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Digital Literacy as a Tool for Countering Radicalism Among Islamic Boarding School Students (Santri)

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ABSTRACT

The use of digital media to spread extremism and radicalism is the driving force behind this research. This research aims to examine how the information literacy model counters radicalism narratives. A counter narrative is a narrative that is deliberately framed with the intention of countering or minimizing the influence of negative narratives that are intolerant and extreme (Wahid Foundation, 2021). This research method uses descriptive qualitative and verification testing to look at the information literacy model in counter narrative efforts carried out by four pesantren. Collective Data through interviews, FGDs, observations, and literature studies. Informants in this research include pesantren leaders and Santri representatives. The resource persons include the Head of the Garut Ministry of Religion Representative Office, the Head of the Garut National and Political Unity Office (Kesbangpol), the Garut MUI Board, and the Garut NU Fatayat Board. Result of this research showed that pesantren information literacy is effective in countering narratives of radicalism through interpretation to re-frame the meaning of jihad and da'wah that has been used as an argument by radical groups, strengthening national insight, pesantren entrepreneurship, and digital media literacy for santri. In solving the problem of radicalism, it is necessary to look at economic and religious factors. This is so the government can find the right reformulation to prevent radicalism and extremism. In addition, the role of women as the first school for children must be an important factor.



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INTRODUCTION

Technological advances in communication and information have provided many conveniences today. The ease of access to information today is inseparable from the changes in the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Technological advances in communication and information have had a tremendous impact on the freedom of information (Aulya et al. 2020). According to data from the Ministry of Information and Communication (Hidayat and Lubis 2021), around 66.3% of Indonesians, or more than half of Indonesia's population, currently use smartphones. The data tells us that the number of internet users in Indonesia is quite large, as data submitted by APJII (Sari 2017) shows that internet users in our country have exceeded 132.7 million.

The digital era has brought various positives and negatives, so it has become a new challenge in human life. Challenges in the digital era have also entered various fields, such as politics, economics, sociocultural, defence, security, and information technology itself (Setiawan 2017). One example of a positive impact for users of digital technology is closer interpersonal relationships (Beni and Rachman 2019). Millennial media users, such as teenagers, are likely to keep in touch with their friends and family through-social networks. However, using the internet can also have extreme negative impacts on its users, such as the spreading radical ideas, terrorist propaganda, and freely accessible

pornographic videos, especially for teenagers and young people. Teenagers are portrayed as rebellious, contradictory, fashionable, deviant, and selfish (Diananda 2019). With technology, teenagers can easily contribute to social media to track popular topics that are reviewed or discussed on social media. Teenagers generally have a medium level of digital literacy, but their creative dimension is low due to a lack of facilities to develop and refine their creativity (Nugroho and Nasionalita 2020). Unfortunately, the importance of literacy in using social media is still not realized by most users. According to Kaspersky research results (Arenggoasih and Pertiwi 2023) that two out of ten social media users share news without making confirmation efforts first. This is because they have certain goals, such as wanting to show that they are people who follow technological developments and are knowledgeable (Pusparisa, 2020 in Arenggoasih and Pertiwi 2023)

The emergence of the internet has become an important factor for young people because it is considered the main gateway to knowledge. Complete information is available on the internet, is easy to present, and is effective enough to influence other people (Viratama & Oktaviani, 2019). The changes that are happening right now are so fast. Changes in adolescents are particularly visible in culture; these changes can be a set of behavioral changes that are easy to make, for example, in the way of speaking or communicating, dressing, eating, and



entering one's cultural identity. It is as if they forget their own culture and prefer to apply foreign culture to their lives (Mukrimaa et al. 2016).

All countries are facing new challenges from terrorism that utilizes information technology. Terrorist groups appreciate and benefit in many ways from the presence of internet-based technology products for the purposes to spread, recruit, and develop their networks. The presence of internet technology and the information revolution have increasingly helped terrorist groups increase their propaganda activities. Information and communication technology as a tool for terrorist propaganda is nothing new. Terrorist groups have a long history of using cyberspace by creating thousands of websites in various languages that promote their extremist messages and activities (Achmad Zainal Huda, 2019).

