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Women’s participation in the terrorist network in the view of gender

Husnatul Hamidiyyah Siregar1*, Ulfah Nurfadhila2, Wildana Wargadinata3

1,2,3Arabic Education Department, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
Email: 1*husnatulhamidiyyah@gmail.com, 2ulfahnurfadhila@gmail.com, 3wildana@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id

Abstract: This study focus on gender Islamic regarding women’s involvement in terrorism networks in Indonesia. The approach of Islamic studies becomes a paradigm or point of view in understanding gender issues, especially terrorism in Indonesia. This study has some objectives. There are how the approach of gender in Islam is, how Islam and Terrorism, and how Islamic studies and women’s participation in terrorism networks is. The design of this study uses a literature review. The results of this study indicate that humans (women and men) can perform their functions as khalîfah, such as piety and not gender. The existence of Islam with the values of justice and equality greatly benefits to the oppressed and marginalized, especially women.

Keywords: Islam; gender approach; women; terrorism


Kata Kunci: Islam; pendekatan gender; perempuan; terorisme
Introduction

Religious pluralism is a condition that cannot be denied for society in Indonesian. These issues lead to conflict when religion is only understood as a doctrinal and personal issue. Then, it no longer forms of social forces and does not even affect world perceptions. The Islamic studies approach is a paradigm or perspective in understanding religious studies and its various problems. The gender approach is approaching that can be used in explaining the concept of roles, behaviors, and social constructs between men and women. Islamic studies cannot be separated from discourses and even problems that occur in the concept and philosophy of religion. One of the discourses of Islamic studies that are interesting to discuss even going public is the study of terrorism.

Indonesia is a country consisting of islands, according to data from the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment of Indonesia in December 2019, that the number of verified islands in Indonesia is 17,491 islands (Okezone Economy, 10 February 2020). To improve the security of the Indonesian state, there must be a separate obstacle due to the vastness of the state of Indonesia, so it cannot be denied that terrorism has entered Indonesia, as the bombing in Bali in 2002. According to Made Redi Hartana, terrorism begins with the presence of potential suicide bombers who are not only men but also women. The fact states that a perpetrator named Dian Yulia Novi was identified who had planned her action to bomb the state palace and the Ika Puspitasari perpetrator who was allegedly planning the Bali bombing (Hartana, 2017: 45).

According to Brigadier General Petrus Reinhard Golose, he is a Director of Enforcement of the National Counter-Terrorism Agency, the suspected that terrorist perpetrators began to carry out their actions by recruiting women to take part in acts of terror in Indonesia. Female perpetrators who have been involved in acts of terror will be placed in a strategic position in the jihad war carried out by the organization of terrorist Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Nurhayati, 2015: 84). As the background for women’s participation in terrorist acts, most of them are influenced by marital relations. According to Lies Marcoes (Director of the Rumah Kita Bersama Foundation), as in the family, extremist women are tasked with managing, raising funds, and conducting regeneration. This shows that the terrorist-extremist movement is growing in Indonesia (Suprapto, 2018: 143).

National Commission of Women stated that the role of women as mothers has been used by terrorists to transmit their radical ideology which has prepared
their children to become perpetrators of terrorism. Women were involved in brutal acts. Meanwhile, the assessment in society that women are figures who have the value of love and affection. The issue of women and terrorists has been contained in many articles. One of them explains the participation of women in an act of terror in Indonesia in the journal’s Siti Maesaratul Qori’ah about women’s involvement in acts of terrorism, which has become propaganda for the success of terrorism. Women as active actors in acts of terror will quickly be recognized if they show courage in jihad by sacrificing themselves. Her courage becomes a ‘religious martyr of Allah’ to measure the level of the piety of a woman (Qori’ah, 2019: 31–46).

