that commonly appear in perpetrators of lone wolf terrorism.

III. Result & Discussion

A. Basic Concepts of Terrorism

Terrorism is basically an extraordinary crime that has a transnational and organized nature. This crime does not only

Empiris," *Administrative Law and Governance Journal* 2, no. 4 (2019): 697–709.

⁹ Peter Mahmud Marzuki, *Penelitian Hukum*, Cetakan Ke (Jakarta: Kencana, 2019).

have an impact within one country, but can also cross national boundaries, making it a complex global threat. One of the main characteristics of terrorism is its clandestine nature, which is carried out in secret, behind closed doors, and through underground movements. The perpetrators often avoid detection by utilizing international networks and disguising their identities and activities so that they are not easily detected by law enforcement officials.

In addition, the development of modern technology has further strengthened the movement pattern of terrorism groups. The utilization of communication and information technology allows the spread of radical propaganda, recruitment of new members, and fundraising to be done more efficiently and quickly through social media and other digital platforms.¹⁰ On the other hand, advances in transportation allow perpetrators to move between regions or countries with ease, thus enlarging the scope of their operations. Not only that, the use of increasingly sophisticated modern weaponry also exacerbates the impact of acts of terrorism, making it a serious threat to national and international security. Therefore, efforts to combat terrorism require close cross-border cooperation, both in the exchange of intelligence information, strengthening law enforcement capacity, and harmonizing international legal regulations to deal with this evolving threat.

In terms of motivation, acts of terrorism do not always stem from the same reason. Some acts of terrorism are committed with ideological motives, where the perpetrators

¹⁰ Fajar Purwawidada, *Jaringan Baru Teroris Solo - Google Books* (PT Gramedia, 2014).

believe that their actions are part of a certain ideological struggle that must be upheld by violent means. Others are driven by political motives, such as efforts to pressure the government, overthrow power, or create social instability in order to achieve certain political goals. However, in some cases, terrorism can also be triggered by other factors, such as personal interests, economic motives, or radicalism that leads to extreme actions that are harmful to the country's ideology and national security stability¹¹.

Referring to the impact caused, terrorism is always categorized as a grave crime that threatens the life of society, legal order, and state sovereignty. Therefore, in almost all jurisdictions in the world, including Indonesia, perpetrators of terrorism are subject to severe criminal sanctions, with very serious penalties. This severe punishment aims not only to provide a deterrent effect for the perpetrators, but also as an effort to protect the public from the growing threat of terrorism.

B. How Does Someone Become Radicalized?

The process of radicalization can be explained through the Staircase to Terrorism model developed by Fathali Moghaddam. This model describes how individuals gradually undergo psychological and ideological changes until they reach a stage where they are willing to commit terrorist acts. The model consists of six main stages, namely ground floor,

¹¹ Cipi Perdana, "Rekonstruksi Pemidanaan Pelaku Tindak Pidana Terorisme Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum* 23, no. 4 (2016): 672–700.

first floor, second floor, third floor, fourth floor, and fifth floor, where each stage reflects an individual's deepening level of involvement in radicalization¹².

1. In the first stage, the **ground floor**, individuals experience social injustice, frustration, and shame due to unpleasant environmental conditions or personal experiences. These feelings are not limited to certain social or economic groups, meaning that radicalization is not necessarily related to education level or family economic background. Complex psychological and social factors can affect anyone, regardless of their social status.
2. When individuals feel increasingly marginalized and do not find adequate solutions, they move up to the **first floor** stage, where they begin to look for ways to address the injustice they perceive. At this stage, two main factors play an important role in pushing individuals to the next stage: the extent to which they see the possibility of acting independently and how they perceive the procedural justice system in society. If individuals feel that the existing system cannot provide justice for them, they will tend to look for alternatives, including radical thinking.
3. In the **second floor**, individuals begin to develop the mental readiness to commit aggressive acts. They look for opportunities to act and are increasingly attracted to extreme ideologies that offer answers to their discontent. At this stage, they begin to gravitate towards extremist

¹² Stanislaus Riyanta, "Analisis Korelasi Antara Konten Radikal Di Media Sosial Dan Aksi Teror Lone Wolf Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Keamanan Nasional* 9, no. 1 (2023): 75–114.

groups and feel that violence can be a legitimate tool to achieve change.