Propaganda is an effort made by message makers to frame certain events continuously so that they can damage relations in society through certain ideas. Propaganda can be effective when spread through the media, especially social media which is currently commonly used (Syafuddin and Nuruzzaman 2023). On a broader scale, the use of the Internet by terrorist groups is a new paradigm, mode, and strategy spreading around the world. Philippe Seib and Dana M. Janbek call this phenomenon global terrorism with the new media of the post-Al-Qaeda generation (Philip Seib and Dana M. Janbek, 2007). The power of terrorists now comes not from individual networks but from internet communication networks. With this new medium, they can send messages nationally and internationally. The existence of new media on the internet is certainly beneficial for terrorist groups. They have

thousands of websites in various languages as propaganda tools. With social media, all people, especially youth, can access radical sites, chat online, and engage in other activities in cyberspace that enable the radicalization process (Zamzamy 2019).

Any counter-narrative must begin with a counter-analysis. According to Hasani (2010), radicalism is a conservative and fundamentalist movement that seeks permanent change and ignores the process of diplomacy. On the other hand, according to Zuly Qodir (2014), radicalism is an understanding that requires fundamental change at its roots. Supporters of this interpretation argue that their actions are justified. This stems from a limited understanding of religion and the social conditions of a society full of religious interests, inequality, injustice, and oppression. The background of radicalism is understood as a systematic effort to stop radicalism itself.

In the context of media use in counter narratives, systematic efforts are made to transform cyberspace that is currently laden with radical content into non-radical content or radical counter-influencers in cyberspace so as not to influence readers and media users themselves. Media counter-narratives emerge in response to the widespread dissemination of extremist messages, propaganda, and recruitment in cyberspace under the assumption that the internet has become an effective means of promoting radicalization (Achmad Zainal Huda, 2019). The issue of religious radicalism is a problem that is considered serious by several groups, the source of which comes from the radical Islamic movement that is developing in Indonesia. If this is neglected, it will threaten the tolerance between religious

communities that has existed above all differences (Fanaqi et al. n.d.).

A counter-narrative is a narrative that is deliberately compiled and framed to counter or minimize the influence of narratives of violent extremism and intolerance (Abu Bakar, 2018). On the other hand, according to the Wahid Foundation (2021), counter-narratives are deliberately compiled and framed to counter or minimize the influence of negative, vulgar, and negative narrative groups. Counter-narratives are based on narratives that are countered and minimized. Some steps in creating a counternarrative Identification: Finding the core narrative, then conceptualizing a new meaning (Wahid Foundation, 2021).

As the oldest religious educational institution in Indonesia, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) is considered suitable for countering the narrative of radicalism. This condition is because the existence of *pesantren*, in addition to its activities, acts as a system structure that is interrelated. The structure of the system includes human resources consisting of *kyai* (Muslim clerics), *santri* (Islamic boarding school students), and the surrounding community; educational institutions for religious studies; learning organizations; and management for management (Dhofier, 2015). In the eyes of the community, *pesantren* are known as traditional educational institutions to understand, live, and practice Islamic teachings in daily life. Because *pesantren* focus more on ideas, ideologies, and social groups and movements that are very strong, they are associated with subtle, relaxed, personalities that can adapt to local cultures (Halim n.d.)

A study by (Achmad Zainal Huda 2019) shows that the activities of spreading radicalism have changed

significantly, in terms of methods and threats, groups, and targets of terrorist acts. Among the various changes in strategy, there is concern about the paradigm shift from physical targets to how people think.

In addition, (Fanaqi & Raturahmi, 2022) also conducted research counter-narratives of radicalism. This study's results show that narratives refuting radicalism through information literacy are the starting point for realizing a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of religion by interpreting the concepts of qital, jihad, dawah, and human rights in Islam. In addition, counter-narratives of radicalism are also realized through understanding what radicalism is and its characteristics as a stage of social education, especially for women as the basis of family education.

