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LOCAL AGENCY, POVERTY, AND RELIGIOUS FRAMING IN COUNTER-RADICALIZATION: A HYBRID STATE–COMMUNITY MODEL FROM INDONESIA

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Abstrak

This article critically reassesses counter-radicalization practices in Indonesia, which have long been dominated by security-oriented and state-centric approaches emphasizing surveillance, law enforcement, and ideological control. Drawing on the theoretical perspectives of positive peace, the "local turn" in peacebuilding, and post-liberal peace, this study examines how former extremists and local communities simultaneously complement and challenge formal state frameworks in preventing violent extremism. The article focuses on the Yayasan Lingkar Perdamaian (YLP) in East Java, a community-based organization established by former militant networks that has become an important actor in grassroots peacebuilding and social reintegration. The study employs a qualitative case study approach based on fieldwork conducted in 2024, including in-depth interviews, limited participant observation, and document analysis. To assess the effectiveness of community-based counter-radicalization, this article introduces a hybrid evaluation matrix consisting of four interconnected dimensions: material, relational, cognitive-normative, and institutional transformation. The findings demonstrate that economic empowerment through micro-enterprises and cooperatives helps reduce socio-economic vulnerability among former extremists and their families. In addition, processes of social recognition and community engagement gradually erode stigma and rebuild trust. Religious literacy grounded in experiential legitimacy reframes the meaning of jihad from violent struggle into ethics of caregiving, responsibility, and social contribution. The study argues that YLP functions as a hybrid intermediary bridging state capacity and community legitimacy, although it remains vulnerable to co-optation, funding dependence, and institutional fragility. The article concludes by recommending policy co-production, multi-year blended financing, mentor certification, and stronger data governance as foundations for sustainable and locally grounded peacebuilding in the Global South.

Keywords: *counter-radicalization; local agency; peacebuilding from below; poverty; religious framing*.

A. INTRODUCTION

Radicalism and violent extremism continue to pose significant challenges in post-conflict societies, particularly across the Global South. Prevailing policy and scholarly discourses often reduce radicalization to a matter of ideological deviation, assuming that it can be effectively addressed through doctrinal correction and security-based interventions.[1] Such a perspective has contributed to the dominance of state-centric and securitized deradicalization frameworks, which tend to prioritize surveillance, legal enforcement, and ideological reorientation while insufficiently addressing underlying structural conditions.[2] As a result, these approaches may inadvertently reproduce cycles of grievance, resentment, and distrust toward state institutions.[3]

In response to these limitations, a growing body of literature advocates a peacebuilding-from-below approach, emphasizing the centrality of local actors, community cohesion, and socially embedded alternative narratives.[4] This perspective departs from purely coercive models by recognizing that sustainable deradicalization requires engagement with the socio-economic, cultural, and relational dimensions that shape individual and collective vulnerabilities.[5] Consequently, community-based strategies should not be viewed as substitutes for state interventions, but rather as complementary mechanisms that enhance the legitimacy and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts.

Within the Indonesian context, counter-terrorism policies remain largely dominated by a state-centric paradigm. Institutional responses have historically emphasized legal prosecution, incarceration, and security operations.[6] While such measures are often justified in terms of maintaining national stability, they also reflect a broader securitization bias that frames radicalization primarily as a criminal or ideological problem.[7] This framing risks obscuring the structural conditions, such as poverty, social exclusion, and uneven development, that contribute to the emergence and persistence of radicalization.

Empirical evidence increasingly demonstrates that socio-economic marginalization plays a crucial role in shaping pathways to violent extremism. Limited access to employment opportunities, persistent social stigma, and experiences of political exclusion have been shown to reinforce feelings of alienation among former offenders.[8] These conditions create fertile ground for the re-emergence of extremist narratives, suggesting that radicalization cannot be adequately understood through an ideological lens alone. Rather, it must be situated within broader dynamics of

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1 Alex P Schmid. "*Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion*." (ICCT Research Paper, 2019)

2 Adrian Cherney. "Evaluating Interventions to Disengage Extremists." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32, no. 5 (2020): 969–986.

3 Kris Christmann, *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence* (London: Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 2012).

4 Roger Mac Ginty, "Where Is the Local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding," *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2015): 840–856.

5 D.B. Subedi. "Preventing Violent Extremism in Fragile States." *Global Change, Peace & Security* 34, no. 1 (2022): 45–60.

6 Kikue Hamayotsu. "Indonesia's Counterterrorism Policy." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 50, no. 1 (2020): 92–110.

7 Arun Kundnani and Ben Hayes, *The Globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism Policies: Undermining Human Rights, Instrumentalising Civil Society* (Amsterdam: Transnational Institute, 2018).

8 Matteo, Vergani. et al. "The Three Ps of Radicalization." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 10 (2020): 854–870

structural inequality and unmet social justice.[9]

Comparative research across regions further reinforces this argument. Studies in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East consistently highlight how economic deprivation, weak governance, and structural injustice contribute to prolonged cycles of violence.[10] These findings resonate with contemporary peace studies emphasizing that sustainable peace requires addressing structural inequalities, not merely eliminating direct violence.[11]

Against this backdrop, community-based initiatives in Indonesia offer important alternative pathways. One notable example is the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) in Lamongan, which focuses on the social and economic reintegration of former terrorism convicts. Through programs such as micro-enterprise development, cooperative formation, and community engagement, YLP addresses both material and symbolic dimensions of reintegration.[12] Its approach combines economic empowerment with spiritual and social rehabilitation, thereby reducing stigma while fostering dignity and belonging.

A distinctive feature of YLP lies in its reliance on experiential legitimacy. The organization is led by former extremists who possess lived experience and moral authority within their communities. This form of legitimacy enables the articulation of alternative narratives that are often more persuasive than state-driven ideological interventions.[13] In this sense, YLP exemplifies how local agency can mediate religious reinterpretation and contribute to peacebuilding processes that are both context-sensitive and socially grounded.

Recent scholarship further underscores that radicalization is best understood as a multidimensional phenomenon emerging from the interaction between ideological grievances, socio-economic marginalization, and exclusive religious interpretations.[14] Within this framework, religion itself is inherently ambivalent: it can function both as a source of justification for violence and as a foundation for reconciliation.[15]

Building on these insights, the peacebuilding from below perspective and the notion of the local turn emphasize that sustainable peace depends on the capacity of communities to generate trust, solidarity, and legitimacy.[16] Evidence from various contexts, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Southern Philippines, demonstrates that local actors are often more effective than formal state institutions in facilitating reintegration and mitigating identity-based polarization.[17]

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[9] Olav Gøtzsche-Astrup, "The Time for Causal Designs: Reviewing the Impact Evaluation Methods of Counterradicalisation Programmes," *Journal for Deradicalization* 23 (2020): 1–37.

