

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
DE-RADICALIZATION PROGRAM

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by

VICENTE B. MABBORANG, JR., MAJOR, PHILIPPINE ARMY
B.S., Philippine Military Academy, Baguio City, Philippines, 2003

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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Name of Candidate: Vicente B. Maborang, Jr.

Thesis Title: Assessing the Effectiveness of the Philippines De-radicalization Program

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
George E. Hodge, M.S.

_____, Member
Richard E. Berkebile, PhD.

_____, Member
Major Jonathan D. Bailey, STM

Accepted this 14th day of June 2019 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PHILIPPINES DE-RADICALIZATION PROGRAM, by Major Vicente B. Maborang, Jr, 129 pages

This thesis assessed the effectiveness of the Philippine de-radicalization program. It sought to analyze the elements present in the program, the factors that impeded its success, and the areas for improvement. The comparative case study method was used to draw out the results of the study. The Singapore and Indonesian programs are studied in comparison to the Philippines' program. The author used the key components of a successful de-radicalization program introduced by Rabasa et al. as the foundation of the analysis. The results showed that Singapore is the most ideal program which can be the reason why there is no terroristic attacks within its territory. Indonesia, which started as a police initiative has vastly improved its approaches and has great potential to be successful. The current Philippines' program lacks the key components to achieve disengagement; more so, de-radicalization. The newness of its program, the kind and availability of data, and other influencing factors that are not part of the study challenged the assessment of its effectiveness. Though de-radicalization programs should be based on the uniqueness of each country, there are methods and approaches from Singapore and Indonesia that can serve as a basis for the Philippines.

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ACRONYMS

AIDA	Aliansi Indonesia Damai
ACG	After Care Group
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ALS	Alternative Learning System
AML	Anti-Money Laundering
AMP	Association of Muslim Professionals
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BJMP	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology
BuCor	Bureau of Corrections
BNPT	Badan National Penanggulangan Terorisme
C-SAVE	Civil Society Against Violent Extremism
DGC	Directorate General of Corrections
DOJ	Department of Justice
E-CLIP	Enhanced Comprehensive Integration Program
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
HSA	Human Security Act
ICPVTR	International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research
ICSRPV	International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISA	Internal Security Act
ISD	Internal Security Department
JI	Jemayaah Islamiyah

LTT	Lateral Thinking Tool
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MMDJ	Metro Manila District Jail
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
NACTAG	National Counter-Terrorism Action Group
NBP	National Bilibid Prison
NCTU	National Counter-Terrorism Unit
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NYPD	New York Police Department
NCSTRT	National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
PIPVTR	Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence, and Terrorism Research
PLPT	Pambansang Lupon ng Pagsasagawa Laban sa Terorismo
PNP	Philippine National Police
RRG	Religious Rehabilitation Group
RSIS	Rajaratnam School of International Studies
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SICA-1	Special Intensive Care Area 1
YPP	Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The threats of terrorism in the Southeast Asian region were viewed as “domestic threats” before the infamous September 11, 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks in the United States soil.¹ However, the 9/11 attacks made the region the “second front” in the global war against terrorism.² The label is primarily due to the existence of prominent local terrorist groups in the region with connections to Al-Qaeda. In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, many lethal and non-lethal military responses were launched with the idea that killing or capturing terrorists will end terrorism. As a result of these counterterrorism efforts, several countries have captured and imprisoned hundreds of radical Muslim extremists.³ Militarily, these efforts successfully suppressed terrorism. However, the efforts did little to affect the ideological aspect of terrorism, which is very important for defeating this fast-growing menace.⁴ What is more revealing is the fact that

¹ Rommel C. Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines: Options for Disengagement Strategy* (Quezon City: Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research, 2014), 4.

² Andrew T.H. Tan, “Southeast Asia as the Second Front in the War against Terrorism: Evaluating the Threat and Responses,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 112-138.

³ Angel Rabasa, Stacie Pettyjohn, Jeremy Ghez, and Christopher Boucek, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation Research Center, 2010), 37.

⁴ Anthony H. Cordesman, “Winning the War on Terrorism’: A Fundamentally Different Strategy,” *Middle East Policy* 13, no. 3 (2006): 101.

captured and imprisoned terrorists pose another concern; the radicalization or recruitment inside jails and prisons. Over time, policymakers and think tanks realized that defeating terrorism needs to address the ideological aspect that inspires violence. To counter these terroristic threats, Southeast Asian governments implemented soft approaches to complement their hard approach measures. One of these soft approaches to counterterrorism is de-radicalization.

De-radicalization programs became a fad that several countries around the globe embraced it as the new norm to defeat terrorism. Despite the uncertainty of its effectiveness, countries like Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Yemen, Indonesia, and Singapore used this soft approach program to target the extremist's ideologies as a recognition that violence cannot defeat violence. These programs seek to create doubt within terrorist organizations, rehabilitate jailed terrorists, and eventually influence them to abandon their ideology.⁵ One critical component of this approach is the prison-based de-radicalization program. According to Peter Neumann, the founding Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSRPV), prisons present a potential answer to the de-radicalization challenge; to counter the extremist ideology and find a way for imprisoned, jailed, or captured militants to coexist peacefully with normal society.⁶ The prison provides the necessarily controlled

⁵ Muhammad H. Hassan, "Key Considerations in Counter-ideological Work against Terrorist Ideology," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no. 6 (2006): 535, accessed 19 November 2018, https://www.academia.edu/1968630/Muhammad_Haniff_Hassan_Key_Consideration_in_Counter_Ideological_Work_Against_Terrorist_Ideology_Studies_in_Conflict_and_Terrorism_Vol._29_No._6_September_2006_pp._561-88.

⁶ Peter Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries* (London: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. 2010), 8, Accessed 10 January 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/homeaffairs/sites/>

environment ideal for the implementation of rehabilitation programs. Unfortunately, this is the one aspect of the counterterrorism strategy the Philippines has taken for granted for years.

The Philippine Setting

The case of the Philippines is of interest for several reasons. First, in 1995, one of the 9/11 masterminds, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed stayed in the Philippines together with Ramzi Yousef and planned the Manila Air or “Bojinka” plot. One of the phases of the plot was to bomb 11 U.S. commercial passenger planes over the Pacific Ocean in a day of rage against the United States of America.⁷ It would have been the deadliest terrorist attack if it was not foiled. Indeed, the idea of using commercial planes for terrorism was conceived in this archipelagic country long before 9/11.