This research is related to previous research entitled Digital Media and the Counter Narrative of Radicalism, written by (Ummah 2021) This research aims to determine the narrative text used by the digital media Islami.co and Ruangobrol.id, to fight the narrative of radicalism. This research uses a data analysis method in the form of discourse analysis, where discourse analysis is used to study in depth to find out the meaning in the text. Narrative is a way of discussing and understanding reality and constructing meaning in a social context. The research results show that counter-narratives also have coherence and truth which are equally important for people to choose and assess the narrative as consistent and credible. In the digital era like now, digital media has an important role in countering radicalism narratives. This is because radical-terrorist groups use the internet and social media platforms to spread their radical thoughts

and actions (Ummah 2021)

Research conducted by (Husna and Zulkarnain 2024) revealed that the strategy of campaigning for tolerance has become a new form of resolving the existing conflict in Aceh. One of the institutions that campaigns for tolerance through social media is LABPSA. As a youth organization in Aceh, LABPSA campaigns for tolerance, inclusivity, gender equality and other social issues. The data collection method in this research was carried out based on virtual ethnography methods and online documentation. The results of the research reveal that the presence of the young generation who are members of the LABPSA organization are able to voice acts of tolerance and resolve religious conflicts in Aceh through campaigns they carry out via social media.

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the field of communication, especially a deep understanding of narrative theory and communication to prevent radicalism and terrorism. In this research, researchers focused on the concept and implementation of information literacy in fighting radicalism among Islamic students which was carried out in 4 Islamic boarding schools in Garut Regency.

METHODOLOGY

In order to examine the study aims a descriptive-qualitative method, which was supported by a verification test. Qualitative research is a process of inquiry based on methodological traditions that look at social or human issues. Creswell & Creswell (2018) argue that qualitative approach as a type of approach used to explore and understand individual or group meaning of a social or human problem.

The Research conducted in four Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Garut Regency they are Pesantren Zawiyah in Samarang Subdistrict, Pesantren An-Nur in Cilawu Subdistrict, Pesantren Nurul Hidayah in Cikelet Subdistrict, and Pesantren Nurul Falah in Malangbong Subdistrict, Garut Regency. These four Islamic boarding schools were selected because of their strong commitment to combating radicalism through information literacy in activities integrated with Santri learning in the pesantren. Data collection techniques used in this research include observation or field research, interviews by deep interview and focus group discussions (FGDs) through purposive sampling, and literature review through the study of literature in the form of books, national journals, and international scientific journals relevant to this research.

Table 1: The List of Informants

No .	Name of Informants	Address	Status
1.	Ust. Ihsan	<i>Pesantren Annur</i> Cilawu	Caregiver of <i>Pesantren Annur</i>



2.	M. Wildan	<i>Pesantren Annur Cilawu</i>	<i>Santri of Pesantren Annur Cilawu</i>
3.	KH. Mukhlas	<i>Nurul Falah Malangbong</i>	Head of Branch Representative Council of NU in Malangbong Subdistrict/ Caregiver of Pesantren Nurul Falah.
4.	M. Rizki	<i>Nurul Falah Malangbong</i>	<i>Santri (male) Nurul Falah</i>
5.	Salawat Ibrahim Fatih	<i>Pesantren Zawiyah Samarang</i>	Manager of <i>Pesantren</i>
6.	Azizah	<i>Pesantren Zawiyah Samarang</i>	<i>Santri (female) of Pesantren Zawiyah</i>
7.	Ust. Mukhlis	<i>Pesantren Nurul Hidayah Cikelet</i>	Caregiver of <i>Pesantren Nurul Hidayah</i>
8.	Devis Hendryawati	<i>Pesantren Nurul Hidayah Cikelet</i>	<i>Santri (female) of Pesantren Nurul Hidayah</i>