4. As extremist thinking develops, individuals move to the **third floor**, where they begin to see transnational radical groups as a “parallel world” with a different system of morality from mainstream society. In this world, they adopt the perspective that extremist groups are heroes who fight for justice, while governments and mainstream society are enemies who hinder change. At this stage, they are increasingly driven to commit to extremist ideologies through strategies such as social isolation, affiliation with radical groups, acceptance of more extreme doctrines, and the use of fear tactics and secrecy to protect their identity.
5. When individuals have reached the **fourth floor**, they have joined extremist groups more actively and have usually been placed in small organized cells. At this stage, individuals have difficulty returning to normal life because they have committed to the group's cause. They begin to be trained to carry out terror attacks and increasingly lose their humanity towards their targets.
6. In the last stage, **fifth floor**, individuals are fully psychologically and ideologically prepared to commit acts of terrorism. They are not only mentally committed, but also physically committed to carrying out attacks, which often involve casualties. At this point, individuals feel that the violent acts they commit are part of the sacrifices necessary to achieve their ideological goals.

Of these stages, not all stages are passed by a lone wolf, the ground floor and first floor phases are very important

determinants in a person's journey towards radicalization. At this stage, individuals begin to feel social injustice, experience deep frustration, and bear the shame of unpleasant environmental conditions or personal experiences. Feelings of marginalization and loss of control over the situation at hand often trigger the urge to seek answers and solutions to their suffering.

Over time, individuals in this phase begin to contemplate various possible actions they can take to challenge the conditions they perceive as unjust. They not only question the injustices they perceive, but also begin to think of ways to fight back against the systems or parties deemed responsible for their suffering. In many cases, this thinking develops gradually until it eventually leads to the search for ideologies or narratives that can justify these acts of resistance, whether in the form of extreme discourse or more radical concrete actions.

The model suggests that radicalization does not happen instantly, but is a gradual process influenced by various psychological, social and ideological factors. By understanding each stage in this model, prevention strategies can be designed to intervene with individuals before they reach more advanced stages in the radicalization process.

C. Why “Lone Wolf Terrorism”?

One of the fundamental questions in understanding the phenomenon of Lone Wolf Terrorism is whether perpetrators in this category can be equated with conventional terrorism perpetrators. In general, terrorism has a certain pattern that involves organized networks or groups, openly propagating ideology, recruiting new members, and raising funds to

finance terrorist acts. However, in the case of Lone Wolf Terrorism, there are a number of characteristics that distinguish it from conventional terrorism patterns. One of the most striking differences is that lone wolf perpetrators are not always connected to extremist groups or larger terrorism networks. They act independently, both in planning and executing actions, without any direct instruction from a particular organization. This is different from conventional terrorists who generally carry out operations based on group orders or doctrine.

The concept of “lone wolf” was first popularized in the late 1990s by white supremacists Tom Metzger and Alex Curtis. They encouraged like-minded individuals to act alone in committing acts of violence. One clear example occurred in March 2019, when a terrorist attacked two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, killing 51 people, while broadcasting the action live. Although the term “lone wolf” is still debated, scholars agree that the perpetrators of these attacks operate alone or in small groups without direct links to terrorist organizations.¹³ Generally, they have no criminal record, making them difficult to detect by security forces, unlike more structured terrorist groups.

Radicalization is a major factor in the formation of lone wolf terrorists, mostly online through social media, encrypted chat rooms on the darknet, and propaganda on instant messaging apps. These platforms allow someone who is already an extremist to anonymously access propaganda,

¹³ Jeffrey D Simon, “Lone Wolf Terrorism: Understanding the Growing Threat,” in *Lone Actors—An Emerging Security Threat* (IOS Press, 2015), 3–10.

disinformation, and weapons and explosives training manuals. A famous example is Anders Breivik's July 20, 2011 attack in Oslo, Norway, which killed 77 people.¹⁴ Breivik claimed his actions were an attempt to "save European culture" from Islamization, and his actions later received support from far-right groups on social media.

In Indonesia, the lone wolf phenomenon began to emerge in late 2015, when an individual launched a TATP bomb attack at a mall in South Tangerang. Since then, a number of other lone wolf actions have occurred, such as the pot bomb in Bandung (2017), the Kartasura Police Post attack (2019), Medan Police Headquarters (2019), and the Police Headquarters attack by Zakiah Aini (2021)¹⁵.

