

Building Resilience in Preventing Violent Extremism through
Moderate Religious Education in Indonesia - **CONVEY Indonesia**

Policy Brief Series

Issue 2 | Vol. 3 | 2020

This Policy Brief Series is made as part of CONVEY Indonesia project conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia.

CONVEY Indonesia is aimed to promote peace in Indonesia and prevent extremism with violence and radicalism through a set of research, surveys, policy advocacy and public interactions based on the potency of religious education. CONVEY Indonesia project covers issues on tolerance, diversity and nonviolence among youth.

Early Warning and Respond System toward Violent Extremism in Schools and Madrasah



Source: Yesi Fitriani/PPIM UIN Jakarta

Introduction

Intolerant and radical views begin to intrude into the formal education of Indonesia and the trend continues to increase. According to the survey conducted by Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta (2017), 51.1% of Indonesian students tend to be intolerant to the other group of Muslim people, especially to the members of Ahmadiyya and Shi'ite. Meanwhile, the 34.3% were considered intolerant to the believers of other religions. These percentages were quite large compared to the number of Indonesian youth population. The findings related to intolerant and radical views within the Indonesian education institutions should be highlighted because this kind of insight might turn into a conflict to Indonesian schools and *madrasah*.

It is so often that teachers and the stakeholders of schools/*madrasah* are not quite mindful of the mushrooming of intolerant and radical views, in spite of the fact that interaction between teachers and students is crucial to the inhibition of the aforesaid views dissemination, so that it would not be worsened to the form of violent extremism. Unfortunately, a standardized protocol or guidance in performing a testing for the early warning and respond toward extremism (in Indonesian schools/*madrasah*) has not been developed yet.

PPIM UIN Jakarta finds that a comprehensive guidance should be developed in order to prevent the mushrooming of radicalism and extremism values. The guidance focuses on a complete and a finely measured strengthening of school environment that covers the aspect of prevention, warning, also the most accurate/precise response. PPIM UIN Jakarta has developed a prototype of guidance, or Standard Operational Procedures (SOP), for Indonesian teachers and students. It is known as "RANGKUL". 'RANGKUL' is an acronym of "Respon (Response), Rehabilitasi (Rehabilitation), Analisis (Analysis), Narasikan (Narrate), Gali (Elaborate), Kaji Ulang (Review), Lakukan (Do it)". These words are keywords of the steps in detecting and responding violent extremism that might happen in schools and *madrasah*. 'RANGKUL' is the Indonesian term of 'embrace'.

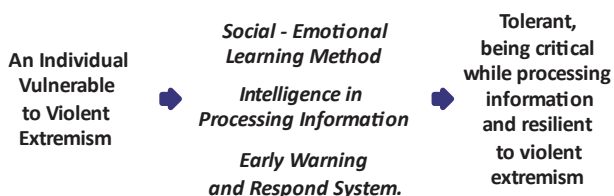
As a comprehensive strategy, RANGKUL serves not only as a warning and responding system, but also as a preventing system to the curriculums, learning methods and student activities.

The study conducted as the testing (piloting) of this RANGKUL system would offer the (1) early warning and respond



system to the students and teachers; (2) insertion of the values related to toleration and empathy, as well as the awareness of information disorders/hoax through a discussions in classrooms; and (3) encouragement for the students to arrange pro-tolerant activities in schools. By using these three approaches, it is expected that RANGKUL might: (1) improve people's awareness about the importance of inhibiting violent extremism in schools and *madrasah*, as well as reduce or prevent the effect of messages/narrations containing the values of extremism for the students; (2) be recognized as the effort in preventing violent extremism in the form of SOP to the action of early warning and respond for schools and *madrasah*. Furthermore, we hope that RANGKUL could be the more preferred radicalism prevention program over the one arranged by the government because there is a big difference between these two programs: RANGKUL focuses on gaining student's resilience against violent extremism, not on the judgment to the occurrence of violent extremism in schools/*madrasah*.

