THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC EXPLOITED BY EXTREMISTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN INDONESIA AND GERMANY

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Abstrak
Artikel ini bertujuan menunjukan bahwa kelompok ekstrem termasuk simpatisannya melakukan delegitmasi kepada pemerintah dengan mengeksploitasi narasi-narasi radikal selama pandemi Covid-19. Dua negara, yaitu Indonesia dan Jerman, sebagai contoh dalam studi komparasi melalui metodologi kualitatif dengan teori masyarakat resiko dan narasi konspirasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat temuan, yaitu (1) respons perlawanan kelompok ekstrem kepada pemerintah meningkat selama Covid-19; (2) penyebaran narasi radikal secara online meningkat baik di Indonesia dan Jerman; (3) karakter kelompok ekstrem dan simpatisannya ternyata hampir sama baik itu di Jerman dan Indonesia; dan (4) kehidupan sosial masyarakat yang berdampingan dengan teknologi menjadi pintu masuk kelompok ekstrem di media sosial. Kesimpulannya, di masa mendatang, kelompok ekstrem serta simpatisanya akan selalu mengoptimalkan agendanya secara daring, karena mereka berhasil melakukannya selama pemberlakuan pembatasan sosial Covid-19.

Abstract
This article aims to show that extreme groups, including their sympathizers, delegitimize the government by exploiting radical narratives during the Covid-19 pandemic. Two countries, namely Indonesia and Germany, as examples in a comparative study through qualitative methodology with risk society theory and conspiracy narratives. The results of the study show four findings, namely (1) the resistance response of extreme groups to the government increased during Covid-19; (2) online dissemination of radical narratives is increasing in both Indonesia and Germany; (3) the characteristics of extreme groups and their sympathizers are almost the same in Germany and Indonesia; and (4) the social life of society that coexists with technology is an entry point for extreme groups on social media. In conclusion, in the future, extreme groups and their sympathizers will always optimize their agenda online, because they succeeded in doing so during the implementation of the Covid-19 social restrictions.

INTRODUCTION

Extremism threats have always been a priority concern for governments and international authorities. The pandemic, of course, has significantly impacted counter-terrorism measures. According to the United Nations (UN, 2021), violent extremists have sought to exploit pandemic-related sociocultural restrictions that have led groups to spend much time online. They have spent their time spreading propaganda, recruiting, and radicalizing people via virtual platforms.

In the case of Indonesia, not only the terrorist attacks occurred during the pandemic, but radical groups have also maximized their online activities to carry out propaganda, recruitment processes, and even terrorist funding (BNPT, 2021). At the beginning of 2020, which was a period of pre-Covid-19 restrictions, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) arrested 57 individuals suspected to be members of terrorist groups (The Diplomat, 2020). It further increased to around 370 people in early January 2022, as claimed by the Head of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) in the meeting with the House of Representatives Commission III. This number was also worsened by the fact that a millennial couple became the perpetrators of the Makassar City Cathedral Church

bombing on March 28, 2021, thus this underlines that radicalism indeed poses significant dangers to youths (Yani, 2021). During the lockdown, the extremists have harnessed social media as a vehicle for transmitting intolerant beliefs, and it is feared to undermine community resilience (Yani, 2021; Campion, Ferrill, and Milligan 2021). Meanwhile in Germany, the challenge of terrorist and extremist groups - during the two years of pandemic - also persisted. The German Interior Minister, Horst Seehofer, announced that 40 percent of the 33,300 far-right extremists were categorized as "*violence-oriented*", which has been the highest proportion ever. Seehofer, additionally, claimed that there has been a 10 percent rise over the past year to 1,023 in 2021 and saw the pandemic had made terrorists promote their agenda by exploiting anti-lockdown protests (DW, 2021). This also occurred in the far-right movements that found footholds in escalating the rise of Neo-Nazi groups who can draw 50,000 people each week in Saxony City, leading to anti-Islam and anti-immigration movements (The Washington Post, 2022). In addition, the pandemic has laid social inequities and structural challenges which are easily infiltrated by extremists to ignite conflicts.