Moreover, in many cases, lone wolf perpetrators are connoisseurs, not actively propagating ideologies on social media or other digital platforms. They may absorb radical ideology from various sources, but they do not necessarily seek to spread it to others. This is in contrast to the pattern of terrorist groups that systematically spread propaganda to influence public opinion and attract sympathizers. Another difference is in the aspect of recruitment and funding. In contrast to terrorist organizations that actively recruit new members and raise funds to support their operations, Lone Wolf Terrorists tend to operate alone, use personal resources

¹⁴ Yulia Widayani, "Terorisme Dalam Media Massa (Analisis Media Framing Terhadap Berita Dan Tajuk Seputar Aksi Terorisme Di Norwegia Pada Harian Umum Kompas, Republika Dan Jawa Pos Periode Juli-Agustus 2011)," 2012.

¹⁵ G Febiola Sirait, Mohamad Rapiq, and Sahuri Lasmadi, "Lone-Wolf Terorisme Di Indonesia: Fenomena Dan Pengaturan," *PAMPAS: Journal of Criminal Law* 6, no. 1 (2025): 495–510.

to launch attacks, and do not require a support network in their execution. They often carry out actions based on personal motivations, whether ideological, vengeful, or psychologically disturbed, without being involved in a terrorist organization structure.

Despite these fundamental differences, the legal challenge of categorizing Lone Wolf Terrorism remains contentious. Some legal systems still consider Lone Wolf as part of the terrorism spectrum because their actions fulfill the elements of the use of violence, threats, and specific goals that are ideological, political, or strategic in nature. However, on the other hand, the legal approach to Lone Wolf Terrorism is often more difficult due to the lack of evidence of involvement in terrorist networks, so law enforcement must rely on approaches based on psychological profiles, digital traces, and individual action patterns.

D. Legal Analysis and Challenges in Handling Lone Wolf Terrorism

Normatively, the legal regulations governing Lone Wolf Terrorism basically have similarities with terrorism crimes in general. In the context of Indonesian legislation, Lone Wolf Terrorism is also subject to Law Number 5/2018 on the Amendment to Law Number 15/2003 on the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1/2002 on the Eradication of the Criminal Acts of Terrorism into Law. This is because several provisions in the Law contain similar norms in regulating criminal acts of terrorism in general, including in the aspect of determining whether an act can be

categorized as a material offense or a formal offense. In Article 1 point 2 of the Law, terrorism is defined as follows:

"Terrorism is an act that uses violence or threats of violence that creates an atmosphere of terror or fear on a widespread basis, which can cause mass casualties, and/or cause damage or destruction to strategic vital objects, the environment, public facilities, or international facilities with ideological, political, or security disturbance motives."

Based on these provisions, the elements contained in the definition of the crime of terrorism according to this Law include:¹⁶

1. Committed intentionally: meaning that the act is not an act that is done unconsciously or without planning, but is done with a certain intention by the perpetrator.
2. Intentionally committed: meaning that the act is not done unconsciously or without planning, but is done with a specific intention by the perpetrator.
3. Using violence or threat of violence: which includes various forms of physical and non-physical actions that can have a serious impact on the victim or the surrounding environment.
4. Causing an atmosphere of terror or fear of people on a widespread basis: either by depriving someone of their freedom, taking their life, or causing the loss of property

¹⁶ M Zen Abdullah, "Analisis Yuridis Terhadap Undang-Undang Nomor 15 Tahun 2003 Jo Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 2018 Tentang Pemberantasan Tindak Pidana Terorisme Dalam Hubungan Dengan Hak Azasi Manusia," *Legalitas: Jurnal Hukum* 13, no. 1 (2021): 26–35.

belonging to others. In addition, such acts can also cause large numbers of victims or mass casualties.

5. Causing damage or destruction to vital objects: such as public facilities, international facilities, the environment, or other strategic objects that have an important value for the security of the state and society¹⁷.

Thus, it can be understood that Lone Wolf Terrorism is still categorized as a criminal act of terrorism as stipulated in Law No. 5/2018. Therefore, it can be understood that even though the action was carried out individually, the impact still fulfills the elements of terrorism as regulated in the Law.

