Identification of Terrorism Actions in Indonesia

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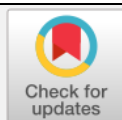
ABSTRACT

The threat of terrorism in Indonesia is not a new phenomenon but has persisted since the early years of independence. Presently, perpetrators of terrorism come from various groups with diverse motives, encompassing ideology, politics, and security disturbances. This study aims to delineate the profile, characteristics, and motives of terrorism in Indonesia. Employing a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach, data collection involved non-participant observation. The findings reveal that from 2017 to 2022, there were 97 recorded instances of terrorism actions in Indonesia. Political motives predominantly drove these actions, constituting 88 cases. Moreover, the targets of terrorist actions exhibited minimal disparity between non-civilian and civilian objects, with 59 and 38 cases, respectively. The terrorism action networks are primarily associated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (69 cases), East Indonesia Mujahideen (10 cases), and Lone Wolf operatives (7 cases). The study's findings highlight the role of political factors in terrorist activities in Indonesia, informing policymakers and law enforcement agencies about the need for targeted interventions to address underlying grievances and enhance social cohesion. Furthermore, identifying terrorist networks offers valuable intelligence for disrupting these groups, ultimately improving national security and public safety.

1. Introduction

Terrorism continues to be an enduring and widespread threat on a global scale, presenting numerous challenges for countries worldwide in their efforts to combat extremist ideologies and the actions of terrorist groups (Brands & O'Hanlon, 2021; Davies et al., 2023; Nguyen, 2023). This phenomenon has undergone significant evolution over time, marked by the adaptation of new tactics and strategies by terrorist organizations in pursuit of their objectives.

The persistence of terrorism as a global threat underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of this phenomenon. It transcends geographical boundaries and affects countries across different regions, irrespective of socioeconomic or political contexts. The global nature of terrorism highlights the interconnectedness of security challenges faced by nations, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation and collaboration in addressing this threat effectively (Bove et al., 2021; Chitadze, 2022).

The evolution of terrorism is characterized by the continual refinement and adaptation of tactics and strategies employed by terrorist groups. These groups demonstrate a remarkable ability to adapt to changing circumstances, exploit technological advancements, and exploit vulnerabilities in security frameworks (Boyle, 2023; Reisner, 2023; Tishler, 2018). This evolution encompasses various aspects, including using sophisticated communication channels, radicalizing individuals through online platforms, and adopting asymmetrical warfare tactics.

Furthermore, terrorist organizations have demonstrated a propensity for innovation in their methods of operation, constantly seeking new avenues to achieve their objectives (Kfir, 2023; Lubrano, 2023). This innovation is evident in diversifying targets, using unconventional weapons and tactics, and exploiting vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure and public spaces.

Terrorism has been a longstanding threat in Indonesia, dating back to the early years of independence. Various forms of rebellion and separatist movements have been observed, including direct attacks, sabotage, kidnapping, and actions causing public disturbances (Bakti, 2014). From 1977 to 1996, there was an increase in separatist and terrorist incidents, with 65 recorded. Between 2000 and 2001, the period saw the highest number of incidents, with 101 in 2000 and 105 in 2001, resulting in substantial casualties (Garnesia, 2018).

Apart from the loss of life and injuries, terrorism poses a significant risk to business in Indonesia. A 2018 World Economic Forum report indicated that concerns about terrorism among business people in Indonesia ranked third highest in Southeast Asia, with a score of 38 percent. Analysis from Aon Risk Solution in 2018 revealed that eight percent of terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia targeted business activity centers. Additionally, there was a threefold increase in terrorist attacks per month, with 74 percent of the rise linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) network (Nandini, 2018).

In 2021, a woman with a firearm shocked the Indonesian people by breaking into the Indonesian National Police Headquarters and firing six shots before being subdued by officers (CNN Indonesia, 2021). Shortly after, a husband and wife carried out a suicide bombing in front of the Cathedral Church in Makassar, South Sulawesi, adding to the ongoing list of terror acts in Indonesia (KumparanNEWS, 2021).

Motives for terrorism in Indonesia can be diverse, including political ambitions, power struggles, security disturbances with revenge motives, and economic factors leading individuals to resort to violence (ANTARA News, 2021).

According to the Deputy for Prevention, Protection, and Deradicalization of the Indonesian National Counter Terrorism Agency, Hamli, large-scale terrorism networks are present in eight provinces in Indonesia, affiliated with major groups like Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), Jamaah Ansharut Khilafah (JAK), and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). The areas prone to terror attacks

include the national capital, government offices, police stations, vital objects, and tourist attractions (CNN Indonesia, 2019).

Terrorist activities involve not only older people but also young people. In 2017, Indonesian National Counter Terrorism Agency data revealed that the majority of terrorist perpetrators were young, with 11.8 percent under 21 years old and 47.3 percent in the 21-30 age range (Tempo.co, 2021). According to the Indonesian National Counter Terrorism Agency, three main motives for terrorism in Indonesia include ideology, where terrorists reject the Pancasila ideology, opting for an ideology of intolerance, violence, and allowing any means.

The significance of researching terrorism in Indonesia stems from the inadequacy of mass media coverage in monitoring the evolving landscape of radicalism and terrorism. This inadequacy highlights a notable research gap in the comprehensive understanding of the scope, nature, and motivations underlying these phenomena. Thus, there is a pressing need for further investigation into the multifaceted motives driving terrorism in Indonesia, including political ambitions, power struggles, economic factors, and ideological beliefs. Additionally, empirical studies are essential to meticulously delineate the profile, characteristics, and specific motivations behind acts of terrorism in the country. Addressing these gaps in knowledge is crucial for informing and enhancing counter-terrorism strategies. This research uniquely aims to contribute to the existing literature by providing an in-depth analysis and mapping the profile, characteristics, and motives of terrorist acts in Indonesia. Doing so offers novel insights that can assist governmental and non-governmental agencies in effectively enhancing community security and combating terrorism.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Definition of Terrorism

"Terrorism" originates from the Latin word "*Terrere*," meaning to make anxious or tremble. In English, it denotes the act of terrifying. Internationally, terrorism is defined as the "use of strength and violence against law by individuals or groups concerning global activities beyond borders" (Juergensmeyer, 2017). This definition encapsulates the essence of terrorism as the deployment of violence to instill fear to achieve specific goals, particularly of a political nature.