Second, on March 15, 2005, Abu Sayyaf Group, under Commander Robot, initiated a hostage-taking at the Special Intensive Care Area 1 (SICA-1) of Metro Manila District Jail (MMDJ) inside Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City. During the said incident, the ASG killed 23 detainees, three Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) personnel and a member of the PNP-Special Action Force.⁸ This horror awakened the

homeaffairs/files/doc_centre/terrorism/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_mobilisation_tactics_en.pdf.

⁷ Counter-Extremism Project, “The Philippines: Extremism and Counter-Extremism,” accessed 06 August 2018, <https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/philippines>.

⁸ Michael S. Vaughn and Napoleon C. Reyes, “Revisiting the Bicutan Siege: Police Use of Force in a Maximum Security Detention Centre in the Philippines,” *International Criminal Justice Review* 19, no. 1 (March 2009): 25, accessed 20 October 2018, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1057567708330891>.

nation, but the government failed to realize the looming threat of radicalization inside the jail system.

Third, in 2013, Renie Dongon, a student of Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan⁹, was arrested in Marawi City by elements of the Philippine National Police (PNP) concerning April 23, 2000, Sipadan, Malaysia Hostage.¹⁰ He was later released from jail due to the insufficiency of evidence. In 2017, he was apprehended in a Nissan pickup truck trying to rescue escaping Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members in the town of Clarin, Bohol. The most surprising news was, Dongon, a known ASG bomber, was arrested with Police Superintendent Maria Cristina Nobleza, a high ranking police officer. Nobleza was the interrogator of the bomber upon his capture in 2013.¹¹

Fourth, according to the Global Terrorism Index of 2016, the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Response to Terror states that the Philippines is ranked 11th among 122 countries with high incidence of terror activities. Fifth, according to Sydney Jones' Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) Report entitled "Marawi, the East Asia Wilayah and Indonesia," stated that ISIS shifted its

⁹ Malaysian Zulkifli bin Abdul Hir, also known as Marwan is listed as one of the world's most wanted terrorists, with at least a \$5-million bounty on his head. He is believed to head the Kumpulun Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM), a member organization of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist network.

¹⁰ Editha Z. Caduaya, "Police Supt. Ma. Cristina Nobleza, Renierlo Dongon: Strange bedfellows?" *NewsLine Philippines*, 25 April 2017, accessed 08 August 2018, <https://newslines.ph/top-stories/2017/04/25/police-supt-ma-cristina-nobleza-renierlo-dongon-strange-bedfellows/>.

¹¹ CNN Philippines Staff, "PNP Chief: Police officer romantically linked to Abu Sayyaf member is arrested," *CNN Philippines*, 25 April 2017, accessed 08 August, 2018, <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2017/04/24/Abu-Sayyaf-police-romance-Maria-Cristina-Nobleza.html>.

strategy to Southeast Asia to establish an ISIS province known as “East Asia Wilayah.” The five-month long Marawi Siege was its result. It is therefore of great interest to study the de-radicalization efforts of the Philippines as it becomes a necessity not just within its territory or the Asian region, but for all peace-loving nations.

Lastly, on a positive note, the Philippines improved its counterterrorism capabilities with assistance from the United States and other international partners.¹² On March 28, 2018, RJ Rosalado, a local TV newscaster, reported the surrender of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group senior commander involved in bombings and kidnappings in Mindanao. The Philippines Defense Chief hopes that this event may lead to the “eventual collapse” of the militants’ stronghold in the southern islands of Mindanao. Jamiri is the highest ranking Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) leader who surrendered to the military. His surrender was a big blow to the ASG as he is one of their tested leaders.

However, his surrender brings more questions than answers. For example, will he become like the Indonesian Nasir Abas who surrendered and helped the government in convincing other terrorists to move away from terrorism? Furthermore, will he be one of those who will convince others into terrorism in prison? Moreover, the most critical question that needs an urgent answer is the Philippine de-radicalization program ready to exploit this kind of opportunity? With this context, this research will try to assess the effectiveness of the Philippine de-radicalization program.

¹² US State Department, *Country Reports on Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Counter Terrorism, 2017), accessed 18 August 2018, <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2017/282842.htm>.

The Many Concepts of De-radicalization

De-radicalization is considered a decisive soft approach to the broad scope of counterterrorism strategy. This is based on the principle that “the fight against the terrorist scourge cannot and must not be fought by military means alone.”¹³ Nasir Abas, an Indonesian bomber who surrendered, proved the rationale of this principle by saying “Fire can only be extinguished by water.”¹⁴ Military and police hard approaches cannot completely defeat terrorism, particularly the cyclic nature of Islamist extremist threats who are continuously seeking to inspire a new generation of terrorists. In order to defeat terrorism from its roots, the strategy should go beyond police and military actions, hence, “taking proactive measures to prevent vulnerable individuals from radicalizing and rehabilitating those who have already embraced extremism.”¹⁵

According to Rommel Banlaoi, a known terrorism expert in the Philippines, “Although de-radicalization is now widely accepted as an innovative counter-terrorism measure, the concept, however, has been poorly defined, less studied, under-theorized and even not really understood by some scholars, experts, journalists, practitioners, and

¹³ Muhammad Haniff Bin Hassan and Kenneth George Pereire, “An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism – The Singapore Perspective,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17, no. 4 (December 2006): 458-459, accessed 02 November 2018, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09592310601060815?journalCode=fswi20>.

¹⁴ Susan Mohammed, “To Deprogram a Jihadist,” *Maclean's*, 2 February 2009, 9, accessed 20 September 2018, <https://archive.macleans.ca/article/2009/2/9/to-deprogram-a-jihadist>.

¹⁵ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xiii.

policy-makers.”¹⁶ The author also argued that the de-radicalization concept is problematic and “carries with it equally troubling expectations.” Thus, the concept of de-radicalization remains a disputed concept despite some such programs in Europe, the Middle East, and South East Asia.