[10] Patricia Justino, Tilman Brück, and Philip Verwimp, "Violence, Inequality and Development," *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 3 (2018): 291–298.

[11] Oliver P. Richmond, "Peace Formation and Political Order in Conflict-Affected Societies," *International Peacekeeping* 27, no. 1 (2020): 1–23.

[12] Mohamad Dindin Hamam Sidik and Rika Dilawati, "The Role of Religion in Peacebuilding in Southeast Asia: A Systematic Literature Review," *Focus* 6, no. 1 (2025): 15–36

[13] Daniel Koehler, "Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism," *Journal for Deradicalization* 20 (2019): 1–5.

[14] Peter R. Neumann, *Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region* (London: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2017).

[15] Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware, "ISIS and the Challenge of Religious Extremism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 3 (2020): 1–21

[16] Hanna Leonardsson and Gustav Rudd, "The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: A Literature Review of Effective and Emancipatory Local Peacebuilding," *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2015): 825–839.

[17] I. Ibrahim and Patrick Barron, "Managing Conflict in Southeast Asia: Alternative Perspectives on

At the global level, debates on counter-radicalization reveal an enduring tension between state-centric and community-based approaches. State-led programs benefit from institutional capacity and resources but are frequently criticized for their top-down orientation and limited community engagement.[18] In contrast, community-based models highlight the importance of participatory engagement, social networks, and individualized support mechanisms in facilitating disengagement from extremist groups.[19]

In Southeast Asia, similar patterns are evident. Community-driven initiatives involving civil society and local religious leaders have proven effective in supporting post-conflict reintegration, often outperforming militarized approaches that lack social legitimacy.[20] In Indonesia, YLP provides a compelling case of how former perpetrators can transform into agents of peace through integrated socio-economic and narrative interventions.

Despite these developments, significant gaps remain in the literature. Existing studies often oscillate between uncritical celebration of community initiatives and the dominance of securitized state narratives.[21] There is a clear need for empirically grounded research that critically evaluates both the strengths and limitations of community-based counter-radicalization, including the ethical challenges associated with reintegration processes.

This article addresses this gap by examining YLP as a case study to assess how local agencies operate in practice. Rather than offering normative endorsement, the study provides a critical analysis of program implementation, outcomes, and limitations. It also explores key ethical concerns, including data confidentiality and the protection of participants' identities.

To advance this analysis, the article proposes a hybrid evaluation framework integrating four dimensions: material, relational, cognitive-normative, and institutional. This framework enables a more comprehensive assessment of how community-based initiatives both complement and challenge state-centric approaches. By shifting the analytical focus from narrow metrics of security effectiveness toward broader considerations of social legitimacy and sustainable peace, the study contributes to ongoing debates on counter-radicalization in the Global South.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative single-case study design to examine community-based counter-radicalization practices in Indonesia, focusing on the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) in Lamongan, East Java. A case study strategy is particularly appropriate for capturing complex social processes and context-specific dynamics, especially in understanding how local agency, socio-economic marginalization, and religious

Peacebuilding and State Formation," *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 7, no. 2 (2019): 233–252.

[18] Daniel Koehler, "Violent Extremism and Deradicalization Programs," dalam The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism and Counterterrorism, ed. Andrew Silke (London: Routledge, 2019), 228–239.

[19] Preben Bertelsen, "The Aarhus Model: Principles and Processes in Denmark's Prevention of Radicalization and Violent Extremism," *Journal for Deradicalization* 7 (2016): 241–253.

[20] Naureen Fink, Sara Zeiger, and Rafia Bhulai, "A Blueprint for a Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism," *Global Policy* 10, no. 2 (2019): 285–296.

[21] Adrian Cherney and Kristina Murphy, "Being a 'Suspect Community' in a Post 9/11 World: The Impact of the War on Terror on Muslim Communities in Australia," *Annual Review of Criminology* 3 (2020): 353–375

framing interact within grassroots peacebuilding initiatives. This approach departs from reductionist perspectives that frame radicalization solely as ideological deviation, instead situating it within broader structural, relational, and institutional contexts. Qualitative case studies are particularly useful for exploring socially embedded phenomena and context-dependent experiences that cannot be adequately explained through purely quantitative approaches.[22]

The research adopts an interpretive paradigm, emphasizing the subjective meanings and lived experiences of actors involved in reintegration and disengagement processes. This perspective is important because dominant counter-terrorism studies remain largely embedded in state-centric and securitized frameworks that often overlook local agency and socio-cultural dimensions of peacebuilding. By foregrounding local narratives, this study seeks to generate a grounded understanding of how "peacebuilding from below" operates in practice. In line with Roger Mac Ginty's concept of "critical localism," local peace actors should not merely be viewed as passive recipients of state intervention but as active agents who negotiate, adapt, and reshape peacebuilding practices within their own socio-cultural contexts.[23]

Research Model and Operational Framework

To evaluate the effectiveness of community-based counter-radicalization, this study develops a Hybrid State–Community Evaluation Matrix. The model combines insights from positive peace theory, the local turn in peacebuilding, and post-liberal peace approaches. It is designed to assess how state institutions and local community actors interact in producing sustainable disengagement from violent extremism. The framework also responds to recent critiques in countering violent extremism (CVE) studies that emphasize the need for multidimensional and evidence-based evaluation models beyond narrow security indicators.[24]

The evaluation matrix consists of four interrelated analytical dimensions. First, the material dimension examines economic vulnerability, livelihood access, entrepreneurship, and cooperative-based empowerment programs. This dimension is informed by studies showing that socio-economic exclusion and structural marginalization often create conditions that increase vulnerability to radicalization.[25]4 Second, the relational dimension focuses on social recognition, trust-building, community acceptance, and the reconstruction of social networks between former extremists and society. Third, the cognitive-normative dimension analyzes processes of religious reinterpretation, ideological transformation, and the reframing of jihad narratives toward peaceful and socially constructive meanings. Fourth, the institutional dimension evaluates governance structures, accountability mechanisms, collaboration with state agencies, and organizational sustainability.

These four dimensions function as operational categories guiding data collection, coding, interpretation, and evaluation. Through this matrix, counter-radicalization is understood not merely as ideological disengagement, but as a

[22] Uwe Flick, "Designing Qualitative Research," *SAGE Open* 9, no. 4 (2019): 1–11

[23] Roger Mac Ginty, "Critical Localism in Peacebuilding," *Third World Quarterly* 40, no. 5 (2019): 840–856.