In simpler terms, the Indonesian Dictionary characterizes terrorism as an act of terror. Meanwhile, under Article 1, number 2 of Regulations of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in Lieu of the Laws of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1/2002 junto Law of the Republic of Indonesia 5/2018, terrorism is detailed as an act involving violence or threats of violence that creates a pervasive atmosphere of terror or fear. Such acts may result in mass casualties and/or cause damage or destruction to vital strategic objects, the environment, public facilities, or international facilities motivated by ideological, political, or security disturbances.

James Adams offers another perspective, defining terrorism as the use or threat of physical violence by individuals or groups for political purposes (Junaid, 2013). These actions may be intended to benefit or oppose existing powers, particularly if the acts of terrorism aim to shock, disable, or intimidate a target group larger than its immediate victims.

2.2. Characteristics of Terrorism

Andrea Locatelli outlines a nuanced set of characteristics that define the complex and varied nature of terrorism. Firstly, terrorism exhibits diversity in its origins, arising from political or non-political motivations. This highlights the diversity of motives driving individuals or groups to engage in acts of terror. Secondly, the targets of terrorist acts display a wide-ranging spectrum, encompassing civilian establishments such as supermarkets, malls,

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schools, places of worship, hospitals, and other public facilities, as well as non-civilian targets (Locatelli, 2014). This broad scope reflects the indiscriminate nature of terrorist activities and the potential for widespread impact on society.

Thirdly, acts of terrorism are often strategically orchestrated to achieve specific objectives, such as intimidating or influencing state government policies. This underscores the political dimension of terrorism, where violence becomes a tool for exerting influence on political processes and decision-making. Fourthly, the execution of terrorism frequently involves actions that transgress established international laws and ethical norms. This disregard for legal and ethical boundaries accentuates the extreme and unconventional methods employed by terrorists in pursuing their goals.

The deliberate targeting of civilians, exemplified by tragic incidents such as the 2002 Bali bombing in Kuta, constitutes a blatant violation of international law. This fifth characteristic emphasizes the gravity of the ethical implications associated with terrorism, as it involves intentional harm to innocent individuals.

Abdul Latif contributes additional dimensions to understanding terrorism (Ali, 2012). Firstly, the justification of violence as a means to achieve objectives points to a fundamental aspect of terrorism – the willingness to employ force and harm to achieve ideological ends. Secondly, the rejection of moral principles reflects the moral relativism inherent in terrorist ideologies, where actions deemed immoral in conventional contexts are rationalized for the sake of a higher cause.

Thirdly, rejecting the established political process demonstrates a preference for unconventional means in pursuing goals. This characteristic underscores the ideological resistance to established structures and processes. Fourthly, terrorism tends to foster an increase in totalitarianism, eroding democratic values. This suggests a broader impact of terrorism on societal structures, contributing to the erosion of democratic principles and fostering an environment conducive to authoritarianism.

Lastly, there is a tendency to trivialize the collective will of civilized society to defend itself against acts of terror. This characteristic reflects a psychological dimension, where terrorists aim not only to cause physical harm but also to instill fear and diminish the sense of collective security within society.

2.3. Motives for Terrorism

A thorough examination of the motivations driving terrorist perpetrators in Indonesia reveals six distinct aspects, as expounded by Guay in 2010 (Amelia et al., 2020). These facets form a comprehensive framework that delves into the intricate and diverse reasons underpinning acts of terrorism. The motivations encapsulate a broad spectrum of psychological, social, and political factors, shedding light on the complex interplay of individual and societal dynamics:

1) Economic Motive: This dimension revolves around motivations linked to economic and biological needs. Individuals engaging in terrorism may find themselves propelled by economic hardships or driven by the pursuit of financial gains. Economic struggles or aspirations can be powerful catalysts for involvement in acts of terrorism.
2) Justice Motive: Pursuing justice is a critical element in the motivation behind terrorism. Individuals may resort to acts of terror to rectify perceived injustices, whether grounded in reality or shaped by their perceptions of societal disparities and grievances.
3) Situational Motive: Terrorism can be motivated by situational factors, tethered to the need for security and safety. Individuals may turn to terrorism in response to perceived threats or

vulnerabilities in their immediate environment, viewing acts of terror as a means of safeguarding themselves or their communities.

4) Social Motives: Social motivations for terrorism stem from the fundamental human needs for social support, a sense of belonging, and establishing a social identity. Terrorism, in this context, provides individuals with a community or cause to align with, offering a sense of purpose and camaraderie.

5) Superiority Motive: This motivation is intricately linked to the pursuit of political power, encapsulating the desire to attain a higher position within the hierarchy of a terrorist organization. The quest for political influence and dominance serves as a potent driving force for certain perpetrators, shaping their engagement in acts of terror.

6) Actualization Motive: Terrorism may be motivated by the desire to have a tangible impact on others. Perpetrators seek to exert influence, leave a lasting impression, or effect change through their actions, driven by a need for recognition, acknowledgment, or the realization of a particular ideology.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive research aims to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description, depiction, or portrayal (Sudjana, 2001). The qualitative approach involves exploring and understanding social issues, encompassing procedures and emerging questions, commonly collected data, and conducting data analysis inductively to construct themes from specific to general themes (Creswell, 2009).

The data collection technique in this research utilizes non-participant observation. This means the observer does not participate in the lives of those being observed and remains separate, serving solely as an observer (Margono, 2010). Therefore, in this study, the researcher acts solely as an impartial observer observing the case or phenomenon of terrorism dissemination in Indonesia through online media, namely Kompas.com, from 2017 to 2022.

Data analysis in this research utilizes the interactive model developed (Miles et al., 2014), which includes data reduction, the initial step in which the researcher reduces the data. Data presentation can be charts, narrative texts, flow diagrams, and relationships between categories. Drawing conclusions and verification, at this stage, the initial conclusions are preliminary; if the researcher discovers new and robust facts during data collection, the conclusions may change.

4. Results and Discussion

Terrorism has persisted as a multifaceted threat in Indonesia for decades, posing significant challenges to national security and social stability. Various terrorist activities have occurred, resulting in loss of life and injuries and instilling fear and uncertainty among the population. These actions have had profound effects on societal cohesion and economic stability.

