Building a Resilient Generation: Education as a Bulwark Against Student Radicalism in Senior High Schools in Tangerang Regency

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INDEXING	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Keyword 1; Education Keyword 2; Radicalism Keyword 3; Bulwark Keyword 4; High Schools Keyword 5; Resilient	Tangerang Regency, as a region with social diversity, faces challenges in countering radicalism among students. This article discusses the results of community service activities implemented through seminars in high schools in 2025. These activities aimed to provide students with an understanding of the dangers of radicalism and strategies for preventing it through balanced education. The seminar material was delivered using interactive lectures, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions involving students and teachers. The results showed an increase in students' knowledge regarding the definition of radicalism, causal factors, early indicators, and preventive measures in the school environment and on social media. School support and the active role of teachers are key factors in maintaining students' ideological resilience. This article recommends strengthening educational programs for preventing radicalism periodically in high schools in Tangerang Regency.

INTRODUCTION

Tangerang Regency is one of the largest regencies in Banten Province, characterized by a diverse urban and semi-urban society (Ischak *et al*, 2017). With a population of over 4 million, Tangerang Regency is home to communities with diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, including Sundanese, Betawi, Javanese, Chinese, and other ethnicities, who embrace Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. This diversity makes Tangerang Regency a potential social laboratory for developing inclusive and tolerant community practices. Within this diversity, challenges to social harmony and interfaith harmony also arise. Although Tangerang Regency is generally known as a relatively conducive area, several phenomena indicate the potential threat of radicalism, particularly among high school students who are vulnerable to exposure to intolerant ideologies. The spread of radical content through social media, along with a lack of contextual national understanding, are often triggering factors (Akram and Nasar, 2023).

High school students represent an age group with great potential as the nation's future generations, yet they also face significant challenges (Pletka, 2007). During adolescence, the process of discovering identity and character formation goes hand in hand with environmental influences and rapid information technology. Exposure to news, opinions, and ideological narratives on social media often occurs without adequate

filtering, leaving students more vulnerable to radical influences. The lack of national education that is applicable to everyday life also contributes to the influx of these ideologies.

In the context of Tangerang Regency, which has a large high school student population, efforts to prevent radicalism through educational activities are crucial. The radicalism prevention seminar was designed as a strategic tool to provide high school students with a clear understanding of the dangers of radicalism, its triggers, and possible preventive measures, as well as explained by Taylor and Soni (2017). The seminar's approach is informative and participatory, with interactive lectures, group discussions, and question-and-answer sessions, tailored to the active and critical nature of high school students.

With a comprehensive understanding, it is hoped that high school students in Tangerang Regency will not only understand the theoretical dangers of radicalism but also be able to recognize early signs and take an active role in creating a harmonious and safe school environment. Tangerang Regency, with its spirit of togetherness and vision of developing superior human resources, is strongly committed to developing a young generation with character, tolerance, and the readiness to safeguard the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), as well as described by Syailendra and Kalsum (2025).

Based on this background, the 2025 seminar on radicalism prevention at high schools in Tangerang Regency is a concrete step to strengthen national understanding and protect students from the influence of ideologies that could threaten national unity. This activity is expected to serve as a model for implementing radicalism prevention education at the secondary school level, relevant and effective in the multicultural context of Tangerang Regency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Changes in social interaction patterns triggered by developments in information technology also pose a challenge (Yanti, 2023). Widespread access to digital platforms allows information to spread without limits, including narratives of radicalism packaged in an appealing manner (Halimah *et al*, 2024). This phenomenon is also felt in Tangerang Regency, where the student environment is inextricably linked to the dynamic mix of facts, opinions, and ideological propaganda. On the other hand, radical ideological narratives constitute a competitive space that certain groups can use to influence student views through provocative and persuasive content. Hertanto *et al* (2022) stated that Terrorism driven by radical ideologies in Indonesia is not a recent development; it has persisted since the nation's early years of independence. However, the nature of radicalism—its expressions, actors, motivations, and movements has evolved over time. In recent years, discussions surrounding radicalism have increasingly focused on Indonesian youth. To mitigate its growing influence, the education sector must play a proactive role in addressing the developmental gaps among high school and Madrasah Aliyah students. This includes fostering social capital through meaningful socialization processes within schools. Consequently, it is imperative for the government, particularly educational stakeholders, to respond to students' vulnerabilities as potential targets of radicalism. Attention must be directed toward the underlying social dynamics and

contributing factors that intensify radical tendencies, ensuring students are safeguarded from radical indoctrination.