[24] Adrian Cherney, "Evaluating CVE Programs: Effectiveness and the Problem of Evidence," *Annual Review of Criminology* 3 (2020): 221–239

[25] Matteo Vergani et al., "The Three Ps of Radicalization: Push, Pull and Personal Factors," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 10 (2020): 854–870.

multidimensional process involving socio-economic inclusion, symbolic recognition, normative transformation, and institutional legitimacy. The matrix also reflects Adrian Cherney's argument that effective CVE evaluation requires attention to social cohesion, behavioral change, institutional trust, and long-term community resilience rather than relying exclusively on recidivism indicators.[26]

Fieldwork was conducted between June and September 2024. Primary data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with former terrorism convicts, YLP staff, religious leaders, and local community members. Informants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling to ensure access to individuals with direct experience and relevant knowledge. Semi-structured interviews enabled the exploration of personal trajectories, perceptions, and meanings while maintaining analytical flexibility. In addition, limited participant observation was conducted to capture everyday interactions and social dynamics within reintegration processes. Secondary data were obtained from policy documents, state reports, academic publications, and credible media sources to contextualize field findings. This design follows Flick's argument that qualitative research is particularly effective for understanding complex social realities through contextual interpretation and flexible inquiry processes.[27]

Data analysis was conducted using thematic coding, combining deductive and inductive strategies. Deductive categories were derived from the four-dimensional evaluation matrix and theoretical frameworks such as peacebuilding from below and the local turn, while inductive coding allowed new patterns and counter-narratives to emerge from the field data. Thematic analysis was selected because it provides a systematic yet flexible procedure for identifying patterns of meaning across qualitative data.[28][7] This multidimensional analytical framework enables a broader assessment of counter-radicalization practices beyond narrow security indicators.

Ethical considerations were central to this research due to the sensitivity of working with former extremists. The study adhered to strict ethical protocols, including informed consent, anonymization through pseudonyms, and the application of the do-no-harm principle. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research and their rights, including the option to withdraw at any stage. These measures were essential to minimize social and legal risks while ensuring research integrity. In sensitive research involving vulnerable groups and politically charged issues, ethical reflexivity and participant protection are crucial to minimizing unintended harm and maintaining trust between researchers and participants.[29]

Operational Definitions

To ensure conceptual clarity and analytical consistency, this study defines several key concepts as operational categories guiding data collection, interpretation, and analysis.

1. Local Agency

Local agency refers to the capacity of community-based actors to actively shape, negotiate, and implement peacebuilding and counter-radicalization processes within their socio-cultural context. In this study, local agency is operationalized through indicators such as community participation, local

[26] Adrian Cherney, *Evaluating CVE Programs*, 231.
[27] Flick, "Designing Qualitative Research," 5–7.
[28] Lorelli S. Nowell et al., "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19 (2020): 1–13.
[29] Tom Clark, "Ethics in Sensitive Research," *Qualitative Research* 19, no. 2 (2019): 137–155.

leadership, grassroots initiatives, social mediation, and the ability of former extremists and local actors to create alternative social and religious narratives. The concept emphasizes that local communities are not passive recipients of state policies but active agents in producing sustainable peace.[30]

2. Poverty

Poverty in this study is understood not merely as a lack of income, but as a multidimensional socio-economic vulnerability that may contribute to social exclusion and susceptibility to extremist recruitment. Operational indicators include unstable livelihoods, unemployment, limited access to economic resources, debt dependency, low educational opportunities, and restricted social mobility. The study specifically examines how economic empowerment programs, entrepreneurship, and cooperatives function as mechanisms of social reintegration and resilience building.[31]

3. Religious Framing

Religious framing refers to the process through which religious concepts, symbols, and narratives are interpreted and mobilized to shape ethical orientations and social behavior. In the context of this research, the concept is operationalized through indicators such as reinterpretation of jihad, religious counseling, peace-oriented Islamic narratives, experiential religious learning, and the transformation of exclusivist theological understandings into inclusive and socially constructive perspectives. Religious framing also functions as a mechanism for producing moral legitimacy and counter-narratives against violent extremism.[32]

4. Counter-Radicalization

Counter-radicalization is defined as preventive and transformative efforts aimed at reducing vulnerability to violent extremism before individuals engage in acts of terrorism. Unlike securitized deradicalization approaches focused primarily on ideological correction, this study conceptualizes counter-radicalization as a multidimensional process involving economic inclusion, social reintegration, community engagement, and normative transformation. Operational indicators include reduced social isolation, increased civic participation, economic stabilization, ideological disengagement, and strengthened community trust.[33]

5. Peacebuilding from Below

Peacebuilding from below refers to grassroots-based peace initiatives driven primarily by local communities rather than imposed exclusively through top-down state interventions. In this study, the concept is operationalized through indicators such as community participation, informal reconciliation practices, locally embedded problem-solving mechanisms, collaborative social networks, and culturally grounded approaches to conflict transformation. This framework highlights the importance of relational trust, local legitimacy, and everyday social interactions in sustaining peace and preventing violent extremism.[34]

6. Hybrid State–Community Model

The Hybrid State–Community Model refers to collaborative interaction between

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[30] Roger Mac Ginty and Pamina Firchow, "Top-Down and Bottom-Up Narratives of Peace and Conflict," *Politics* 36, no. 3 (2021): 308–323

[31] David Nilsson and Anna Jarstad, "Social Exclusion and Vulnerability in Post-Conflict Societies," *Peacebuilding* 10, no. 4 (2022): 455–472.

[32] Sarah Marsden, "Reintegrating Extremists through Religious Reframing," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 15, no. 2 (2023): 176–194.

[33] Stian Lid and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, "Preventing Radicalization through Social Inclusion," *Journal for Deradicalization* 31 (2022): 55–81.

[34] Séverine Autesserre, "The Frontlines of Peace: Local Peacebuilding in Contemporary Conflict," *International Affairs* 97, no. 2 (2021): 513–530.

formal state institutions and local community actors in implementing counter-radicalization and reintegration programs. Operational indicators include institutional collaboration, resource-sharing, policy coordination, mentorship systems, community legitimacy, and accountability mechanisms. This model is used to analyze how state authority and local legitimacy intersect in producing sustainable peace outcomes. The model reflects contemporary debates on hybrid peace governance in the Global South, where sustainable peace often emerges through negotiation between formal institutions and informal community structures.[35]

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP): Local Agency and a Community-Based Counter-Radicalization Mode

The Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) represents a distinctive form of community-based counter-radicalization rooted in local agency and experiential legitimacy. Established in 2017 in Lamongan, East Java, by a former member of an extremist network, YLP emerged from a process of ideological transformation and lived experience within radical circles. This background constitutes a crucial foundation of its social legitimacy, as the organization is led and managed by individuals who possess first-hand knowledge of radicalization pathways. Consequently, the narratives and interventions promoted by YLP tend to be perceived as more credible and relatable by both former extremists and the broader community.[36]

Unlike state-led deradicalization programs, which often rely on formal authority and institutional legitimacy, YLP operates through relational trust and moral authority derived from experience. This distinction is significant, as recent studies emphasize that disengagement from extremism is more likely to occur when interventions are delivered by actors who are socially embedded and perceived as authentic.[37] In this sense, YLP exemplifies how local agency can function as a critical driver of peacebuilding processes that are context-sensitive and socially grounded.

