

Maqasid Shariah as a Tool to Strengthen Resilience to Radical Religious Extremism Movement

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Abstract—Resilience is generally understood as a way to adapt into adversity as well as the ability to bounce back from stress and catastrophe. The ongoing issue of radical religious extremism (RRE) is heightening the society as its modus operandi utilizes the advancement of internet to disseminate its ideology, even recruiting new member. This study aims to present the real situation of joining RRE and after detainment phase that affecting the five measurements of maqasid shariah which indirectly lead to unstable state of someone’s life. Other than previous literatures, data were collected from key informants among experts, detainees and released detainees which were sentenced due to their involvement in RRE movement. The discussions centred around the issues of RRE and its connection to five measurements of maqasid shariah which should be learnt especially among Muslim in order to preserve their healthy and sound life.

Keywords— Extremism, *Maqasid Shariah*, Radical, Resilience

I. INTRODUCTION

Radical religious extremism (RRE afterwards) issue is not a novel problem, nonetheless it is still unsolved and continuously mushrooming in different scale which assimilating with current trend and situation. There are abundant of efforts done by various agencies and respective authorities to curb this issue such as strict punishment, education through rehabilitation, enforcement of laws and sundries. This kind of efforts seems to help and lessen the number of active movements, however with the advancement of internet, this kind of movement able to accommodate the facilities and utilize the unlimited space of cyber net in spreading the RRE ideologies. Besides, the process of recruitment – even from far reaching region, is becoming easier by the vastness use of mass media such as from the applications of WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook and et cetera (Davis, 2019; Winkler, 2016).

In this sense, their target and dissemination of the ideology is able to be accessed by all people around the world easily. Either

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being searched individually by people who are interested into this ideology or approached as a targeted person; the advancement of internet is largely contributing into accelerating this process. Since, it is considered as a world without boundaries, therefore the users must be educated in order to prevent themselves from being a target, or involves into RRE movements.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research benefitted previous literatures for accumulating important data. Besides, this qualitative research used certain related information shared by key informants among detainees of Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 (POTA) in Simpang Renggam Prison (Malaysia) and released detainees which were detained due to their involvement in RRE movement. Other than that, 2 key informants among officers also being included in this research. These officers were selected for their established position in handling RRE issues in Malaysia. Nonetheless, their detail information is unable to publicly shared due to agreement between researchers and Malaysia security authority.

In this paper, those key informants are put into certain codes which are stated as below:

TABLE I
LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

| | Key Informants | Codes |
|---|---------------------|-------|
| 1 | POTA Detainee 1 | D1 |
| 2 | POTA Detainee 2 | D2 |
| 3 | POTA Detainee 3 | D3 |
| 4 | Released Detainee 1 | RD1 |
| 5 | Released Detainee | RD2 |
| 6 | Released Detainee | RD3 |
| 7 | Police Officer | O1 |
| 8 | Academician | O2 |

III. COMPREHENDING THE CENTRAL ISSUE: DISSEMINATION OF RADICAL RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IDEOLOGY THROUGH CYBER NET

An atmosphere of high tension raised up by RRE ideologies and movements is flaring everywhere, regardless of any religion it may represent. Every cult or sect is possessing groups of extremists where they act and think differently, excessively from the majority path. Thus, this issue of religious extremism is not exclusively among Muslim but it is shared by other beliefs as well. Nonetheless, this paper is solely focusing on RRE

movement which misleadingly bring the name of Islam in their ideologies.

This kind of issue has rooted in the history of Muslim since the age of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, however its scale and form of radical and extreme is changing in accordance to the different epochs and ideologies. For instance, one of the stories as narrated by Anas bin Malik in Sahih al-Bukhari, portrays one of the form of extremes in religion:

A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) asking how the Prophet (ﷺ) worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet (ﷺ) as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) came to them and said, "Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and I also marry women. So, he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers) (Hadith Collection Sahih Bukhari/ Book 67, n.d.)

In this hadith, it is clearly shown that even to do religious duties such as prayer and fasting excessively and not to attend their desire for marriage is abstained in Islam. Besides, it is sternly rejected by Prophet Muhammad by not acknowledging this group of extremists as his follower. In this sense, extreme is an imbalance situation due to the missing of wisdom which is located in the middle of two poles of extremes which are being too excessive or too deficient.

This state of extreme has been warned by Allah several times in al-Quran, alas people are not taking heed and afraid of His penalty. As how stated in chapter al-Maaidah;

O you who have believed, do not violate the rites of Allah or [the sanctity of] the sacred month or [neglect the marking of] the sacrificial animals and garlanding [them] or [violate the safety of] those coming to the Sacred House seeking bounty from their Lord and [His] approval. But when you come out of ihram, then [you may] hunt. And do not let the hatred of a people for having obstructed you from al-Masjid al-Haram lead you to transgress. And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty (Al-Quran, 5:2).