RESEARCH METHOD

The program's implementation strategy is implemented through a school-based, participatory educational approach, which positions schools as the center for strengthening national values and preventing radicalism. This approach is adapted from the principle of asset-based community development developed by García (2020), where the school community is viewed as possessing internal strengths that can be mobilized for sustainable change. In this context, students are not merely recipients of material but also active agents in disseminating anti-radicalism values within their school environment.

Based on this approach, high school students in Tangerang Regency are positioned as important social assets. The student council (OSIS), extracurricular activities, and guidance and counseling (BK) teachers act as strategic partners in building collective awareness of the dangers of radicalism. This activity utilizes seminars as a means of knowledge transfer, critical thinking development, and strengthening national commitment. This approach ensures that radicalism prevention takes place within the school environment in a participatory manner.

The stages of implementing this seminar include;

1) Observation: an initial mapping was carried out on the conditions of students regarding their understanding of nationality, insight into diversity, and potential exposure to radical ideology;
2) Seminar and Outreach: Held at a high school in Tangerang Regency in 2025, the seminar covered the definition of radicalism, its causes, its impact on the nation, and prevention strategies based on the values of Pancasila, diversity, and national unity. The presentation was conducted using interactive lectures, group discussions, and open question-and-answer methods.
3) Evaluation: carried out through pre-post seminar questionnaires to measure changes in participants' understanding as well as reflective discussions to formulate follow-up actions in each school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The radicalism prevention seminar held at a high school in Tangerang Regency in 2025 received a very positive response from the school, teachers, and students. Based on initial observations, students' understanding of the concept of radicalism varied and tended to be superficial. Most students were exposed to the term radicalism only through social media, whether in the form of news, short videos, or online discussion content. However, they still lacked a thorough understanding of the definition, causes, characteristics, and impact of radicalism on national stability.

The school showed high enthusiasm for the implementation of this activity because it is in line with the Character Education Strengthening (PPK) program and efforts to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.

1. Observation Stage

The observation phase was conducted as a preliminary step before the seminar. Its purpose was to map students' baseline knowledge, identify potential vulnerabilities to radical ideology, and explore their perceptions of national issues. This process was conducted systematically through three main methods.

a. Short Interview with Guidance and Counseling Teacher (BK) and OSIS Advisor.

These interviews were conducted because the guidance counselor and student council advisor are the closest to and most familiar with the dynamics of students' daily lives. They have direct observation of students' behavior, interactions, and attitude development in both academic and non-academic contexts.

Aspects explored through interviews include:

1. Student behavior in interacting at school – includes the level of discipline, communication methods, and student social patterns inside and outside the classroom.
2. The level of student involvement in organizational and extracurricular activities – as a positive indicator of student openness to cooperation, leadership, and shared values.
3. Indications of intolerant thoughts or attitudes – include early symptoms such as group exclusivity, use of language that demeans others, or involvement in conversations that contain negative sentiments towards diversity.

Interview results showed that the majority of students exhibited a positive sense of community, actively engaged in positive interactions, and participated in school activities. However, a small number of students were found to be susceptible to provocative narratives on social media, particularly those related to religious and political issues.

b. Monitoring Commonly Used Social Media Activities by Students

The questionnaire was administered to student representatives from several grade levels, selected proportionally to represent a variety of academic and social backgrounds. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to measure students' conceptual understanding of radicalism and their awareness of its impact.

Measurement aspects in the questionnaire include:

1. Basic knowledge of the definition of radicalism – to see to what extent students understand this term in general.
2. Understanding the characteristics of radicalism – are students able to identify signs of radicalism in discourse or social behavior.
3. Perception of the impact of radicalism on national stability – are students aware of the social, political and security consequences that may arise.