Based on the provisions in Law Number 5 Year 2018, not all criminal norms stipulated in the regulation can be imposed on the perpetrators of Lone Wolf Terrorism. This is because there are elements in the articles that specifically regulate involvement in terrorist organizations, recruitment of members, fundraising, and paramilitary training, which in reality are not always carried out by a Lone Wolf Terrorism. For example, Article 12A paragraph (2) stipulates that a person can be charged if he:

1. Being a member of an organization that has been designated as a terrorist organization by a court.
2. Recruiting others to join an organization that has been designated as a terrorist organization by the court.

¹⁷ Ahmad Mukri Aji, "Pemberatasan Tindak Pidana Terorisme Di Indonesia (Analisis Terhadap Undang-Undang Nomor 15 Dan 16 Tahun 2003 Berdasarkan Teori Hukum)," *Jurnal Cita Hukum* 1, no. 1 (2013).

As we know, in many cases of Lone Wolf Terrorism, the perpetrator acts independently, without affiliation or involvement in a particular terrorist organization. A Lone Wolf usually does not join an extremist group directly, but is only inspired by radical ideologies that are widely spread through various media, including the internet. They also do not recruit new members, but rather operate individually based on personal drive or ideological motivations that they believe in. Furthermore, Article 12A paragraph (3) emphasizes that a person may be subject to criminal sanctions if he:

1. Establishes an organization that has been designated as a terrorist organization,
2. Leads a terrorist organization,
3. Managing or controlling a terrorist organization.

In the context of Lone Wolf Terrorism, these elements are difficult to fulfill because the perpetrator does not have a clear organizational structure and does not act as a leader in a terrorist group. Unlike conventional terrorist groups that have a leadership hierarchy and command system, Lone Wolf operates independently without the need for direction from other parties. Therefore, this provision is not relevant to be applied to the perpetrators of Lone Wolf Terrorism, unless there is evidence that the perpetrators were involved in the formation or leadership of certain terrorist organizations before committing acts of terrorism.

Meanwhile, Article 12B regulates military and paramilitary training aimed at supporting acts of terrorism. In paragraph (1), it is explained that a person may be subject to punishment if he:

1. Organizes, provides, or participates in military or paramilitary training,

2. Plans, prepares, or commits a criminal act of terrorism. Then, subsection (2) adds that a person who: Recruits, accommodates, or sends others to participate in such training, may also be charged with the applicable criminal provisions. Furthermore, subsection (3) stipulates that a person can be punished if he/she makes, collects, or disseminates writings or documents that aim to support terrorism activities as referred to in this article.

E. Motivation, Impact, and Solidarity

One of the main factors that drives people to become radicalized is theological beliefs that are similar to the teachings espoused by radical groups. Certain individuals or groups among Muslims believe that the existence of these groups is closely related to the religious concept of the establishment of "khilafah ala minhaj nubuwwah", an Islamic government that is considered part of religious teachings and historical destiny. This view became stronger with the collapse of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, which then opened up space for the emergence of radical groups' claims regarding the re-establishment of the Islamic caliphate system¹⁸.

In addition to ideological factors, sectarianism is also a major trigger for the development of radicalization. Let's take an example like ISIS, as a group that claims to be the pioneer of the caliphate, actively calls for discrimination and hatred against the Shia group. They take advantage of political conditions in various countries, including in Southeast Asia, which are considered quite conducive to the spread of

¹⁸ Fajar Purwawidada, *Jaringan Baru Teroris Solo - Google Books*.

sectarian ideology. In Malaysia, for example, Shia teachings are officially banned, while in Indonesia, its existence is not widely recognized and is often the object of persecution. With this situation, ISIS sees an opportunity to instill sectarianism ideology by building a narrative that they are fighting to defend the “purity” of Islam from groups they consider as enemies¹⁹.

Another factor contributing to the radicalization process is the growing sympathy and solidarity among Muslims, especially in Southeast Asia, for the plight of Muslim communities in Syria, Palestine and other conflict-ridden countries in the Middle East. The prolonged conflicts taking place in these countries, with reports of atrocities and civilian suffering, have generated strong feelings of solidarity among Muslims around the world. Many individuals feel a moral and religious obligation to help their fellow Muslims who are suffering oppression.²⁰ In this context, the propaganda of terrorist groups often exploits the humanitarian narrative by inviting individuals to go to conflict zones under the pretext of performing jihad or defending oppressed Muslims. Those who are lured by this narrative often do not realize that they are ultimately recruited to join terrorist groups and engage in acts of violence.

