

WOMEN IN THE SHADOW OF TERRORISM: EXPOSING THE DISCURSIVE AWARENESS BEHIND THE DIVORCE OF TERRORIST WIVES IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

In 2022, the National Counter-Terrorism Agency released data that over the last 10 (ten) years the involvement of women in terrorism activism has increased by 10%. The increase was coupled with an increase in divorce cases among spouses of perpetrators of terrorism. The objective of this study is to elucidate the reasons and mechanisms behind the correlation between the surge in women's involvement in terrorism and the phenomenon of divorce. The data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and tracing of data from the National Counter-Terrorism Agency. The data collected were then analyzed using Anthony Giddens' Structural Theory. According to the findings, multiple factors contributed to the divorce of terrorist couples, such as insufficient financial resources, pressure from peer groups to end the marriage due to differences in supporting the Islamic State, and the realization of no longer wanting to be associated with husbands engaged in terrorist activities. By applying Giddens' framework, these results formed a compelling argument that the wives of terrorists possessed a discursive awareness of the societal context in which they lived, leading them to make the decision to divorce their husbands.

Keywords: *Terorism; Terrorist divorce; Discursive awareness*

Abstrak

Tahun 2022, BNPT merilis data bahwa selama 10 (sepuluh) tahun terakhir pelibatan perempuan dalam aktivisme terorisme telah meningkat 10%. Peningkatan tersebut telah diiringi dengan peningkatan kasus perceraian di kalangan pasangan suami-istri pelaku terror. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk menjelaskan mengapa dan bagaimana fenomena perceraian tersebut menggejala seiring dengan peningkatan pelibatan perempuan dalam terorisme. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan penelusuran data BNPT. Data yang terkumpul selanjutnya dianalisis dengan menggunakan Teori Strukturasi dari Anthony Giddens. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat beberapa factor yang menyebabkan perceraian di kalangan pasangan teroris, diantaranya: faktor ketidakterpenuhinya kebutuhan ekonomi, dorongan peer-group untuk bercerai karena sudah tidak sepemahaman dalam menegakkan Daulah Islamiyah, dan adanya kesadaran untuk tidak lagi terikat dengan suami yang terlibat terorisme. Melalui Strukturasi Giddens, temuan ini kemudian menjadi argumen kuat bahwa istri teroris memiliki kesadaran diskursif akan realitas sosial yang mengelilinginya, dan kemudian mendorongnya untuk memutuskan bercerai dengan suaminya.

Kata Kunci: *Terorisme; Perceraian teroris; Kesadaran diskursif*

A. INTRODUCTION

Divorce among women involved in terrorist movements is one of the phenomena that is rampant in this era. Some divorce causes include the differences in perspectives or ideologies between husband and wife regarding the radical movement of terrorism. Today's wives or even women perpetrators of terror no longer make marriage sharia to perfect religion before committing '*amaliah*.' In comparison, women in terrorism make divorce the first step to maintaining what they believe. Some women in Penatoi, Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, for example, prefer to divorce their husbands who have recognized the Republic of Indonesia rather than have to leave their networks.¹

This phenomenon becomes interesting to discuss, especially in Gender Sociology, where terrorism has been synonymous with masculine things (Nurhayati 2015). The fact that is happening right now is that women are individually able to determine their agencies. Gidden expresses that this change of agency is the embodiment of the individual himself and does not come from the collective life of wanting change (Giddens 1986). In this case, divorce among female terrorists does not choose resistance. Instead, it attempts to maintain and preserve the Sharia and Islamic traditions they believe in. It follows Mahmood's concept of embodiment, that divorce as an embodied subject is an attempt to achieve or maintain the Islamic norms and sharia that is believed, and not just symbolism or formality to achieve these norms (Mahmood 2011).

The existence of divorce among female terrorists also shows the phenomenon of women's independence in terror movements and networks. It can undoubtedly be the antithesis that most

¹ Data obtained from Deradicalization Program of Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme in Nusa Tenggara Barat in Agustus 2022.

studies make the activity a masculine discussion (Lavinia 2018). Meanwhile, from this phenomenon of divorce, it can be seen that the role of women in terrorism is an agency and the individual consciousness of women themselves. However, the agency is inseparable from the structure of the terror group (Suarni 2001). Divorce allows women to stay in the jihadi movement or leave their *jihadi* group.

The new form of terrorism today targets men and women as the main perpetrators. The women perpetrators of terror are recruited mainly by those closest to them, such as parents, partners, and friends. Even with the increasingly sporadic pattern of terror movements, women are also involved in terrorism out of self-will, either individually or in tissues or small cells. In other words, women's involvement in terrorism today has a vital role to play in the movement's strategy and is not just stalled in the domestic sphere. Women have played many roles as negotiators and suicide bombers (Amusan, Adeyeye, and Oyewole 2019). However, Musdah Mulia sees the shift in women's involvement as the main perpetrators in terrorism, not as a form of emancipation or consciousness of women themselves. Nevertheless, acts of terror later used women as perpetrators with a feminine approach. According to Mulia, even though women are perpetrators, they are still victims (Mulia 2018).