This study observed the 'social transformation' idea by using an intervention technique namely Social Emotional Learning (SEL). The following is the scheme depicting the 'social transformation' idea. This idea was observed (in our extremism intervention study) from the perspective of 'behavior':



The research on social intervention (conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta) within the RANGKUL program provided the answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent does the RANGKUL program increase the awareness and resilience of school communities against violent extremism?

2. To what extent does the difference between two type schools (SMAN versus MAN) influence the effectiveness of RANGKUL program?

Research Method

This research used a method so-called Social Intervention. There were three stages of observation, including 'baseline' stage, 'intervention' stage and 'end line' stage. During the baseline stage, 8 schools were chosen to be the subject of social intervention. Those 8 schools included four SMAN (State Senior High School) and four MAN (State Islamic Senior High School) located in West Java and South Sulawesi. The social intervention was observed using a method namely Pre-test and Post-test Control Group Design. We divided the subjects into control group and treatment group. These two groups underwent pretest and posttest, but the treatment group would be the one to undergo intervention. By obtaining control group and holding the 'pre-test and post-test', we could improve the quality of our data. Quality data would generate some choices of statistical analysis that could strongly refuse the null hypothesis which was 'intervention applied to the treatment group can actually generate the change'.

Baseline

The baseline stage was performed as the first stage of observation with a purpose of determining the best strategy to be applied in introducing RANGKUL to the stakeholders. It was expected that this stage could reveal the initial condition of every one of the schools so the comparison between the initial condition and the condition after intervention could be performed well, and the effectiveness of intervention could be scientifically justified.

Tolerance, empathy and the perception of the threats of information disorder would be the predicting variables, while opinions related to violent extremism would be the target variable which might experience alteration after the

intervention. The variable of tolerance was divided into 'tolerance in the form of opinion' and 'tolerance in the form of intention', while the variable of empathy was divided into 'the sense of empathy' and 'perspective taking'. These variables were also divided into 'external toleration and empathy' (addressed to the believers of other religions) and 'internal toleration and empathy' (addressed to the other groups of the same religion, in which these groups were considered 'misguided').

All of the variables were measured in the scale of 1-4. Higher score in the variables of toleration and empathy implied the tendency that the participants were quite tolerant and empathic. Higher score in the variable of 'perception of the threat generated by information disorder' indicated that participants were highly threatened by the information. If the participants possessed higher score in the variable of 'opinion to violent extremism', it meant that they were positive about violent extremism and found violent extremism as the symbol of religious observance.

Below are the findings obtained during the baseline stage:

1. The scores of 'external tolerance' (opinion) possessed by SMAN students were higher than that of the MAN students. It indicated that SMAN students tended to be more tolerant to the people of different religions than the MAN students.
2. The scores of 'external empathy' (opinion) possessed by SMAN students were higher than that of the MAN students. It indicated that SMAN students tended to be more empathic to the people of different religions than the MAN students.
3. The scores of 'external tolerance' (intention) possessed by SMAN students were higher than that of the MAN students. It indicated that SMAN students tended to be more tolerant (in the context of intention) to the believers of different religions than the MAN students.
4. The scores of 'internal tolerance' (opinion) possessed by SMAN students were higher than that of the MAN students. It indicated that SMAN students tended to be more tolerant to the people of the same religion despite different streams compared to MAN students.

The following items are the findings related to the teachers:

1. External tolerance in the form of intention: the scores of SMAN teachers were higher than that of the MAN teachers, meaning that SMAN teachers were more tolerant (in the context of intention) to the people of different religion when compared to MAN teachers.
2. Internal empathy: the scores of MAN teachers were higher than that of the SMAN teachers, meaning that MAN teachers were more empathic to the people of different sects compared to SMAN teachers.
3. Internal perspective taking: the scores of MAN teachers were higher than that of the SMAN teachers, meaning that MAN teachers had a higher capability in understanding the thoughts and/or feeling of the people of different sects when compared to SMAN teachers.