Empirical findings from this study indicate that YLP's approach to counter-radicalization is structured around four interrelated dimensions: economic-spiritual empowerment, social recognition, alternative narrative construction, and symbolic resistance. These dimensions operate simultaneously and reinforce one another, forming a holistic model of reintegration that addresses both structural and ideological aspects of radicalization.

First, the economic-spiritual dimension constitutes the foundation of YLP's intervention. Programs such as entrepreneurship training, micro-business development, and cooperative initiatives aim to address the structural vulnerabilities faced by former terrorism convicts following their release. In many cases, individuals encounter significant barriers to employment due to stigma and limited access to economic resources. This condition often exacerbates feelings of alienation and marginalization, which, as the literature suggests, are key drivers of vulnerability to re-radicalization.[38] By facilitating access to capital, skills training, and market networks, YLP provides

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[35] Gëzim Visoka and Oliver P. Richmond, "After Liberal Peace? From Failed Statebuilding to an Emancipatory Peace," *Cooperation and Conflict* 57, no. 1 (2022): 3–21.

[36] Koehler, Understanding Deradicalization, 45

[37] Cherney, "Evaluating Counter-Radicalization Programs, 221-22.

[38] Vergani. et al. The Three Ps of Radicalization, 854–55

pathways toward economic self-reliance while simultaneously integrating religious values that emphasize moderation, responsibility, and social ethics.

Importantly, this economic intervention is not merely material in nature but is closely intertwined with spiritual transformation. Religious teachings are framed in a way that connects economic activity with ethical responsibility, thereby redefining notions of piety and struggle in non-violent terms. This integration reflects broader findings that economic empowerment combined with value-based orientation can significantly reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies.[39]

Second, the relational dimension focuses on restoring social recognition and rebuilding trust between former offenders and their communities. Reintegration is often hindered by what may be termed "layered stigma," where individuals are simultaneously perceived as security threats by the state and as social outsiders by their communities.[40] YLP addresses this challenge by creating spaces for interaction, including public forums, religious gatherings, and community dialogues. Through these platforms, former convicts are gradually repositioned as active participants in social life rather than passive subjects of surveillance.

Field observations suggest that such interactions play a crucial role in transforming perceptions and reducing prejudice. Over time, these engagements contribute to the reconstruction of social identity, allowing former offenders to reclaim dignity and belonging. This finding aligns with research emphasizing that social recognition and inclusion are essential components of sustainable disengagement from extremist networks.[41]

Third, YLP actively develops alternative religious narratives that challenge the ideological foundations of extremism. Through study circles, seminars, and informal discussions, YLP facilitators—including former extremists—reinterpret religious texts that have previously been used to justify violence. Rather than adopting a confrontational or doctrinal approach, these reinterpretations are grounded in everyday experiences and communicated in accessible language.

This strategy reflects a growing consensus in the literature that counter-narratives are most effective when they are contextually embedded and delivered by credible messengers.[42] In the case of YLP, experiential legitimacy plays a decisive role: former perpetrators possess the authority to critically reflect on their past beliefs, thereby enhancing the persuasive power of their narratives.

Fourth, the symbolic dimension of YLP's work involves the transformation of former extremists into agents of peace. By publicly presenting individuals who have renounced violence, YLP constructs alternative symbols that directly challenge the appeal of extremist identities. These figures function not only as role models but also as sources of moral authority within the community.

Empirical evidence suggests that such a symbolic transformation has a profound impact on public perception. As one community member noted, messages delivered by former perpetrators tend to be perceived as more authentic than those conveyed by state authorities. This finding underscores the importance of symbolic capital in countering extremist narratives and aligns with studies highlighting the role of

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[39] Justino. et al. Violence and Development, 283–298.

[40] Arun Kundnani and Ben Hayes. "The Globalisation of CVE." *Race & Class* 62, no. 1 (2020): 3–20.

[41] Subedi. Preventing Violent Extremism." Global Change, 45–60.

[42] Kurt Braddock. "Counter-Narratives and Persuasion." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 3 (2020): 1–17.

identity transformation in deradicalization processes.[43]

Taken together, these four dimensions illustrate that YLP's model extends beyond conventional deradicalization frameworks. Rather than focusing solely on ideological correction or security measures, it addresses the structural, relational, and symbolic dimensions of radicalization simultaneously. This integrated approach reflects the principles of peacebuilding from below, which emphasize the role of local actors, community participation, and social legitimacy in sustaining peace.[44]

Moreover, the YLP case demonstrates that effective counter-radicalization requires a shift from a securitization paradigm toward a more holistic framework that prioritizes human security, social justice, and community resilience. While state institutions remain important, their interventions must be complemented by community-based initiatives that are capable of addressing the everyday realities of affected individuals.[45]

In conclusion, YLP provides a compelling example of how local agencies can transform the dynamics of counter-radicalization in post-conflict contexts. By integrating economic empowerment, social recognition, religious reinterpretation, and symbolic transformation, YLP not only facilitates reintegration but also contributes to the broader project of building sustainable and inclusive peace in Indonesia.

2. Limitations of the State-Centric Model in Deradicalization

The findings of this study reveal that deradicalization efforts in Indonesia remain predominantly shaped by a state-centric paradigm that prioritizes securitization, surveillance, and legal enforcement. Institutions such as the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) and the Detachment 88 Anti-Terror Unit have played a crucial role in disrupting terrorist networks and preventing immediate threats. However, this approach is largely oriented toward short-term security objectives and often overlooks the deeper structural and social conditions that contribute to radicalization.[46]

This securitized framework tends to conceptualize radicalization primarily as a problem of ideology and criminality, thereby emphasizing containment and control rather than social reintegration. While such measures are effective in weakening organizational capacity and reducing immediate risks, they are insufficient in addressing long-term vulnerabilities such as poverty, social exclusion, and uneven development.[47] As a result, deradicalization policies risk becoming reactive rather than transformative, focusing on symptoms rather than underlying causes.