Bjorgo and Horgan noted this challenge when they argued, “De-radicalization often appears to be understood as any effort aimed at preventing radicalization from taking place.”¹⁷ Indeed, confusion arises as the term de-radicalization is misrepresented as broad, encompassing idea of different, but related methods. Like de-radicalization, the concepts of counter-radicalization and anti-radicalization are also aimed to reduce the threat of terrorism. Lindsay Clutterback in *Deradicalization Programs and Counterterrorism*, defines counter-radicalization as the term used to describe methods to stop or control radicalization as it is occurring while anti-radicalization describes methods or techniques to shield vulnerable individuals or groups from radicalization.¹⁸ The latter aims to deter or prevent radicalization from occurring. However, Banlaoi and Rabasa et. al. define this idea of prevention from exposure to radical ideas as counter-radicalization rather than anti-radicalization.

¹⁶ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines: Options for Disengagement Strategy*, 5.

¹⁷ Toro Bjorgo and John Horgan, eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind* (New York, Routledge, 2009), 3, accessed 04 November 2018, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780203884751>.

¹⁸ Lindsay Clutterback, “Deradicalization Programs and Counterterrorism: A Perspective on the Challenges and Benefits,” Middle East Institute, 10 June, 2015, accessed 30 September 2018, <https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/Clutterback.pdf>.

Another concept associated with de-radicalization is rehabilitation. According to Rohan Gunaratna, a renowned terrorism expert, “Rehabilitation is to help someone return to normal life by providing education, training, and therapy.”¹⁹ He believed that individual or groups who are exposed to extreme ideologies do not have normal lives. These strayed individuals are on the extreme and to help them return to the mainstream; rehabilitation is needed. Governments and their partners should rehabilitate terrorists to restore life to normalcy. According to Banlaoi, rehabilitation is usually implemented in prison, where individuals are subjected to therapy sessions that involve psychological and religious counseling.²⁰ Countries like Saudi Arabia and Singapore have established more comprehensive rehabilitation programs such as community involvement, and aftercare programs even after release. Existing literature indicates that terrorist rehabilitation is an essential program for the de-radicalization process.²¹

Moreover, there is a trend to define de-radicalization as an inverse process of radicalization. The author defers with Charles Allen’s “working” definition that radicalization is “the process of adopting an extremist belief system, including the

¹⁹ Rohan Gunaratna. “Terrorist Rehabilitation: Genesis, Genealogy and Likely Future,” in *Terrorist Rehabilitation: A New Frontier in Counter-terrorism*, eds. Rohan Gunaratna and Mohamed Bin Ali (London: Imperial College Press), 3-20, accessed 20 September 2018, <http://www.worldscientific.com/doi/abs/10.1142/97817832674460001>.

²⁰ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines: Options for Disengagement Strategy*, 6.

²¹ Richard Barrett and Laila Bokhari, “Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Programmes Targeting Religious Terrorists and Extremists in the Muslim World: An Overview,” in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, eds. Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan (New York: Routledge, 2009): 170, accessed 04 November 2018, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780203884751/chapters/10.4324/9780203884751-19>.

willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence, as a method to effect societal change.”²² With this definition of radicalization, the author will use the de-radicalization definition of Rabasa et. al. in their RAND report entitled *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremist*. The report defines de-radicalization as, “The process of abandoning an extremist worldview and concluding that it is not acceptable to use violence to effect social change.”²³ In other words, de-radicalization is a process that aims to alter or remove the ideological foundations of violence in an individual or a group.

However, the process should not only focus on the ideology, but also gives attention to the behavioral approach. For Ashour, de-radicalization comes into two domains, ideological and behavioral. Ideological de-radicalization results from delegitimizing or a change in belief, while behavioral de-radicalization emphasizes on renouncing or a change in attitude, behavior, and action.²⁴ This is in contrast to some experts that label a change in behavior as *disengagement*.

²² Charles E. Allen, *Threat of Islamic Radicalization to the Homeland*, written testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC, 14 March 2007, 4, accessed 06 November 2018, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/testimony/270.pdf>.

²³ Quoted in Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 2.

²⁴ Omar Ashour, “Lions Tamed: An Inquiry into the Causes of Deradicalization of Armed Islamist Movements: The Case of the Egyptian Islamic Groups,” *The Middle East Journal* 61, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 596, accessed 03 November 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233498914_Lions_Tamed_An_Inquiry_into_the_Causes_of_DeRadicalization_of_Armed_Islamist_Movements_The_Case_of_the_Egyptian_Islamic_Group.

Rabasa et. al. define disengagement as “the process of changing one’s behavior by refraining from violence and withdrawing from a radical organization.”²⁵ Besides, John Horgan also notes that de-radicalization and disengagement are two different processes. According to Horgan, disengagement can be the product of psychological or physical factors, most notably, imprisonment.²⁶ In his article, “*Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Analysis*,” he explains that while de-radicalization may prime disengagement, disengagement does not automatically lead to de-radicalization. An individual could leave terrorism behind or be disengaged, but does not imply that one is de-radicalized.²⁷ There are disengaged individuals who keep their radical views while deciding to stay away from violent acts. Therefore, a “successful de-radicalization program” should not merely produce a change in an inmate’s pattern of behavior, but it should also produce a change in an individual’s underlying beliefs.²⁸

The Program’s Effectiveness

Several authors and terrorism experts question the effectiveness of existing de-radicalization programs. There are literatures and articles, as well as studies about the

²⁵ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 5.

²⁶ John Horgan, “Deradicalization or Disengagement? A Process in Need of Clarity and a Counterterrorism Initiative in Need of Evaluation,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 2, no. 4 (2008), accessed 20 September 2018, <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/32/html>.

²⁷ John Horgan, “Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Analysis,” in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, eds. Toro Bjorgo and John Horhan (New York: Routledge, 2009), accessed 04 November 2018, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780203884751>, 27.

²⁸ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 6.

complications of assessing its effectiveness. According to Marisa Porges, former counterterrorism advisor in the U.S. DOD and Treasury, the lack of monitoring mechanism creates doubt to the claim of high success rates by de-radicalization programs dealing with Islamist extremists.²⁹ Zachary Abuza, a political science professor, shares the same perspective. He argues that most of the Indonesian prisoners who have retracted are not de-radicalized. “At the end of this program, you are probably still going to have someone who is committed to the establishment of sharia and who is probably still going to be less than friendly toward non-Muslims and ethnic minorities.”³⁰

Horgan and Braddock further question the success of the programs. They argued, “There is no consensus on what constitutes success in reforming a terrorist, let alone what even constitutes reform in this context.”³¹ They pointed out that no program has identified valid and reliable factors for a successful program, thus making it challenging to evaluate its effectiveness.