The motives driving terrorism actions in Indonesia are diverse and complex, encompassing political ambitions, ideological beliefs, economic factors, and personal grievances. The prevalence of political motives underscores the influence of political dynamics in driving terrorist activities within the country.

In terms of targets, terrorist actions in Indonesia have exhibited minimal disparity between non-civilian and civilian objects. Government offices, security installations, public spaces, and religious institutions have all been targeted by terrorist groups, highlighting the broad spectrum of targets chosen by these organizations.

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4.1. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2017
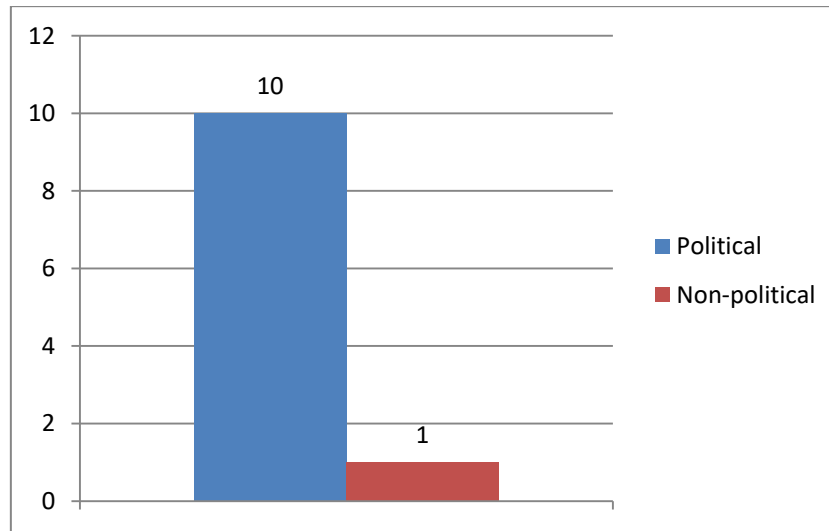**4.1.1. Motive**

Figure 1. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2017

Figure 1 provides a comprehensive visual representation of the primary motives behind terrorism acts in Indonesia during 2017, revealing a prevailing emphasis on political motivations. Among the 11 recorded terrorist acts, a significant majority of 10 were identified as politically motivated, indicating a strong correlation between these activities and political agendas.

4.1.2. Targets
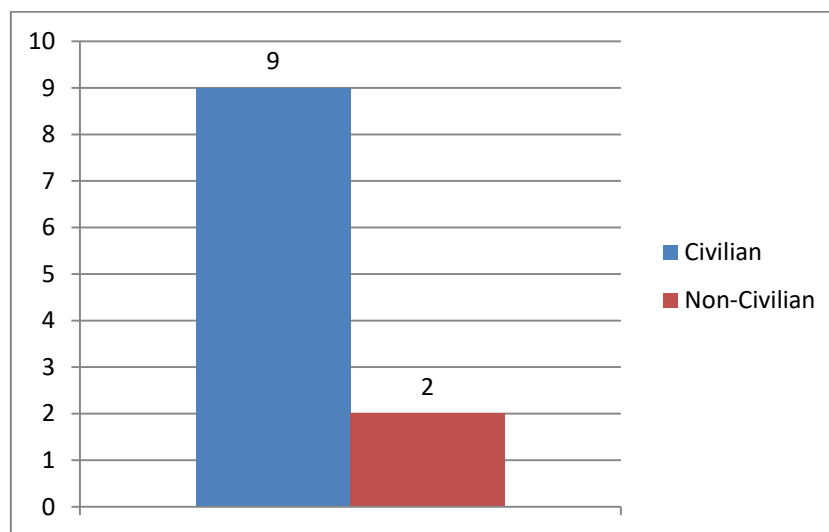
Figure 2. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2017

Figure 2 illustrates a significant trend in terrorism acts in Indonesia during 2017, with a notable preference for targeting non-civilian objects. Of the 11 recorded acts, nine were directed towards non-civilian targets, highlighting a strategic focus on disrupting governance structures or security installations.
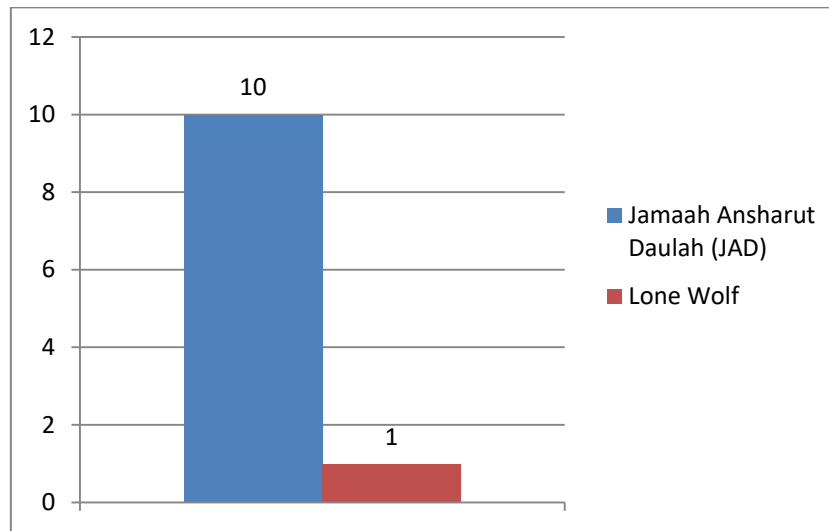
4.1.3. Networks

Figure 3. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2017

Figure 3 provides insight into the affiliations of terrorism acts in Indonesia during 2017, revealing a significant association with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of the 11 recorded terrorism acts, the data indicates that 10 were linked to JAD, underscoring the predominant role of this organization during that period. Conversely, only one act was attributed to the Lone Wolf network, suggesting a lesser presence or influence compared to JAD in perpetrating terrorist activities.