We should note that these findings should not be used to generalize the condition of the entire teachers and students in Indonesia, but they must be used as the provision during the intervention to the target variables. In spite of the difference between the students and teachers of SMAN and MAN, they would be given the same kind of intervention because our regression calculation implied that the differences did not give a significant contribution to the student/teacher's opinion about violent extremism.

Intervention

The intervention was conducted based on the theory of 'social transformation', and the SEL intervention technique was employed in this activity. SEL is a kind of learning process where children and adults could effectively utilize their

knowledge, attitudes and skills of emotional management, achieving positive aims, showing empathy to other people, maintaining a positive relationship with others and being responsible to their own decisions. Therefore, we expect that the SEL technique applied in the intervention could change the variable of toleration, empathy and the perception of threat generated from information disorder.

We conducted intervention to the students by holding a two-day training followed by a competition to arrange some actions that could improve the sense of tolerance in the school environment.

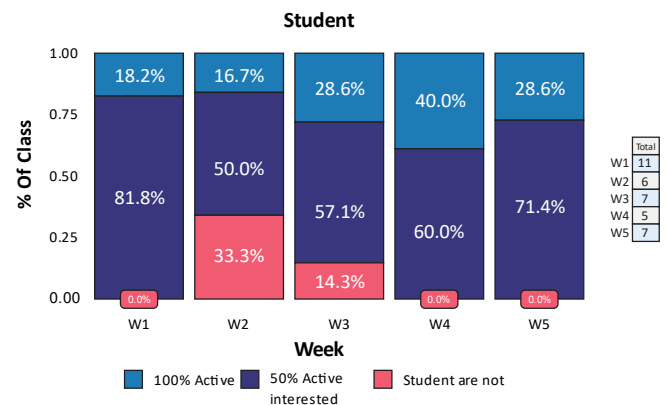
As for the teachers, we held a two-day training and we gave the opportunity for the teachers to guide a five-week class discussion in order to insert the values of tolerance.

As for the school's stakeholders, the intervention activities were conducted in the form of a two-day training and the opportunity to give some inputs for the protocol of RANGKUL, also for the guidance given to teachers and students.

Teacher's capability in guiding the class discussion would be very important in this intervention stage because it was related to the result expected by this study (the social transformation) that were supposed to be experienced by the students after undergoing intervention. We found that, even after the intervention, the teacher's capability was not adequately consistent, especially in encouraging the students to have different opinions, elaborating the opinions of the students, and encouraging the students to actively convey their own opinions.

Furthermore, the reflection process (which should be generated after the class discussion) was not successfully implemented because of the poor time management of the teachers. The class discussion was not really 'lively' due to the lack of facilitation from the teachers and the lack of student's participation. The number of students who were actively involved in the class discussion were not really satisfying.

The following graphic shows that the number of students who inactively attending class discussion was higher than the number of students who tend to be active, and this number fluctuated inconsistently through the weeks. This happened as the consequence of teacher's poor ability in guiding the class discussion.



**This table presents the number of class observed per week with different kinds of classes*

Endline

We conducted an analysis using the method of 'hierarchical regression' to see whether the intervention could generate an alteration to the score of target variables by controlling demographic variables and the scores founded during the baseline stage.

The following items are the result of regression analysis happened to the students:

1. The students who participated in our training obtained a lower score for the 'perception of threat generated by information distortion' variable.
2. The students who were involved in the competition of 'arranging the action' obtained a lower score for the opinion about violent extremism.

Below is the result for the teachers:

The teachers who willingly guide the class discussion obtained a higher score in the capability in taking internal perspective of the people who followed the so-called 'misguided stream. After conducting regression analysis, we also observed the difference between the scores found in the end line stage and baseline stage possessed by the participants who attended the

intervention activities. It was implemented to enrich the result of analysis. The following items are some findings related to the students:

1. The students obtaining intervention in the form of 'training' could increase their scores of 'internal tolerance (opinion and intention)'
2. The students obtaining intervention in the form of 'discussion' experienced a positive change in the score of 'external tolerance (opinion and internal perspective taking)'
3. The students obtaining intervention in the form of 'competition' experienced an increment in the score of 'internal tolerance (intention)'
4. The students obtaining intervention in the form of 'training' and 'competition of arranging actions' experienced increment in the score of 'internal perspective taking'.