Consequently, Rabasa et al. enumerated five obstacles that challenge the accuracy of the evaluation. First, programs are just recently implemented to allow an in-depth evaluation. Second, governments deliberately withhold information. Third, there is no

²⁹ Marisa L. Porges, “The Saudi Deradicalization Experiment,” Council on Foreign Relations, Expert Brief, 22 January 2010, accessed 20 September 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/saudi-deradicalization-experiment>.

³⁰ Quoted in Drake Bennett, “How to Defuse a Human Bomb,” *Boston Globe*, 13 April 2008, accessed 18 September 2018, archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2008/04/13/how_to_defuse_a_human_bomb/.

³¹ John Horgan and Kurt Braddock, “Rehabilitating the Terrorists? Challenges in Assessing the Effectiveness of De-radicalization Programs,” in *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22 (2010): 268, accessed 03 November 2018, <https://www.start.umd.edu/sites/default/files/files/publications/Derad.pdf>.

monitoring system for extended periods for released detainees. Fourth, the use of recidivism as a measure of success is misleading. Fifth, a standard definition is absent for recidivism.³²

Interestingly, Gunaratna stressed that Singapore is a success in rehabilitating their jailed extremists, while other experts claimed some level of effectiveness with regards to Indonesia's program. Despite these mixed reviews and for a country with serious security concerns, the Philippines embarked on rehabilitating its terrorist inmates. Banlaoi discussed the Philippines acknowledgment on the necessity of the program in his book, *De-radicalization Efforts in the Philippines*. On the other hand, Clarke and Morales examined the preparedness of Philippine jails and prison for the program in their article, *Integration versus Segregation: A Preliminary Examination of Philippine Correctional Facilities for De-Radicalization*. However, there is no literature related to assessing the effectiveness of the Philippines de-radicalization program; thus, identifying a significant void in the research.

Research Purpose

This paper focuses in the Philippines. It aims to assess the effectiveness of the Philippine de-radicalization program in comparison to the Singapore and Indonesian programs. It examines the current efforts in the Philippines, particularly with Muslim inmates accused of various crimes associated with terrorism. The result of this study is to provide an understanding of the current state of the Philippine de-radicalization program with regards to its components, the factors that impede its success, and the areas for

³² Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 40-41.

improvement. This understanding will lead to some proposed recommendations the government may adopt to enhance its program or further study.

Background or Context of the Problem and the Research Question

There are several studies regarding the de-radicalization efforts in the Philippines lacking an effectiveness assessment. Assessment is the main focus of this study. For years, the Philippine government embraced de-radicalization as a potential answer to the challenge of how to rehabilitate jailed extremists to cohabit in normal society after release. However, the effectiveness of the program is not known. How effective is the de-radicalization program for jailed terrorist in the Philippines? What factors constitute success? Can best methods be replicated? To answer these questions, the author used de-radicalization literature to provide a background and basic understanding of the concept. The cases of Singapore and Indonesia are also used to increase confidence in the findings. This paper compares and contrasts the three countries' programs to search for common factors of success.

Assumptions

The Philippines, Singapore, and Indonesia de-radicalization programs have not substantively changed throughout the study. The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) will still implement the de-radicalization program in the Philippines. The Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) will continue to oversee Singapore's program while the Indonesian police force will still be implementing their de-radicalization efforts. No changes in the respective programs' elements occurred that has affected the course of the study. The current structure of

examined programs is seen to become more significant with the current trend of terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Definitions

Disengagement: is a behavioral change, such as refraining from violence and leaving a group or changing one's role within it.³³

De-radicalization: is an ideological or cognitive shift, such as a fundamental change in understanding that moderates one's beliefs.³⁴

Detainee: refers to a person who is accused before the court or competent authority and is temporarily confined in jail while undergoing or awaiting investigation, trial or final judgment.³⁵

Radicalization: is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice. In this study, it is being used as a process wherein inmates adopt views and acts that are contrary to the prescribed norms and standards expected from them or against the prescribed jail policies and regulations.

³³ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 5.

³⁴ Omar Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 5, accessed 12 December 2018, <https://www.routledge.com/The-De-Radicalization-of-Jihadists-Transforming-Armed-Islamist-Movements/Ashour/p/book/9780415485456>.

³⁵ Julius Arro, Fermin Enriquez, and Severino Khita, "Strengthening the Intervention Programs to Address Radicalization of Detainees in the BJMP-manned Jails in Camp Bagong- Diwa" (master's thesis, Development Academy of the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines, 2017), 10.

Special Intensive Care Area (SICA): is a maximum security detention center inside Camp Bagong Diwa that houses high risk and high-profile detainees on remand awaiting trial for various capital offenses, including those suspected of being members of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Moro National Liberation, Front (MNLF), Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Terrorism: is all intentional criminal acts that are committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, unduly compelling a government or an international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act, seriously destabilizing or destroying fundamental, political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.³⁶

Terrorist inmate: is an individual who is arrested and detained in the Philippines for his involvement in militant or terrorist activities, and his associations with the various groups that generally incarcerated on criminal charges or convictions, such as kidnapping, murder, and extortion, rather than terrorism offenses.³⁷

Ulama: a body of Muslim scholars recognized as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology or simply “the possessor of knowledge”. They play

³⁶ Riyad Rahimullah, Stephen Larmar, and Mohamad Abdalla., “Understanding Violent Radicalization amongst Muslims: A Review of the Literature” *Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science* 1, no. 1 (December 2013): 21.

³⁷ Clarke R. Jones and Resurrecion S. Morales. “Integration versus Segregation: A Preliminary Examination of Philippine Correctional Facilities for De-Radicalization” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 35, no. 3 (2012): 213, accessed 26 September 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233456923_Integration_versus_Segregation_A_Preliminary_Examination_of_Philippine_Correctional_Facilities_for_De-Radicalization.

active roles in administration, governance, and politics by serving as judges, advisers, interpreters, clerks, administrators, and in the shaping of public opinion.

