

# The Concept of Jihad and Women's Involvement in Terrorism: (A Case Study of Dian Yulia Novi)

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**Abstract.** In this study, the researchers conducted a study of Dian Yulia Novi, an Indonesian woman who intended to carry out a suicide bombing at the State Palace on December 11, 2016 under the pretext of performing jihad. The objectives of this study are (1) to explain the process of learning about the concept of jihad which according to Dian Yulia Novi supports the involvement of women in terrorism and (2) to analyze the techniques used to rationalize Dian Yulia Novi's involvement in terrorism through the concept of jihad. This study used a qualitative approach by employing a single instrumental case study and applied the neutralization theory of Matza and Sykes. The results of this study indicate that Dian Yulia Novi learned about the concept of jihad with the help of the Internet. The Internet provided Dian Yulia Novi with access to social media and websites that offer content on terrorism. This study also shows that Novi used four neutralization techniques to rationalize her involvement in terrorism, namely (1) denial of responsibility; (2) denial of victimization; (3) condemnation of the condemners; and (4) an appeal to higher loyalties.

**Keywords:** *jihad, religious terrorism, suicide bombers, women*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is a crime that often causes death and loss of property in large numbers. According to Forst (2009), terrorism involves the use of violence or the threat of planned and unlawful violence, which targets non-combatant populations or symbolic targets. The objective is political change through intimidation, and the destabilization or destruction of a population that is seen as an enemy. Deflem (2009) explained that terrorism uses illegal methods such as violence against civilians for political-ideological purposes. Terrorism can be divided into several types. The type of terrorism that attracts the authors is religious terrorism. According to Jones (2008), religious terrorism is the use of violence in the form of deadly symbolic actions to serve sacred goals or values. Perlmutter (2004) defined religious terrorism as the use of violence or the threat of violence to intimidate individuals, civilians, or the government, to achieve religious goals. Moghadam (2006) stated that religious terrorism is not entirely separate from other forms of terrorism since it usually has political motivations. The

root of religious terrorist ideology can be found in various religious traditions that oppose the secularization process in society (Deflem, 2009). Moghadam (2006) stated that almost all world religions, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, have yielded to religious terrorism.

As a Muslim-majority country, the incidents of religious terrorism that we hear or witness most often in Indonesia are those committed in the name of Islamic teachings, such as jihad. The terrorists who commit jihad show us that religious teachings can be misused to terrorize the wider community. This reasoning supports Azyumardi Azra, who stated that the meaning of jihad has been distorted by terrorist groups to justify violence committed against the community (Margianto, 2013). According to Latif and Munir (2014), jihad differs from terrorism since jihad cannot fulfill human desires or worldly purposes but only aims to realize an Islamic order in accordance with God's commands. Odhiambo (2014) stated that religious terrorists are motivated by religious leaders who deliberately misinterpret some of the sacred texts to justify their actions. Although some religious leaders and experts openly state that terrorists have misunderstood the true teachings of Islam, especially the concept of jihad, there are still those who are interested in engaging in terrorism in the name of jihad. Not only men but also women can be affected and actively involved in terrorism to perform jihad.

In this study, the researchers examined women's involvement in terrorism in the name of jihad. The researchers conducted a case study of Dian Yulia Novi, an Indonesian woman who planned to carry out a suicide bombing at the State Palace on December 11, 2016. The Indonesian National Police called Dian Yulia Novi the first "bride candidate" (suicide bomber) in the history of terrorism in Indonesia (Utama, 2017). Dian Yulia Novi is also the first Indonesian woman to be sentenced to prison for planning a suicide bombing. Dian Yulia Novi was sentenced to 7.5 years in prison. In Indonesia, this was the first verdict served on a woman involved in terrorism. Dian Yulia Novi planned a suicide bombing because she wanted to die in jihad (Siswoyo, 2017b). The objectives of this study are twofold, namely (1) to explain how she learned about the concept of jihad, which according to Dian Yulia Novi, supports women's involvement in terrorism; and (2) to analyze the techniques used to rationalize Dian Yulia Novi's involvement in terrorism through the concept of jihad.