Empirical evidence from fieldwork in Lamongan illustrates these limitations. Former terrorism convicts frequently encounter significant challenges upon release, particularly in accessing employment and rebuilding social relationships. One informant emphasized that social stigma represents a more profound burden than incarceration itself, highlighting the enduring nature of exclusion and marginalization. These experiences reflect a broader pattern in which individuals are released from prison without adequate support systems, leaving them vulnerable to renewed alienation.

This finding is consistent with recent scholarship demonstrating that post-release conditions play a critical role in shaping the

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[43] Roger Mac Ginty. "Critical Localism 840–856.

[44] Oliver P Richmond "Post-Liberal Peace." *International Peacekeeping* 27, no. 1 (2020): 1–15.

[45] Leonardsson et.el, Local Turn, 825–839.

[46] Kikue Hamayotsu. "Indonesia's Counterterrorism Policy." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 50, no. 1 (2020): 92–110.

[47] Kundnani and Ben Hayes. "The Globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism, 3–20

trajectory of disengagement from extremism.[48] Without access to livelihoods and social acceptance, former offenders may experience frustration and identity crises, which can create openings for the re-emergence of extremist narratives. In this context, deradicalization cannot be understood as a discrete intervention but must be viewed as a long-term process requiring sustained socio-economic and relational support.

Furthermore, testimonies from practitioners reinforce the structural gaps in current approaches. A staff member of a community-based organization noted that state interventions often end at the point of release, with limited follow-up support in terms of employment or psychosocial assistance. This observation underscores a fundamental disconnect between policy design and lived realities. While the state focuses on monitoring and compliance, individuals face immediate challenges related to survival and social acceptance.

International literature strongly supports this critique. Studies on violent extremism increasingly emphasize that radicalization is shaped by the interaction of structural, ideological, and personal factors.[49] However, state-centric models often privilege ideological correction and network disruption, neglecting the socio-economic conditions that sustain vulnerability. In the Indonesian context, this imbalance results in a fragmented approach that fails to integrate security measures with social reintegration strategies.

Moreover, the centralized and technocratic nature of state-led programs limits their responsiveness to local contexts. Policies are often designed at the national level and implemented uniformly, without sufficient consideration of regional variations and community dynamics.[50] This lack of contextual sensitivity reduces the effectiveness of interventions, as local needs and cultural specificities are not adequately addressed.

Another critical limitation concerns the issue of legitimacy. Deradicalization programs that are perceived as instruments of state control tend to generate distrust among their target populations.[51] In many cases, the presence of security personnel in reintegration processes is interpreted as an extension of surveillance rather than support. This perception reinforces psychological distance between the state and former offenders, undermining the potential for genuine engagement.

Field data from Lamongan clearly illustrate this legitimacy gap. Community members and local leaders consistently emphasized that interactions facilitated by state actors are often viewed with suspicion, whereas initiatives led by community figures are perceived as more trustworthy and inclusive. This distinction highlights the importance of relational legitimacy, which cannot be imposed through formal authority but must be cultivated through sustained interaction and mutual recognition.

In addition to legitimacy concerns, the state-centric model also exhibits limitations in addressing the empowerment dimension of reintegration. Many former convicts reported that they were required to comply with administrative procedures, such as regular reporting, without receiving meaningful support for rebuilding their livelihoods. This imbalance between obligation and support creates a sense of frustration and dependency,

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[48] Cherney. Evaluating Counter-Radicalization Program, 221–239.

[49] Vergani et al. The Three Ps of Radicalization, 854–870.

[50] Subedi. Preventing Violent Extremism in Fragile States, 45–60.

[51] Christmann, *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence,* 67.

further complicating the reintegration process.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with critiques of securitization approaches in counter-radicalization literature. Scholars argue that an excessive focus on security can produce unintended consequences, including the reinforcement of exclusion and the reproduction of grievances.[52] By framing individuals primarily as security threats, such approaches may inadvertently hinder their transition into socially integrated citizens.

In contrast, emerging research highlights the importance of integrating social, economic, and relational dimensions into deradicalization strategies.[538] This perspective emphasizes that sustainable disengagement from extremism requires not only ideological transformation but also structural inclusion and social recognition. Without these elements, interventions risk remaining superficial and short-lived.

The Indonesian case thus illustrates a broader tension between state-centric and community-based approaches. While the state possesses the institutional capacity to enforce security and maintain order, it often lacks the social embeddedness necessary to foster trust and facilitate reintegration. Conversely, community actors are better positioned to address relational and cultural dimensions but may lack resources and institutional support.

This tension underscores the need for a more integrated and hybrid approach that combines the strengths of both models. Rather than privileging securitization, deradicalization policies should incorporate community-based strategies that prioritize empowerment, inclusion, and local legitimacy. Such an approach would enable a more comprehensive response to radicalization, addressing both its structural roots and its ideological manifestations.

In conclusion, the limitations of the state-centric model in Indonesia are not merely technical but fundamentally structural and relational. By focusing narrowly on security, existing policies fail to address the complex interplay of factors that sustain radicalization. The absence of economic support, social recognition, and local legitimacy undermines the effectiveness of deradicalization efforts and increases the risk of recidivism.

The findings of this study, therefore, suggest that a shift toward peacebuilding from below is necessary to complement state interventions. By positioning communities as central actors in reintegration processes, this approach offers a more inclusive and sustainable pathway for addressing violent extremism. Ultimately, the challenge lies not in replacing the state-centric model, but in transforming it through meaningful engagement with local actors and contexts

3. Peacebuilding from Below through Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP)

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) constitutes a significant alternative within Indonesia's counter-radicalization landscape by operationalizing a peacebuilding from below approach. This perspective challenges the dominance of state-centric paradigms by emphasizing that sustainable peace cannot be achieved solely through top-down interventions, but must be rooted in local agency, community participation, and socially embedded practices.[54] In this regard, YLP provides an empirical illustration of how grassroots initiatives can address the multidimensional nature of radicalization in

[52] Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware. "Religious Extremism." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 3 (2020): 197–215.

[53] Ginty, "Where Is the Local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding," 840–45.

[54] Ginty, Critical Localism in Peacebuilding 846.

ways that formal institutions often fail to capture.

YLP's approach is distinguished by its integration of economic, social, and spiritual dimensions into a coherent framework of reintegration. Rather than treating deradicalization as a purely ideological or security-oriented process, YLP situates it within the everyday realities of former terrorism convicts (ex-napiter), particularly their struggles with economic survival, social stigma, and identity reconstruction. This holistic orientation reflects broader findings in the literature, which emphasize that disengagement from violent extremism is shaped by the interaction of structural, relational, and cognitive factors.[55]

At the material level, YLP implements a range of economic empowerment programs, including micro-enterprise development, cooperative formation, entrepreneurship training, and access to market networks. These initiatives aim to address one of the most persistent challenges faced by former offenders: economic marginalization. Following release, many individuals encounter significant barriers to employment due to stigma and limited skills, which in turn reinforces their vulnerability to re-radicalization.[56] By providing opportunities for income generation and economic self-reliance, YLP not only improves material conditions but also contributes to the restoration of dignity and self-worth.