Scope

This study focuses on assessing the effectiveness of the de-radicalization program of the Philippines. The researcher looks into the different activities in the de-radicalization program of the government and examines its successes. This study also includes the Singapore and Indonesia de-radicalization programs to search for best practices where the Philippines can replicate. The researcher compares and contrasts these programs with the Philippines to find common factors of success or failure. Also, due to the contested concept of the Philippines de-radicalization program, the author assesses the effectiveness of all prison-based rehabilitation efforts whether its goal is ideological or behavioral.

Limitations

This study is based primarily on related published literature to substantiate the paper. Moreover, local and foreign literature, as well as numerous news articles, commentaries, current assessments from defense and security agencies, and credible think-tanks will provide a clearer understanding of the subject matter at hand. Data gathered are limited because the researcher currently resides in the U.S for the duration of the study. No classified information such as Intelligence Summaries, tactical interrogation reports, and incident reports from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) were available due to

classification issues. These two government agencies are the ones mandated to implement the Philippines de-radicalization program.

Moreover, the Philippines' program is not well documented. Most of the interpretations and analysis are based on available written literature and personal knowledge of the author based on his previous dealings. The researcher was able to get information from government officials that are or were involved in the de-radicalization program, but were limited due to classified information. This limitation is aggravated by the fact that the Philippines does not have any clear distinction between its de-radicalization, rehabilitation, and disengagement efforts.

Delimitations

The research focuses on jailed Muslim extremist and not all imprisoned terrorist in the Philippines. The New People's Army is also a known terrorist group in the Philippines, but they are not part of this study. The study might mention some concerns regarding the Philippines political and social environments together with the prison and legal systems, but will not focus on discussing these factors. The findings of the study only reflect the researcher's assessment of the current de-radicalization program of the Philippines and not the whole counterterrorism efforts of the Philippine government.

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on de-radicalization programs mainly for the Philippines. This research has an implication to the overall counterterrorism strategy of the government as it continuously develops its capabilities in combatting the violent threat of terrorism not only within its territory, but in the region as

well. With the persistent threat of transnational terrorist organizations in the region, specifically in Muslim Mindanao³⁸, the need to enhance the de-radicalization program of the country comes into more significance. It will also have implications for the BJMP and BuCor whose primary task is to implement the de-radicalization program. This study will highlight the importance of their roles in the de-radicalization process. Most importantly, this paper will try to show the real status of the Philippines de-radicalization program. This paper will be a valuable literature contribution for the Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) particularly on formulating inter-agency defense strategies, doctrines, and policies.

Thesis Overview

Chapter 2 presents available works of literature that were studied to have a holistic understanding of key definitions, concepts, and programs regarding de-radicalization. It starts with the difference of de-radicalization and disengagement and concludes with the Philippines policies and programs about these two concepts. Chapter 2 examines prison-based radicalization and the nature of the threat in South East Asia. The chapter also highlights the response of Singapore and Indonesia towards the Jemayaah Islamiyah (JI) threat.

³⁸ SITE Intelligence Group Enterprise, "IS East Asia Province claims bombing of Filipino soldiers in Sultan Kudarat," 28 August 2018, accessed 09 September 2018, <https://ent.siteintelgroup.com/Statements/is-east-asia-province-claims-bombing-filipino-soldiers-in-sultan-kudarat-in-mindanao.html>.

Chapter 3 discusses how data are gathered for this study. It explains the reason behind choosing comparative case study analysis as the methodology as well as its perceived weaknesses. Chapter 3 also presents the three components of the successful de-radicalization program as basis for assessment.

Chapter 4 is the comparative analysis of the programs of Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Each program was deliberated based on the threat situation, Muslim population, the program, and an evaluation of the strength and weakness. The three components of a successful program discussed in chapter 3 are the basis for the analysis. Singapore presents a comprehensive program while Indonesia and the Philippines use an ad hoc program.

Chapter 5 provides a conclusion of the study on the effectiveness of the Philippines de-radicalization program on jailed Muslim extremists. This chapter presents significant findings and challenges in the research. It discusses some features that can be adapted for a successful Philippines' program.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following segments are the review of related literature and studies that either concur with or dissent from the study. This chapter will present the difference of de-radicalization and disengagement, and the influence of prisons in the radicalization process. It also discusses the JI's influence in the region and the Singaporean and Indonesian responses. It will also highlight appropriate legal basis, different policies, and existing government initiatives the Philippines launched as part of its counterterrorism efforts.

De-radicalization and Disengagement

John Horgan provides the specific difference of de-radicalization and disengagement. He emphasizes that experiencing disengagement from a terrorist activity does not necessarily mean experiencing de-radicalization. Horgan further underlines that de-radicalization is not a “necessary accompaniment to disengagement.” Moreover, the author explains that understanding the phases of radicalization and the process of disengagement may be valuable in creating a counterterrorism strategy.³⁹

Omar Ashour, a political scientist and author, provides an additional explanation to this point of view. In his book, “The De-Radicalization of *Jihadists*,” Ashour defines de-radicalization as “a process that leads an individual or group to change his attitudes about violence.” He argues that de-radicalization is all about changes in beliefs or

³⁹ Horgan, “Deradicalization or Disengagement?”

ideology, whereas disengagement pertains with changes in actions with an end of abandoning violent activities. In layman's term, in the disengagement process, the individual leaves the terrorist group, but not necessarily renounces his ideology of terrorism.⁴⁰

Contrary to Horgan and Ashour's perspective that disengagement and de-radicalization are two distinct concepts, Arie Kruglanski, Michele Gelfand and Rohan Gunaratna, in their article, *Aspects of Deradicalization* argue that disengagement could be an integral part and parcel of de-radicalization. They explain that it is difficult to influence terrorists and their supporters to abandon their ideology entirely. Hence, in the authors' view, the terrorist's acknowledgment that violence is irrational or the individual's disengagement from terroristic acts is a crucial component of de-radicalization. In other words, one cannot be de-radicalized without being disengaged.⁴¹

Prison-based Radicalization

In order to understand the effectiveness of de-radicalization programs in prisons, one must first understand the prison's influence in radicalization. Prisoner radicalization is not a new phenomenon in the complex world of counterterrorism. The article, "The Radicalisation of Prison Inmates," written by Elizabeth Mulcahy, Shannon Merrington,

⁴⁰ Omar Ashour, "De-radicalization of Jihad? The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on al Qaeda," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 11, no. 14. (March 2008), accessed 03 December 2018, <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/36/75>.