¹⁹ Noor Hasanah and Huriyah Huriyah, “Religius Radikal: Dualisme Gen-Z Dalam Mengekspresikan Kesadaran Beragama Dan Kesalehan,” *Jurnal Penelitian* 16, no. 1 (2022): 23.

²⁰ Sukawarsini Djelantik, *Terorisme: Tinjauan Psiko-Politis, Peran Media, Kemiskinan, Dan Keamanan Nasional* (Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2010).

Another fact found by the researchers is that economic factors also become the main driver in the radicalization process, especially for individuals who join organized terrorist groups. Many former convicts of terrorism cases revealed that they were driven to join radical groups not only because of ideology, but also for economic reasons. In many cases, these individuals come from weak economic backgrounds, experience difficulties in getting a job, or face severe financial pressures. Terrorist groups take advantage of this situation by offering the lure of jobs, decent salaries, and a more stable life for them and their families. With these promises, many individuals are attracted to join, even though they may not initially have a strong ideological inclination towards extremism.

However, this condition is different for those involved in lone wolf terrorism. Unlike members of terrorist groups who are often recruited with economic incentives, perpetrators of lone wolf terrorism generally come from well-established economic backgrounds, many of whom come from the middle class or even have decent education and jobs. Economic factors are not the main motivation for their actions, but are more influenced by ideological drives, feelings of social alienation, or even personal dissatisfaction with a system they perceive as unfair.

F. Prevention Efforts

In Law Number 5/2018 on the Eradication of the Criminal Acts of Terrorism, efforts to prevent terrorism have been systematically regulated, but still tend to be procedural and oriented towards formal mechanisms. One of the main approaches used is through early detection by intelligence

officers, as stipulated in Articles 43A to 43E.²¹ In this provision, the State Intelligence Agency (BIN), the Police, and the TNI are authorized to identify terrorism threats through data collection, monitoring suspicious activities, and intercepting communications of individuals or groups suspected of having links to terrorist networks. This step aims to anticipate and prevent acts of terrorism before they happen. However, this approach is more reactive because it focuses more on detecting individuals who have shown signs of involvement in radical networks, rather than early prevention through education or social intervention.

In addition to intelligence efforts, the state also promotes counter-radicalization and deradicalization strategies as stipulated in Articles 43F to 43J, which in this case is the task of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT). Counter-radicalization is carried out to counter the spread of extremism ideology by involving various parties, including academics, religious leaders, and civil society, in building counter narratives to radical teachings. Meanwhile, deradicalization focuses on rehabilitation efforts for individuals who have been exposed to radicalism, especially former terrorism prisoners or those who are indicated to have undergone a radicalization process.²² While these strategies are important, in practice they

²¹ Rizky Saputra, Ramlani Lina Sinaulan, and Farhana Farhana, "Peranan Detasemen Khusus 88 Anti-Teror dalam Penanganan Tindak Pidana Terorisme Dalam Perspektif Hak Asasi Manusia," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia* 2, no. 9 (2023): 2764–86.

²² Nur Paikah, "Kedudukan Dan Fungsi Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme (BNPT) Dalam Pemberantasan Terorisme Di Indonesia," *Al-Adalah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Politik Islam* 4, no. 1 (2019): 1–20.

are often formal and do not fully address the root of the problem. These programs tend to be implemented after someone is identified as being exposed to radicalism, rather than as an initial step to prevent radicalization at the grassroots level, such as through education or social empowerment.

From this explanation, we can understand that efforts to prevent terrorism have been clearly regulated in Law Number 5/2018 on the Eradication of the Criminal Acts of Terrorism. However, the provisions in the law tend to be procedural and emphasize more on formal mechanisms in preventing and countering terrorism. In reality, there are many factors that can be identified early on as early indicators of potential radicalization and terrorist acts.

One of the informants we interviewed revealed that although lone wolf terrorism is more difficult to identify compared to acts of terrorism committed by organized groups, it does not mean that detection and prevention efforts are impossible. The main difference between lone wolf perpetrators and conventional terrorists lies in the absence of direct affiliation with certain radical groups or extremist networks. However, even though they operate independently, their radicalization process can still be traced, especially through the digital footprints they leave on social media.