4.2. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2018
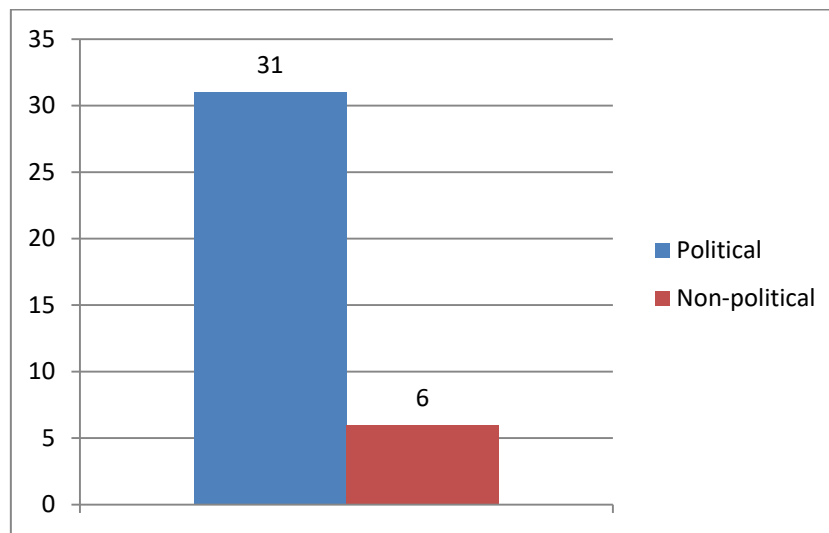### 4.2.1. Motive

Figure 4. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2018

Figure 4 illustrates that the motives behind terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2018 were predominantly political. There were 37 terrorism acts recorded, with 31 of them being politically motivated, while 6 acts had non-political motives.
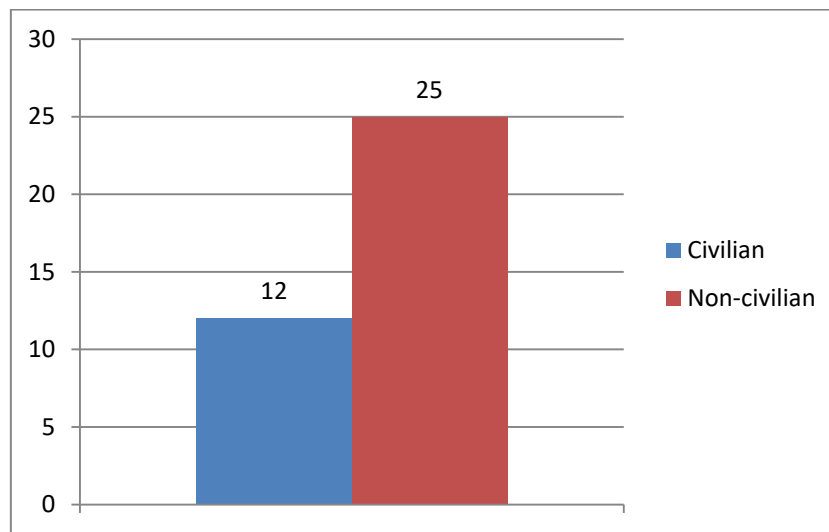
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4.2.2. Targets

Figure 5. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2018

Figure 5 shows that terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2018 predominantly targeted non-civilian objects. Out of 37 recorded acts, 25 targeted non-civilian objects, while civilian targets were observed in 12 acts.
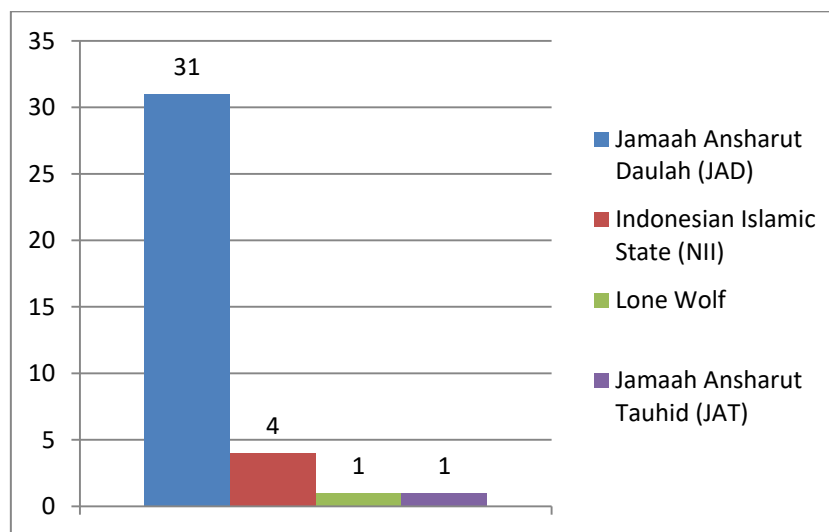
4.2.3. Networks

Figure 6. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2018

Figure 6 explains that most acts of terrorism in Indonesia in 2018 were affiliated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of 37 terrorism acts, 31 were affiliated with JAD, followed by the Indonesian Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia or NII) network with 4 acts, Lone Wolf with 1 act, and Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT) with one network.

4.3. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2019
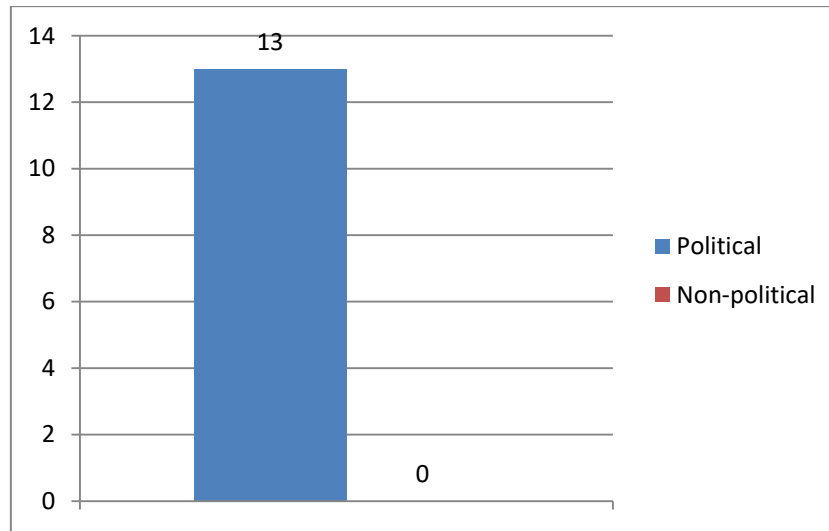### 4.3.1. Motive