⁴¹ Arie Kruglanski, Michele Gelfand, and Rohan Gunaratna, "Aspects of Deradicalization," Institute for the Study of Asymmetric Conflict, accessed 20 June 2018, <http://www.asymmetricconflict.org/articles/aspects-of-deradicalization/>.

and Peter Bell tells that throughout history, prisons have served as recruitment and control centers for ideological extremists. They presented Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler as examples. They used their prison times to cultivate extremist philosophies and recruit others. The writers also claimed that some of the most powerful criminal groups' leaders originated in prisons.⁴²

Interestingly, according to a Pulitzer prize winner Joby Warrick, in his book, “Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS,” Ahmad Fadil al-Khalayleh famously known as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was radicalized in the Jordanian al-Jafr prison. Warrick articulately discussed how Abu Muhammad Maqdisi, a firebrand preacher, transformed Zarqawi from a purely physical being to a jihadist action figure. He also discussed how the teachings and brutality of Zarqawi were adopted by the present ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Baghdadi, the self-declared “caliph” was caught in 2004 and was imprisoned in the dysfunctional Camp Bucca U.S. detention center. Lieutenant Commander Vasilios Tasikas, who ran the legal operations at the prison wrote: “Extremists mingled with moderates in every compound.” The legal officer also said that the approach is dangerous and prejudiced, which predictably fueled insurgency inside the detention center. Indeed, Baghdadi is the greatest alumnus of Camp Bucca Jihadi University.⁴³

⁴² Elizabeth Mulcahy, Shannon Merrington, and Peter Bell, “The Radicalisation of Prison Inmates: Exploring Recruitment, Religion and Prisoner Vulnerability,” *Journal of Human Security* 9, no. 1 (2013): 4-14, accessed 14 November 2018, [https:// research-repository.griffith.edu.au/bitstream/handle/10072/64669/98691_1.pdf?sequence=1](https://research-repository.griffith.edu.au/bitstream/handle/10072/64669/98691_1.pdf?sequence=1).

⁴³ Joby Warrick, *Black Flags; The Rise of ISIS* (New York: First Anchor Books Open-Market Edition, June 2016).

Some academic literature also describes prisons as radicalization incubators. Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, senior intelligence analysts of the NYPD division listed prisons as “pit stops” or “meeting places” that serve as radicalizing agents. The report entitled, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* identified prisons as “a radicalizing cauldron,” playing a critical role in both triggering and reinforcing the radicalization process. The prison’s isolated environment with the imprisoned audience without distractions makes it an excellent hotbed for radicalization. Moroccan Jamal Ahmidan and Algerian Alleka Lamari, two of the Madrid bombers were either radicalized or indoctrinated in prison.⁴⁴ This belief concurs in McDowell’s *Indonesia’s deradicalization program under fire* article. As discussed in Julius Arro, Fermin Enriquez and Severino Khita’s *Strengthening the Intervention Programs to Address Radicalization of Detainees*, McDowell described that prisoners are susceptible while in prison. According to McDowell, disaffected disposition, violent behaviors, criminal orientation, and anti-social habits make them vulnerable to radical feelings.⁴⁵ To make matters worse, Kruglanski and Fishman assumed that prisoners are being exposed to radical religious messages, accepting violence as a way to gain preferred outcome and become radicalized.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York: New York City Police Department, 2007), accessed 20 September 2018, https://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/files/NYPD_Report_Radicalization_in_the_West.pdf.

⁴⁵ Arro, Enriquez, and Khita, “Strengthening the Intervention Programs to Address Radicalization of Detainees.”

⁴⁶ Arie Kruglanski and Shira Fishman, “The Psychology of Terrorism: ‘Syndrome’ Versus ‘Tool’ Perspectives,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18, no. 2 (July 2006): 193-215, accessed 20 September 2018, <https://www.researchgate.net/>

Horgan supported this concept. He said that prisons are breeding grounds for radical ideologies. The environment that inmates are isolated, unprotected, and under personal crisis provide the conditions inmates become radicals.⁴⁷ Franklin Bucayo, former director of the Philippines National Bilibid Prison, indicated that the threat of radicalization for common criminals is real. He added that congestion and the lack of facilities compound the threat.⁴⁸

Indeed, according to Neumann in his book, *Prisons and Terrorism*, “Prisons are places of vulnerability in which radicalization can take place,” but at the same time, “prisons have on many occasions been incubators for peaceful change and transformation.”⁴⁹ Accordingly, this view was shared by Morales when she outlined in her book, *Terrorism and Deradicalization*, that combating radicalization behind bars begins by first recognizing that there is a threat and implementing an effective de-radicalization program.⁵⁰ Indeed, many rehabilitation programs like Singapore,

publication/233207885_The_Psychology_of_Terrorism_Syndrome_Versus_Tool_Perspectives.

⁴⁷ John Horgan, *Psychology of Terrorism: Classic and Contemporary Insights* (New York: Psychology Press, 2009).

⁴⁸ Tarra Quismundo, “Prison officials fear terrorist radicalizing inmates,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 12 April, 2015, accessed 08 September 2018, <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/684939/prison-officials-fear-terrorists-radicalizing-inmates>.

⁴⁹ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 8.

⁵⁰ Quoted in Arro, Enriquez, and Khita, *Strengthening the Intervention Programs to Address Radicalization in the BJMP-manned Jails in Camp Bagong-Diwa*, 16.

Indonesia, and the Philippines saw the prison as a potential catalyst for disengagement and de-radicalization.