The results of the questionnaire analysis indicate that students' understanding of radicalism remains variable and tends to be superficial. While most students are familiar with the term, their in-depth understanding of its characteristics, spread, and impact is limited.

c. Monitoring Commonly Used Social Media Activities by Students

As part of the observation, social media platforms popular among students, such as Instagram, TikTok, and school WhatsApp groups, were monitored. This step aimed to identify interaction patterns, content consumption, and potential exposure to radical narratives.

Monitoring focus includes:
1. The types of content students' access – including entertainment, information, religious content, and socio-political issues.
2. Student engagement patterns in digital interactions – for example, comments, sharing links, or discussions in online chat rooms.
3. Indications of exposure to radical or provocative narratives – either directly (propaganda content) or indirectly (memes, comments, or discussions with a provocative nuance).

Monitoring findings indicate that students actively use social media for communication and entertainment. While the majority of interactions are positive, there are vulnerabilities associated with exposure to provocative, viral content. Some students have shown a tendency to reshare content without verifying the source, which can be a gateway to radical ideology. The results of observations prior to the seminar are detailed in the following figures and tables:

Figure 1 Interviews And Photos With Student Representatives And Several Teachers
Source: Author (2025)

Table 1. Observation Results Before the Seminar

Before the Seminar	Percentage
Getting to know the term radicalism from social media	68%
Admitting not knowing for sure the characteristics of radicalism	54%
Considering Radicalism as only related to action	41%

Source: Author (2025)

Based on the table above, the observation results show that students' literacy on radicalism remains shallow. The majority of their knowledge is sourced from social media, while substantive understanding of the definition, characteristics, and dangers of radicalism remains minimal. This data underpins the need for more in-depth and interactive seminars to strengthen ideological awareness among students.

2. Level of Seminar Implementation

The radicalism prevention seminar was held in the hall of a high school in Tangerang Regency, attended by student representatives from various classes. The event was led by speakers from security practitioners, academics, and local youth leaders. The primary goal was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of radicalism and prevention strategies relevant to students.

a. Material Delivery Method

1. Interactive Talk

    a) The material presented includes the definition of radicalism, causal factors, forms of radicalism, and prevention strategies.
    b) The presentation is carried out using communicative language and is accompanied by visual media such as presentation slides, illustrative videos, and current case examples.
    c) Two-way interaction with students is done through spontaneous questions to gauge understanding in the middle of the session.

2. Group Discussion (Case Study)

    a) Students are divided into small groups to discuss case studies of radicalism adapted to the context of student life.
    b) Each group presents the results of their discussion in front of other participants, so that an exchange of perspectives occurs.
    c) This discussion facilitates students to identify radical recruitment patterns and formulate preventive measures in the school environment.

3. Open Question and Answer Session

    a) Students were given the opportunity to ask questions related to the phenomenon of radicalism that they encountered both on social media and in their surroundings.
    b) Frequently asked questions include online propaganda, solicitations through closed communities, and the "us vs. them" narrative.
    c) The resource person provides answers using a dialogical approach, so that students can understand the issue rationally and critically.

b. Atmosphere and Enthusiasm of Participants

    a) The classroom is filled with an interactive and conducive atmosphere.
    b) Students appeared enthusiastic, with many taking notes on important points and actively participating in the discussion.

c) The accompanying teacher participated as a discussion mediator, helping to connect the material with the Character Education Strengthening (PPK) program and the Pancasila Student Profile.

3. Evaluation Stage

The evaluation was conducted using a pre-post-seminar questionnaire to measure student understanding. The results of the pre- and post-seminar evaluations are detailed in the following table:

Table 2 Results of Student Understanding Evaluation Before and After the Seminar

Understanding indicators	Before the Seminar	After the seminar	Change (%)
Explain the characteristics of radicalism	54%	87%	+33%
Understanding the impact of radicalism on the nation	49%	85%	+36%
Understanding the forms of online radical propaganda	42%	81%	+39%
Willing to be an ambassador Spreading national values in school	52%	78%	+26%

Source: Author (2025)

Based on the table above, these results show a significant increase in participants' understanding after the seminar, especially in their ability to recognize online radical propaganda.