Figure 7. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2019

Figure 7 explains that the motive behind terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2019 was predominantly political. There were 13 terrorism acts recorded, all of which were politically motivated.
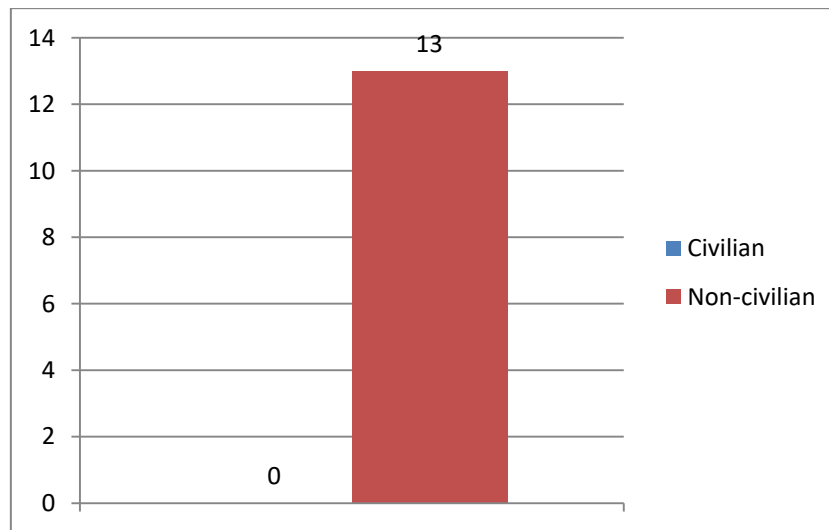
4.3.2. Targets

Figure 8. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2019

Figure 8 shows that terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2019 predominantly targeted non-civilian objects. Out of 13 recorded acts, all targeted non-civilian objects.
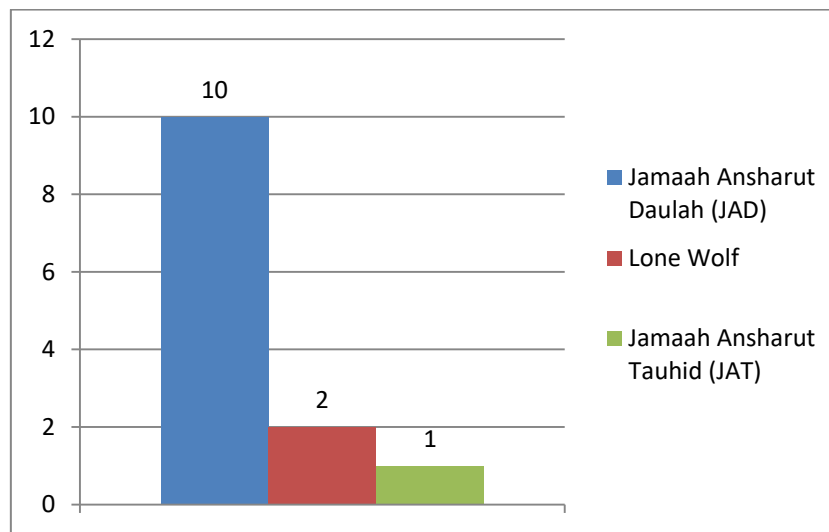
4.3.3. Networks

Figure 9. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2019

Figure 9 explains that most acts of terrorism in Indonesia in 2019 were affiliated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of 13 terrorism acts, 10 were affiliated with JAD, followed by 2 acts by the Lone Wolf network and one network by Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT).

4.4. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2020
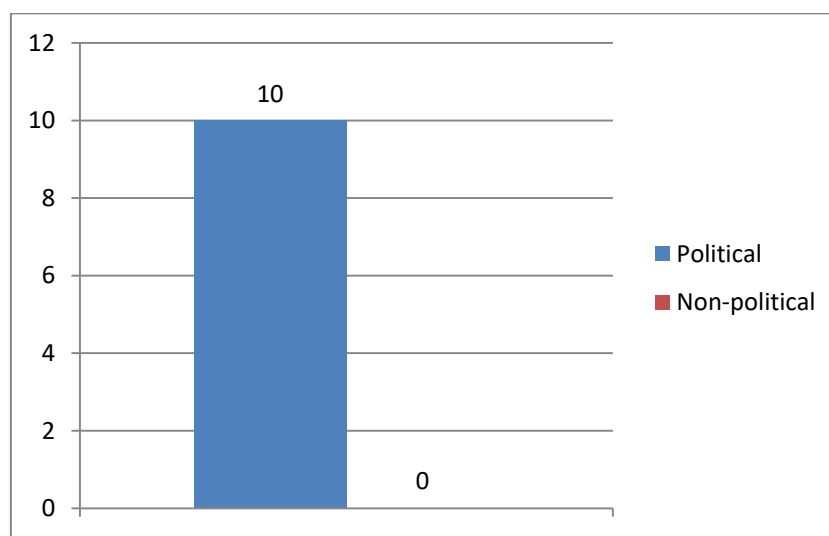### 4.4.1. Motive

Figure 10. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2020

Figure 10 explains that the motive behind terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2020 was predominantly political. There were ten terrorism acts recorded, all of which were politically motivated.
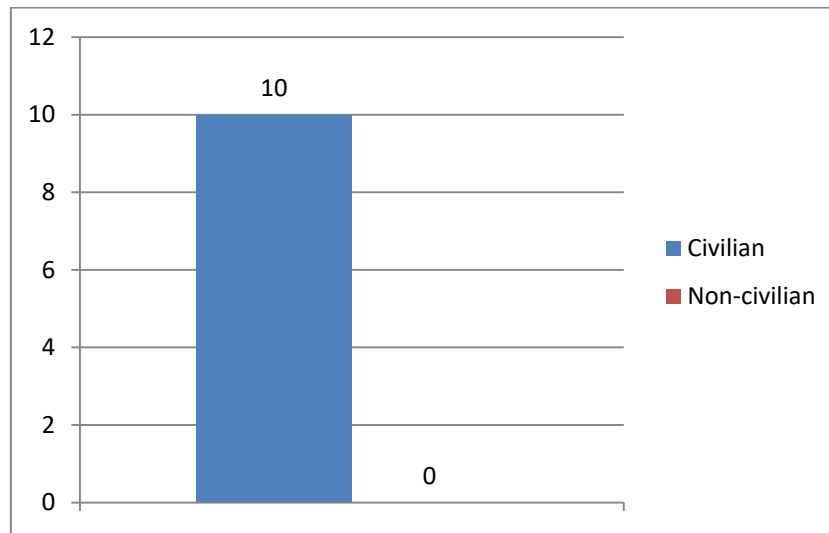
4.4.2. Targets

Figure 11. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2020

Figure 11 shows that terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2020 predominantly targeted civilian objects. Out of 10 recorded acts, all targeted civilian objects.