This study is a qualitative case study which is classified as single instrumental case study. In a single instrumental case study, the researchers choose one limited case to illustrate the issue or problem which is the focus of the study (Creswell, 2018). The researchers collected the primary case study data from an in-depth interview with Muhammad Nur Solikin, Dian Yulia Novi's husband, who was involved in planning suicide bombings. While conducting the in-depth interview, the researchers used a list of questions that had been prepared to guide the process. However, the researchers also asked new questions as the interview process progressed. Meanwhile, the researchers collected secondary case study data from an interview with Dian Yulia Novi in the Special News (Kabar Khusus) program aired by TV One on December 13, 2016, and from various online news articles.

### **1.1. Theoretical Framework**

In this study, the researchers used Matza and Sykes' neutralization theory. According to Maruna and Copes (as cited in Lanier & Henry, 2010), this theory is used to explain the etiology of deviant behavior which involves the use of reason and justification to rationalize delinquent behavior. Sykes and Matza (as cited in Siegel, 2010) explained that people develop a series of justifications for deviant and illegal behavior. According to Sykes and Matza (as

cited in Lanier & Henry, 2010), there are five types of justification processes used they term techniques of neutralization, as follows:

- **Denial of Responsibility**

The offenders state that their behavior is out of their control or a kind of accident. An example of this technique is the justification “this is not my fault.”

- **Denial of Injury**

The offenders minimize or eliminate the losses their behavior has caused by denying that that have harmed anyone. An example of this technique is the justification “no one is harmed.”

- **Denial of Victimization**

The offenders state that their victims deserve to be the targets of their behavior. An example of this technique is the justification “they brought it on themselves.”

- **Condemnation of the Condemners**

The offenders negate others’ rights to judge their behavior, since these others are viewed as bad people, not worthy of respect. An example of this technique is the justification “law enforcement officers are also bad.”

- **Appeal to Higher Loyalties**

The offenders argue that they are loyal to their group, and the group’s needs must be prioritized over the moral demands of society. An example of this technique is the justification “I do not do it for myself.”

Through these techniques, offenders can at least temporarily free themselves from normative restrictions on their behavior and justify their involvement in illicit activities (O’Brien & Yar, 2008). The study conducted by Matza and Sykes was originally applied to delinquency, but neutralization theory has since been used by researchers investigating various crimes, including crimes committed by adults (Lanier & Henry, 2010).

Neutralization theory, specifically the five neutralization techniques proposed by Sykes and Matza are used by the researchers as a theoretical framework for analyzing the techniques Dian Yulia Novi used to rationalize her terrorist activities by referring to the concept of jihad. Weiten (2007) states that rationalization creates false reasons to justify unacceptable behavior. According to Burns (1991), there are two objectives of rationalization. First, rationalization helps an individual make an excuse for committing an immoral act. Second, rationalization helps an individual to alleviate the disappointment that arises when they cannot achieve their goals. Based on the explanation above, the definition of rationalization used in this study refers to an individual’s attempt to justify immoral actions through an appeal to seemingly plausible reasons.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Jihad and Terrorism**

The term jihad derives from the Arabic word jahada which means striving earnestly (Bamualim, 2003). Jihad is generally classified into two forms. First, Jihad al-Akbar, which is the greater jihad, refers to spiritual search and struggle with one's soul. Second, Jihad al-Asgar, which is the lesser jihad, refers to outward rebellion and physical effort (Bennett, 2007). Syu'aibi and Kibil (2010) explains that the lesser jihad applies when the Prophet and khulafa ar-rasidin fought against attacks by the enemy who intended to interfere with the efforts of the Prophet and his companions to uphold Islam to ensure the formation of the ummah, or community. In contemporary conditions, the war against colonialism carried out in

Muslims' territory can be understood as a form of lesser jihad. According to Syu'aibi and Kibil (2010), lesser jihad is temporary and limited to the territories of an Islamic state, while the greater jihad is permanent and is not limited to the territories of an Islamic state. Syu'aibi and Kibil (2010) assert that the lesser jihad has several objectives, namely (1) to establish an Islamic state, and as a first step in building an Islamic social community; and (2) to maintain the balance and sustainability of the Islamic community. Meanwhile, the greater jihad aims to (1) build a peaceful Islamic civilization; (2) prevent all the disturbances caused by lust that exist in a Muslim; and (3) advance science to develop the economic system and create prosperous and peaceful social conditions.