Beyond these debates, the fact is that in Indonesia itself, women's involvement with terrorist groups is not surprising. Although at first, women were only synonymous with "auxiliary roles" who prepared logistics and war supplies. However, nowadays, they can play many roles, from facilitators, recruiters, and bombers, to fighters on the front line. It can be found in the involvement of Jumiatusun, aka Umi Delima, who is Santoso's wife. Where Umi Pomegranate also took up arms in the Poso conflict. Putri Delima was followed by Dian Yulia Novi, the pot bomber, and

Ika Puspitasari, who intended to carry out a suicide bombing in 2016.²

The involvement of women has also been shown to significantly influence the development of terrorist groups (Wulan 2015). Throughout 2015 Ika Puspitasari routinely provided financial support for terror operation plans through small cells formed by Ika. Furthermore, Ika is also targeted to be the bride of a planned suicide bombing in 2016 in Bali. Female suicide bomb attacks are much more effective, four times more dangerous, and eight times more noticeable than male suicide bomb attacks (Shepherd 2016).

However, women's agency in terrorism seems inseparable from men's role. In previous research, Erin Gayatri (2019) used the marriage context to examine the level of radicalization and involvement of women in terrorism. Marriage is the entrance and legitimacy for women to play an active and passive role in terrorism. Gayatri divides the radicalization type of women in marriage into pre-marriage, which consists of pride marriage and marriage as an instrument, and post-marriage, which only consists of an ordinary marriage. Post-marriage represents women being radicalized after marriage, while pre-marriage refers to the radicalized women before marriage. Gayatri also added that the level of radicalization is a sign that women with pre-marriage are higher than women with post-marriage. Even though the same principles are applied to their participation, it is not always mean that radicalized women before married more active than radicalized women after marriage (Gayatri 2019).

² Jumiaturun aka Umi Delima is known to have joined the Santoso Group since January 2015. Not as a maid role, Umi Demi was also involved in gun contact with authorities at Camp Tasrib on August 17, 2015. He also actively participated in shooting and bomb-throwing exercises. Even during the arrest, he also escaped with a SS2 type rifle belonging to Santoso.

Although marriage is still one of the entrances for women in terrorism, recent acts of terror have encouraged women to “do *amaliah*” individually, even without marriage. Zakiah Aini, the “lone wolf,” was one of the ISIS sympathizers who attacked the National Police Headquarters on March 31, 2021 (Kompas 2021). Aini is known to be unmarried and only left a will for her family. The latest incident was Tuesday, October 25, 2022, when Siti Elina tried to break through the state palace on her initiative. The incident began to shift the urgency of marriage in terrorism. Even this study shows that women involved in terrorism make divorce an agency for women to continue to be involved in terrorism or not (CNNIndonesia 2022).

In the social sciences, agency is defined as individuals' ability to act independently and make their own decisions (Giddens 1986). However, this capacity is limited and shaped by structure as influencing factors such as social class, religion, gender, ethnicity, ability, and habits. The relationship between agency and structure has been debated regarding how human behavior is constrained by social systems (Jane and Barker 2016). This study uses Sabah Mahmood's concept of agency. She suggested that agency should not be understood as a synonym for resisting dominance relations but rather as an agency that historically enables and creates certain subordination relations (Mahmood 2011). She also argued that we must look at the agency within structures rather than at the structure level. It is consistent with Spivak and Said's (1988) sub-alternative research, where the sub-alternative agency is based on different patterns and narratives.

Divorce became one of the agencies for women involved in terrorism networks to show their independent position. In this study, twenty women, ex-wives of terrorists and women terrorists, explained the reasons for their divorce, ideologically, economically, and the social factors that helped drive them. Women in terrorism

clearly express how they defend their jihadist ideology by divorcing their husbands. SW, the ex-wife of ex-terrorism convict KT, said she felt she had to divorce her husband because she no longer had *kaffah* Islamic views. SW noted that her husband had been closer to the *ansharut thagut* circle and was no longer fighting to uphold Islamic Law. In another case, AN, the wife of RA, revealed that the change in her husband's ideology, which was more supportive of the Republic of Indonesia, made her rethink whether she could continue her marriage. This doubt was further reinforced by the advice of the *pengajian* (communal Quran reading) she followed, that her husband was already a *thagut*.

This fact is undoubtedly different from Western feminist thinking uses the tools of the Western context to define the position of other women; for example, Arab Muslim women. is difficult. At a historical moment when, as Mahmood put it, women seem to offer more opportunities for liberation when they see them actively supporting movements that go against their interests and agendas, feminists face a dilemma (2011). In her book "The Politics of Piety", she states:

With Islamic revival and feminist subjects, she represented the Muslim women's movement's agency in the mosque. She uses the term subjectivity to describe the female voice, where subjectivity is defined as the power to do something in such an endeavor. In other words, how women gain agency within the religious, cultural, and group systems in which they live (Mahmood 2011).