4.4.3. Networks
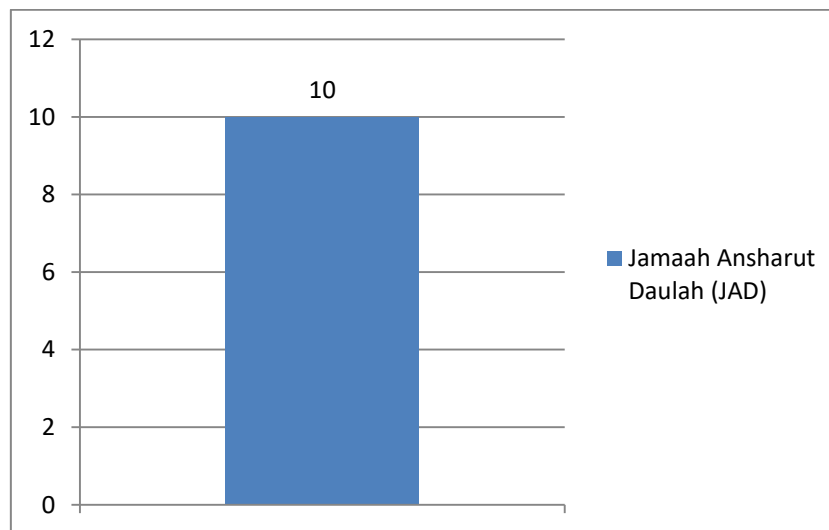

Figure 12. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2020

Figure 12 explains that most acts of terrorism in Indonesia in 2020 were affiliated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of 10 terrorism acts, all were affiliated with JAD.

4.5. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2021
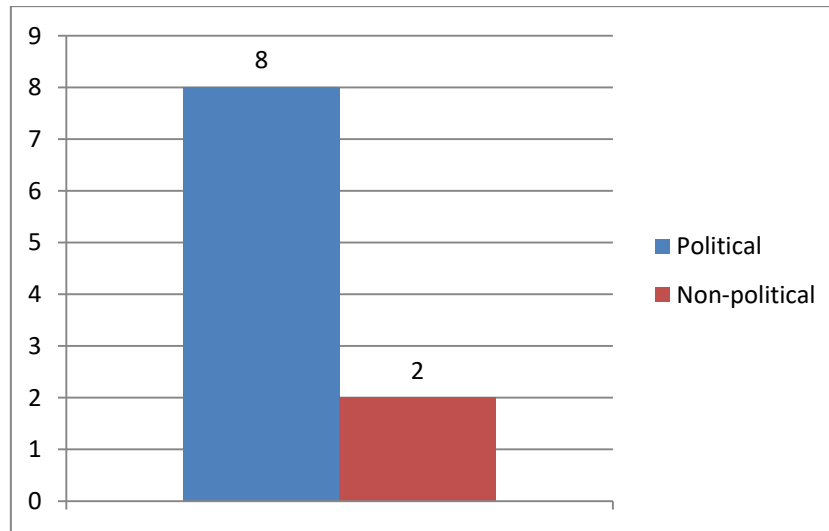### 4.5.1. Motive

Figure 13. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2021

Figure 13 explains that the motive behind terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2021 was predominantly political. There were ten terrorism acts recorded, with eight politically motivated and two non-politically motivated acts.
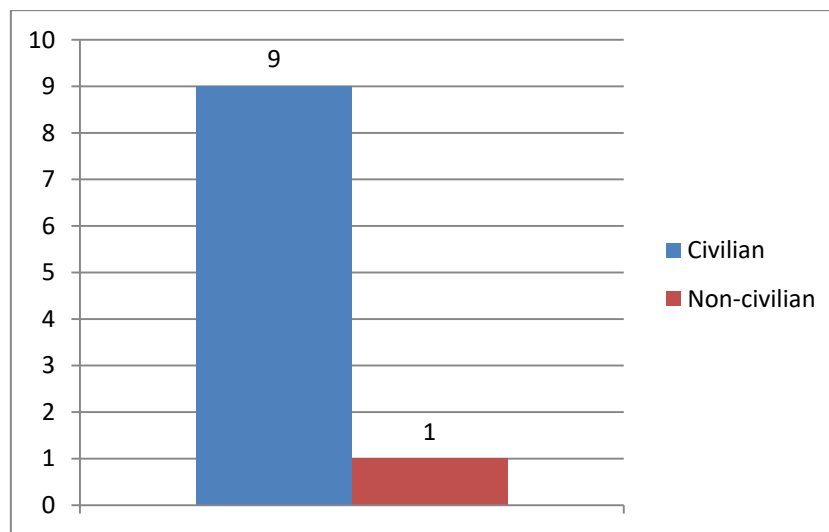
4.5.2. Targets

Figure 14. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2021

Figure 14 shows that terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2021 predominantly targeted civilian objects. Out of 10 recorded acts, all targeted civilian objects, with 1 act targeting non-civilian objects.

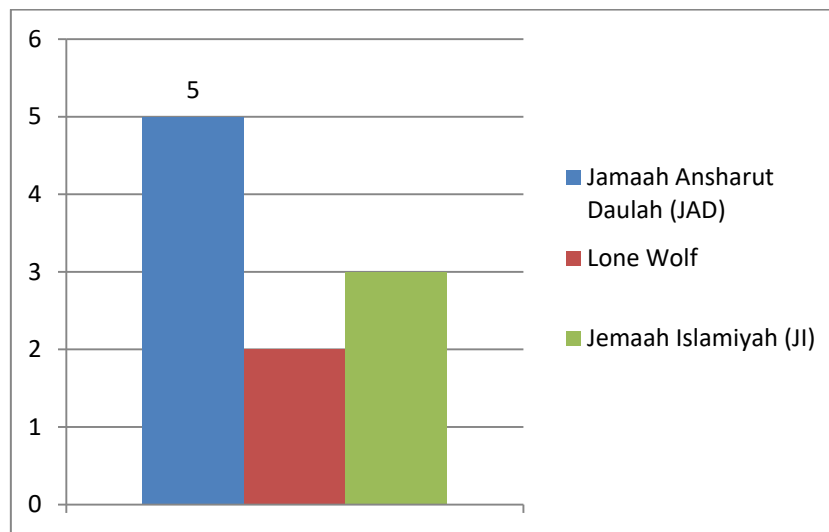OPEN ACCESS

4.5.3. Networks

Figure 15. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2021

Figure 15 explains that most terrorist acts in Indonesia 2021 were affiliated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of 10 terrorist acts, five were affiliated with JAD, followed by 2 acts by the Lone Wolf network and 3 acts by the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