Based on the explanations above, the concept of jihad is not limited to physical struggles such as warfare. In fact, a jihadist war needs to fulfill several predetermined conditions. According to the Qur'an, there are several conditions for conducting jihad in the form of war, namely (1) it is only conducted against people who start a war with Muslim groups; (2) only conducted against people who abuse Muslims and force them to leave their religion and their hometowns; (3) peace efforts must be prioritized if the enemy tries to make peace; (4) for maintaining the dignity of prisoners of war; and (5) for giving guarantees and providing the protection of civil society, agricultural land, livestock, ulamas, and places of worship (Bamualim, 2003). According to an interview conducted by Al-Khattar (2003) with an Imam who has a degree in Islamic law, Islam permits several types of violence if there is no other solution. However, Muslims are prohibited from killing and targeting civilians such as women, children, and the elderly. Undertaking jihad also needs a parent's consent, as in the hadith narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. It is stated in the hadith that the Prophet said "Go home and ask for their permission. If they agree to it, go for jihad. Otherwise, obey them and be dutiful to them." (Atsqalani, 2012). According to the conditions stated, the concept of jihad does not always have a negative connotation.

Although the concept of jihad taught in Islam is not associated with terrorism at all, the fact is that there are people involved in terrorism because they are motivated to conduct jihad. The existence of certain parties who perform terrorism activities in the name of jihad could cause many people to view the concept of jihad negatively, and assume that jihad is closely related to terrorism. Moniruzzaman (2008) explains that the concept of jihad is now understood as an Islamic religious policy that involves the launch of an offensive war against unbelievers which is the inspiration for killing non-Muslims in the name of God. According to Moniruzzaman (2008), this misunderstanding of jihad has been caused by deviant Islamic groups. In fact, jihad and terrorism are two different concepts. Latif and Munir (2014) emphasize that jihad basically aims to eradicate dangerous trends and developments in society, while terrorism causes the destruction of people and society. In addition, terrorism is a crime against humanity that involves the physical and mental torture of military personnel and civilians, as well as the destruction of public and private property and infrastructure to instill fear in people. In contrast, jihad opposes these things, and even requires resistance to these actions.

According to what has been described above, it is evident that jihad and terrorism cannot be linked since the two concepts are very different. One example that clearly demonstrates that terrorism is not jihad is suicide bombing, which is often carried out by terrorists to achieve their desired goals. According to Bin Syamsuddin (2014), suicide bombing is not a form of jihad, but merely a suicidal act as explained in the following words of the Prophet:

"Whoever commits suicide with a piece of metal, then that piece of metal will be in his hand and he will strike himself in his stomach with it in the fire of Hell; dwelling in it eternally, forever. Whoever commits suicide by drinking poison, he will then drink it in the

fire of Hell; dwelling in it eternally, forever. Whoever commits suicide by throwing himself from a mountain, then he will fall in the fire of Hell; dwelling in it eternally, forever.”

Another example that clearly denotes terrorism is not aligned to the concept of jihad are the indiscriminate murders committed by terrorists when realizing their goals. Bin Syamsuddin (2014) states that there are very severe penalties, sanctions, and very large risks for a Muslim who is not careful when causing bloodshed, especially the blood of a believer, as stated in Surah An-Nisa verse 93 as follows “And whoever deliberately kills a believer, his recompense is Hell wherein he shall abide forever and Allah is angry with him, and curses him and provides a great punishment for him.” Terrorist incidents that kill non-Muslims also contradict the concept of jihad. This is because Islam prohibits the killing of adherents of other religions, especially if they live in peaceful conditions and do not pose a danger to the lives of Muslims. Bin Syamsuddin (2014) explains that the Messenger of Allah threatened anyone who murdered non-Muslims while living under a peace treaty in a Muslim country as follows “Whoever kills a mu’ahid (an infidel who is in the treaty), then he will not smell heaven, even though the fragrance can be smelt from a distance of forty years of travel.”

Thus, suicide bombings and indiscriminate killings by terrorists certainly cannot be understood as a form of jihad that aims to uphold Islamic teachings. This is because Islam forbids these actions and clearly states that those who commit them will receive severe consequences in the afterlife. Terrorist incidents involving women perpetrators of attacks cannot be categorized as a form of jihad either, since this is contrary to the hadith on the role of women in jihad as narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah. In the hadith, it is stated that Aisyah asked the Messenger of Allah about the women’s obligations to jihad. The Messenger of Allah answered, “Yes, they are obliged to jihad without war in it, namely Hajj and Umrah” (Atsqalani, 2012). The hadith clearly explains that women’s jihad must be conducted free of elements of war. More specifically, the Prophet Muhammad stated in the hadith that women’s jihad should be Hajj and Umrah.

