



The Role of Intelligence in the Process of Radicalization and its Impact on Acts of Terrorism: an Analysis of the Staircase to the Terrorist Act

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ABSTRACT

The process of radicalization and acts of terrorism is a complex phenomenon that affects global security. This article presents an analysis of the role of intelligence in addressing radicalization processes and acts of terrorism, particularly in the context of the Bali bombings. With the help of literature reviews as a method of data collection, a qualitative descriptive research approach was employed. The outcomes revealed the importance of the role of intelligence in tackling radicalization and acts of terrorism. With effective intelligence work, the risk of terrorism can be reduced and public security can be maintained. Analysis of the Bali bombing case also shows the complexity of the radicalization process and the need for timely and accurate preventive measures.

INTRODUCTION

Disasters as described in Law No. 24 of 2007 article 1(1) Events or a sequence of events that endanger and disturb the community's lives and means of subsistence due to natural and/or man-made factors, resulting in fatalities, property losses, environmental harm, and psychological effects are considered disasters in the context of disaster management. catastrophes brought on by human factors can be called social disasters. It is also explained in Law No. 24 of 2007 article 1 (4) social conflicts between groups or communities, terror, and other human-caused events are examples of social disasters. The constant threat of incarceration, disfigurement, or death can induce a state of extreme fear known as terror. When the victim finds themselves powerless in the hands of other humans and generates fear of being hurt or killed. Terrorists manipulate people and governments by making the threat of physical harm real. Terrorists threaten humanity's most basic drive: the desire to survive intact. (M.E. Silberstein; Schimd, 2011). Terrorism is an anxiety-provoking method of repeated acts of violence perpetrated by (semi)clandestine people, organizations, or state actors, for specific, illegal, or political purposes, in which the intended victim is not the main target of the violence. (Schimd, et.al 1988; Schimd 2011).

Radicalism when associated with terrorism is the process of individuals or groups being indoctrinated with a set of supportive beliefs to fill the gap between their expectations and reality. Radicalism is a process in which individuals or groups are indoctrinated with a set of beliefs that support acts of terrorism (Rahimullah et. all, 2013; Thanszil, 2023). Radicalization in Asrori (2019) is a process of embracing or promoting an extreme ideological and belief system for the purpose of providing a justification framework for acts of violence in carrying out social, political, and religious changes. Radicalism can be easily spread through technological developments and globalization affect each other in terms of disseminating information that can be obtained easily only through the devices we have. Usually radicalism is spread through narratives that move individuals or groups that have psychological emotional factors such as the desire for revenge, responding to various humiliations, complaints and experiences of being treated unfairly, which are psychological symptoms that stimulate a number of people to commit acts of violence and terrorism. (Post, 2006). This explains that One of the main concerns of international security is terrorism, which uses social networks and information technology advancements to fortify its worldwide network to take revenge for unfair treatment, obtain weapons, financial support, moral support, and shelters.

The capacity to effectively adapt to one's surroundings, whether by creating modifications in a single cell or by exploring new ones, is the essence of intelligence. Instead of being a single mental process, intelligence is the result of several mental processes working together to effectively adapt to one's surroundings. (Hutter & Legge, 2007). Because intelligence frequently concentrates on threats, it overlooks lucrative opportunities. (Phythian, 2013). The process of turning raw data into ready-made intelligence for users, such as legislators, law enforcement officials, investigators, and patrol officers, is known as the intelligence cycle in the context of criminal intelligence. These ready-made intelligence results are used for decision-making and action, advancing ongoing investigations, and for planning resource allocation. In its implementation, intelligence has a cycle with five stages: collection, processing, analysis and production, planning and direction, and dissemination. (Iowa Department of Public Safety). In this article, we will analyze the role of intelligence in the radicalization process as well as its impact on acts of terrorism using The Staircase to The Terrorist Act. In his article The Staircase to Terrorism, Mogaddham (2005) mentioned "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act." An Investigation into Psychology can provide deep insight into how radicalism can plunge individuals into terrorist networks through a series of psychological stages that can be identified and understood.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Staircase to the Terrorist Act

According to Moghaddam (2005) there are 6 floors of The Terrorist Act as a Staircase to Gain a Better Understanding of Terrorism including,

1. Ground Floor: Psychological Interpretation of Material Conditions
2. First Floor: Perceived Options to Fight Unfair Treatment
3. Second Floor: Displacement of Aggression
4. Third Floor: "Moral Engagement"
5. Fourth Floor: Solidification of Categorical Thinking and the Perceived Legitimacy of the Terrorist Organization
6. 6. Fifth Floor: Dodging Inhibitory Mechanisms and the Terrorist Act. The staircase extends to a continuous number of floors, and a person's decision to remain on a given level is based on the doors and available space that he imagines being on that floor.

METHODOLOGY

Basically, research methods are scientific methods for obtaining data for particular applications and goals (Creswell, 2014). Based on this, it is necessary to take into account four keywords: data, goals, uses, and scientific methods. (Sugiyono, 2013). This study employed a qualitative descriptive method. In contrast to experiments, the qualitative descriptive method uses the researcher as the primary instrument to investigate the natural state of objects. It is based on the postpositivist philosophy (Sugiyono, 2016). The goal of qualitative descriptive research is to describe, explain, explain, and provide a more detailed response to the research question by examining a person, a group, or an event as much as feasible.