In many cases, lone wolf individuals acquire their radical ideologies through exposure to extremist propaganda on various online platforms, such as closed forums, encrypted instant messaging groups or social media posts. Their online interaction patterns, ranging from consumption of extreme content to active engagement in discussions with like-minded individuals, can be early indicators that allow authorities to detect potential threats. Therefore, while the detection of lone

wolf terrorism is more challenging compared to terrorist groups with a clear organizational structure, technology-based monitoring strategies and online behavior analysis can play an important role in preventing acts of violence before they occur²³.

After undergoing a radicalization process, a lone wolf terrorist actually begins to show various observable warning signs before the attack is carried out. With the development of social media and digital technology, this behavioral change is easier to detect because most of their activities and ideological expressions are recorded online. Some behavioral patterns that often appear in this pre-attack phase include leakage, fixation, and identification²⁴.

1. **Leakage**; this refers to a form of communication where the perpetrator indirectly or explicitly conveys the intention to carry out the attack to a third party. This communication can take the form of social media posts, comments on online forums, or private messages containing the rationale for target selection and the ideological justification behind their actions. In some cases, these messages also reflect the research, planning and preparation for the execution of the attack by the perpetrator. This leakage phenomenon is often considered as one of the key indicators that can be used to identify potential terrorists before they act.

²³ Hafifuddin Hafifuddin, "Reexamining Problems and Management Strategies For Fighting Terrorism in Indonesia," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 44, no. 2 (2021): 313–31.

²⁴ Fathali M Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration.," *American Psychologist* 60, no. 2 (2005): 161.

2. **Fixation;** This stage describes an obsessive pattern towards a particular ideology, individual or group that increasingly dominates the perpetrator's way of thinking and behavior. Fixation can take many forms, such as increased interest in the target of the attack, intensified publicly voiced extreme opinions, and a tendency to portray the target as a threat or enemy that must be fought. Individuals in this stage also tend to increasingly isolate themselves from moderate social environments and more often seek validation from extremist communities, both online and offline.
3. **Identification;** which reflects the transformation of the individual into a figure who considers himself a "warrior" in an ideological or political struggle. At this stage, individuals begin to identify with previous extremist figures, either from previous terrorist attacks or from symbols associated with violence and resistance. They may begin to adopt military or paramilitary attributes, show an excessive interest in weapons, or even emulate the lifestyle and mindset of the perpetrators of previous attacks. This identification can be rooted in a variety of factors, such as a desire to be part of a larger struggle, a drive for social recognition within a radical group, or a belief that they have a moral duty to carry out attacks in order to achieve a certain goal.

These three indicators are interrelated and can be an early detection tool for security forces and the public in preventing lone wolf terrorism. Given the nature of attacks that are often carried out individually and without an organized terrorist

network, monitoring these signs becomes increasingly important to prevent potential threats before they reach the execution stage.

IV. Conclusion

This research confirms that lone wolf terrorism is a growing threat that is difficult to detect because the perpetrators act independently without direct affiliation with major terrorist organizations. Social media is a major factor in the radicalization process of individuals, which allows for the widespread and unsupervised spread of extremist ideologies. Other factors such as religious ideology, sectarianism, social discontent, and solidarity with certain communities are the main drivers for individuals to commit acts of terror independently.

In Law Number 5/2018, terrorism prevention efforts have been regulated through early detection by BIN, Police, and TNI (Articles 43A-43E) as well as counter-radicalization and deradicalization strategies by BNPT (Articles 43F-43J). However, this approach still tends to be procedural and reactive, focusing more on individuals who have been exposed to radicalization rather than early prevention through education and social empowerment. The results of this study state that early detection of lone wolf individuals is possible through monitoring 1). digital footprints, 2). online behavior analysis, and 3). their interaction patterns in cyberspace.

Some key indicators that can be used in detecting potential lone wolf perpetrators are 1). leakage, which is the expression of intent to carry out attacks through online posts or messages; 2). fixation, which is an obsession with extreme

ideologies and increased engagement in radical narratives; and 3). identification, where a person begins to imitate previous extremist figures, adopt militaristic symbols, and justify violent acts on the basis of ideology. Therefore, technology-based counter-radicalization strategies need to be strengthened to anticipate this threat before it develops into real action.

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