## **2.2. Women and Terrorism**

The involvement of women in terrorism is not a new phenomenon but has existed for several centuries. According to Gentry and Sjoberg (as cited in Agara, 2015), women’s involvement in terrorist organizations and terrorism is not a 21st century phenomenon and has not been limited to Islamist terrorist groups. Women were affiliated with the Narodnaya Volya in the late 19th century, a Russian nihilist organization, and the Socialist Revolutionary Party in the early 20th century. Women have also been involved in terrorist attacks carried out by groups such as the Shining Path in Peru, Republican and Loyalist rebel groups in Northern Ireland, the Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka, the Kurdistan Workers' Party in Turkey, Hamas in Palestine, the Zapatistas in Mexico, Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. In addition, women have held several leadership roles in a number of groups, such as the Baader-Meinhof Gang in Germany, the Red Brigade in Italy, Prima Linea in Italy, the Basque Separatist Movement (ETA) in Spain and France, the Japanese Red Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Chechen Resistance Movement, and Weather Underground in the United States (Agara, 2015).

Women’s participation in terrorism certainly needs to be taken seriously. In fact, the number of women involved in terrorism has increased. As mentioned by Sjoberg et al. (as cited in Agara, 2015), there has been substantial public attention paid to worldwide reports about women’s active involvement in militant and terrorist organizations as support personnel, logistics personnel, kinetic resources, and even perpetrators of attacks, kidnappings, piracy,

and martyrdom. According to the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) report released on January 31 2017, there has been an upsurge of women's involvement in radical groups. IPAC noted that in 2015–2016, there was an increase in women's active involvement in Indonesia's radical movements (Siswoyo, 2017a).

Women have played increasingly important roles in terrorism, including as suicide bombers. According to Makin and Hoard (2014), women's increasing participation in religious-based groups includes active service in the battlefield and martyrdom. Female suicide bombers are often from the Muslim community (Bawa, 2017). According to Bawa (2017), women who carry out suicide bombings try to avoid detection by mainly male military forces by exploiting male assumptions about innocent women. The view that women are a weaker gender has led terrorist organizations to exploit this and use women as suicide bombers to cause havoc in the community (Agara, 2015).

In the Indonesian context, the IPAC report released on January 31, 2017 showed that in the last 18 months, a number of women were arrested or identified with several types of active roles in violent extremism. In December 2016, four women were arrested, namely Dian Yulia Novi, Ika Puspitasari alias Tasnima Salsabila, Tutin Sugiarti, and Arida Putri Maharani. Dian Yulia Novi, a former domestic worker abroad, was arrested for planning a suicide bombing in Jakarta. Meanwhile, Ika Puspitasari, a former domestic worker abroad, was arrested for planning a suicide bombing in Bali. Tutin Sugiarti is a herbal medicine seller and Islamic medicine therapist was arrested for acting as Dian Yulia Novi's introductory facilitator on behalf of pro-ISIS cell leaders, and is the founder of a pro-ISIS charity called Dapur Umahat Aseer (Kitchen of Prisoners' Wives). Arida Putri Maharani was arrested for helping her husband to make bombs. In October and July 2016, two women were arrested, namely Tini Susanti Kaduku and Jumaitun alias Ummi Delima. They were arrested for acting as armed fighters along with their husbands in the Eastern Indonesian Mujahidin (MIT) group. In September 2015, a woman named Aisyah Lina Kamelya created a pro-ISIS channel on Telegram social media, whose members included Indians, Kenyans and Libyans. The channel was named Baqiyah United Group. In August 2015, a woman named Ratna Nirmala encouraged her husband to accompany her and her son to Syria (IPAC, 2017).

According to Sydney Jones (as cited in Marcoes, 2018), young women in Indonesia involved in radical movements are no longer interested in playing the role of fund-raiser for jihad (fa'i), or traditional roles such as wives and mothers, even though they may desire to marry senior officials in their radical organization. These women actively adopt masculine patterns in jihad, such as active service in the battlefield, studying bomb assembly technology, or acting as suicide bombers. These masculine patterns of military behavior are dreamed of by young women who wish to serve in the war in Syria.