Therefore, this phenomenon is worth exploring in this paper through a qualitative comparative study between Germany and Indonesia, combined through political and sociological perspectives and empirically examining significant patterns. There are four analytical-based qualitative approaches employed in this paper which started with (1) how the far-right groups responded to Covid-19 and its government policies; (2) Subsequently, the extremist groups discovered the opportunities in disseminating conspiratorial narratives online, and (3) both groups, either in Indonesia and Germany, presumed to have equivalent characters. Lastly (4), it is necessary to seek long-term recommendations, particularly a conclusion that fits the techno society. These four explanations cannot be deemed as a conclusion since it needs other related research ahead, but at least this paper creates a bridge for other researchers who want to explore the comparison between Indonesia and Germany in countering the extremists.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of conspiracy narratives and risk society was used in this paper. It underlined that conspiratorial thinking has existed across cultures and is carried by society and reflects the anxieties of the same. Previously, according to Rabb et al.,(2013), the motif behind a conspiracy is to emphasize the values of autonomy by inducing an intensive fear. It can be deemed as the term of agency panic by suggesting that public personal freedom is at stake and thus create a crisis in society. Conspiracy narratives also push widespread doubts about an official truth and lead to the crisis of ideologies among individuals, even though there is a clear distinction between an official truth and delusive idiosyncratic explanations that can be made. And lastly, a conspiracy is very likely to emerge from the spare of new media and repeatedly echoed on the internet (Rabb et al., 2013).

Another theory that was used is a theory of risk society by Ulrich Beck (2002), particularly after the event of September 11st 2002 which he called "world risk society". Terrorist-network threats, or other extremism movements, have flourished and are intentionally dreadful so it aims to produce the effects of that other crisis, such as economic or global warming, unintentionally (Beck, 2002). It also undermines the trust in fellow citizens and governments all over the world. And, the threats have made everyone into a heightened fear coupled with the facts

of "terrorist sleepers" that have been identified both in advanced countries like Germany and weak countries (Beck, 2002). Both conspiracy narrative and risk society concepts are harnessed as the foundation of discussing the analysis that was divided into four chapters: (1) The respond of far-right groups; (2) Conspiratorial narratives through online; (3) Characters and Targets; and (4) Risk society in the digital era.

METHODOLOGY

This paper uses a case study to enable comprehensive and in-depth examinations of two different objects. The selection of study case of Indonesia and Germany was done due to the image of those countries that are considered as a leading country in Europe continent and Southeast Asian region. Furthermore, both Germany and Indonesia experienced a similar issue that right-wing groups and those who deemed as extremists' sympathizers are growing significantly during the two years of pandemic (BNPT, 2021; DW, 2021; The Diplomat, 2020). In addition, this paper uses qualitative method through literature review approach, where the data collection process focused on the peer-reviewed literature, local, and global news articles. The documents that are not pertinent to the context of radicalism and extremism

were excluded from this pool of material after have been manually and automatically vetted according to predetermined criteria. In the end, the qualitative method assisted the writer to analyse and interpret a particular phenomenon (Lamont, 2021), especially during the two years of pandemic. The qualitative method, in addition, focuses on events in natural settings (Miles & Huberman, 1994), so it will assist the writer to conduct an in-depth analysis on the existence of extremists and their sympathisers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Far-Right Group Response to Covid-19

The far-right groups, in the case of Indonesia, tend to reject the vaccine due to its *halal status*. The Chief of BNPT claimed that the rumours of a vaccine made with pork-derived ingredients were provoked by radical groups to show the imported vaccines violate Islamic law, thus they could blame the government as the regulator of the vaccine distributor (Detik, 2021). Based on a survey conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, the data show that around 57 percent of 2,610 respondents across 34 provinces refused to carry out vaccinations due to religious factors (Puslitbang

Kemenag, 2021). Those who strongly rejected the vaccine programs are right-wing adherents who possess rigid and textual understandings, and this has exacerbated the debate on religion (Islam) and science in Indonesia (Fridiyanto et al., 2021; Hannan, 2022). Even President Joko Widodo, to tackle the anti-vaccine narratives, got the first Covid-19 jab publicly in the free mass Indonesia vaccination program to show that vaccine policies do not violate any kind of religious law. Joko Widodo's first jab, nevertheless, did not reduce the spirit of anti-vaccine movements. What he has done was not enough to counter the anti-vaccine movements by some religious figures, a role model of intolerant groups in Indonesia, who have tried to delegitimize the government during the pandemic.

The act of legitimizing a sovereign government, in the past two years, has become a public spectacle that aims to give the impression that Joko Widodo's government is incompetent in handling the pandemic. Religious figures, of course, but not all of them, are the determinant actors in spreading the narrative of anti-vaccines through the emotional messages that increasingly cause polarization in Indonesia (Candra & Alifiana 2021; Shiddiq 2022). The

dissemination of misleading news, particularly on social media, is unfortunately accepted by the public. They accepted the opinions of leaders, but not all, to continue rejecting vaccines (Rahayuwati, 2021), in which this is very in-line with the reality of risk society (Beck, 2002).