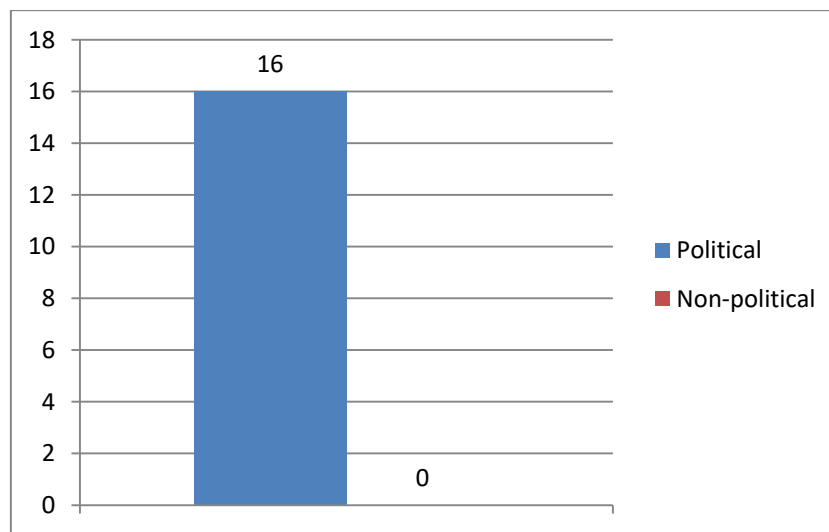## 4.6. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2022
4.6.1. Motive

Figure 16. Motive of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2022

Figure 16 explains that the motive behind terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2022 was predominantly political. There were 16 terrorism acts recorded, all of which were politically motivated.

4.6.2. Targets
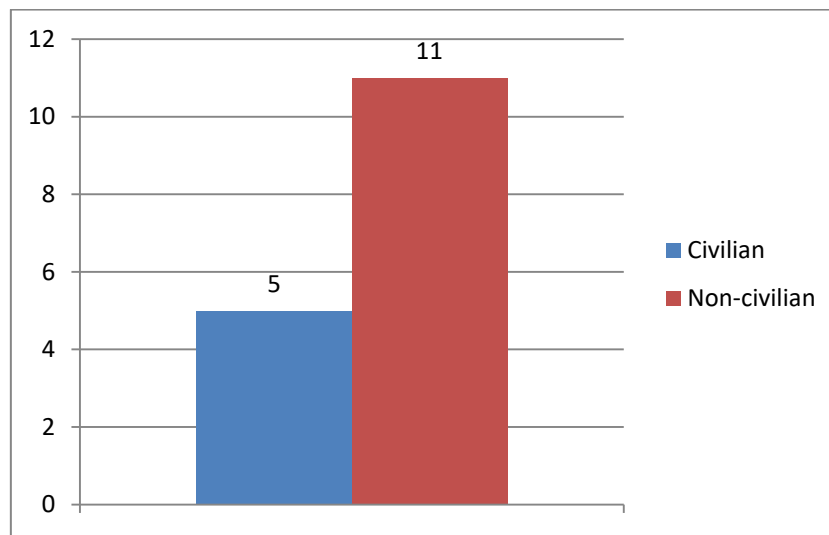
Figure 17. Targets of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2022

Figure 17 shows that terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2022 predominantly targeted non-civilian objects. Out of 16 recorded acts, 11 targeted non-civilian objects, while five targeted civilian objects.
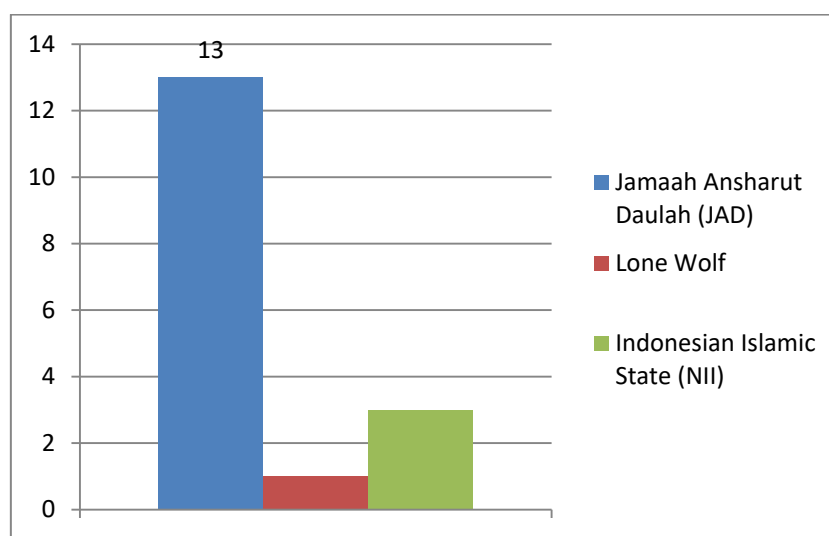
4.6.3. Networks

Figure 18. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia in 2022

Figure 18 explains that most terrorism acts in Indonesia in 2022 were affiliated with Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). Out of 16 terrorism acts, 13 were affiliated with JAD, followed by 1 act by the Lone Wolf network and 3 acts by the Indonesian Islamic State (NII) network.