One method of gathering data is through a review of the literature. A literature study examines theoretical, scholarly, and other scientific works pertaining to culture, values, and norms that develop in the social situation under study (Sugiyono, 2016). Data collected by researchers during the research process is in the form of public documents in the form of newspapers, news, and official reports or personal documents in the form of journals, personal diaries, letters and emails. Other data collected in the form of audio-visual data such as photos, art objects, video recordings, or all forms of sound (Creswell, 2009).

RESEARCH RESULT

Analysis of The Staircase to the Terrorist Act on the Bali Bombings

Analysis of the six floors of The Staircase to the Terrorist Act according to Moghaddam (2005) on the Bali Bombing case:

1. Ground Floor: Psychological Interpretation of Material Conditions

(Ground floor: psychological interpretation of material conditions)

Relative sentiments and the sense of justice rule the ground floor. Certain members of the irate populace will ascend to the first floor in search of remedies when millions of people living on the ground floor perceive injustice and relative deprivation.

2. First Floor: Perceived Options to Fight Unfair Treatment

Perceived Choices Against Unfair Treatment (First Floor) Those who made it to the first floor initially looked for methods to get better treatment and more justice. However, they are likely to keep climbing if they do not perceive opportunities for personal mobility and do not believe they have any control over the processes that lead to the decisions. The Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist group, believed to be responsible for the Bali bombings, has hatred against Western countries, especially the United States and Australia. They feel frustrated and angry about foreign policy policies that are perceived as detrimental to Muslims.

3. Second Floor: Displacement of Aggression

(Second floor: aggression transfer)

Even after they make it to the second floor, those who continue to feel severely wronged will be angry and frustrated. In certain cases, leaders will even persuade these people to change their aggression to the "enemy." Those who are more likely to physically inflict aggression on their adversaries will advance up the ladder.

Members of Jemaah Islamiyah involved in the Bali bombings are part of a group seeking identity in the form of radical Islamic movements in Indonesia. They are exposed to extremist ideologies that offer compelling narratives about rebellions against foreign powers and the return of Islamic glory.

4. Third Floor: "Moral Engagement"

(Third Floor: "Moral Engagement")

The most significant change among those who made it to the third floor was their gradual acceptance of the terrorist organization's morality; they are now starting to regard terrorism as a legitimate tactic. Those who climb the ladder and immerse themselves deeper in the morality of terrorist groups are prime candidates for recruitment into the terrorist ranks.

Prior to the attacks, the Bali bombers had various discussions and ideological justifications for their actions. They believe that attacks on places frequented by foreigners will inflict harm on the enemies of Islam and will be retaliation for the alleged oppression of Muslims around the world by Western countries.

5. Fourth Floor: Solidification of Categorical Thinking and the Perceived Legitimacy of the Terrorist Organization

(Fourth Floor: Solidifying Categorical Thinking and the Perceived Legitimacy of Terrorist Organizations)

The fourth floor is where terrorist organizations recruit new members, teaching them to view terrorist groups as legitimate and to more strictly divide the world into "us against them."

More seasoned terrorist attack planners, senior Jemaah Islamiyah members, provided support and direction to the Bali bombers. Their motivation stems from an environment that perpetuates their conviction that committing acts of terrorism is a way to show one's devotion to the teachings of Islam.

6. Fifth Floor: The Terrorist Act and Sidestepping Inhibitory Mechanisms

(Fifth Floor: Acts of Terror and Sidestepping Inhibition Systems) The final floor, or the fifth floor, is where some people are trained and chosen to avoid the inhibitory systems that keep them from hurting or killing themselves or others. These people are then outfitted and dispatched to carry out acts of terrorism.

The Bali bombings in 2002 were the result of earlier stages in "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act". The perpetrators planned and carried out the attacks as a concrete step to avenge alleged injustices against Muslims and to champion radical Islamic ideals. The process of radicalization and the execution of acts of terrorism involves a complex series of steps. The Bali bombings that occurred in 2002 were the result of the process that the perpetrators had gone through through "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act". They planned and carried out the attacks as a concrete step to avenge alleged injustices against Muslims and champion radical Islamic ideals.

The Role of Intelligence in the Radicalization Process and Its Impact on Acts of Terrorism in the Bali Bombing Case

In the context of prevention, deterrence, and countermeasures against any threat to national security, intelligence is defined as knowledge, organization, and activities related to the formulation of policies, national strategies, and decision making based on the analysis of information and facts collected through working methods for early detection and warning. (1) Law No. 17 of 2011 art. In order to provide early warning and anticipate various possible forms and nature of potential and real threats to the safety and existence of the nation and state as well as opportunities that exist for national interests and security, state intelligence seeks to detect, identify, assess, analyze, interpret, and present intelligence. Article 5 of Law No. 17 of 2011