The effect of the lockdown on houses of worship closure also raises tension between the government and some Muslim communities. In a previous study (Koni et al., 2022), the limitation of religious activities has shown the paradoxical circumstances between the demands for preventing the spread of Covid-19 and the guidance of congregational prayers. There was a bold opinion stating that prayers at home are considered *"less complete"* than mosque's congregational prayers. For those who feel *"less complete",* there is a tendency to still carry out prayers in the mosque without adhering to healthy worship protocols (Koni et al., 2022). Another finding (Akmaliah & Ahmad, 2021) shows the shift of ritual, from the conventional to the virtual, has sparked a debate among Indonesian Muslims, particularly on why the government relocated *"the sacredness"* of physical spaces to digital space. To some conservatives, it represents Beck's theory for *"risk society dilemma"* or

the dilemma of Indonesian Muslim society, whom some still want to conduct *the Friday Prayer* that cannot avoid the communal gatherings as a mandatory requirement. It is common for people to shake hands, hug, kiss hands, and exchange greetings during the *Firday Prayer* (Akmaliah & Ahmad 2021).

A previous study (Sukamto & Parulian, 2020) also showed that a group that opposed the restriction was fanatics who easily believe in false conspiracy theories. This narrative, commonly, leads to the opinion that worship restrictions are a form of injustice against Islamic communities. Moreover, another research project (Nurmansyah et al., 2022) claimed that one thousand and ninety-seven (1097) Muslim prayers indicated that the older age group prayed more frequently at the mosque during lockdowns without having fear of the virus. The old categories are much more prone to and are at higher risk of Covid-19. This is in line with the research that religion can influence confidence in worshiping activities.

All studies mentioned that there is a gap between the social restriction policy and the conservative belief which is prone to be politicized by far-right groups and hard-liners. They usually come with the notion that Covid-19 policies and restrictions are prone to violate Islamic Sharia law, and they use it

as the momentum to delegitimize the government and, of course, exacerbating the society (Beck, 2002).

The challenge of terrorist and extremist groups also persisted in Germany, during the two years of the pandemic, during which the German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer announced that 40 percent of the 33,300 far-right extremists were categorized as "*violence-oriented*", and it has been the highest proportion ever. Additionally, Seehofer claimed there has been a 10 percent rise over the past year to 1,023 in 2021 and saw the pandemic had made terrorists promote their agenda by exploiting anti-lockdown protests (DW, 2021).

Conspiracy theory (Rabb, 2013) is an effective narrative to mislead public opinion towards the government. It is easier, then, to conduct online propaganda over the last two years. According to Silke (2020), "*terrorists do not go into lockdown*", but they realize how vulnerable government is to be distracted. The German far-right groups have optimized online activity in the short-to-medium term while waiting for the long term or the recovery phase of the pandemic to better maximize the impact of attacks. Previously, (Althof, 2018) argued with a deep analysis of the nexus between right-wing populism and conservative Christianity,

in which he concluded that there has been a significant interest in how conservative religious figures – some traditional Catholics and Protestants - have started to support activism on the right wing. They have a passion for joining AfD (*Alternative für Deutschland*) - anti-immigrants, white nationalists, & Islamophobic – and joined in the demonstrations during the pandemic.

An article (Benhold, 2022) shows that Germany's far right, which in recent years harnessed anger over an influx of refugees, has seized on the Covid-19 virus as its latest cause. It also concluded that there had been the far right and pandemic protesters merged that was very likely to become an incubator of political violence. This has potentially become a violent resistance to democratic values in Germany and the evidence of radicalization movements is something real events during the lockdowns. Another research by (Heinke, 2022; Germani & Biller-Andorno, 2021) revealed that the anti-lockdown and anti-vaccines movements have potentially fuelled anti-government sentiments and thus may form a gateway for the acceptance of more right-wing extremists. This comes from the fact that several individuals, those who often led and rallied the protests, had arranged a plot to kill

Saxony's premier Michael Kretschmer. Moreover, there was evidence of weapons in the protest scenes that underline the movement of this group poses a real threat.