A woman's voice is not limited to speech but includes everyday activities. A more comprehensive analysis will help confirm the place of women in terrorism. Her conception of subjectivity is inseparable from that of agency and emancipation.

The study found the essential divorce phenomena to examine women's agency in terrorism, where women can achieve the perfection of *jihad*, even without marriage. This study is expected to contribute to efforts to deal with women exposed to radical terrorism by placing them as subjects. Today's scholars cannot

simply see the position of women as auxiliary roles in terrorism. More than that, women have their roles and agencies in the current map of terror networks. This study also wants to see how the social practicality of divorce among women is one of the discursive awareness for women to stay afloat or leave the pilgrim structure that has been followed.

This study maps the background of women's divorce in terrorism into three types, ideological divorce, economic pressure divorce, and social pressure divorce. Ideological divorce wants to see how ideological factors are one of the drivers for women in terrorism to divorce. Economic factors are also crucial in divorce, in addition to ideology. It caused financial problems when the husband was imprisoned or felt that her husband's property was currently *syubhat*. Another factor in the struggle among women in terrorism, however, is social pressure. *Pengajian* or women's place networks encourage divorce because husbands no longer have the *kaffah* Islamic ideology they have. Of the three types, it is expected that the level of radicalism can be seen in women involved in radical terrorism.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study uses qualitative field research as a research method. This method is based on an underlying interest in a particular social issue that requires consideration (Babbie 2010). In terms of performance, the study asked in detail about ten women terror perpetrators and ex-wives of former terrorism convicts throughout 2020–2022. In addition, data is also obtained from identification and assessment carried out by the National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT). So some of the names mentioned use initials to maintain the confidentiality of intelligence data. The divorce data are then classified based on each woman's background and causes of divorce, from ideological differences,

economic factors, and loyalty factors to the *pengajian* group. Data was also obtained spread across several provinces, including North Sumatra, DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java, NTB, and Central Sulawesi.

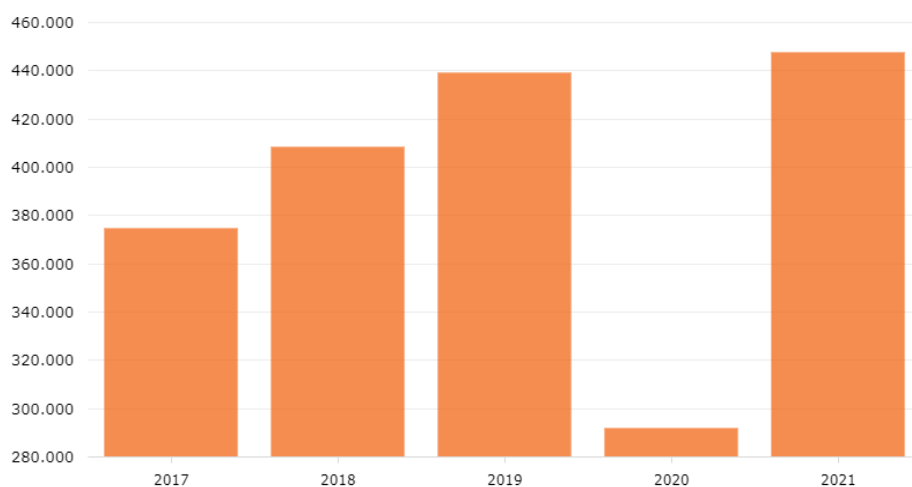
There are several obstacles in obtaining data in this study, especially for women with a highly radical ideology of terrorism. Some data is obtained based on intelligence information. This study only used information related to the divorce background of women involved in terrorism and did not use personal or individual data. Moreover, the data for this study are also based on library resources and observations. Library sources provide a supplementary aspect to get some basic questions and introductions covering discussions on gender, terrorism, and women's issues.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of divorce among terrorist women cannot be separated from the divorce trend in Indonesia, which tends to increase yearly. According to the Statistics Indonesia report, divorce cases reached 447,743 cases in 2021, an increase of 53.50% compared to 2020, which got 291,677 cases (Annur 2022). The report shows that wives are suing for divorce more than husbands. A total of 337,343 cases, or 75.34 percent of divorces, resulted from divorces in which Court rulings on litigation brought by the wife were the cause (Government Regulation 1975). Meanwhile, 110,440 cases, or 24.66% of divorces, occurred due to *talak* divorce, a subject whose application was filed by the husband that the court had decided (Annur 2022).

Chart 1.

The Divorce Rate in Indonesia (2017 – 2021)



Source: katadata.go.id 2022

Divorce rates tended to decline in 2020. It could have been triggered by the Covid 19 pandemic, which forced us to limit mobility and stay at home. However, the divorce rate jumped again in 2021 and showed a higher graph than in 2019.

Among the Muslim community itself, divorce has been a trend since 2010. In presenting the research results of the divorce trend of Muslim communities in Indonesia, the Head of the Research and Development Center (Puslitbang) of the Ministry of Religion said that the divorce rate in Indonesia has tended to increase since the last five years, 2010-2015. He also mentioned that of the approximately 2 million married couples, 15-20 percent of them are divorced. Among these, an average of 59% - 80% are *gugat* cases (Kemenag 2015).