### **3. THE INVOLVEMENT OF DIAN YULIA NOVI IN TERRORISM**

In mid-December 2016, Indonesia was shocked by the presence of a woman named Dian Yulia Novi who was about to perpetrate a suicide bombing at the State Palace. The planning of the suicide bombing made Indonesian people aware that women could also participate actively in terrorist activities. Dian Yulia Novi was born in Cirebon, July 4, 1989. When planning to carry out a suicide bombing at the State Palace on December 11, 2016, Dian Yulia Novi was 27 years old (Arsyam, 2016). In an interview conducted by Ecep S. Yasa, a senior TV One reporter revealed how Dian Yulia Novi had previously worked in Singapore for 1.5 years and in Taiwan for 3 years. While in Singapore, Dian Yulia Novi worked as a caregiver

for three children aged 11 years, 9 years and 5 years respectively. Meanwhile, while working in Taiwan, she cared for a 78-year-old grandmother. While working abroad, Dian Yulia Novi did not wear a niqab or veil covering her lower face up to the eyes, but only a hijab (Annisa, 2016).

The interview also discovered how Dian Yulia Novi's learning about the concept of jihad encouraged her to engage in terrorist activities. Dian Yulia Novi mentioned that she was actively using Facebook and for approximately one year before planning the suicide bombing, she often read Facebook status updates about jihadists. Dian Yulia Novi stated that she did not join any group, but only listened to Facebook statuses and was driven by curiosity. Dian Yulia Novi also explained that she admired the writings posted on the Millah Ibrahim website. The majority of which are by Aman Abdurrahman. These writings not only discuss jihadists, but also muamalat, fiqh, aqeedah, the history of Islam, and monotheism. According to Dian Yulia Novi, there were no video recordings on the Millah Ibrahim website, only articles and voice recordings (Annisa, 2016).

During the interview, Dian Yulia Novi also explained the initial meeting with her husband, Muhammad Nur Solikin, who was also involved in the planning of the suicide bombing of the State Palace. According to Dian Yulia Novi, she became acquainted with Muhammad Nur Solikin in October 2016 when she was introduced to him. However, they then continued communication through Telegram social media. Dian Yulia Novi further mentioned that it was Muhammad Nur Solikin who proposed to her. Before marriage, they did not undergo the taaruf process and never exchanged photos. Dian Yulia Novi also stated knowing that Muhammad Nur Solikin already had a wife and child. Dian Yulia Novi was not present during the wedding and was represented by someone she did not know. According to her, the entire marriage process was managed by Muhammad Nur Solikin (Annisa, 2016).

The interview also indicated that Dian Yulia Novi initially offered to carry the bomb and was then approved by Muhammad Nur Solikin. According to Dian Yulia Novi, all planning of the suicide bombing was arranged by Muhammad Nur Solikin. She also explained that after she consented, she met Muhammad Nur Solikin to discuss the suicide bombing plan. However, after the meeting, Dian Yulia Novi parted from Muhammad Nur Solikin. On November 2016, they met again and Dian Yulia Novi was led by Muhammad Nur Solikin to declare baiat or an oath of allegiance. During the process of baiat, Dian Yulia Novi shook hands with Muhammad Nur Solikin while reciting the Arabic baiat text read by her husband. Dian Yulia Novi admitted that she did not know all of those involved in planning her suicide bombing, she only knew that those involved included herself, Muhammad Nur Solikin, and Bahrin Naim. Dian Yulia Novi explained that she had communicated through Telegram with Bahrin Naim for approximately three days. Bahrin Naim gave her instructions to target the suicide bombing at the Presidential Security Force (Paspampres) at the State Palace (Annisa, 2016).