Table 2: The List of Resource Persons

No	Name	Address	Status
1.	Cece Hidayat	Garut Ministry of Religion Representative Office	Head of the Garut Ministry of Religion Representative Office
2.	Drs. H Nurroddhin M. Si	Garut National and Political Unity Office	Head of the Garut National and Political Unity Office
3.	Dr. Heri M. Tohari, M. Si	STAIPI Garut (The College of Islamic Education of Persis)	Lecturer of STAIPI/Coordinator of Legal Affairs of MUI (Indonesia Council of Ulemma) Garut Representative
4.	Dr. Ernawati Siti Saja'ah, M. Pd	<i>Pesantren Nurul Huda, Cibojong-Cisurupan, Garut</i>	Caregiver of Female Class of the Nurul Huda Islamic boarding school/ Head of Politics, Law, and Advocacy of Fatayat NU Garut Branch Manager

Source: Author's Calculation (2023)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As one of the areas considered vulnerable to issues of radicalism and intolerance (BNPT, 2021), several Islamic boarding schools in Garut Regency are carrying out counter-narratives as an effort to fight back against the massive narratives that lead to radicalism and intolerance movements through digital media.

The View of Radicalism

Several *pesantren* leaders in the Garut Regency refuted the opinion of certain individuals that they were responsible for propagating extremism. Ustadz Ihsan, the chairman of Pesantren Annur, explained that *pesantren* are facilities provided for *santri* (knowledge seekers) to acquire knowledge, especially religious knowledge (*tafakkahu fiddin*). In this quest for knowledge, *santri* are also equipped with life knowledge, which is reflected in habits that lead to the implementation of religious teachings as Islamic teachings, such as praying in congregation, discussing material in a book locally known as the Yellow Book (*bahtsul Masail*), working together, and living side by side with other people who come from different cultural backgrounds. as the results of the interview:

"Radicalism is not good and is not suitable to be applied in the daily lives of students, both social, religious and political, so Islamic boarding schools continue to act proportionally and moderately towards the current conditions where radicalism is actually spreading because its spread

comes from various media, both through the media electronic, print, as well as online media connected to the internet" (Ustadz Ihsan, 2023).

As the leadership council of *Pesantren Zawiyah*, Ustadz Salawat Fatih Ibrahim made it clear that *Pesantren* must be forceful, in contrast to Ustadz Ihsan, who favours a more moderate stance regarding the emergence of radicalism in the media. Because radicalism goes against the genuine teachings of Islam, he declared war on it. Additionally, he added, radicalism is considerably propagated thanks to today's modern media. As a result, *Pesantren Zawiyah* limits Santri's use of social media.

Meanwhile, K.H. Mukhlas believes that radicalism shows a hostile attitude towards groups that do not agree with him, which is contrary to the *pesantren* principle of always being *tawazun* (*balanced*) as a reflection of the values of *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah*, which teaches us as believers to be balanced (not leaning to the right or left) but to be balanced (*tawazun*) and moderate (*tawasuth*). In addition, K.H. Mukhlas explained that NU also teaches about *Al-Muhafadzah* and *Al-Akhdzu*. *Al-Muhafadzah* is an effort to maintain traditions that are still appropriate and relevant. At the same time *Al-Akhdzu* is an effort to be open to changing times as a means of adaptation.

Then Ustadz Mukhsin believes that radicalism starts from an exclusive or closed mindset so that he

feels that he is the most right. In contrast others are not necessarily right and even punishing people even outside his community and his group is misguided.

A Study of the Meaning of Jihad and Da'wah

To prevent radicalism from influencing the perception of santri, Islamic boarding schools, through the studying of the interpretation of the Quran and Hadith, teach several arguments related to religious radicalism, such as the concepts of jihad and da'wah (Mukhlis, 2022).

The interpretation of the meaning of jihad in the verse is often intended with the terminology of war. Although this is not always the case, according to KH. Mukhlis, Jihad cannot be interpreted narrowly because it has a broad meaning, so it should be interpreted according to the context surrounding it. Jihad is not always interpreted as fighting, as understood by radical groups that choose violent means to spread their version of Islamic teachings. Even suicide bombing, which is strictly forbidden in Islam, is one of the options currently rampant in the name of religion (Mukhlis, 2022).