From this data, it is not surprising that divorce trends also occur among women involved in terrorism. Of the ten women who were the resource persons in this study, only one was divorced by their husband. Meanwhile, eight filed for divorce. It shows that women in terrorism have their consciousness to be able to determine the sustainability of their marriage. In her presentation,

Rachel Rinaldo (2022) said that divorce cases in Indonesia describe the religious legal system may have unintended consequences, promoting aspiration for marriage and potentially shifting gender more broadly. It is contrary to Muslim family law, which has always been believed that wives must always be obedient to men, even before women tended not to have the power to sue for divorce from their husbands (Rinaldo 2022).

In addition, divorce among terrorist women is an important phenomenon to study. Seeing that marriage can be a crucial door for women to enter terror groups (Gayatri 2019). In her research, Gayatri (2019) classifies the marriage of terrorist women into three types. The first is ordinary marriage, in which women initially marry non-jihadist men. However, after they witnessed the change from her husband joining the terror group, they followed her husband's changes. Second Pride Marriage This part focuses on women willing to marry a *jihad*. They believe that *Jihad* is an ideal husband and deserves to be his wife. Some *pengajian* develop an image of the ideal spouse for a lady, such as purity or cleanliness, with various other criteria because they are focused on the perfect husband and directed by the *ustaz*. Therefore, women are motivated to get this kind of husband. Many Muslims use a hadith delivered by Bukhori, Muslim, Al-Nasa', Abu Dawud Ibn Majah, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and Al Darini that states four criteria to consider when looking for a partner: treasure, heredity, face, and religion. Nevertheless, under these standards, religion becomes the dominant criterion.

The last is marriage as an instrument. Inquiring about marriage as a tool to recruit women used to expand the alliance was also widespread among western women. Jihadist men in the Middle East approach them through social media (Knoop 2007). However, marriage can also be a tool for terrorist women to be able to carry out their actions. It was shown by Ika Puspitasari, one of

the former female terrorism convicts who had been the bride of a suicide bomber. Before launching her action, Ika married her ex-husband, Zainal Akbar, and used it as an eye in Indonesia while Ika was still working in Taiwan.³

Sidney Jones used intercultural and interregional marriages to uncover marriage patterns within terrorist groups (NYTimes 2018). They sought broad alliances. In this way, they spread their ideology, which led to new strongholds. According to his IPAC interview with Nasir Abas, a senior JI (Jamaah Islamiyah) member from Malaysia, he strongly supported the organization using marriage to gain a foothold in weaker areas. From 1994 to 1996, when he conducted his JI training camps in areas controlled by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), he told recruits that they were there to train, not to marry. However, the phenomenon in this field offered a transformational complexity related to marital issues. They were restricted to marrying men within their group, a period called the first wave of terror in Indonesia. They hugged the members tightly and confirmed they would protect themselves from external threats.

Beyond the urgency of marriage for women to join radical terrorist groups, divorce has become a social practice for women to stay afloat or abandon their ideologies or networks. These divorced women have diverse educational backgrounds, reasons for joining the terror movement, and why they divorced their husbands. To further clarify this phenomenon of divorce, this study divides the background of divorce into three types as follows:

1. Ideological Divorces

This divorce is caused by the ideological differences shared by husbands and wives involved in terrorism. Both wives, who can no longer accept their current husbands, have turned more

³ Results of a personal interview with Ika Puspitasari in Purworejo in August 2021.

moderate and left the terror network after their release. Alternatively, the woman can no longer have the same understanding as her radical husband. Both changes become one of the factors that may eventually decide whether to continue the marriage or not.

In the first case, SW, the ex-wife of KT ex-terrorism convict, decided to divorce her husband because there were no longer any ideological similarities. KT, which used to be the Amir of JAD Malang, has now changed its direction to be more moderate. KT has been known since he was in prison to have actively participated in various coaching programs held by the government. Even when KT was free, he actively participated in studies and discussions of NU and Muhammadiyah circles. Seeing the change, SW began to distance herself from her husband⁴.

When KT was still in Cipinang Prison, SW followed him to Jakarta. There SW joined the JAD forum of the *Ummahat* group in Depok. SW also began to study Islam exclusively in the group. Upon learning her husband decided to take Parole, SW received much advice from the group to divorce her husband. However, because they have two children, SW postpones the intention again. Until her husband was released, SW often argued with him. Even SW does not want to meet government officials who guide her husband⁵.

Witnessing her husband's extreme changes, SW decided to find another woman with ideological similarities. KT also married NA, an akhwat from Palembang who had the same thoughts as KT. Nevertheless, a year after the marriage, SW filed for divorce from her husband. In August 2022, SW officially divorced KT⁶. A similar case was also experienced by AR, where his wife, AK, sued for

⁴ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, Mei 2021.