Nature of Threat in South East Asia

Mohamed Bin Alih believes that Jemayaah Islamiyah (JI) is the largest and most dangerous terrorist organization in South East Asia.⁵¹ It is based in Indonesia and has network cells in the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, and Australia. It uses violence to fulfill its sacred duty and has links with Al-Qaeda forming its global network. JI poses a new kind of threat because it is a religiously motivated terrorist organization. Former Singapore's Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong agreed with this view when he said, "The virulent strain of Islamic terrorism is another matter altogether. It is driven by religion. Its ideological vision is global. It is the most dangerous. The communist fought to live, whereas the jihadi terrorist fight to die and live in the next world."⁵²

Thomas Koruth Samuel documented in his study, *Radicalization in South East Asia: A Selected Case Study of Daesh in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines*, about the increasing threat of ISIS/Daesh in South East Asia. The presence of local militant groups such as Darul Islam in Indonesia, Qoid Wakalah in Singapore, and the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines make these countries potential expansion areas for ISIS. Samuel also pointed out;

⁵¹ Mohamed Ali, *Coping with the Threat of JI – The Singapore Experience* (Singapore: International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Nanyang Technological University, 2016), 1, accessed 26 October 2018, http://rrg.sg/wpcontent/uploads/2016/05/Coping_with_Threat_of_JI.pdf.

⁵² Speech by Prime Minister Goh to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington on 07 May 2004, accessed 20 September 2018, <http://www.mfa.gov.sg>.

Daesh places importance in a particular geographical area by normally expanding its activities through setting up of its branches in those areas. The act of setting up its branches is determined by how strategically significant and important is that particular locality in furthering its interests and/or by the acceptance or willingness of homegrown groups to be part of the organization; submitting to its leadership and sharing its aspirations.⁵³

Singapore and Indonesia Response to JI Threat

There has been an increased global and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Agreements have been signed to share intelligence and increase security cooperation to prevent, disrupt, and neutralize terrorists and their financial system.⁵⁴ Gunaratna and Hassan affirmed that Singapore's government immediately recognized "they had the structures in place to fight the threat of terrorism, but not the threat of ideological extremism." Singaporean leaders knew that Singapore's Muslim community was under threat of radicalization and had to develop an ideological response to protect the Singaporean Muslims. Bin Hassan and Pereire also acknowledged this fact; however, they argued that the Singaporean government viewed the fight against Al-Qaeda and JI ideologies is the primary responsibility of the Muslim community. Subsequently, the government adopted the direct initiative to counter the ideology and the indirect initiative to prevent its spread.

Since the Bali bombing in 2002, Indonesia enforced new terrorism laws to counter the threat of terrorism. The Office of the Coordinating Minister for Politics and

⁵³ Thomas Samuel, "Radicalization in Southeast Asia: A Selected Case Study of Daesh in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines" (monograph, The Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2016), accessed 18 November 2018, https://www.unodc.org/documents/southeastasiaandpacific/Publications/2016/Radicalisation_SEA_2016.pdf.

⁵⁴ Ali, *Coping with the Threat of JI – The Singapore Experience*, 2.

Security also established an anti-terrorism desk. In 2003, Minister of Defence, Matori Abdul Djilil, suggested to enact an Internal Security Act similar to Malaysia and Singapore, but did not succeed. The Indonesian effort relied mostly on the police force in an ad hoc capacity. According to Cameron Sumpter, one significant effort the government embarked is the establishment of the national counterterrorism agency in 2010 because the “moderation of religious conviction is now considered central to state-led tertiary CVE interventions.”⁵⁵ In late 2016, Coordinating Minister for Political, Security and Legal Affairs, General Wiranto, emphasized the necessity of re-education of nationalism to Indonesian ISIS supporters, “They will be made aware of their role as citizens responsible for maintaining the country’s security.”⁵⁶

The Philippine Policies and Programs

The Congress of the Philippines passed the Republic Act No. 9372, also known as the “Human Security Act of 2007.” This Act is the first legislation about the government’s effort to combat terrorism in the Philippines. The Act defines and criminalizes terrorism, conspiracy to commit such act, and other terms such as an accomplice, and accessory. It also authorizes the surveillance of suspects, interception, and recording of communications in addition to the guidelines for banking regulations to

⁵⁵ Cameron Sumpter. “Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Priorities, Practice and the Role of Civil Society,” *Journal for Deradicalization* (Summer 2017): 119, accessed 07 January 2019, <http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/viewFile/103/86>.

⁵⁶ ANTARA. “Gov’t Encourages De-radicalization Program,” *Tempo.Co*, 19 November 2016, accessed 20 September 2018, <http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2016/11/19/055821489/Govt-Encourages-De-radicalization-Program> Accessed January 16, 2019.

prevent terror funding. The Anti-Terrorism Council, the lead agency in implementing the Act, is created under this legislation.⁵⁷ On November 27, 2007, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also created the *Pambansang Lupon ng Pagsasagawa Laban sa Terorismo* (PLPLT) or the National Counter-Terrorism Action Group (NACTAG) to assist in enforcing the Council's regulations. It is an anti-terror group focused on intelligence-gathering, operations, and prosecution of terrorists in the country.⁵⁸ It is the Anti-Terrorism Council's counter-terrorism body NACTAG that is mandated to conduct the actual investigation and provide evidence and witnesses for the prosecution in the event of a terrorist attack.⁵⁹ The NACTAG was later renamed to National Counter Terrorism Unit (NCTU).

However, reports from captured terrorists revealed that well-structured financial networks financed terrorism in the Philippines. In February of 2013, President Benigno Aquino signed the Republic Act No. 10365 as an amendment to the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Act of 2001. This modification of the Anti-Money Laundering Act aims to strengthen it and help prevent the Philippines from being blacklisted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).⁶⁰ The Philippines AML regime now includes

⁵⁷ Congress of the Philippines, *An Act to Secure the State and Protect Our People from Terrorism*, 13th Congress, 3rd Special Session, Quezon City, 19 February 2007.

⁵⁸ Lira Dalangin-Fernandez. "Palace forms new anti-terror group," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 28 November 2007, accessed 03 October 2018, <http://archive.is/VhUwO#selection-2939.48-2939.158>.

⁵⁹ Infogalactic, "National Counter-Terrorism Action Group," accessed 03 October 2018, https://infogalactic.com/info/National_Counter-Terrorism_Action_Group.