4.7. Identification of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022

Table 1. Results of Identification of Terrorist Acts in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022

Year	Motive		Targets		Networks					
	Political	Non-political	Civilian	Non-civilian	JAD	JAT	JI	NII	Lone Wolf	MIT
2017	10	1	9	2	10	0	0	0	1	0
2018	31	6	25	12	31	1	0	4	1	0
2019	13	0	13	0	10	1	0	0	2	0
2020	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	10
2021	8	2	1	9	5	0	3	0	2	0
2022	16	0	11	5	13	0	0	2	1	0
Total	**88**	**9**	**59**	**38**	**69**	**2**	**3**	**6**	**7**	**10**

Table 1 explains that the results of the identification of terrorism acts in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022 include 97 acts of terrorism. The motives are predominantly political, with 88 cases of terrorism. The targets of terrorism acts between non-civilian and civilian objects are not significantly different, with 59 and 38, respectively. Meanwhile, terrorism acts are more affiliated with JAD (69), MIT (10), and Lone Wolf (7) networks. Further details can be found in **Figure 19**.

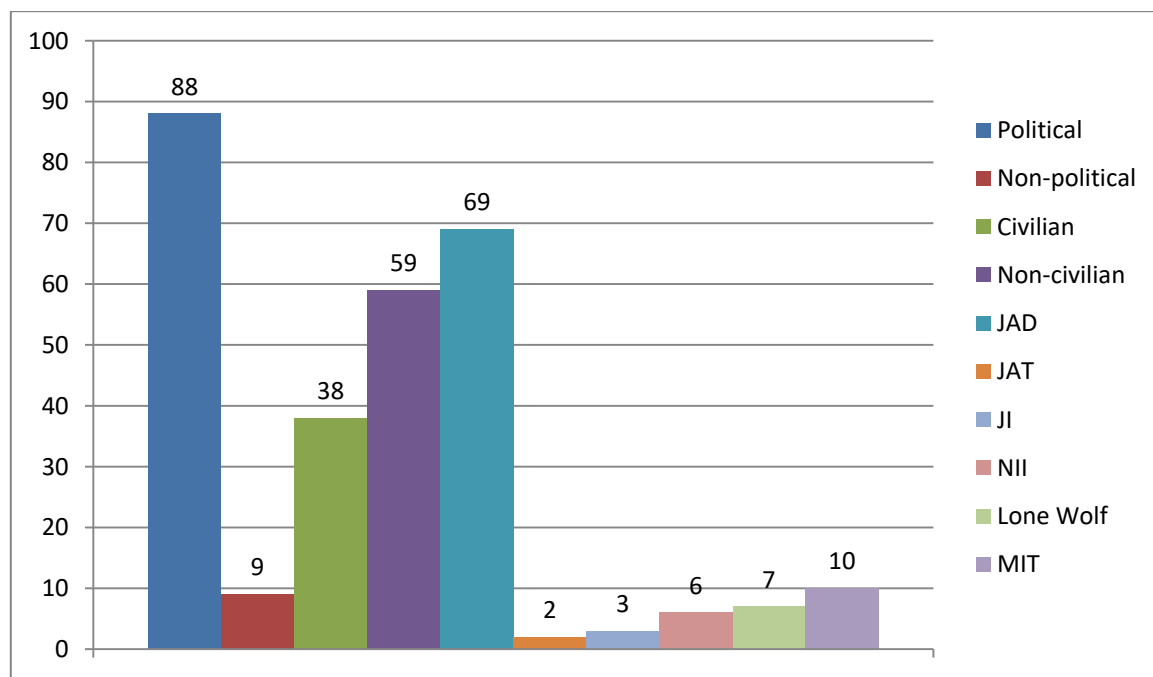**Figure 19. Networks of Terrorism Acts in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022**

4.8. Trends in Terrorism Activities in Indonesia (2017-2022)

The thorough examination of terrorism acts in Indonesia spanning from 2017 to 2022 unveils significant trends that provide insight into the nature and dynamics of terrorism in the region. Firstly, a prevalent trend across the years is the consistent dominance of political

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motives underlying terrorism activities. Radical beliefs intertwine with political discontent, shaping the landscape of terrorism (Haner et al., 2023; She et al., 2020)

Secondly, an evident trend is the targeting preference of terrorism acts toward non-civilian objects. This trend indicates a strategic approach by terrorist groups to disrupt governance structures and societal stability. By targeting non-civilian objects such as government offices, security installations, and public infrastructure, terrorist organizations seek to instigate fear, undermine authority, and destabilize the social fabric of the country (McCartan et al., 2008).

Lastly, the emergence of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) as the predominant network associated with terrorism activities is a notable trend. This indicates the significant operational capacity and influence wielded by JAD. The dominance of JAD underscores its role as a key player in terrorism acts in Indonesia (Jadoon et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the prevalence and characteristics of terrorism in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022. The findings indicate a significant level of terrorist activity, with a total of 97 identified incidents during this period. Notably, the primary motive behind these acts was political, accounting for 88 cases. This underscores the intricate socio-political landscape in Indonesia, where terrorism often stems from political motivations or grievances.

Additionally, the analysis reveals interesting trends in the targeting patterns of terrorist acts. There appears to be a balanced distribution between non-civilian and civilian targets, with 59 incidents targeting non-civilian objects and 38 targeting civilian entities. This suggests that terrorist groups in Indonesia may have diverse agendas and are capable of targeting a wide range of institutions, including both governmental and civilian establishments.

Moreover, the study sheds light on the prevalent affiliations of terrorist networks in Indonesia. Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) emerges as the dominant network, associated with 69 of the identified terrorist acts. This underscores the urgency of addressing the influence and operations of extremist groups like JAD to combat terrorism in the region effectively. Additionally, the presence of other networks, such as East Indonesia Mujahideen (Mujahidin Indonesia Timur or MIT) and Lone Wolf, highlights the multifaceted nature of the terrorist threat in Indonesia.

Given these findings, it is crucial for relevant stakeholders, including the government, law enforcement agencies, and the public, to prioritize counter-terrorism efforts. One key recommendation is to enhance the understanding and application of retroactive principles in addressing legal issues related to terrorist crimes. This approach allows authorities to apply new laws or regulations to past actions retroactively, facilitating the effective prosecution of individuals involved in terrorist activities, even if the laws were not in place at the time of the offense.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need to enhance vigilance against various terrorist threats and develop comprehensive policies to protect society from potential attacks. This includes strengthening intelligence-gathering capabilities, improving border security measures, fostering community engagement and resilience, and promoting inter-agency coordination to disrupt terrorist networks effectively and prevent future attacks.

6. Acknowledgment

7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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