In today's context, the meaning of jihad can be broad. *Pesantren* prioritizes *jihad* against oneself before jihad against others. Jihad against oneself is to fight laziness to learn. Jihad to overcome anger so that one can control oneself when facing problems. This jihad is for santri to have a high spirit of learning as learn; and it is for santri not to be trapped in hate speech and commit acts of violence in the name of anything.

Radical groups have also misapplied the concept of da'wah in addition to jihad. According to *Pesantren*, da'wah is a duty for every Muslim and is frequently done recklessly, such as by using violence, even murder, to coerce people into accepting one's religious viewpoint. Da'wah, includes stages that are tailored to the skills of everyone. Dakwah has several levels, including the path of wisdom, *mauidzah hasanah* (good lessons), and better refutations.

According to Azizah, as a santri of *Pesantren Zawiyah*, *Pesantren* provides flexibility for *santri* to develop themselves in *pesantren* activities, which are all organized in the form of *santri* organizations. This includes the freedom to cooperate with other parties in developing more open learning patterns.

The santri's explanation is in line with Fatih Ibrahim's explanation that the da'wah he usually performs is typical of *Pesantren Zawiyah*, which carries the *Tijaniyah Tarekat* as its path. According to him, the tarekat pilgrims who usually study at the *pesantren* come from different regions in Garut and even from outside Garut. This context depends on the topic of the recitation and its frequency. Some recitations are usually held weekly, monthly, or even annually. As the results of the interview:

"Santri will no longer easily blame others, underestimate the existence of others. In this way, an attitude of respect and appreciation for other people will grow from students who know themselves. "This is a

Sufi concept that we try to explore and introduce to every Zawiyah student" (Ustadz Fatih Ibrahim, 2023).

Pesantren studies the jihad concept adapted to current issues related to the rise of radical teachings in the surrounding world and in the media. This study was done to help students understand the studies discussed related to specific cases. Ustadz Ihsan explained that the study was conducted by explaining the interpretation of holy verses related to jihad and war. Since the knowledge base of each santri is not the same, the *pesantren* provide a discussion space to further explore their understanding of the various studies and teachings given.

Nurul Hidayah Islamic boarding school's interpretation of the verses on jihad and war was directly in line with the real conditions in Cikelet. Devis Hendryawati, a female *santri* of *Pesantren* Nurul Hidayah, explained this in a way that is compatible with her interpretation. She asserts that there is a course on Nahdlatul Ulama understanding in which it teaches which thoughts are neutral and which are dangerous, as well as how to discriminate between *aswaja An-Nahdliyah* and concepts outside of it. She claims that the goal of the jihad, as she sees it, is to uphold *aswaja* ideals such as respect for others, tolerance, and love of peace as principles that, if followed, may unquestionably avoid bloodshed and arbitrariness in the name of religion.

Strengthening National Insight

National insight is usually carried out by *Pesantren* through the introduction of new students as the first gate for students to enter the *Pesantren* world. This is a commitment by the *pesantren* to protect the Republic of Indonesia from ideological undermining, which is becoming more numerous and dangerous. According to Ustadz Ihsan, national insight is carried out through joint activities by formal education and informal education in *pesantren*. For example, character education is currently being intensively promoted in formal education.

In addition, according to M. Wildan, as a *santri* of Annur Islamic boarding school, *Pesantren* Annur usually cooperates with youth organizations such as Anshor Youth Movement or the Nahdlatul Ulama Youth Association (IPNU) to hold activities to strengthen national insight through national seminars and leadership training, which prioritizes leadership that is *rahmatan lil alamin* (blessing of the universe).

Meanwhile, *Pesantren* Zawiyah develops national insight through routine activities held by STAI (The College of Islamic Education) Badruzzaman, a college established by the *pesantren*. These routine activities are adapted to the national momentum, such as the commemoration of the Youth Pledge, the commemoration of Hero's Day, the commemoration of the Independence of the Republic of Indonesia, and so on.

In addition, according to Fatih Ibrahim, *Pesantren* Zawiyah formed



a special organization that was given the trust to organize santri in activities that support the achievement of the Pesantren's vision and mission.

Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School affirms national insight for students to foster a sense of love for the homeland through activities integrated with school programs. Incidentally, most of the santri are junior high and senior high school in the Nurul Falah Foundation environment, According to KH. Mukhlas, the head of the *pesantren*, says the issue of nationality must be taught in the *pesantren* environment because the *pesantren*, as a forum for Islamic education, plays a role in forming the character of students who love the country as part of the expression of faith for a Muslim.

Meanwhile, *Pesantren* Nurul Hidayah outlines the affirmation of its national insight through materials in each recitation by providing lessons emphasizing *ahlussunah waljamaah* understanding, According to KH. Mukhsin, *ahlussunah waljamaah annahdiyah* teaches the concept of love for the country as part of expressing our faith in Allah SWT.

The Entrepreneurial Skill of Santri

Pesantren Annur has a policy to help students develop their entrepreneurial potential, including agricultural skills, waste processing, and animal husbandry. Pesantren Annur Cilawu has long taught agricultural and animal husbandry skills to students. This student's skill is intrinsically tied to *Pesantren* Annur's mission, one of which is to promote Santri's independence. By leveraging the *pesantren's* existing

land, students, particularly senior students, are urged to enhance their agricultural and animal husbandry skills, in addition to the purpose of offering

Pesantren Nurul Hidayah carried out the same action. The *pesantren's* board of director's chairman, Ustadz Muchsin, claims that catfish farming in the *pesantren* environment is how student entrepreneurship grew at this time. For students interested in catfish farming, which is promising, it is also not required but rather an option. Naturally, the outcomes are applied to the food security of the *pesantren*.

Meanwhile, *Pesantren* Nurul Falah and *Pesantren* Zawiyah are teaching santri independence, one of which is through the development of santri-managed *pesantren* cooperatives. The *Pesantren* cooperative provides a complete and affordable sales unit for learning materials. In addition, through the cooperative, students can learn about financial and business management at the same time. The results of this cooperative activity will certainly return to the *santri* or students, as the profits can be reused for their various activities while in the *pesantren*.

The management of the *pesantren* believes that entrepreneurial skills and other positive activities will direct santri to positive activities so that they can channel their talents, interests, and actualization, which in turn can prevent negative actions, one of which is preventing radicalism among santri. It is hoped that when they graduate from the *pesantren*, they will be able to develop their skills as economic potential to keep away

from poverty, is one of the factors that trigger radicalism in the community.

The Student's Literacy in the Use of Digital Media

The santri's literacy activities in the use of digital media are carried out to counter narratives through media analysis among the santri. The boarding schools are aware that the existence of new media linked to Internet access has both positive and negative effects. Therefore, the skills of the Santri are needed to increase their ability to filter these negative effects in the form of false or untrue information, hate speech, cyberbullying, and digital propaganda that leads to radicalism and extremism.

Pesantren carries out media literacy initiatives through media literacy training, which features academics or media professionals and equips students with the knowledge to utilize social media responsibly.

Additionally, limiting social media use is the greatest approach to shield pupils from its negative effects. M. Wildan clarified that it is against the guidelines in Annur *Pesantren* for students to carry smartphones or Android devices. This limitation is in place to lessen the damaging impact of the media. However, M. Wildan claims that the *pesantren* still offer facilities to contact families in following with the demands of each santri planned on holidays (Friday) for communication needs with parents.

According to Fatih Ibrahim, Students are still provided with a computer lab space for school tasks, allowing them to look up and input

knowledge that is done outside of class instruction. Additionally, by participating in *muhadoroh* activities that teach students how to think critically, santri can still learn the most recent facts and knowledge.

Meanwhile, *Pesantren* Nurul Falah provides digital media literacy skills to Santri through training routinely incorporated into the leadership activities often held. The *pesantren* once cooperated with Fatayat NU of Garut Regency, where they taught literacy in the use of social media in the digital age and even specifically how to recognize the dangers of radicalism in the digital space. In addition, the *pesantren* also works with MUI, which provides *wasathiyah* da'wah in the digital age.