The participation of women in acts of terrorism as the main actors or supporting roles has finally caused public unrest in Indonesia and is even considered a new history in Indonesia. The news of terrorism acts has grown rapidly over time because of the added influence of mass media, especially from television or online media such as YouTube. Mass media makes it easy for terrorists to spread their acts of terror. (Junaid. Sulesana: Journal of Islamic Insights, p. 118). This case has also been raised in an article by Achmad Zainal Huda (2019) which contains “Through Radicalism through Counter-Narrative Online”, with the results of research explaining the impact of internet technology which can become propaganda for acts of terrorism in which crimes cyber terrorism become a viral phenomenon in the world of social media (“Against Radicalism through Counter-Narrative Online” by Achmad Zainal Huda). It is not easy to eradicate terrorism if it is not accompanied by strict supervision of state security and the participation of the government and society in providing direction on the impact of terrorism in Indonesia. It is because terrorism or extraordinary crime will be able to develop with the development of information technology and the development of human civilization which is sociologically referred to as “crime is the shadow of civilization” (Hartana, 2017: 46).

Terrorists carry out their acts of terror under the guise of religion in which the understanding of religion has been reduced to a fanatical and narrow understanding of religious texts. Thus it changes the meaning of Islam’s value in terms of vision, mission, and objectives of Islam even though Islam is a religion that spreads love and love among human beings. Therefore, if the process of radicalization and inaccurate interpretation and understanding of religion, it will result in a religious leader who is fundamentalist and extreme and considers himself different from others. Besides, he is a different actor from his believes in, the texts of the Al-Qur’an for terrorist perpetrators have been interpreted in an atomistic, partial-monolithic manner. It
affects one’s view to become hard in religion which causes a person to commit a radical action and harm society even though on the pretext of upholding his religion.

Based on these problems, the authors define research problems. There are how the approach of gender in Islam is, how Islam and Terrorism are, and how Islamic studies and women’s participation in terrorism networks is. Therefore, this paper will find out the problems that have been discussed previously to be the result of a credible study.

**Islamic Studies and Gender Approaches**

Islamic studies have a broad scope and meaning. There are many methods and approaches used in Islamic studies, especially gender. The study of Islam in essence includes aspects of Islamic society and Muslim culture. Some areas are covering Islamic studies. First, it is the areas of practice of belief and understanding of revelation that has been interpreted in some ways by scholars, role models, and the community. In general, this area of practice only goes through community experiences without any authentic proof from theoretical studies. Second, it is the area of scientific theories that are designed and compiled systematization and methodology by scientists, experts, and scientists and scholars according to their respective.

The objectives of Islamic studies can be explained in some cases. First, it uses to study in depth what is the true nature of Islam, and how its position and relationship with other religions in human cultural life. Second, it uses to study deeply about the main contents of the original Islamic teachings, then how they are explained and operated in the growth, development of Islamic culture and civilization throughout its history. Third, it uses to study deeply the basic sources of Islamic teachings that remain timeless and dynamic, then how they are actualized throughout history. Fourth, it uses to study throughout history the basic principles and values of Islamic religious teachings, then how they are realized in guiding, directing, controlling the development of human culture and civilization in this modern era (Rozali, 2020: 6-8).

The word “approach” includes a common context in Islamic studies. An Islamic study examines many problems or religious issues by using an approach. Many approaches are used in the research process in finding solutions to religious discourse. However, a researcher must determine one of the approaches used to get
results that are not ambiguous and wide-ranging from the problems that have been determined.

The definition of an etymological approach in the Indonesian Dictionary is the process or way. Then, Cambridge Dictionary defines that approach is a way of considering or doing something. In the Oxford Dictionary, the approach is starting to deal with (a situation or problem) in a certain way. The term of this approach is included in the context of Islamic studies which in Arabic is called “madkhal”. Then, in English, it is called the “approach”. Khoiruddin Nasution (2007: 146) explains more broadly about the meaning of the approach. He defines that the approach is divided into two meanings. First, the approach is divided into two, namely an approach that is interpreted as “being approached/viewed with” and also an approach that is interpreted as “how to view/approach a phenomenon (social and cultural)”. If the approach is interpreted as “viewed with”, the approach is defined as “paradigm”, but if the approach is interpreted as “way of looking/approaching”, the existence of the approach is defined as “a perspective/point of view”. The meaning of the approach above can be interpreted as a scientific discipline for the research about “Gender Islamic Studies on Women’s Participation in Terrorism Networks”. Using a gender approach, it refers to gender disciplines from theories in certain predetermined disciplines.