The problem of those ideologues among this RRE movement groups are, they always tend to interpret Quranic verse in political view rather than understand it properly under the right guidance of righteous scholars. Hence, this misconception is continuously chained to others, especially during the era of Kharijite until present days.

The emergence of the Kharijite approximately between 656 until 661 c.e, has witnessed the biggest rebellion sparked among Muslim community (Mamouri, 2015). They were reluctant to obey and launched rebellions towards the government led by Bani Umayyah due to few factors (Adam et al., 2016). The issue was centered around the appointment of the caliph or head of

Islamic government where they were challenging the superiority of Quraysh tribe to hold a position in governing and managing financial flows as for them the privileges to become a caliph is open to all Muslims including slaves (Mamouri, 2015). This form of struggle appears noble in theory but practically, they were doing punitive and violent actions including onto women and children in order to accomplish their aim (Koch, 2015).

Owing to their frantic boldness actions, this group was extended long for continuously being

persecuted and offended by the majority of Muslims and absolutely not received any support from the caliphs. Kharijites only able to sustain their survival period nearly one and a half century, and later annihilated by their own nature. Besides, during last 7th century, there was a sect from the Kharijite castoff vicious approach and dwelled themselves in a discussion on how to live with non-Kharijite which were regarded as irreligious men (Egger, 2016). Due to many quarter factors, by the beginning of the Abbasid's ruling era, this group reported being entirely disappeared.

Though the body of Kharijite movement had been buried, but their ideology is still breathing and being revived in different names. The revival of modern RRE movements such as Daesh, Boko Haram and local groups (Malaysia context) such as al-Maunah, Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, Darul Islamiyah Malaysia (Kheng, 2009) are a solid proof on how bad ideology able to challenge the stability of a nation and religious institution.

In Malaysia (and few other countries as well), many acts were amended for the purpose of thwarting those RRE movements, such as Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA), Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA), Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 (POTA) and sundries. These acts are successfully implemented for the involved persons by giving the detainees punishment and rehabilitation courses. It is shared by two of key informants O1 and that the number of detainments is currently low. However, both of them agreed that they are not fully annihilated but currently stay in idle mode. Yet, this is not a right time to celebrate on the effectiveness of the regulative acts, but it is a right time to get prepared for any challenges ahead.

Since most of the involvement of those RRE movement members are from their connection through social media, it is a compulsory note to the authorities to safeguard the cyber net from being manipulated by this ideology. However, the boundaryless of this medium able to give access for the sharer and recipients to connect freely, even they are from far-reaching region. Previously, the idea may be transferred from a country to other countries by travelling individuals but with the advancement of cyber net today, every person which has a screen and internet connection may being exposed and access to this ideology in any preferred time and space. Therefore, it is a requirement to educate the society to properly avoiding themselves and being resilience from any incitation, provocation, false ideology and teaching, and recruitment process.

IV. EDUCATING THE SOCIETY BY STRENGTHENING THEIR UNDERSTANDING ON MAQASID SHARIAH

In rehabilitation centre, those detainees were obliged to follow certain courses in order to put them back in a mainstream and set them fit into society after release. Most of the interviewed detainees are going home with new personality, mind and thought; yet they still have to face some challenges and difficulties entailed from their previous status as ex-detainees. Therefore, in order to prevent any detainment in nearest future, the society need to be educated by showing a real evidence and proof on how a simple steps taken into RRE movement will significantly change their quality of life, especially in five main aspects of Maqasid Shariah which are; religion, mind, life, lineage and wealth.

In brief, these five aspects or kulliyat al-khams of Maqasid Shariah are mentioned by al-Ghazali as follows:

"The main goal of Maqasid Shariah is to elevate the wellness of mankind, by protecting religion (deen), life (nafs), mind (aql), lineage (nasl) and wealth (mal). The protection of these five aspects is required to preserve public interest and any action that breaks the protection of these five aspects is forbidden because it will disrupt public interest." (Mohamad & Nor Azman, 2016)

These five aspects are interlinked (Chapra, 2008; Mohamad & Nor Azman, 2016) which the imbalance in one aspect may affect others as well. Hence, in order to secure the happiness of life, both in here and hereafter; these five aspects of Maqasid Shariah have to put as a main framework in life in whatever situation may applied.