The pandemic, of course, introduced the lockdown policy has created fertile ground for conspiracy theories. Far-right extremists and other anti-government ideologists have aggressively exploited the situation to spread scepticism of government activities (Beck, 2002), and Germany is no exception.

Conspiratorial Narratives Through Online

More than a decade ago (Lewis, 2005a), it was believed that internet is a crucial tool for terrorist groups. As a strategic tool, the internet is not only utilized to control, communicate, and control the groups, but to share propaganda and ideas – something that possesses great significance in radicalizing and recruiting targeted groups. The internet, of course, is a major driving factor to foster the development of radical contrast societies, particularly in altering individuals to change from non-violent to violent political and religious activism (Koehler, 2014). And thus, militant extremist and terrorist movements, both "*homegrown*"

and "*lone-wolf*" are striving to take advantage of the internet benefits during the pandemic (Yani 2021; Bloom, 2020). One research (Dongen & Leidig, 2021) found that extreme-right individuals spread their propaganda to audiences who were sitting at home during the lockdown, and it eventuated not only in the United States and Europe but across the globe including Latin America and Asian countries.

They push their conspiratorial narratives to spread fear. The theory of conspiratorial narratives should be underlined in that it has the motive to emphasize the values of autonomy by inducing intensive fear. It can be deemed as the term of agency panic by suggesting that public personal freedom is at stake and thus create a crisis in society (Rabb et al., 2013). The conspiracy theories are usually "hoaxes" related and prompt the public to refuse preventive behavior during the Covid-19 crisis as its government recommendation. The purpose, in other words, is to oppose the government and it is easier to affect those who are anxious, worried, and have no power (Beck, 2002). All notions of conspiracy theories are very likely related to the case of the Covid-19 crisis. Those narratives have also been exploited by groups, both in Indonesia and Germany, to provoke the public against the government.

In the case of Indonesia, conspiratorial narratives have cemented the anti-government movements at the grassroots. The conspiratorial theme has been in the main discussion among the public on the internet, and this has led to anti-science attitudes and anti-trust in the Jokowi government (Rastati, 2020). The imported vaccines from China, for instance, have been the most debated and controversial, particularly when the Indonesian government announced 121.9 million doses were made by China (Tempo, 2021). This was further exacerbated by the narratives from the hard-liners that accused the pandemic was the work of Chinese interest. One of the recent studies (Fridiyanto et al., 2021) also claimed that conservative groups harness religion to protect themselves from the Covid-19 virus and ignore the protocols based on science. One example of conspiratorial lines that are often heard is *"God is the only protector (not a vaccine). The virus (Covid-19) is God's army to destroy China for which they have been oppressing the Uighur (minority)."* (Fridiyanto et al., 2021). These are two of many narratives that often appear in social media, and unfortunately, still, many other words can be found on *Youtube* (88%);

Whatsapp (84%); *Facebook* (82%); and *Twitter* (56%) (Fridiyanto et al., 2021). Those conspiratorial narratives, of course, have a negative impact on the increase of hatred and prejudice against Indonesian Chinese, which has a long and unfinished story in Indonesia (Muzakki, 2010; Ninawati et al., 2021; Walujono, 2014).

In Germany, the situation is similar to happen, especially after 3,324 observed people lead to some main results: *first,* there has been an increase in misinformation related to Covid-19; *second,* there was a believed false claim that the Covid-19 virus is a common flu; and *lastly,* all the misinformation mostly associated with the far-right AfD party (Leuker et al., 2022). Given the focus of this paper is the extremist movements, thus the examples in Germany can be observed by the actions of white supremacies that have a strong connection with AfD. The German extremists who majority vote for the AfD party are linked to conspiratorial beliefs and are very likely to accept the twisted news as more sound (Leuker et al., 2022; Schemer et al., 2021; Frischlich et al., 2021). Not only spread false information on vaccines, they repeatedly minimized the dangers of Covid-19 infections and exploited the narrative to

decrease the trust in institutional government (Gensing & Rohwedder, Wulf 2021; Pummerer et al., 2022). The Purpose of disturbing the government can be assumed that they strongly reject the stream of immigrants (Leuker et al. 2022; Schroder 2020), as the targeted objects, and this is very in line with the characteristics of Indonesian extremists who also tend to blame the minority groups.