⁵ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, Agustus 2021.

⁶ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, September 2022.

divorce because she thought her husband was treasonous with Daulah Islamiyah.

Moreover, he had started contact with the police⁷. Previously, AR and AK supported the Young Farmer Terrorist group's funds to buy bomb assembly chemicals. After being free, AK felt AR underwent many changes in thinking. AK also interacted more with police and government officials (Jawapos 2017).

There are similar reasons between SW and AK for divorcing their husbands; here, both feel their husbands no longer have a jihadist Salafist ideology. In addition, their husbands also have a personal affinity with the security forces and the government, which they have always considered to be *thagut* and worthy of fighting. In addition, the existence of children is no longer an obstacle to the divorce of these two couples. SW has three children from his marriage to KT. Meanwhile, AK is blessed with one son from his marriage to AR. In addition, the two also received support from the network to divorce her husband.⁸

A different case occurred in the divorce of Ika Puspitasari and Zainul Akbar. When Ika, who was in Taiwan, was forming a small cell to prepare for the suicide bombings in Indonesia, Ika recruited Zainal Akbar as an eye. They married online and carried out their jihadi operation plan. They were still in close contact through social media when released from prison⁹. However, Ika experienced the deradicalization process faster than her husband in Papua. In early January 2022, Ika began to open a space for discussion and dialogue with ex-terrorism convicts with a moderate and nationalist understanding of Islam in the Persadani and Gema Salam Foundations. From here, Ika began to open discussions about the concepts of *daulah*, caliphate, and *jihad*. Ika

⁷ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, September 2021.

⁸ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, September 2021.

⁹ Based on identification and assessment data of BNPT, September 2021.

also began comparing her group's opinions with those of the *Ikhwan* and *ummahat* in Persadani and Gema Salam. At one point, Ika realized that what she had always believed about Jihad, *daulah Islamiyah*, and the Islamic State was wrong. Ika realized that she was not very deep in studying *Kaffah* Islam.

I used to believe that 'qital Jihad' is a fisabilillah jihad by waging war, so it is the highest jihad. Then we must compete to make amaliah efforts to obtain the Jannah. However, now I understand that such jihad in a peaceful Indonesia is inappropriate. In addition, after I have studied it again, although in writing the Law does not state Islamic Law, the basis of this country is nothing contrary to Islamic Law." (Interview with Ika in PodCast Ruangobrol.id, January, 2022)

Figure 1.

Ika Puspitasari in PodCast Ruangobrol.id



Source: PodCast Ruangobrol.id 2022

Seeing the change in Ika's thinking and tendency to start getting close to the moderate group of ex-terrorism convicts, Ika's ex-husband, Zaenal Akbar, did not remain silent. Besides, Zaenal and his group often reprimanded Ika for betraying Islam and being close to the *thagut*. Zaenal also often disagrees with Ika, that already considered an *kafir*. Finally, at the end of February 2022, Ika and Zaenal Akbar divorced via WhatsApp. Ika also said that she has separated from her group and divorced Zaenal. Until now,

Ika is still intimidated by her various social media messages for being part of the *kafir* and *thagut*¹⁰.

Two types of divorce can be seen based on ideology from some of these cases. Women sue for divorce from their husbands because they maintain their radical ideology of terrorism. Nor wives who already have a more tolerant ideology sue for divorce because of their husband's radical ideology. Nevertheless, more than that, it shows how women can maintain their piety and doctrine. The agency of women's piety must be viewed from a different lens than western feminists. All the time, women involved in terrorism are only defined as victims and do not have the individual consciousness to play a role in terrorism. As Musdah Mulia sees, the shift in the involvement of women as the main perpetrators in terrorism is not a form of emancipation nor the consciousness of women themselves (Mulia 2018). It contrasts what Mahmood (2011) conveyed where women can personally increase pious (in this case, the understanding of Islam) to cultivate themselves. In other words, a woman can maintain what she believes in the righteous practice of her movement. Women's agency is also shown from the awareness of individual women to stay afloat or let go of their networks through divorce as a social practice (Gidden 1984 in Sztompka 2010).