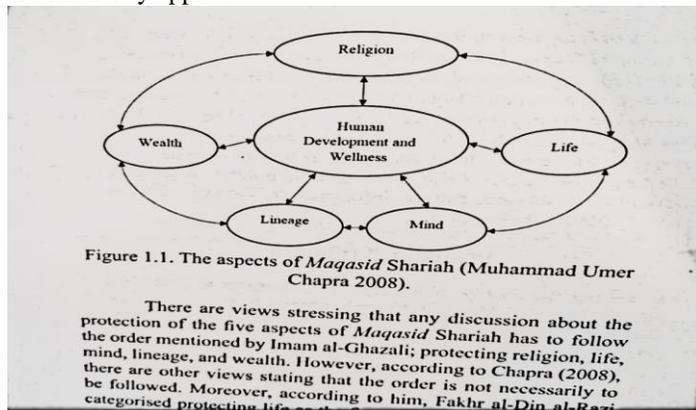


Fig. 1 The Aspect of Maqasid Shariah (Chapra, 2008)

As how supported by Auda (2014), Maqasid is one of the development projects and relates to human rights; this study will simplify the importance of building resilience to RRE movements, especially among cyber net users by discussing it in the perspective of five aspects of Maqasid Shariah:

A. Protecting Religion

It is said that the struggle of those RRE movements is to protect and strive for Islam as how the Daesh claims that their existence is purposely for setting up *Dawlah Islamiyyah* or religious kingdom where Islam is going to be on the highest point. However, their noble ambition is unparallel with their

actions. For instance, Boko Haram in Nigeria perceived that Western education is forbidden and ought not to be taught to the Muslims (Adam et al., 2016; Shuaibu & Salleh, 2015) Meanwhile, in Islamic jurisprudence, it is clearly mention that everything is permissible unless it has any evidence to prove on its forbiddance (Ibhiis, 2016).

Hence, in order to show their hatred, this organization was recognized as the deadliest terrorist group where it has to be responsible for 6644 deaths (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2015). They even willing to slaughter students from various educational levels such as what had happened on September 2013 where 44 teachers and male students were killed at a college in Gujba; 29 students killed during attack on Buni Yadi's college at February 2014, and also kidnapping approximately 276 schoolgirls in Chibox on following April (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2015; Shuaibu & Salleh, 2015).

In this case, Islamic kingdom is merely utopian fantasy which has no dimensional measurement of protecting religion itself. It tarnishing the image of Islam which is supposedly known as the religion of peace but it happened vice versa. As how discussed previously, this movement also breaks the *maqasid* of protecting life and lineage by executing massive massacre.

Despite Malaysia is not facing issue of serious violence such as what had happened in Nigeria and other countries, it was agreed by most of the detainees that they had wrong understanding on Islam. Even, some of them were not fully comprehend the essence of *jihad* in Islam but blatantly to fight in the name of Allah and Islam. They were wrongly searching for truth by referring the wrong websites, Facebook pages and joining secret room chat in Telegram or WhatsApp.

B. Protecting Life

Shortly, as discussed previously, these RRE movements are not reluctant to practice assassination as long as their ideology achieved. In this sense, this second *maqasid* is clearly meets its failure. Even in war, Islam has highlighted special guideline which must be compliance among fighters which is to not kill children, women, old-folks, ruining trees and worshipping sites. Some of the groups incite their members to do suicide-bombing which is unacceptable in Islam.

During interview session among detainees of POTA, most of them said that their life is totally upside down. There are no longer comfortable and only can have plain food and water and have to be in cell, without a comfortable bed to lay on. Even, to assure wellness of their life through sport and recreational activities are considered very limited.

Meanwhile, among released detainees; RD2 shared that he has to fit into a new community and new lifestyle when he decided to move thousand miles from his hometown after released. His friend and himself, have to received regular visitation from selected police officers in order to secure them from relapse into former ideology.

C. Protecting Mind

Sadly, it is obviously showing that the ideologies and the acts

of them are not acceptable by sound reason, common sense, humane sentiments, even to religious authority. Killing, bombing, raping, ambushing and other negative and cruel actions did by those groups are illogically acceptable by religion and social rules.

In explaining this situation, these people are no longer unable to do a right judgement since recruitment process is not only exercising their physical bodies but receive a constant misleading idea which entail a huge cognitive dissonance and conflicts among themselves. Cognitive dissonance has its magnitudes. The wider the inconsonant between the cognitions (by frequently exposed), thus the magnitude of the consonance or the inconsistent turn broader This can be understood by the analogy of wider sponge; it absorbs more water than smaller-size sponge could. Hence, by the wider magnitude of consonance caused, thus the tendency of man to reduce or eliminate the conflicts becomes higher (Cooper, 2007). Therefore, an individual may remove the conflict by accepting that these cruel actions are acceptable in the name of *jihad*. Clearly, unstable mind may cause someone to act eccentrically, erroneously and inappropriately.