The definition of gender in the Indonesian Dictionary has not been included in the vocabulary of Indonesian because the term gender is taken from English. However, the only word related to gender is the word “sex” which means “mate” (male and female or can be called male and female) a pair, a physical or spiritual nature that distinguishes two beings as female and male or female and male (Harun AR, 2015: 688). Meanwhile, gender in the Cambridge Dictionary is “the physical or social condition of being male or female”. According to Sulaeman in the Women’s Studies Encyclopedia, it explained that gender is a cultural concept that can create disparities in terms of character, behavior, emotional mentality, and roles between men and women that are increasing and increasing today in society (Sulaeman: 2). Gender in the Encyclopedia of Feminism is defined as a set of equipment and attitudes and actions that are created culturally in men and women (Humm, 2002: 11).

According to Caplan in his book entitled The Cultural Construction of Sexuality, the differences between men and women are not only from biological factors but also from social and cultural factors. The formation of gender differences is caused
by several factors, including manifested, socialized, empowered, strengthened, and constructed socially and culturally through religious and state teachings so that gender is considered natural (Sex, Gender, and Social Construction, p. 219). Gender debates resulting from social interpretations give rise to a division of space and time. Men in the public sphere play a part in the production, while women in domestic roles are responsible for the household and reproductive affairs.

The debate of the relationship between men and women has become a formal conversation in the scientific discourse known as gender and has caused controversy in contemporary Islamic discourse. This debate is one of the Christian methods of challenging Islam. The discussion of gender has even become a polemic between Western colonialism and Islam. This approach is carried out in a method of interpreting the message and meaning of the verses of the Al-Quran. It re-analyzes the verses that explain gender in it to straighten out the controversy. Gender in Islam is reinterpreted in several interpretations of the Al-Quran verses. The gender characteristics in Islamic studies are as follows (Siri, 2014: 247):

1. Men and women have the same opportunity to achieve achievements, which are stated in the Qur’an Surah Ali ‘Imran: 195, Surah An-Nisa’: 124, Surah An-Nahl: 97, dan Surah Ghafir: 40.
2. In the Quran Surah Ad-Dzariat: 56, there is an explanation of men and women who have a parallel status as servants of Allah.
3. In the Qur’an Surah Al-An’am: 165 and Al-Baqarah: 30, there is an explanation of men and women who have the same mandate as the caliphs of Allah SWT.
4. In the Qur’an Surah Al-A’raf: 172, there is an explanation of men and women whom both accept primordial and antediluvian agreements.
5. In the Qur’an Surah Al-Baqarah: 35, Surah Al-A’raf:20, 22, and 23, and Surah Al-Baqarah: 187, includes explanations about men and women who have both been involved in cosmic drama events.
6. In the Qur’an Surah Ali ’Imran: 195, Surah An-Nisa’: 124, Surah An-Nahl: 97, and Surah Ghafir: 40, includes an explanation of men and women who are equally entitled to have the opportunity to gain performance and achievement.

From those characteristics, it can be concluded that Islam is not in line with absolute patriarchal ideology, which can provide opportunities for women to work
bigger, achieve higher. Besides, Al-Qur’an does not require differences in status or position between men and women only because of physical-biological differences.

There are several factors in the occurrence of gender-bias concepts in Islamic societies. There are a partial understanding of Islamic studies, there is no one’s awareness that the importance of distinguishing texts into universal normative and practical temporal, many texts seem to marginalize women due to partial use, Islamic culture adopts Islamic teachings, men dominate in the theology of texts, pure Islamic studies with a religious approach, generalizing the laws of specific laws, taking the law and establishing the law as a legal product (siyasah as-syari’ah), Islamic studies that are textually identical, the role of power (Yatazaka, 2014: 295).

The gender approach in Islamic studies does not differentiate or even denigrate women in any field. Islam provides special values by nature. Islam provides opportunities for women to “free themselves” independently from injustice and political, economic, social, and cultural marginalization that binds them. There is no difference between a man and a woman other than one’s devotion to Allah SWT. Islam was born as a gate to glorify the position of women which does not give birth to an understanding of “inequality” to make someone commit unfair treatment.