Perspective taking means the capability to understand the thoughts and/or feelings of the other persons who follows the so-called 'misguided sects'.

5. The students obtaining intervention in the form of 'training' and 'competition of arranging actions' experienced reduction in the score of 'opinion on violent extremism', meaning that the students were not accepting the idea of violent extremism anymore.

According to the difference between the teacher's score in end line and baseline stages, we found that:

1. Teachers obtaining intervention in the form of 'guiding class discussion' experienced increment in the score of 'external perspective taking and internal perspective taking'.
2. Teachers obtaining intervention in the form of 'training' experienced increment in the score of 'internal tolerance (intention)'
3. Teachers obtaining intervention in the form of 'guiding class discussion' experienced reduction in the score of 'perception of the threat generated from information disorder/hoax', meaning that they were not threatened by the hoax anymore

Highlight

- » The RANGKUL approach has been proven to be effective in generating positive transformation to several kinds of aspects. The training reduces the score of 'perception of threat generated by distortion of information, while the competition reduces student's score of 'opinion on violent extremism'. Teachers who willingly guide class discussion experience increment in the capability to take higher internal perspective.
- » RANGKUL is also effective to be implemented in both education institutions (schools and *madrasah*).

Recommendations

1. Take the RANGKUL program as the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) for detecting and responding violent extremism in schools and *madrasah* so that the SOP can be uniformed. According to the findings of our research, RANGKUL has been proven to be effective for increasing the values that prevent radicalism and violent extremism in schools. Furthermore, education philosophy used in the protocol of RANGKUL has been conformed to the provisions of student-friendly schools which are now being tested by the Indonesian government.
2. Create a module of class discussion implementation for the teachers. Discussion learning is a method required by Curriculum of 2013 (K13). In order to optimize the implementation, modules equipped with indicators of discussion achievements should be created so that the delivery of lessons could be implemented effectively, and the students could understand the learning contents easily.
3. For the teachers: to improve their capabilities in guiding class discussion. Teacher's capability in moderating discussions is a crucial component for the effort of increasing student's capability to be more tolerant and empathic.

For supervisors and the headmasters:

- » Create a sustainable program to increase teacher's ability in moderating a class discussion because supervisors and headmasters possess a strategic role in guarantying teacher's quality. According to the findings of our research, teacher's ability in moderating a discussion is still inadequate. It was indicated by the lower number of student's participation, and the failing of the reflection process (due to a poor time management), even though the success in moderating discussion might influence the delivery of lessons.
- » Improve the school managerial quality. A good management would create conductivity, and the RANGKUL program would be implemented successfully so that violent extremism in schools can be identified as early as possible by the community: students, teachers, headmasters and supervisors.

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Profile of PPIM UIN Jakarta

Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta is an autonomous research institution under Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. PPIM UIN Jakarta was established in 1994 and has been continuously conducting research, advocacy, and publication concerning the life issues and religious education in Indonesia.

Since 2017, PPIM UIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia, have been holding the Countering Violent Extremism for Youth (CONVEY) program, a program aimed to create peace in Indonesia based on religious education potential by covering the issues on tolerance, diversity and violence among youth. In addition, since its establishment to this date, PPIM UIN Jakarta has been publishing the Journal *Studia Islamika*, an international journal focusing on Islamic studies in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.



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Gedung PPIM UIN Jakarta

Jalan Kertamukti No. 5 Ciputat Timur, Tangerang Selatan, Banten 15419 Indonesia

Tel: +62 21 7499272 | Fax: +62 21 7408633 | E-mail: pmu.convey@gmail.com | Website: <https://conveyindonesia.com>

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