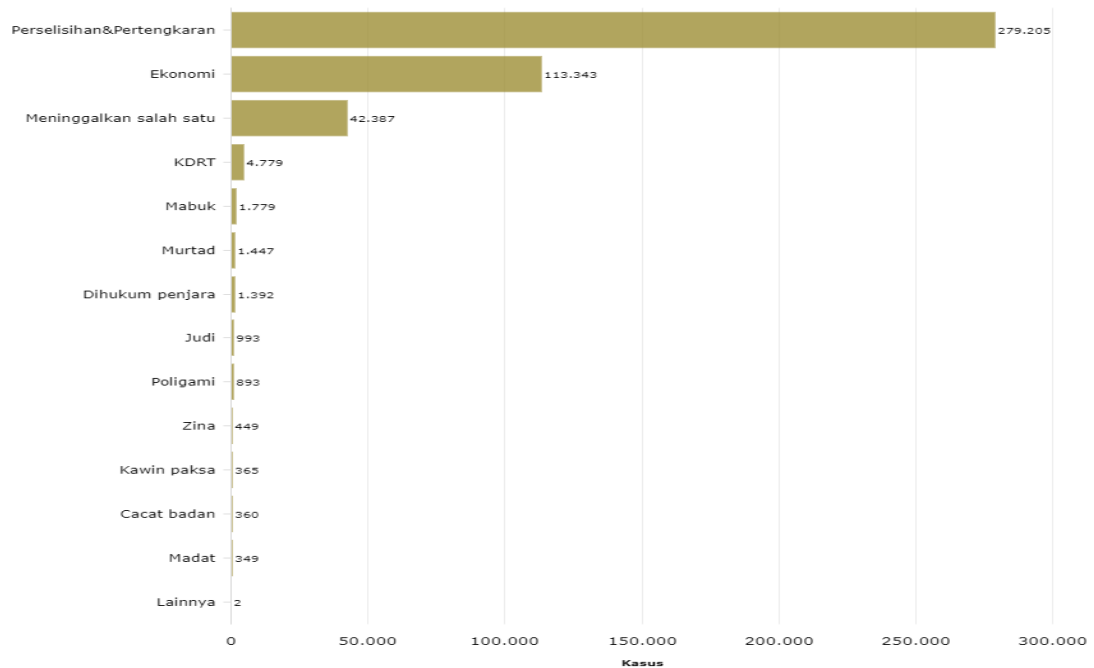
2. Economic Pressure Divorces

The economy is a factor that often arises in divorces. Data from the Religious Justice Agency in 2021 shows that the economy is the second most significant factor behind the public divorce. Some studies mentioned that the economy became the highest divorce factor among the Muslim community (Hakim 2000; Nisaurrizqiyah 2018). The low economic level has a significant effect on the high divorce rate. It is evidenced by research in

¹⁰ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, September 2022

Pabeanudik Village, Indramayu Regency, which is dominated by Islamic communities who work as fishermen. This research found that divorce stems from the low level of the fisherman's economy, so it cannot maintain the family's needs (Bahrein 1996).

Chart 2.
Causes of Divorce in Indonesia According to the Religious Justice Agency (2021)



Source: katadata.go.id 2022

Economic factors also contribute to divorce among women involved in terrorism. Unstable economic conditions after serving time in prison can trigger various conflicts in the household. Even while still in prison, the wife of an ex-terrorism convict also had a dual role. In addition to taking care of the home and children, they also must provide for family life. LM, the ex-wife of ex-terrorism convict KH, said she had to work alone as a cloth dressing factory worker to provide for the family. LM has two children in the 4th grade of elementary and 1st grade of high school. Her factory

worker income is insufficient to meet all their needs. LM said that most of the school's needs are derived from the scholarships of her two children¹¹.

LM claimed she never knew of her husband's involvement in terrorism networks. She only knew that her husband at the time was attentive in *pengajian*, but she did not expect the group to be as radical, even planning a bombing in Kartasura in June 2019. Apart from deteriorating economic conditions, LM filed for divorce from her husband when she knew that KH was remarried. KH's new wife is one of the women known through her terror group. Nevertheless, after KH was imprisoned and applied for parole, there was no more news from his second wife. After being released, KH filed a referral to the LM, who had not divorced until the Religious Court. LM was willing to accept her husband back because she felt that her husband had changed quite a lot. She considered that KH had returned to moderate and no longer join in his group¹².

SF also experienced a similar case. SF has twice been sued for divorce by his two wives. SF's first wife, AD, sued her husband for no longer providing for the family's living and needs. Even though AD had followed her husband by joining a terror group, she felt SF was not fulfilling her obligations as a husband well. AD later sued for divorce from her husband while in prison. She also decided not to get involved with jihadist groups anymore. AD agreed to take off the veil and work as an online motorcycle taxi driver to meet the needs of her family and child¹³.

After getting divorced from AD, SF then decided to remarry NN. Despite his status as an ex-terrorism convict, NN felt SF had an excellent religious understanding and was no longer radical.

¹¹ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, September 2022.

¹² Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, September 2022.

¹³ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, Juni 2021.

However, due to low economic stability after release, SF experienced financial problems again. NN later sued for divorce from her husband for irresponsibility. Currently, she has remarried men from other regions¹⁴.

In Islamic family law, a robust religious dogma about women's obedience to men is not strong enough to make these women survive. The economy is also a significant factor in divorce among women involved in terrorism. Even one of the former terrorism convicts, AM, claimed to be divorced by his wife because he thought the money was *syubhat*. After AM was released, he got a job as a parking boy in one of the markets in Solo city with the help of the police. Even in challenging economic conditions, AM's wife sued for divorce from her husband, who earned sustenance through *thagut* people.