Importantly, the economic dimension of YLP's intervention extends beyond mere livelihood support. It is closely linked to broader processes of identity transformation and social reintegration. For many participants, the ability to engage in productive economic activities serves as a pathway to reclaim social recognition and rebuild trust within their communities. This finding is consistent with research indicating that economic inclusion plays a critical role in breaking cycles of violence and fostering long-term stability.[57]

However, economic empowerment alone is insufficient without social acceptance. Accordingly, YLP places strong emphasis on the relational dimension of peacebuilding, which involves rebuilding trust and fostering inclusive social relations. Through community dialogues, religious gatherings, and public engagement activities, YLP creates spaces for interaction between former offenders and community members. These interactions are crucial in reducing stigma and facilitating the gradual reconstruction of social bonds.

Field data suggest that this process of social recognition is essential for sustainable reintegration. Without acceptance from the community, former offenders remain socially marginalized, regardless of their economic progress. This dynamic underscores the importance of what scholars describe as "relational legitimacy"—a form of legitimacy that emerges from trust, recognition, and everyday interaction rather than formal authority.[58]

A key factor enabling this relational process is the role of YLP's founder and facilitators, who possess what may be termed experiential legitimacy. As former participants in extremist networks, they are uniquely positioned to engage with individuals undergoing similar transitions. Their narratives are not perceived as abstract or doctrinal, but as grounded in lived experience, thereby enhancing their credibility and persuasive power. This form of legitimacy has been identified in recent studies as a critical element in effective

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[55] Vergani et al., "The Three Ps of Radicalization, 854-56.

[56] Cherney, "Evaluating Counter-Radicalization Programs," 221–239.

[57] Justino et al., Violence and Development, 283–298.

[58] Subedi, Preventing Violent Extremism, 45–60

counter-radicalization, particularly in community-based settings.[59]

Beyond economic and relational dimensions, YLP also foregrounds the importance of cognitive-normative transformation, particularly through the reinterpretation of religious teachings. In many cases, extremist ideologies are sustained by rigid and decontextualized interpretations of religious texts. YLP addresses this issue by facilitating religious study forums and discussions that promote inclusive, contextual, and non-violent understandings of Islam.

Within these spaces, key concepts such as jihad are reframed as ethical practices related to everyday life, including providing for one's family, contributing to society, and maintaining social harmony. This reinterpretation shifts the meaning of religious obligation from violent struggle to constructive engagement, thereby undermining the ideological foundations of extremism.

This approach aligns with a growing body of literature emphasizing that religion is not inherently a driver of violence, but rather a field of contested interpretation that can be mobilized for both conflict and peace.[60] When mediated by credible local actors, religious narratives can serve as powerful resources for reconciliation and social cohesion.

In addition to cognitive transformation, YLP's strategy also involves a symbolic dimension, which plays a crucial role in reshaping public perceptions. By presenting former extremists who have transformed, YLP creates alternative symbols that challenge dominant narratives of radicalism. These individuals embody the possibility of change and serve as living evidence that disengagement from violence is both possible and meaningful.

Such symbolic representation is particularly important in countering extremist propaganda, which often relies on heroic and martyrdom narratives. By offering alternative role models grounded in peace and social responsibility, YLP contributes to the reconfiguration of collective imaginaries surrounding identity and belonging. This finding is consistent with studies highlighting the importance of symbolic capital in processes of deradicalization.[61]

Furthermore, the YLP model demonstrates significant relevance beyond the Indonesian context. In many Global South countries, radicalization is closely linked to structural inequalities, weak state capacity, and fragmented social relations. In such contexts, community-based approaches are not merely complementary but often necessary to address gaps left by formal institutions.[62]

Comparative evidence supports this argument. Programs such as EXIT-Deutschland in Germany and the Aarhus Model in Denmark similarly emphasize mentorship, community engagement, and individualized support.[63] However, YLP's distinctiveness lies in its integration of economic empowerment with religious and social transformation within a localized cultural framework. This hybrid model reflects the adaptability of peacebuilding from below in diverse socio-political contexts.

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[59] Koehler, *Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism*, 56

[60] Hoffman and Jacob Ware, Religious Extremism, 197–215.

[61] Kurt Braddock, "Counter-Narratives and Persuasion," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 3 (2020): 1–17

[62] liver P. Richmond, "Post-Liberal Peace," *International Peacekeeping* 27, no. 1 (2020): 1–15.

[63] Preben Bertelsen, "Danish Preventive Measures and Deradicalization Strategies: The Aarhus Model," *Panorama: Insights into Asian and European Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2015): 241–253.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the potential limitations of this approach. Community-based initiatives often face challenges related to resource constraints, dependency on key individuals, and risks of co-optation by state agendas.[64] Therefore, while YLP demonstrates the potential of grassroots peacebuilding, its sustainability depends on the development of supportive institutional frameworks and accountability mechanisms.

In conclusion, the experience of YLP underscores the importance of rethinking counter-radicalization beyond securitization. By integrating economic empowerment, social recognition, religious reinterpretation, and symbolic transformation, YLP offers a multidimensional model that addresses both the structural and ideological roots of radicalization. This approach not only complements state interventions but also provides a critical corrective by centering local agency and community resilience.

Ultimately, the YLP case illustrates that peacebuilding from below is not simply an alternative strategy, but a necessary component of sustainable peace in post-conflict societies.

4. Epistemic Tension between the State-Centric Model and the Community

The findings of this study reveal a pronounced epistemic tension between two dominant paradigms of deradicalization in Indonesia: the state-centric model and the community-based model. The state-centric approach is primarily grounded in a securitization framework, emphasizing surveillance, law enforcement, and ideological containment. Its central objective is to dismantle extremist networks and prevent the recurrence of violence through institutional control mechanisms. In contrast, the community-based approach prioritizes social legitimacy, relational trust, and the reconstruction of everyday life through economic inclusion and social reconciliation.[65]

This divergence reflects not merely a difference in policy orientation but a deeper epistemological divide regarding how radicalization is understood and addressed. While the state conceptualizes radicalization as a security threat requiring containment, community actors approach it as a social and relational phenomenon rooted in marginalization, identity crises, and fractured social ties.[66] Consequently, each model operates with distinct logics: the state emphasizes risk management and compliance, whereas communities focus on trust-building and social reintegration.