In June 2020, Interior Minister of Baden-Württemberg Thomas Strobl claimed that violent far-right groups have been mushrooming false narratives to ignite the hate, minimizing the *holocaust,* and trying to make Nazi comparisons (Reuters, 2020), which all of these were harnessed to underline that the current modern German state is illegitimate. This situation was also compounded by the fact that the number of crimes committed by far-right extremists climbed to its highest level in 2020. The German police also recorded 23,080 crimes with far-right backgrounds, around 700 more than in the previous year. This includes the attack on the Robert Koch Institute and the Berlin office of the Leibniz Association – a group of research institutes, by lockdown deniers who are far-right groups (NBC, 2021). Another example can be taken by the

advent of *Querdenker 711* – a movement that comprises anti-lockdown demonstrators, pandemic pessimists, and anti-vaxxers in Germany – who frequently stage demonstrations across German cities. According to Oliver Nachtwey, a sociologist from Basel University, *Querdenker 711* tends to disseminate conspiratorial narratives such as an exclamation that "*the freedom does not prevail (in Germany)*" and the provocation to wear a *yellow star* – similar to which Jews were forced to wear during under the Nazis – in several demonstration places (DW, 2021b), a character that is very attached to radical groups. The *Querdenker* 711 movement is one of the proofs of organized communities that swiftly evolved into right-wing extremists and were very open to conspiracy theories (Gowin, 2022; Heinke, 2022).

Similar Characters and Targets

Every character, both German and Indonesian extremist groups, is similar, such as being open to conspiracy theories, accepting anti-government propaganda, rejecting minority groups, and accepting more intolerant views or even performing violent acts (Heinke, 2022; Leuker et al.,

2022; Ninawati, Setiawan, & Suparman 2021; Yani 2021). Based on the report by Polri, the number of terrorism suspects in 2020 was 232, and it increased by 59 percent to around 370 in 2021 (Katadata, 2022), and this number is not included in the case of extremist or radical acts. There were three main topics, during the two years of lockdown that attracted public attention. *First,* the Cathedral church bombing in Makassar where the perpetrators were a very young couple or millennials; *second,* a young lady, 25 years old – a lone wolf, who attacked the Police Headquarters and finally shot dead; and the arrest of terrorist suspects who surprisingly are state civil servants. Those three main events show the relevance of how extremist characters are enormously in line with the idea of minority hatred and anti-government. This is also similar to German extremists who are blatantly against minorities and reject democratic institutions.

German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer, when delivering a speech in Berlin on 4 May 2021, stated that far-right supporters committed a record number of crimes increased to 20 percent to 3,365 and accounted for the highest level since 2001 (Reuters, 2021). The German government, in addition, labels the right-wing extremists as a top security threat and indicates the group

exploits the public discontent over the lockdown. The labelling is also believed as the result of *the Hanau attack*, in which a far-right extremist was a single perpetrator. This massacre was referred to as an act of terrorism, as eleven people were killed and five others were wounded. The attack is not only targeting the minorities, but is also linked to the extreme eugenics idea, a racist imperialism that flourishes among a broad social and political spectrum, underlines the superiority of the white race that believed to will always stand out at the head of humanity (Weindling, 1989; Winfield, 2018), and is blamed for the rise of anti-Semitism and social degradation in Germany (Williams, 2020). The German government claimed that anti-Semitic offenses jumped to 2,300 in 2021, a very surprising number that has been alarmed by German intelligence units, with the phenomenon of the yellow star that often appeared at German protests. This example was compounded by the rise of Pediga *(Patriotic Europeans Against Islamization),* a group that was founded in October 2014 as an act against the Syrian refugees, that become more extreme and anti-constitutional during the lockdown (BBC, 2021; DW, 2021).

Based on the series of facts on radical groups both in Indonesia and German, there has been a narrative that shifted Covid-19 from a pandemic threat to a minority hatred issue. The rhetoric of nationalism and the spirit of indignity have twisted the narrative to accept violent offenses in targeting minorities. As an object of violence, minorities are often blamed as the source of problems in social and economic issues and during that time the extremists ignored the scientific reason on Covid-19 pandemic. They have succeeded to gather people neglecting the security protocols, chanting the spirit to oppose the government, and attending the mass movement. Some of the objects were surprisingly new people and agreed to protest the government on the streets for the first time. Mobilizing people each week to resist the government policies on Covid-19 policies has shown us that they have accomplished their goal to put the government – including the minorities – as the guilty party. The characteristics of extremists in Indonesia and Germany are similar and aligned with the tendency to exploit the pandemic to become a severe threat in countries (Dongen & Leidig 2021; Campion, Ferrill, & Milligan 2021).