3. The Social Structural Loyalty Divorces

The social environment is essential in forming women's agencies involved in terrorism. As mentioned earlier in the ideological divorces, the divorce between SW and KT relates to the role of the *pengajian* group. Since joining the Depok *ummahat* group to Solo, SW still often joins and establishes close relationships with other active women¹⁵. So it is unsurprising if the women's *pengajian* group becomes an essential forum for *ummahat* to strengthen each other's faith and Islamic ideology. It is also shown by Mahmood (2011) that how the Muslim women's movement in Egypt used forums as a movement of piety. It is also the case with women's *pengajian* groups involved in terrorism in Indonesia.

Another case was found in the divorce of SL and RA. SL claims to love her husband, RA. Besides her two young children,

¹⁴ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, November 2022.

¹⁵ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, Maret 2021.

she feels that RA has always been responsible as a husband. Even in prison, RA often paid attention to the family even though it was limited to cell phones. Nevertheless, the divorce of SL and RA was driven by family factors and the advice of the *pengajian* group. The members of the *pengajian* advised SL to divorce her husband because he no longer had a shared understanding of enforcing Daulah Islamiyah. After being released, RA chose to join a government-formed foundation. RA is considered to have joined the *ansharut thagut* circle. His marriage was deemed no longer valid, as RA no longer believed in and enforced Islamic Law¹⁶.

Unlike the *pengajian* group, SL's family encouraged them to file for divorce because of RA's status as an ex-terrorism convict. RA is considered to have tarnished the dignity and self-esteem of the family. The SL family is not among the jihadist groups. SL's father, one of the government officials, did not forbid her to join the *pengajian* group as long as she did not violate the Law.

Based on the belief that she had always been convinced of upholding Islam, SL filed for divorce from RA while in prison. SL still hopes that her husband can return to the path of truth that they have always believed. When RA was released, SL maintained a good relationship with her husband and received the living given to her son. However, RA is still trying to get him back to his wife.

Similar cases also occurred in EF and SI; both were married because they belonged to a jihadist group. Even while EF was still in prison, the terrorism network foundation in Penatoui was still providing for his wife and family. Even when applying for parole, EF chose to keep it a secret from SI and his family. Nevertheless, when the network jihadists knew that EF had recognized the Republic of Indonesia, they cut off the assistance. Even women of jihadist groups in Penatoui prompted SI to remarry the *ikhwan*, which still has a *kaffah* Islamic ideology.

¹⁶ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, September 2021.

Nevertheless, the SI family encouraged her to stay afloat and not get divorced from EF. SI then decided not to sue her husband. She felt that if they were still practicing Islamic Law, they were no longer *thogut* groups.

MF also felt the solidarity of women's groups involved in terrorism. During her husband, ZW was imprisoned at the Nusakambangan Penitentiary; the *ummahat* group provided assistance and facilities as a halfway house while MF was in Cilacap. Even the *ummahat* also worked together to meet the needs of MF and his two young children. However, it changed when ZW decided to apply for parole and pledged to the Republic of Indonesia. Before breaking up with MF, the *ummahat* gave her advice and encouragement for MF to divorce her husband. Initially, MF listened to the input, but she later got closer to the Wahdah Islamiyah group that was followed before marriage. MF rethought and supported her husband's choice by choosing a more moderate Islamic path¹⁷.

The exact purpose and sense of solidarity (Tarrow, 1998) in the *pengajian* group can create a sustainable social movement for women in terrorism. In this case, the *pengajian* group is followed by some individuals with the same collective goals and identities as the *ummahat*, who are jointly involved in collective action (Klandermans 2005). The *ummahat* beliefs and institutionalized activities aimed to advance the *kaffah* application of Islam and obstruct the *thagut* system of government.

4. The Divorces of Terrorist Wives in the Sociological Perspective

The agency can not only be interpreted as a movement or individual consciousness to counter the oppression of a group that has been conferring its freedom. In this case, it must be seen how

¹⁷ Based on identification and assessment datas of BNPT, April 2021.

women, through “pious self-cultivation,” can maintain the faith and piety she has always believed in and fought for amid terrorism. This belief became habit and embodiment. Thus, the notion that women are involved in terrorism is incorrect. They are judged not to know what they are doing in the terror movement (Abidah El-Khalieqy 2014). Taskarina (2019) articulates terrorist's wife in prison is a victim. By inquiring about two women in prison, she argued that women in terrorism were utilized by their husbands. Moreover, the wife is innocent and lacks knowledge about gender equality. That is why gender insight is essential for women.

This study argues that it is inadequate to see those women only as the victim; instead, they are thorough agents in their own space. Therefore, seeing Indonesian Muslim women's agencies is not all that offensive. In Fatayat and Rahima's group, Rachel Rinaldo confidently justifies feminist goals in Islamic texts. This study found that they use Islam to make political claims. They also advocate state enforcement of Islamic Law. Women of the PKS are known for their conservative writing ideology but argue that a narrow interpretation of Islamic writing is necessary. For Rinaldo, it makes it more relevant to agency questions that contextualize the text (Rinaldo 2013).