Recent scholarship suggests that sustainable peace is more likely to emerge when these two approaches are integrated rather than treated as mutually exclusive.[67] Community-based reintegration programs, however, require institutional support from the state to ensure continuity and scalability, while state-led initiatives need local legitimacy to enhance effectiveness and acceptance.[68] Thus, the challenge lies not in choosing between the two models but in reconciling their epistemological differences.

Nevertheless, empirical findings indicate that such integration remains difficult in practice. From the perspective of state institutions, community-based initiatives are often viewed with suspicion. Programs that do not explicitly emphasize ideological "correction" are sometimes perceived as insufficiently rigorous or potentially risky.

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[64] Hanna Leonardsson and Gustav Rudd, "Local Turn," *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2019): 825–839.

[65] Cherney, "Evaluating Counter-Radicalization, 221–239

[66] Vergani et al., "The Three Ps of Radicalization, 854–870.

[67] Kris Christmann, Preventing Radicalisation, 145–162.

[68] Subedi, Preventing Violent Extremism: 45–60.

This skepticism reflects a broader tendency within securitized frameworks to equate effectiveness with control and measurable compliance.

Conversely, community actors frequently perceive state interventions as overly repressive and disconnected from local realities. The presence of security personnel in reintegration processes is often interpreted as an extension of surveillance rather than genuine support. As one practitioner noted, interactions led by state authorities tend to generate discomfort and distrust, whereas community-led initiatives foster a sense of acceptance and belonging. This perception highlights a critical legitimacy gap that undermines the effectiveness of state-centric approaches.

This gap can be understood as an "epistemic divide" between two competing logics: the logic of threat prevention and the logic of relationship restoration. The former seeks to minimize risk through control mechanisms, while the latter aims to rebuild trust and social cohesion. These differing logics shape not only policy design but also the lived experiences of individuals undergoing reintegration.

Within this context, the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) emerges as a bridging institution capable of mediating between these two paradigms. On one hand, YLP engages with state actors to ensure that former offenders remain within acceptable regulatory frameworks. On the other hand, it translates peacebuilding narratives into everyday language grounded in lived experience, thereby enhancing their resonance within local communities. This dual role allows YLP to navigate the tension between formal authority and social legitimacy.

Comparative experiences from other contexts reinforce the importance of such hybrid arrangements. In the United Kingdom, the Channel program illustrates the tension between centralized security interventions and community-based engagement, often resulting in contested perceptions of legitimacy.[69] Meanwhile, initiatives such as EXIT-Deutschland demonstrate that successful disengagement programs depend on balancing state oversight with individualized, community-oriented support mechanisms.[70] These examples suggest that hybridity rather than exclusivity is a key condition for effective counter-radicalization.

In the Indonesian context, YLP exemplifies how such hybridity can be operationalized. The state provides the legal and institutional framework necessary for maintaining security, while community actors address the socio-economic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of reintegration that lie beyond the reach of formal institutions. This complementary relationship enables a more holistic approach to counter-radicalization, combining structural intervention with relational engagement.

Moreover, the hybrid model demonstrated by YLP reflects broader theoretical developments in peacebuilding studies, particularly the notion of the local turn. This perspective emphasizes that sustainable peace emerges from the interaction between global norms, state structures, and local practices.[71] Rather than viewing communities as passive recipients of policy, the local turn recognizes them as active producers of knowledge and agents of transformation.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that hybrid approaches are not without challenges. Power asymmetries

[69] Fahid Qurashi, "The Prevent Strategy and the Channel Programme: Deradicalisation Policies and Practices in the UK," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 11, no. 3 (2018): 534–547.

[70] Koehler, Understanding Deradicalization, 45-47

[71] Leonardsson et el, Local Turn, 825–839.

between state institutions and community actors can lead to co-optation, where local initiatives are absorbed into formal structures without retaining their autonomy.[72] Additionally, differences in priorities and accountability mechanisms may create tensions that hinder collaboration.

Despite these challenges, the findings of this study suggest that the integration of state and community models remains a necessary condition for achieving sustainable peace. The epistemic tension identified here should not be seen as a barrier, but rather as a productive space for negotiation and innovation. By recognizing the strengths and limitations of each approach, policymakers and practitioners can develop more nuanced strategies that combine security with social justice and control with legitimacy.

In conclusion, the Indonesian case illustrates that effective deradicalization requires moving beyond binary distinctions between state and community. Instead, it calls for a hybrid framework that bridges institutional authority and local agency. Within this framework, organizations such as YLP play a crucial role as intermediaries, translating between different epistemologies and facilitating the co-production of peace at the local level.

5. Theoretical Reflection and Global South Contribution

The case of the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) offers a significant contribution to contemporary debates on peacebuilding from below, particularly within the context of the Global South. In many post-conflict societies, state institutions often struggle to deliver equitable social justice and instead prioritize securitization-oriented interventions. As a consequence, community-based approaches should not be understood merely as complementary mechanisms, but rather as structurally necessary responses to the limitations of formal institutions.[73] This perspective aligns with a growing body of scholarship that emphasizes the importance of addressing structural inequalities, economic, social, and political, as a prerequisite for sustainable peace.[74]

In this regard, the YLP case extends beyond a practical example of reintegration for former terrorism convicts. It also constitutes an epistemological intervention that challenges the dominance of securitization paradigms in counter-radicalization policy. Rather than focusing exclusively on surveillance, ideological correction, or coercive control, YLP foregrounds social legitimacy, lived experience, and the restoration of social relations as central components of peacebuilding. This shift in emphasis reflects broader developments in peace studies, where the role of local actors has become increasingly recognized as essential in shaping sustainable outcomes.[75]

Moreover, YLP provides an empirical illustration of what has been described as the local turn in peacebuilding. Within this framework, local communities are not positioned as passive recipients of externally designed interventions, but as active producers of knowledge, norms, and practices of peace.[76] The experience of YLP demonstrates how local actors reinterpret and translate abstract concepts such as reconciliation, justice, and religious

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[72] Mac Ginty, "Critical Localism in Peacebuilding, 840–56.

[73] Cherney, "Evaluating Counter-Radicalization Programs, 221–222.

[74] Patricia Justino et al., "Violence and Development," *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 3 (2019): 283–298.

[75] Roger Mac Ginty, Critical Localism in Peacebuilding, 840-42.

[76] Hanna Leonardsson dkk, "Local Turn," 839

obligation into contextually meaningful practices. For instance, the reinterpretation of religious concepts into everyday ethical responsibilities illustrates how peace narratives can be vernacularized and embedded within local cultural frameworks.