In the researchers' interview conducted with Muhammad Nur Solikin, it appeared that the target, location, and timing of the suicide bombing were determined by Bahrin Naim. During his interview, Muhammad Nur Solikin explained that he was only a facilitator for Dian Yulia Novi who intended to perform amaliah or good deeds. According to Muhammad Nur Solikin, Ummu Abza introduced him to Dian Yulia Novi. The introduction was made via Telegram. Muhammad Nur Solikin considered his acquaintance with Dian Yulia Novi qadarullah (God's decree) since at that time he received an assignment from Bahrin Naim to carry out suicide bombings in Indonesia (which he called amaliah) and Bahrin Naim wanted women as executors. Muhammad Nur Solikin admitted that he did not understand why Bahrin Naim chose women as executors. According to Muhammad Nur Solikin, two other parties were

directly involved in planning the suicide bombing, namely Khafid Fathoni and Abu Izza. Khafid Fathoni served as a bomb maker, while Abu Izza provided a place to assemble bombs. Other parties who assisted in planning the suicide bombing of the State Palace included Agus Supriyadi, who acted as a driver (Solikin, personal interview, July 31, 2018).

Based on Ecep S. Yasa's interview with Dian Yulia Novi and the researchers' interview with Muhammad Nur Solikin, it is evident that the Internet played an important role in the planning of this suicide bombing. Dian Yulia Novi learned about the concept of jihad on the Internet, which then encouraged her to engage in terrorism. The Internet also played a role in connecting Dian Yulia Novi with Muhammad Nur Solikin and Bahrin Naim, so they could coordinate and plan suicide bombings. Moreover, Bahrin Naim had an important role planning suicide bombings; namely, issuing orders. Bahrin Naim is the leader of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), also known as Jamaah Ansharut Daulah Khilafah Nusantara. Bahrin Naim is named as the sole acting ISIS Indonesia coordinator in Syria. The leaders of JAD Indonesia are Aman Abdurrahman who has been detained in Nusakambangan and Abu Jandal who is reported to have died. In January 2017, JAD was categorized by the United States Department of Foreign Affairs as the Indonesian group that most supported ISIS. In addition, JAD is reported to manage hundreds of ISIS sympathizers throughout Indonesia (Moerti, 2017).

These interviews also reveal that Dian Yulia Novi actively desired to be involved in terrorist activities which she viewed as a form of jihad. This is consistent with Agara's statement (2015), that women's active participation in suicide operations and terrorist organizations needs to be understood as a conscious decision made by women who are aware of the implications and effects of their actions, just as with male terrorists.

The suicide bombing that Dian Yulia Novi tried to commit was one example of a terrorist plot that was foiled by the police. On December 10, 2016, the Special Anti-Terrorism Police Special Detachment 88 (Detachment 88) arrested Dian Yulia Novi, Muhammad Nur Solikin, and Agus Supriyadi (Sohuturon, 2017). The arrest of Muhammad Nur Solikin and Agus Supriyadi occurred under the Kalimalang flyover. Meanwhile, the arrest of Dian Yulia Novi occurred in a boarding house on Bintara Jaya VIII, Bekasi. The bomb was stored ready to explode in a black backpack in room number 104 in the boarding house. Dian Yulia Novi was sentenced to 7.5 years in prison on August 25, 2017 by the East Jakarta District Court (Putra, 2017). Meanwhile, Muhammad Nur Solikin was sentenced to 11 years in prison by the East Jakarta District Court (Vasandani, 2017).

#### **4. THE RATIONALIZATION OF DIAN YULIA NOVI'S INVOLVEMENT IN TERRORISM**

Ecep S. Yasa's interview with Dian Yulia Novi yielded information about her religious views which led her to plan a suicide bombing as a form of jihad. According to Dian Yulia Novi, the planned suicide bombing was not motivated by a desire to end her life caused by despair. Dian Yulia Novi viewed the suicide bombing as *istishhad* or martyrdom which aimed to reach Allah's blessing and gain the virtue of *jihad fi sabilillah* (jihad in the way of Allah). Dian Yulia Novi realized that the majority of religious scholars did not justify suicide bombings, but she stated that she was on the *Al Ghuroba* path, namely the path of outsiders in the midst of people who do not possess the same religious principles. Dian Yulia Novi explained that she did not feel insulted to be an outsider in this sense, instead, she felt proud. According to her, Islam began as an outsider's religion and will end up an outsider's religion.



She also stated that Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country, but not all of them pray and only a few people wear the niqab, a veil covering the lower face up to the eyes. According to Dian Yulia Novi, when she was walking wearing a niqab, many people considered her a strange person, not an ordinary person. Meanwhile, she stated that people who wear short hijabs, wear jeans, and display body curves are considered as normal. However, she realized that matters related to belief are *habluminallah* (human relations with God), not *habluminannas* (interhuman relations). Therefore, Dian Yulia Novi admitted that she did not pressure people to wear a niqab, but she regretted the majority of people saw women wearing a niqab as a strange phenomenon (Annisa, 2016).