Giddens's agency theory can describe how women involved in terrorism use their consciousness to remain in terror structures or not through their divorce practices (Giddens 1984 in Sztompka, 2010). Women's agencies are seen as they defend their beliefs, even to the point where they divorce their husbands. Women can protect their piety either by becoming increasingly radical or moderate. Women have time to reflect and reconsider their decision to live differently without the influence of their husbands. Nevertheless, the fact that they still operate with a terrorist ideology. Even economic factors cannot yet be a single factor. LM sued for divorce from KH, an economic issue and a radical change in her husband's

ideology. LM was willing to accept her husband back after KH returned to having a moderate Islamic religious understanding. From this case, women with their agencies can maintain the knowledge that has been believed.

Many feminists dislike female supporters of conservative Islamic movements. Feminists thought Muslim women were far from free. Worse, when a woman is involved in terrorism, feminists reaffirm her status as an agent of dangerous irrationality (Mahmood 2011). For feminists, this recent catastrophe has alienated women. In other words, Muslim women cannot activate their agency and seem determined to avoid violence through rational thinking. This assumption is far different from the concept of Giddens' Agency, where women's agency should not be imagined as a passive act and just resigned to accepting fate. However, as someone who knows and comprehends every decision, women realize that divorce decisions will be monitored to conform to rules and norms. Nevertheless, not all of these behaviors can be fully realized (Giddens 1984).

The decision to divorce among terror women cannot be separated from the awareness they have, both practical awareness that is carried out repeatedly and discursive awareness so that women can reflect and give detailed and explicit explanations of divorce. The practical awareness that encourages women to divorce arises and is strengthened by the regular *pengajian* they follow. In the *pengajian*, women conveyed a lot of advice and religious materials from Islamist groups that upheld the enforcement of Islamic law *kaffah*. In addition, women are encouraged to divorce repeatedly from women in terrorist networks. In another case, Ika Puspitasari divorced and left the terrorist network after repeatedly participating in a moderate group.

From this practical awareness, the women reflect on it and produce discursive awareness. So that women can explain the

reasons for their divorce rationally. In realizing social practices in the form of divorce, women certainly have a rationalization for their actions. Giddens (1984) defines rationalization of action as the attempt of agents who routinely and without debate maintain a "theoretical understanding" of the foundations of their actions. So, when someone asks why they divorced, the women can rationally explain their choice, ideologically and economically, and maintain their piety.

Giddens' view of agency is interesting to see its relationship with structure. According to Giddens, the pattern of influence of structure on agency in two senses, enabling and constraining (Giddens 1984). The influence of structure on women's agency in divorce decisions can be seen from the pattern of *pengajian* among women of terror. Women strengthened each other's faith and piety while their husbands were in prison. The women's *pengajian* also worked together to provide for the entire family. Even when their husbands no longer share the same understanding of Islam, this *pengajian* will strengthen women's agencies to maintain their faith and piety. However, they must divorce her husband. Even if a woman involved in terrorism decides to leave the *jamaah*, they still try to maintain a relationship so that the woman can return. It is also proper with what Mahmood sees in women's agencies that Islamists have a much different meaning of the body than (and often misunderstood by) secular people (Mahmood 2011). Where western feminists mean that women involved in terrorism have false consciousness, but this woman in The Islamist *pengajian* maintains her ideology and piety.

Divorce as a social practice of women's agencies in terrorism is further strengthened by the *pengajian* of the *ummahat* as a structure formed. The *ummahat* can strengthen each other's faith to be steadfast in the women's terror movement. It is done through regular *pengajian* forums, family economic support, and children's

kaffah education while their husbands are in prison. These women also provide social and material support if wives divorce their husbands who no longer hold *Kaffah* Islamic views. It supports Giddens's assertion that women's organizations are linked to the structures surrounding them (Giddens 1984 in Sztompka 2010). However, women can still determine whether to stay in the structure through divorce practice. According to Giddens' theory of agency (1984), an agency can leave structure but is not always subject to the structure. They can look for opportunities or possibilities to get out of the *pengajian* structure, or this situation can be called "dialectic of control."

D. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The phenomenon of divorce among women involved in terrorism shows that they can decide whether or not to engage in terror networks. Divorce as a social practice arose from the fact that women were conscious of maintaining their ideology and piety. It dismisses the assumption of Western feminists that women's involvement in terror is created from the religious dogma that builds women's ignorance as the victim. In contrast, through Giddens' perspective, we can understand that wives of terrorists are aware of every action they take, including in this case the decision to divorce. Even a woman is consciously aware that her divorce options will always be monitored to conform to the rules or norms that apply around her.

Based on the result and discussion above, there are a discursive awareness behind the divorce of terrorist wives that arises from women's participation in repeated *pengajian*. In the forum, women receive many religious advice and ideological aspects of the surrounding structures (Islamist or moderate). After that, women will reflect by examining whether the advice or aspects of the ideology are appropriate for their condition. The

results of these reflections lead to a discursive awareness of terrorist wives so that they can provide the logical and ideal reasons for their divorce. It indicates that the terrorist wives can decide whether to leave or survive within the structure of terrorist networks.

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