Besides, even after their detainment period; few of the ex-detainees do not feel at ease and always feel insecure due to their mental breakdown in prison. For instance, RD2 and RD3 were quite watchful while sharing information – as if researchers are among the authorities that may drag them in into the prison in any time. Some of the potential respondents among released detainees also were reluctant to be interviewed since this kind of session will make them remembering their hardship days in detainment. As for RD3, he was put into detainment when his wife on the last phase of pregnancy. Certainly, their minds were never at rest due to their concern on family that they had to left behind.

D. Protecting Lineage

Islam is a religion that covers all aspect of life. Thus, it also encompasses the aspect of protecting lineage which its failure may result disorder in society and nation as well. This is stated by (Mohamad & Nor Azman (2016) that protecting lineage from the view of *Maqasid Shariah* incorporates three aspects of 1) family relationship; 2) social relationship; 3) law enforcement.

Protecting lineage starts from marriage (Kasule, 2004) – which understood to be encompassed by the relationship and responsibilities between spouses and children. Therefore, any action of killing innocent person purposely for supporting false ideology is terribly disturbing someone's lineage; they may kill a father or a mother, a son or a daughter. In other perspective, people that being recruited into RRE movement may left their families behind. Their responsibilities as a parents or children are unable to be performed as how it supposed to be.

Besides, it is very improper for a woman to flee from their family and hometown with their dream to become a wife to a so-called '*mujahideen*' and raise a family within an Islamic atmosphere. Their aim to become a better version of *Muslimah* by participating in this movement is not supported by their

actual main role when most of them just become the property of man to full their sexual desire. This situation is clearly unacceptable and not in the path of al-Quran as how referred to this verse:

Marry off the singles among you, as well as the righteous of your bondmen and bondwomen. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. For Allah is All-Bountiful, All-Knowing. (Al-Quran, 24: 32)

It is a sad truth when most of the women who decided to follow this movement are having inadequate knowledge about Islam thus find this way as the truth and see this sacrifice as a noble path to upgrade themselves.

In another perspective, upon detainment period, all of them are unable to perform their duties and responsibilities as a bread-winner, parents or children to their family. One of the detainees (D1) shared that he had to divorce his wife (asked for *fasakh* – dissolution of marriage) due to stress and hardship that she needed to face it along the detainment. Meanwhile, RD1 told that not only he had to accept *fasakh* from his ex-wife; he also has no access to his daughter that he's been longing and waiting for.

E. Protecting Wealth

One of many factors that attract people into this movement is due to its monetary support. They try to fulfil and build rapport by offering the targeted individuals to what they need, especially pertaining to monetary aspect. In this case, Muslims should understand that owning wealth must be obtained from halal sources and protecting their wealth from any forbidden deeds such as wasting, stealing, rubbering and sundries (Ibn Ashur, 2006; Nasir, 2011). Therefore, it is very fundamental understanding among Muslims that RRE movements are illegal hence all related transaction is forbidden as well. However, this is one of the strengths of RRE movement when they are using monetary support for motivating people (especially among poor people) to join them. Some of them were also wholly supported to migrate from their place by providing free transportation, accommodation, visa and et cetera (D3). This kind of generosity is strengthening rapport and trust between them.

In the other perspective, almost all interviewed former detainees shared that they are currently facing hardship to find appropriate jobs. One of them is totally banned from tourism industry due to his former status as ex detainees of RRE, "they afraid that I might bomb their hotel (RD1)". Luckily, RD1 able to fit in society and find other job to feed his family as well as RD2. Meanwhile, RD3's life is quite challenging for he is still underemployed.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

Throughout aforementioned evidences, it is clearly indicating an important lesson among cyber net to be resilience from any threat, ideology and influence of RRE movement which may be found on the internet. They should use their rational and collaborate their thought to those five measurements of maqasid shariah in determining and assessing the information found on their screen.

This research used experiences from detainees and released detainees purposely to educate the society from the actual situation (causes of involvement and effect afterwards) in order to give them chance to avoid from these wrong steps and be cautious on the effect of joining RRE movement from the perspective of five measurements of maqasid shariah.

As how illustrated above, those five measurements of maqasid shariah are interlinked to one another closely. For instance, if a husband fails to maintain his role as a breadwinner (which falls under the measurement of protecting wealth), it may entail further consequence such as dissolution of marriage (protecting lineage), not in a good state of mind or constantly worrying (protecting mind) which may bring unhealthy ambience (protecting life and religion). Thus, it is very important for a Muslim to have a broader outlook on this life by putting the five measurements of maqasid shariah in making any decision in life. Learn from past experience of others may help them to choose a better path as only the ignorant will fall into the same hole again and again.

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