At the same time, the YLP model contributes to ongoing discussions on post-liberal peace. Contemporary peacebuilding scholarship increasingly highlights that peace is not a fixed or universal condition, but rather the outcome of negotiations between global norms, state institutions, and local practices.[77] In this sense, YLP exemplifies a hybrid form of peace that emerges from the interaction between formal structures and grassroots initiatives. It neither fully rejects the role of the state nor operates entirely outside it; instead, it navigates a middle ground in which institutional frameworks and local agency interact dynamically.

This hybrid configuration is particularly relevant in the Global South, where the legitimacy of top-down interventions is often contested. Empirical studies have shown that externally driven or state-imposed peacebuilding programs frequently face resistance due to their perceived detachment from local realities.[78] By contrast, initiatives rooted in community participation and social solidarity tend to generate higher levels of trust and sustainability. The YLP case reinforces this argument by demonstrating how locally grounded interventions can address not only immediate needs but also deeper structural and relational dimensions of conflict.

Furthermore, the findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating economic empowerment, social reconciliation, and cognitive-normative transformation within a unified framework. This multidimensional approach challenges reductive understandings of radicalization as merely an ideological problem. Instead, it situates radicalization within a broader context of structural inequality, social exclusion, and identity formation.[79] By addressing these interconnected dimensions, YLP contributes to the creation of what may be understood as positive peace, a condition characterized not only by the absence of violence but also by the presence of justice, inclusion, and social cohesion.

Importantly, this contribution also carries broader implications for global peacebuilding discourse. Much of the existing literature has been shaped by perspectives originating in the Global North, which often prioritize institutional design, governance reform, and technocratic interventions. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they may not fully capture the complexities of contexts where informal institutions, cultural norms, and community networks play a central role.[80]

The YLP case thus provides an alternative epistemic standpoint that expands the analytical horizon of peacebuilding studies. By foregrounding local agency, experiential legitimacy, and the integration of spiritual and socio-economic dimensions, YLP challenges dominant assumptions about how peace is constructed and sustained. This perspective does not reject global frameworks but rather reinterprets them through the lens of local experience, thereby contributing to a more pluralistic understanding of peace.

Additionally, the emphasis on experiential legitimacy represents an important conceptual contribution. Unlike formal

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[77] Oliver P. Richmond, "Post-Liberal Peace," *International Peacekeeping* 27, no. 1 (2020): 1–15.

[78] Subedi, Preventing Violent Extremism, 45–60.

[79] Vergani et al., The Three Ps of Radicalization, 854–870.

[80] Kurt Braddock, "Counter-Narratives and Persuasion: Reconsidering Anti-Extremism Messaging," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 3 (2020): 1–17.

authority derived from state institutions, experiential legitimacy emerges from lived experience and is recognized by communities as a source of moral credibility. In the context of deradicalization, this form of legitimacy enhances the effectiveness of interventions by enabling more persuasive communication and deeper engagement with target groups.[81]

Nevertheless, it is important to approach these findings with a degree of caution. While the YLP model demonstrates considerable potential, its scalability and sustainability depend on broader institutional support and resource availability. Furthermore, the reliance on specific individuals or networks may limit its replicability in different contexts.[82] These considerations highlight the need for further research on how community-based initiatives can be integrated into broader policy frameworks without losing their autonomy and local relevance.

In conclusion, the YLP case study underscores that peacebuilding from below in the Global South should be understood not only as a practical response to state limitations but also as a significant epistemological contribution. By integrating economic empowerment, social reconciliation, and religious reinterpretation[83], YLP demonstrates that peace is best conceptualized as a dynamic and contextually grounded process. This perspective enriches ongoing debates on post-liberal peace and the local turn, offering a more inclusive and nuanced framework for understanding peacebuilding in diverse socio-political contexts

D. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that securitization-oriented approaches alone are insufficient to address the structural and relational conditions that sustain vulnerability to violent extremism. The case of the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation (YLP) illustrates how peacebuilding from below operates through the integration of three interconnected dimensions: material, relational, and cognitive-normative transformation. Economic empowerment initiatives reduce structural marginalization and socio-economic insecurity, while the restoration of social recognition facilitates the reintegration of former extremists into community life. At the same time, contextual religious reinterpretation enables the transformation of ethical orientations from exclusivist understandings of jihad toward more inclusive, peaceful, and socially constructive frameworks.[84]

The interaction of these dimensions generates experiential legitimacy, strengthening symbolic resistance against extremist narratives and enhancing the credibility of community-based interventions. In this regard, YLP represents a hybrid model that bridges state capacity and local agency, reflecting broader debates on post-liberal peace, the local turn in peacebuilding, and community-based counter-radicalization in the Global South. The findings suggest that sustainable deradicalization requires moving beyond narrow security paradigms toward multidimensional approaches grounded in

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[81] Koehler, Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism, 1–5

[82] Leonardsson and et el, "The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: A Literature Review of Effective and Emancipatory Local Peacebuilding," 825–839.

[83] Sholihul Huda, Warsidi, and Muhammad Hambal Shafwan, BOM di Tengah Kemiskinan: Pendekatan Religio-Ekonomi dalam Deradikalisasi Mantan Narapidana Teroris (Surabaya: Samudera Biru, 2025).

[84] Warsidi, Sami Ullah Khan, and Suhartono, "Implementasi Maqāṣid Al-Syarī'ah dalam Pertimbangan Hakim pada Sengketa Ekonomi Syariah," Maqasid: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam 14, no. 3 (2025).

social justice, relational trust, economic inclusion, and locally embedded knowledge.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, as a single-case study, the findings are not intended for statistical generalization but rather for analytical transferability to similar contexts. Second, access to sensitive data related to former extremist networks was constrained by ethical and security considerations. Third, some interview narratives may have been influenced by social desirability bias, particularly regarding ideological transformation and disengagement processes. In addition, the limited duration of field observation restricted the ability to assess the long-term sustainability of reintegration outcomes.

Based on these limitations, future research should conduct comparative studies across multiple community-based deradicalization initiatives in different regions to examine variations in local agency, institutional collaboration, and post-conflict dynamics. Longitudinal research is also needed to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of socio-economic reintegration and ideological transformation programs.

From a policy perspective, this study recommends strengthening collaborative governance between state institutions and community-based organizations through policy co-production mechanisms. Sustainable counter-radicalization programs also require multi-year blended financing, professional mentor certification, improved monitoring and evaluation systems, and stronger data governance to ensure accountability and long-term institutional resilience. Such measures are essential for developing more inclusive, context-sensitive, and sustainable peacebuilding strategies in Indonesia and other Global South societies.

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