Terrorism in Islamic Studies

Terrorism is a topic that is still hot and actual in political, religious, and social discussions. Terrorism is closely related to religious fundamentalism and radicalism. Hendropriyono said that a society that has been contaminated by religious fundamentalism and radicalism is fertile ground for the development of religious terrorism (Hiariej, 2017: 20). Acts of terrorism always undergo development from time to time, especially in Indonesia. The acts of terror do not all run smoothly according to the wishes of acts of terror. The government was able to prevent their heinous acts, even though some escaped. The motives of terrorism are different, some through suicide bombings and some by detonating bombs in places that were previously planned. This action is very disturbing for many parties in general.

Terrorism occurs due to radical Islamic movements. The birth of the radical Islamic movement has created an upheaval in Islam itself. The examples of radical Islamic movements are Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Radical Islamic groups define themselves by various names. Although they have different names, they consider themselves to be defenders of the Muslims who were attacked, not as defenders of Islam which are
used as the name of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) organization. This means that the assumption of Islam and its people is being tyrannized, so it needs to be defended. Besides, the acts of terrorism arose under the pretext of jihad, which is obligatory for every Muslim to defend his religion. Terrorism in the name of Islam is not only a problem for the domestic sphere, but is already considered an international enemy and has very serious consequences for state security. ISIS is a clear proof of concern for the international community where ISIS is centered on Iraq and Syria with real actions that harass people from around the world.

The accusation of religion as a source of radicalism, jihad, and terrorism is given by people outside the religions who are adhered to by radicalizes, jihadists, and terrorists. It leads people who adhere to the same religion as the perpetrators of radicals, jihad, and terror receiving a bad impact on their actions. As a result, they are not only discriminated against but also deprived of them. Even worse, they are considered as common enemies to be fought. This assumption can have an unfavorable effect because acts of terrorism are one way to retaliate against what has been received by the discriminated group. Furthermore, this can cause enmity and division not only between religious communities but also internally to Muslims. It is because the majority of religions do not agree with what is done by people who consider themselves jihad in the way of Allah.

The study of Gender Islam and Women’s Participation in Terrorist Networks

In the history of the development of many religions, the term fundamentalism has grown as a reaction to the emergence of various religious currents that are progressive and liberal. Fundamentalism claims to have the authority to purify religions that progressives and liberals. (Houtart, 1997: 3) stated that religious purification is a return to the textual understanding of the sacred texts of religion. They ignore the contextual understanding that holds religious moral messages which are usually in line with universal human values. Terrorism groups that carry the name of the Islamic religion not only make women the object of religious purification, lately, they also make women's bodies as deadly weapons to uphold the Islamic state or caliphate.

According to Bahrun Naim, the leader of ISIS from Indonesia, it is necessary to invite women to take part in acts of terror because fewer and fewer men are willing to become terrorists, which was found in telegram conversations in June 2016. Besides,
women are considered very loyal toward teaching and religious ideology, more militant in acting. Moreover, those who have experienced trauma have been victims of domestic violence or have experienced conflicts in their families or divorce. This incident occurs when women are given knowledge of radical understanding so that they become far more militant than men.

Some reasons emerge why women are involved. First, women are easier to move and are not easily suspected by the state security apparatus, so that the value of women's involvement is far more profitable than men's involvement (Mia, 2005: 21). Second, the involvement of women as suicide bombers gets high popularity if broadcast by the mass media, especially in the digital era, as a result, the involvement of women in the terrorism movement strengthens the meaning of terrorist resistance as well as increases sympathy for them (Nacos, 2005: 435). Third, to further build men's morale in terrorist acts, women's involvement has forced men to be more courageous in carrying out their actions.

From the perspective of Women's Human Rights, radicalism, and terrorism are threats to women that can trigger various forms of violence against women. Therefore, the United Nations Human Rights mechanism makes policies globally, among others, through the General Recommendation 30 CEDAW which emphasizes a country to protect women from gender-based violence due to various kinds of conflicts, including in the context of terrorism. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1.325 on “Women, Peace and Security” which calls for cooperation across countries to protect women and girls in conflict-affected areas from one such conflict from acts of gender-based violence. Therefore, the author will analyze the involvement of women in the terrorist network acts in the theological scope.