In the researchers' interview with Dian Yulia Novi's husband, Muhammad Nur Solikin, he reported that he helped plan the suicide bombing (which he regarded as *amaliah*) due to the many injustices suffered by Muslims, especially in Syria, Afghanistan, and Indonesia. One example was the shooting of suspected terrorists. In fact, these people were not involved in terrorist activities. In addition, Muhammad Nur Solikin agreed that the meaning of *jihad* etymologically is struggling. However, he stated that the meaning of *jihad* terminologically is *qital* (war), not just struggling. According to him, the obligation to undertake *jihad* depends on the condition of *jihad* itself. He explained that there are two conditions of *jihad*, namely *fardhu ain* (all Muslims are obliged to do it, including women) and *fardhu kifayah* (not obligatory if another Muslim has done it) (Solikin, personal interview, July 31, 2018).

According to Muhammad Nur Solikin, if one inch of a Muslim group's land is seized by the enemies of Allah, it is necessary to carry out *jihad fardhu ain*. He viewed the planned suicide bombing of the State Palace as *jihad fardhu ain*, since Palestine was still occupied which belonged to Muslim groups. He explained that the *jihad* did not have to be performed in Palestine, but could be conducted in Indonesia to raise government awareness of the suffering experienced by fellow Muslims in Palestine and Syria. Muhammad Nur Solikin even mentioned that his planning of suicide bombings was an expression of his love for Indonesia, just as a mother rebuked her son for doing wrong. He also stated that the expression of his love was aimed at urging Indonesia to implement Islamic law. According to Muhammad Nur Solikin, when he was planning the suicide bombing, he tried hard to minimize the impact upon innocent victims from lay Muslim groups, such as pedestrians. However, he also stated that it was difficult to avoid the impact upon innocent victims because the action was not on the battlefield. According to him, it is natural that many people view planning suicide bombings as wrong and contrary to Islamic teachings, since their religious understanding may not be equivalent to his (Solikin, personal interview, July 31, 2018).

In the interview, Muhammad Nur Solikin also explained that he did not understand why Bahrin Naim chose the Presidential Security Force as the target of the suicide bombing. According to him, this did not need to be questioned since anyone could be a target as long as they were classified as a *shar'i* target (a religiously prescribed target). Muhammad Nur Solikin also admitted that he obeyed Bahrin Naim's commands. When the researchers asked what was meant by the *shar'i* target, Muhammad Nur Solikin explained that a *shar'i* target is anything *shar'i* (Allah's rule) defined as a combatant. One example of the *shar'i* targets according to Muhammad Nur Solikin is the *taghut*. Muhammad Nur Solikin explained that there are many kinds of *taghut*, among them are (1) Satan, who persuades people to worship a God besides Allah; (2) people who persuade others to obey a law other than God's law; (3) a ruler who applies a law other than God's law (Solikin, personal interview, July 31, 2018).

In the interview with the researchers, Muhammad Nur Solikin emphasized that the planning of the suicide bombing was commanded by God. Muhammad Nur Solikin stated that the planning of the suicide bombing was an *amaliah istishhadiyah* (act of martyrdom), not

simply an ordinary suicide. According to him, the act of suicide is a huge sin when people are desperate to end their lives. However, the suicide bombing was not planned due to despair or other worldly matters (Solikin, personal interview, July 31, 2018).

Therefore, the interviews conducted with Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin reveal that both regarded suicide bomb planning as a form of jihad that conforms to God's orders. They both held that planning a suicide bombing was different from ordinary suicide. According to them, planning a suicide bombing was not based on a desire to end a life due to despair like ordinary suicide, but was the way of Allah and not worldly things. The suicide bombings they intended to commit were certainly contrary to the concept of jihad taught in Islam, given that these actions would eliminate many innocent lives, and cause material losses. In fact, the concept of jihad in Islam does not teach Muslims to carry out suicide bombings which are acts of terror. As stated by Latif and Munir (2014), jihad opposes acts of terrorism, which include physical and mental torture of military personnel and civilians, or the destruction of property and public and private infrastructure aimed at instilling widespread fear and social disruption.