In addition to regular recitations, *Pesantren* Nurul Hidayah also holds formal events by inviting media practitioners and organizations with media literacy programs. One of them is the Fatayat organization, which intensively provides a kind of socialization on how to use the media wisely, thus preventing *Santri* from falling into the trap of spreading false news and propaganda of ideologies that smack of extremism and radicalism, which are indeed widely spread in online media. This statement is explained by Devis Hendryawati, a female *santri* of *Pesantren* Nurul Hidayah.

The assumption that Islamic boarding schools have contributed to the spread of radicalism in the country has led several *pesantrens* in Garut to counter narratives of radicalism through digital media information literacy. This is seen to prevent the spread of the virus of radicalism

among students and the community around the pesantren. According to the view of the Wahid Foundation (2021), counter-narrative in the use of digital media is carried out as an effort to counter the influence of radical content in digital media through several steps, including identifying narratives, finding master narratives, and framing with new interpretations.

Some efforts made by Islamic boarding schools to counter the narrative of radicalism have received attention from several figures who have great interest in the issue of religious radicalism in Garut Regency. Heri M. Tohari, coordinator of the legal sector of Indonesian Council of Ulama in Garut, responded through a researcher interview (2023), that several Islamic boarding schools have done is a relatively appropriate effort considering that radicalism mostly comes from a narrow religious understanding. Islamic boarding schools as centers for religious education need to counter this through various efforts that are unique to Islamic boarding schools. However, according to him, this is not enough, considering that overcoming radicalism is a collective work not only borne by Islamic boarding schools. Hence it requires the cooperation of all parties, especially stakeholders, to eradicate it. According to him, the emergence of radicalism has several motives. Apart from religious understanding, other factors such as economic and political factors are also underlying.

Meanwhile, The Head of the Garut Regency Ministry of Religion, Cece Hidayat (2023), believes that online media is currently also an actor

in spreading hateful narratives, hoaxes, and fake news that lead to religious radicalism. So as one of the oldest religious educational institutions in Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools are responsible for countering these narratives of radicalism through counter narratives through adequate Islamic arguments. This statement is a confirmation of the true teachings of Islam which uphold the values of humanism, peace and moderation. The Indonesian Ministry of Religion had created a policy in the form of a religious moderation program in the education environment under the Indonesian Ministry of Religion to reduce extremism and radicalism movements that had entered the educational sphere. However, according to him, this will not be successful if there is no collaboration with various other educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and elements of society to strengthen Islamic education that is *rahmatan lil alamin*.

Head of Kesbangpol Garut district, H Nurroddhin (2023), believes that solving the problem of radicalism in society cannot be separated from the role of women as a stronghold for family education at home. Therefore, according to him, women are strongly encouraged to study religion comprehensively.

The same thing was also conveyed by Ernawati Siti Saja'ah, as Chair of the Political, Legal and Advocacy Division of PC Fatayat NU Garut, who believes that women need to equip themselves with adequate religious education. However, religious education must be gender

equitable, which should be given to women, but also to men. Islamic boarding schools have long been considered an institution that legitimizes patriarchal culture. It is time to improve its teaching approach not only through education prioritizing equality between male and female students. According to her, this counter-narrative of radicalism is an entry point for equality education so—public issues such as the issue of radicalism are not only a concern for men but also for women (Saja'ah, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Several Islamic boarding schools in Garut have several strategies for addressing the issue of radicalization in the neighbourhood. These strategies include: *first* learning the significance of jihad and da'wah through the recitation of *pesantren* leaders and muhadoroh; *second*, strengthening national insight; *Third*, encouraging Santri enterprise through cooperatives in agriculture, waste management, animal husbandry, and *pesantren*; *Fourth*, promoting media literacy by prohibiting the use of mobile devices in classroom settings and by bringing in professionals, academics, and organizations with interest in enhancing young people's media literacy and content creation.

In solving the problem of radicalism, it is necessary to look at economic and religious factors. This is so the government can find the right reformulation to prevent radicalism and extremism. In addition, the role of women as the first school for children must be an important factor.

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Collection, Reviewing and Editing.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

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