What is Next: Empowering the Techno Society

Some radical leaders, since outdoor activities are prevented and staying inside at home is recommended during the lockdown, have profited from their expression of Islamophobic and minority hatred from social media. The "*virus*" of extremist narratives has easily infected new people and countless radical thoughts burgeoning on social media (Rose, 2021; Yani, 2021). In this modern era, of course, people are progressively harnessing social media. The data have shown that there were 4.74 billion social medial users in October 2022, equating to around 59 percent of the total global population. This equates to 4.2 percent growth annually or an average rate of six users every single second (Datareportal, 2023). Social media such as *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube,* and other platforms are considered great tools to not only spread hoaxes and terrors, but effectively to wrap and twist to accommodate shifting contexts. In the case of Indonesia, for instance, the statements like several Muslim preachers claiming Muslims should not be afraid of Covid-19, but of Allah mushrooming online (Choironi, 2021; Akmaliah & Ahmad 2021; Koni et al., 2022). A new wave of antisemitic narratives in

Germany, meanwhile, has reached a new record with the advent of the hashtag *#jewworldorder* – an example of how Germans blame Covid-19 on Jew population control – that had reached around 13,900 posts during 16 months of lockdown. This was also worsened by how radical communities had labelled Covid-19 as *"Holocough"* and *"Jew Flu",* and other scorns of which 84% is difficult to be removed and often remained online (Rose, 2021). Besides facing the rise of antisemitic conspiracies online, German also experience conspiracies that they blame Muslims for the pandemic online. *Biological jihad* and *corona jihad* are the two most common phrases that spread throughout social media (Rose, 2021; Pratiwi& Tsauro 2021; Käsehage (ed.), 2021).

Online social interaction, indubitably, avoids distance and isolation, thus it enables people to leave the traditional ways of meeting and gathering. In a previous study (Bevard, 2014), years ago before the pandemic took place, an online community was built with similar interests and goals. This underlines that stronger emotions, feelings, and hopes are shared by people with a common vision. Thousands of miles apart are no longer matter due to social networking – video conferences, blogs, podcasts, and

other social networks - that definitely will reach a greater number of online participants in the upcoming years. This is quite parallel with the thoughts that predict more people rely on digital connections for work, education, daily transactions, and essential social interactions, thus some call it a "*tele-everything*" world and 86 percent of respondents agree that there must be far more tech-driven in 2025 (Pew Research, 2021). The post-pandemic era, without a doubt, will bring impacts on digital life which will continue to have both positive and negative outcomes. A study found that Indonesian and German extremists established driving factors to promote radical narratives through the internet and succeed to translate them into political motives (Lewis, 2005; Koehler, 2014), and also targeting youths during the lockdown (Yani, 2021; Arianti & Gunasingham, 2022). To counter radical narratives on the internet, therefore, empowering techno society is a prerequisite. Peaceful words, tolerance messages, and the values of unity spirits are undeniably required for fostering online communities where numbers are rising. The program of tolerance literacy carried out online by BNPT through PMD (Peace Media Centre), for instance, is an exceptional endeavour even

though it requires a long process and time to obtain desired outcomes. The program includes peaceful content formulators distributed through websites, social media, and media electronics (Tahaj & Logahan, 2019), of which all aimed to counter hate narratives on minority groups. This approach also fits the case of Germany, which (Koehler, 2021) analysed German policies for preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and found only around 4 percent of online-based and interactive projects that have been made up since 2018. Hence, in the future, the P/CVE should expand its online projects with a *hybrid model* of shared responsibility between government and non-government actors (Koehler, 2021) with the support of academic research to raise the awareness of general youth in tackling online radical content.

CONCLUSION

The extremists, by all means, have optimized their online agendas on recruiting new members, or at least cultivating religion intolerance during the pandemic. Since the internet things have been at least personally significant in the time of restrictions, radicalizing people is much simpler done ever before, and not forget to mention that

far-right groups both in Indonesia and Germany have significantly shown their existence in the internet, as well as to blame the government. Conspiratorial narratives have emerged as a key factor behind the development of radical contrast civilizations, and thus extremist movements struggled to either incite the public against the government or triggered the attacks. The case between Indonesia and Germany, as the countries that are consistently tackling extremist issues, have shown that the militant groups possess similar characters such as rejecting the minority societies and accepting the violent acts. And lastly, the countries need to empower its techno society since the virus of radical narratives massively emerged on the internet.

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