These interviews reveal a number of techniques were used to rationalize Dian Yulia Novi's involvement in terrorism as jihad. According to Matza and Sykes' neutralization theory, there are five neutralization techniques. However, the researchers' analysis of the interviews with Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin, revealed only four neutralization techniques were used to rationalize their actions, namely (1) denial of responsibility; (2) denial of victimization; (3) condemnation of the condemners; and (4) appeal to higher loyalties.

The first technique used was the denial of responsibility. This technique can be observed in Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin's statements that the planned suicide bombings at the State Palace were in accordance with God's orders. Their statements indicate that the perpetrators do not feel responsible since they comply with God's command. This technique is also observable in Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement that the planned suicide bombing at the State Palace was jihad fardhu ain, meaning that all Muslims, including women, should participate. Therefore, Muhammad Nur Solikin believed Dian Yulia Novi's involvement in the suicide bombing was not his responsibility, since it was related to jihad fardhu ain. Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin both emphasized the difference between ordinary suicide and suicide bombing which rationalized their actions, because they acted for God not worldly affairs. In addition, Muhammad Nur Solikin's reported that he received orders from Bahrun Naim to plan suicide bombings at the State Palace with women as executors. Muhammad Nur Solikin did not understand and never questioned the reason behind the order. He said that he only obeyed Bahrun Naim's orders. Thus, Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement gives the impression that planning the suicide bombing was not his responsibility because Bahrun Naim issued an order that had to be obeyed.

The second technique was the denial of victimization. This can be seen observed in Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement that anyone can be the target of suicide bombings as long as they are classified as a shar'i target, namely those defined as legitimate targets by God's rules. Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement justified the victimization of the Presidential Security Forces at the State Palace, because they were classified as a shar'i target.

The third technique used was condemnation of the condemners. This technique can be observed in Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement that people who view this suicide bombing as a wrong act or contradictory to Islamic teachings may not have an understanding of religion equal to his own. Muhammad Nur Solikin considered those who judged him and Dian Yulia Novi as false adherents to Islam as people without deep religious understanding. This technique can also be observed in Dian Yulia Novi's statement about Indonesian attitudes to

veiled women, who are viewed as strange, and instead see women who wear short headscarves, jeans, and display their body curves as normal. Dian Yulia Novi's statement indicates that these people cannot deem Dian Yulia Novi a false follower of Islam since, according to her, they lack religious piety.

The fourth technique involved an appeal to higher loyalties. This technique can be observed in Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement that the planned suicide bombing was intended to raise the Indonesian government's awareness of the suffering experienced by fellow Muslims in Palestine and Syria. Muhammad Nur Solikin's statement shows that the suicide bombing was not just intended to benefit himself and Dian Yulia Novi, but to forge solidarity among Muslims for the benefit of all Muslims. In addition, this technique was observed when Muhammad Nur Solikin's stated that the planned suicide bombing was an expression of his love for Indonesia which aimed to persuade Indonesia to implement Islamic law.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Dian Yulia Novi learned the concept of jihad which supported the involvement of women in terrorism with the help of the Internet. The Internet enabled Dian Yulia Novi to access social media and website content that encouraged her to become involved in suicide bombings. In addition, with the help of the Internet, Dian Yulia Novi also communicated with those who were willing to facilitate her desire to engage in terrorist activities in the name of jihad. One of these people was Muhammad Nur Solikin, who later became her husband. Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin shared the view that the suicide bombing of the State Palace was a form of jihad that complied with the commands of God. They also developed a series of techniques to rationalize Dian Yulia Novi's involvement in terrorism using the concept of jihad. These techniques were (1) denial of responsibility, namely the statement that the planned the suicide bombing was not their fault, given it conformed to God's and Bahrn Naim's orders; (2) denial of victimization, namely the statement that the Presidential Security Force deserved to be the target of suicide bombings because they are classified as a shar'i target; (3) condemnation of the condemners, namely the statement that people who view Dian Yulia Novi and Muhammad Nur Solikin as adherents to false teachings lack their deep religious understanding of Islam; and (4) appeal to higher loyalties, namely the statement that the planned suicide bombing was motivated by a sense of solidarity with all Muslims for the benefit of Muslims.

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