Figure 2 Presentation of material "Education is a Fortress of Radicalism" by Suryadi, a hybrid STISNU student, August 2, 2025
Source: Author (2025)

4. Follow-Up Levels

The follow-up phase is a strategic step designed to ensure the sustainability of the radicalism prevention program in the school environment. This follow-up phase aims to ensure that the spirit of tolerance, moderation, and patriotism is continuously internalized by students. The follow-up phase is formulated into three main programs:

a. Formation of the Anti-Radicalism Student Team

    a) As the vanguard in maintaining a spirit of tolerance in schools, an Anti-Radicalism Student Team was formed, comprised of representatives from the Student Council (OSIS), extracurricular activities, and the Islamic Religious Affairs (Rohis). This team was selectively selected based on integrity, a spirit of togetherness, and a commitment to the values of diversity.

    b) The roles and functions of the team include: Being an ambassador for the tolerance campaign – The team is tasked with spreading messages of religious moderation, respecting differences, and building unity among students.

    c) Organizing internal socialization activities – Through regular discussions, mini seminars, or cross-extracurricular activities that encourage harmonious interactions between student groups.

    d) Acting as a liaison between students and the school – The team plays a role in providing input regarding social dynamics in schools that have the potential to give rise to intolerant or radical attitudes.

b. Creating Positive Digital Content

The use of digital media is an important strategy in spreading positive narratives among students. Digital content is produced and published in a structured manner through official school social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and school communication groups. The content includes: Digital posters with messages of diversity, unity, and love of the homeland; Short videos containing inspirational stories about tolerance, harmony, and heroism; Educational infographics on the characteristics of radicalism, its impacts, and how to avoid it; Short articles written by students or teachers, containing creative ideas about religious moderation and nationalism. Content focus: Highlighting narratives of diversity, moderation, and love of the homeland, so that students become not only consumers of information, but also producers of positive messages that build a healthy digital environment.

c. Guidance by the Guidance and Counseling Teacher and Homeroom Teacher

Guidance and counseling teachers and homeroom teachers act as facilitators and mentors in the program's sustainability. They are tasked not only with early detection but also with overseeing student character development to ensure it remains on a positive path.

Mentoring tasks include:

a) Early detection of potential radicalism through monitoring student interactions, language, and attitudes both in the school environment and on social media.

b) Assisting the Anti-Radicalism Student Team by providing direction, supervision, and ensuring that team activities are directed and have a positive impact.

c) Provision of a consultation room for students who need clarification or are confused about issues of ideology, tolerance, or diversity.

CONCLUSION

The 2025 seminar on radicalism prevention at high schools in Tangerang Regency went well and received a positive response from the school, teachers, and students. This activity was able to improve students' understanding of the concept of radicalism, from its definition, causes, characteristics, and impact on national stability. Initial observations indicated that the majority of students were exposed to radicalism through social media, but their understanding was still shallow and unstructured. Through the seminar, which used interactive lectures, group discussions, and open-ended questions and answers, students were able to gain a deeper understanding of the issue of radicalism and relate it to the realities they face in their school environment and digital media.

This activity also encouraged the formation of an Anti-Radicalism Student Team at the school, which serves as a driving force for the national values campaign. Support from guidance and counseling teachers and the involvement of the Student Council (OSIS), extracurricular activities, and the Islamic Religious Council (Rohis) made the program's follow-up more focused and sustainable. Overall, the seminar demonstrated the effectiveness of a participatory and community-based approach in building students' ideological awareness and resilience. This program aligns with the objectives of Strengthening Character Education (PPK) and the Pancasila Student Profile and can serve as a model for replication in other schools.

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Community service is not just a routine program, but a moral manifestation of scientific knowledge. It is a bridge connecting theory and practice, bringing academic values to life amidst the pulse of real life.

We believe that education is the foundation of civilization, while service is the spirit that animates that foundation. The synergy between universities, schools, and the community creates harmony that fosters knowledge, shapes character, and strengthens unity.

As the wise saying goes, "Knowledge that is not put into practice is like a lamp hidden in a dark room; it only becomes meaningful when its light is shared to illuminate those around it." May this step be part of a long journey toward a civilized, tolerant, and virtuous society. May this intergenerational collaboration continue, becoming a lasting legacy for the nation's future.

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