The part intelligence plays in the process of radicalization and its implications for acts of terrorism in the context of the Bali bombings is a crucial aspect. The main task of intelligence is to collect data related to potential terrorism threats, including identifying individuals or groups who are vulnerable to the radicalization process. By monitoring and analyzing their activities, intelligence can provide early warning of possible attacks and reduce the likelihood of additional recruitment into terrorist networks. In the case of the Bali bombings, intelligence roles include surveillance of individuals or groups suspected of involvement in terrorist activities, monitoring the movement of funds and supplies that may be used to plan attacks, and coordinating with law enforcement agencies to prevent the execution of planned attacks before they occur. Intelligence also plays a role in identifying and apprehending perpetrators after an attack occurs, allowing law enforcement to take legal action against them. The positive impact of effective intelligence work in tackling radicalization and acts of terrorism is to limit the ability of terrorist groups to plan and execute harmful attacks, as well as to give people confidence. With timely and accurate information in place, preventive measures can be taken to reduce the risk of terrorism and maintain public security and welfare.

The Context of Asymmetric Warfare

In this context, asymmetric warfare theory is a concept that refers to a conflict between two parties that have unequal strengths and capabilities, but the weak side utilizes innovative strategies and tactics against the stronger side. In this study, "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act" was used as a case analysis to understand the role of intelligence in identifying, preventing, and addressing radicalization that could lead to acts of terrorism. "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act" illustrates how individual-radicalization occurs through a series of steps or stages, ranging from an ideological perspective to the execution of acts of terrorism. According to Ganor (2005), intelligence is defined as "the process of informing decision makers of potential threats, risks, opportunities and benefits, which are not at all or have not been fully understood by decision makers at the time." In the context of this study, intelligence has a key role in detecting indications of radicalization, identifying perpetrators and networks, and preventing acts of terrorism.

In asymmetric warfare, an effective intelligence strategy is essential to tackling the threat of terrorism. As Fishman (2006) points out, intelligence has an important role in gathering information, analyzing data, and providing recommendations to governments to take preventive measures. Thus, intelligence must be able to work proactively and coordinatively with various security and law enforcement agencies to address radicalization and prevent acts of terrorism. However, this study also shows that the role of intelligence in the process of radicalization and acts of terrorism is not enough if it is not balanced with other efforts such as preventive approaches, deradicalization, and re-integration. This is in accordance with what Eubank & Wein (2006) mentioned, that in asymmetric warfare a comprehensive and holistic approach is needed to overcome the threat of terrorism.

1. Intelligence Resources vs. Radical Groups

In the context of asymmetric warfare, the role of intelligence is seen as having greater access to information, technology, and personnel resources compared to radical or terrorist groups. Analysis can focus on how intelligence uses the advantages of these resources to identify, monitor, and impede radicalization processes that can lead to acts of terrorism.

2. Intelligence Strategy and Tactics

Intelligence often uses asymmetrical strategies and tactics in countering the threat of terrorism. This includes the use of advanced technology, infiltration, and covert operations to identify and suppress the activities of radical groups. The analysis can consider the effectiveness of these intelligence strategies and tactics in preventing acts of terrorism from occurring as well as their impact on the radicalization process.

3. Adaptive response to threats

In asymmetric warfare, adaptation to changing and evolving threats is crucial. Intelligence needs to have a high adaptive ability to keep up with the often changing strategies and tactics of radical groups. The analysis can evaluate the extent to which intelligence can adapt quickly to the dynamics of radicalization and acts of terrorism, including the application of new technologies and innovative methods of approach.

Collaboration and Coordination Between Related Parties:

1. In asymmetric warfare, collaboration between intelligence, security forces, government agencies, and the private sector is key in confronting the threat of terrorism.
2. The analysis can pay attention to how effective this collaboration is in detecting, preventing, and responding to radicalization processes and acts of terrorism.
3. By considering the theory of asymmetric warfare, an analysis of the role of intelligence in the radicalization process and its impact on acts of terrorism can be carried out comprehensively by taking into account the dynamics of forces, strategies, and responses that exist in the context of asymmetrical conflicts.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that the role of intelligence in the process of radicalization and its impact on acts of terrorism is very significant in the context of asymmetric warfare. Intelligence has a key role in detecting, preventing, and addressing terrorism threats by gathering accurate and reliable information to provide recommendations to governments and relevant security agencies.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article illustrates the complexity of the process of radicalization and the execution of acts of terrorism, especially in the context of the Bali bombings. By referring to the concept of "The Staircase to the Terrorist Act" by Moghaddam (2005), it is explained how individuals or groups can fall into the network of terrorism through a series of complex psychological stages. Psychological interpretation of external circumstances, emotions of unfairness, aggression transfer, moral engagement, categorical thought solidification, execution of terrorist acts, and evading inhibitory mechanisms are all parts of the process. An obvious example of these phases is the Bali bombings, in which those who carry out these acts join terrorist organizations to support extreme ideologies and react to perceived injustices.

The role of intelligence in this process is crucial, as they are responsible for gathering information about potential terrorism threats, identifying individuals or groups vulnerable to radicalization, as well as providing early warning and preventing further recruitment into terrorist networks. With effective intelligence work, the risk of terrorism can be reduced and public security maintained.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

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