The author considers that in the theological sphere, acts of terrorism in the name of religion with the concept of jihad. Jihad which they consider as a very correct treatment against matters that is controversial with Islam. Jihad is considered as *jihad fi sabillallah* which brings to heaven. In Islam, many people associate the theology of terrorism with the concept of jihad. Whereas in the Islamic tradition, the meaning of jihad varies and can be categorized, such as: First, the moral concept which is interpreted as a struggle against oneself and resistance to lust (*jihad al-nafs*); Second, the political concept which is interpreted as the concept of just war (Mubarak, 2013: 245).

Lies Marcoes explained that the concept of jihad that is believed by women who are involved in acts of terrorism is a form of their awareness and desire to be
involved in acts of terror and an effort to fight injustice and the enemy of Allah. Radicalism instills the concept of jihād kabīr, namely by going directly to the battlefield or in other words being an active actor in acts of terror and that is a man’s duty. Meanwhile, women become encouragement and reinforcement for their men (husbands) (Qori’ah, 2019: 40).

Jihad means activities carried out by humans consciously involving two parties where both try to defeat each other. Meanwhile, al-Qastalani defines jihad as “warfare with infidels to enforce Islam and the sentence of tauhid” (Musdah, Mulia. 2015). During its development, jihad was believed to be a ‘war’ (qitāl). Concerning terrorism, the meaning of jihad developed into something that required fighting the enemies of Islam and infidels. However, most acts of terrorism are in the name of ‘jihad’ in the name of Islam. Jihad in this case is interpreted as acts of violence. In Islam, it is not advisable to commit violence against fellow human beings. Thus, we will all agree that the jihad that is always echoed by terrorists or a group that is always spreading radical ideology is immoral. It is not jihad in the real sense.

In the Al-Qur’an, it is not recommended to carry out acts of terror as has been believed by terrorists. In Surah Al-Anfal verse 60, the same meaning as the word terrorist is found, namely ‘al-irhab’ which means to shake or make fear or interpreted as a terrorist. Terrorism is translated into Arabic as ‘irhabiyyah’. The irhabiyyah referred to in the Al-Qur’an contains content and meaning for one’s behavior in kindness, while terrorism is an action that aims to make people feel afraid, insecure and of course eliminate the lives of innocent people (Mujani, 2003: 35) this is hujjah (justification) for what the terrorists have done so far. This hujjah is not justified in the Al-Qur’an or by social laws and norms. The concept of jihad as understood in acts of terror is a form of mistaken thinking. How can jihad be done by eliminating the lives of innocent people and involving children in the action? Jihad is often defined as war through violence. It means making other people afraid. Jihad is often believed to be an effort to fight for religion through war against infidels (Abdullahi, 1997: 79). Acts of terror are also believed to be a way of fighting against the enemy of Islam and people.

Therefore, humans (women and men) can carry out their function as khalīfah, such as piety, not the virtue of heredity (nasab), not gender, or ethnic glory, and so on. It is because as humans who are given the mandate, have the same caliphate duties, both men and women are ordered to work together in the mission of Amār ma’rūf nahy Munkar, especially upholding the principles of justice and equality in
all areas of life, both in the domestic sphere and in the public sphere. The existence of Islam with the values of justice and equality greatly benefits the oppressed and marginalized (mustadhāfin), especially women.

Conclusion

The gender approach in Islamic studies does not differentiate or even denigrate women in any field. Islam provides special values by nature. Islam is not in line with absolute patriarchal ideology, but it is Islam that can provide opportunities for women to work bigger, have higher achievements, and the Al-Qur‘an does not require differences in status and position between men and women just because of physical differences of biological.

Terrorism occurs due to radical Islamic movements. The birth of the radical Islamic movement has created an upheaval in Islam itself. The accusation of religion as a source of radicalism, jihad, and terrorism is given by people outside the religions who are adhered to by radicalizes, jihadists, and terrorists. This affects people who adhere to the same religion as the perpetrators of radicals, jihad, and terror receiving a bad impact on their actions. As a result, it is not only discriminated against but also deprived.

In the Al-Qur‘an, it is not recommended to carry out acts of terror as so far believed by terrorists. Concerning terrorism, the meaning of jihad develops into acts of violence. In the Al-Qur‘an, jihad is the one’s behavior in goodness, which does not cause violence and does not give harm to humans.

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