⁶⁰ Congress of the Philippines, *An Act Further Strengthening the Anti-Money Laundering Law*, Quezon City, 15 February 2013.

financing terrorism in the list of crimes. Under Republic Act No. 10168, known as, “The Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act of 2012, financing terrorism is a stand-alone crime.⁶¹

The Philippines also saw the need to stop and deter the exposure of communities with the influence of terrorism. In 2011, as part of the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016, the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA), or Resilient Communities in Conflict-Affected Communities was launched. This project is the country’s counter-radicalization program. It is the government’s conflict resolution and development program in conflict-affected areas. One of its objectives is to provide social protection for former combatants and their next-of-kin. These programs are also intended to support indigenous people and other marginalized groups to encourage capacity-building and foster sustainable peace.⁶²

According to Banlaoi, the Philippine government recognizes the importance of the de-radicalization program as a soft counterterrorism measure. However, the government failed to implement a systematic de-radicalization program that is at par with the programs implemented in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.⁶³ He also argued there

⁶¹ Congress of the Philippines, *An Act Defining the Crime of Financing Terrorism, Providing Penalties therefore and for Other Purpose*, Quezon City, 20 June 2012.

⁶² Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace Process, *PAMANA Accomplishment Report* (Manila: Malacanang Palace, January-March 2014), accessed 20 September 2018, <https://www.scribd.com/document/271128589/PAMANA-Accomplishment-Report-for-the-1st-Quarter-of-2014>.

⁶³ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines: Options for Disengagement Strategy*, 9.

is no actual implementation of programs on the de-radicalization and rehabilitation of Muslim detainees. In contrast, Jones and Morales stated the Philippine government had involved a multi-pronged de-radicalization strategy. Part of this strategy is staff awareness, prison reform to reduce corruption and the development of current rehabilitation programs.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation: A Preliminary Examination of Philippine Correctional Facilities for De-Radicalization.”

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thesis utilized a comparative analysis of three de-radicalization/ disengagement programs of Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Valid and pertinent data gathered through research was analyzed. All collected materials were used to assess the effectiveness of the Philippines de-radicalization program. Core elements about the reason for creation and the implementation of de-radicalization programs in the said countries will be analyzed to determine their similarities and differences.

The author chose the Singapore and Indonesia as illustrations given the success of their programs and their cultural similarities with the Philippines. In addition to the success rate, Singapore was also chosen due to its similar ethnic composition. Like the Philippines, it has a minority Muslim population. This ethnic similarity is essential since the research focuses exclusively on Islamic de-radicalization in the Philippines. Indonesia was chosen primarily due to the reported success of the program and the agency similarities implementing the programs. Chapter 4 will further discuss the rationale for choosing Singapore and Indonesia.

This study is mainly focused on the rehabilitation efforts on jailed Muslim extremists from three South East Asian countries; Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The author compared and contrasted these programs based on gathered data and used personal knowledge to differ or concur on some arguments specifically about the Philippine program having worked with the counterterrorism unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Though the political and social setting is important in assessing

the program's success, these factors together with the legal and prison structures are not part of this study.

Recognizing the limitations in comparing three countries with very different government structures and constitutional safeguards, an objective comparison of their existing de-radicalization programs will provide useful data for consideration in assessing the real status of the Philippine program. Several characteristics of the Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines programs were compared and analyzed. Each country involved will be discussed on the terrorism situation, the rationale for comparative analysis, the Muslim populace, the program, and evaluation covering its strengths and weaknesses.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the programs studied, the author used Rabasa et. al.'s three key components of successful de-radicalization programs. They argued that to rehabilitate radical Islamists programs should;

1. Counter a radical's affective, pragmatic, and ideological commitment to an extremist organization.
2. Employ an interlocutor whom the militants view as credible
3. Monitor and offer continued support to reduce the likelihood of recidivism

Countering a Radical's Affective, Pragmatic, and Ideological Commitment

Most rehabilitation processes are not linked to the specific reason for the individual's radicalization. They neglected the idea that an individual develops ties once he joins an extremist organization. These ties create the bond that makes it hard for him to disengage. Moreover, Andrew Silke, a forensic science expert, advises for programs to

look beyond the individual to be effective.⁶⁵ The individual becomes reliant on the organization and embraces the group's identity regardless of the reason for his recruitment. Also, the family can be influential for the attitude of jailed extremists.⁶⁶

Rohan Gunaratna revealed, "Individuals are ideologically driven and not operationally driven."⁶⁷ Terrorism expert Brian Michael Jenkins shared this belief when he stated, "Terrorists do not fall from the sky . . . they emerge from a set of strongly held beliefs. They are radicalized. Then they become terrorists."⁶⁸ Therefore, successful programs must address these different dimensions of mental, behavioral, and social ties. "Extremist groups fulfill functional needs in terms of providing identity, community, protection, and excitement."⁶⁹ The program needs to break this connection, ensure independence, and provides psychological, social, and economic needs to be successful.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Mohammed, "To Deprogram a Jihadist," 10.

⁶⁶ Helen Rose Ebaugh, *Becoming an EX, The Process of Role Exit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 75.

⁶⁷ Bruce Hoffman, William Rosenau, Andrew J. Curiel, and Doron Zimmermann, "The Radicalization of Diasporas and Terrorism," A Joint Conference by the RAND Corporation and the Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, RAND Corporation Research Center, 2007, accessed 23 October 2018, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/2007/RAND_CF229.pdf.

⁶⁸ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman, *Homegrown Terrorists in the US and the UK, an Empirical Examination of the Radicalization Process*, Division of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, 2009, accessed 28 November 2018, <https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/380/homegrown-terrorists-in-the-u.s-and-u.k-an-empirical-examination-of-the-radicalization-process>.

⁶⁹ Bjørgo and Horgan, *Leaving Terrorism Behind, Individual and Collective Disengagement*.

⁷⁰ Rabasa et.al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 42-43.

Credible Interlocutors

The development of a comprehensive program is not a guarantee for success. Moreover, those who carry its implementation have a substantial impact on the program's success.⁷¹ On this premise, the role of interlocutors grows in significance. Most programs use religious clerics as principal interlocutors.⁷² Interestingly, few programs like Indonesia, use ex-militants.⁷³

Theological dialogue is not enough to discredit extremist's ideology.⁷⁴ The use of credible interlocutors "who can relate to prisoners' personal and psychological needs"⁷⁵ makes it effective. These interlocutors possess authority, legitimacy, and credibility. According to Susan Sim, a counter-terrorism expert, in *Analysing Different Dimensions and New Threats in Defence against Terrorism*, captured terrorist leaders who eventually abandoned the cause have a "street cred" that is hard to disregard.⁷⁶ They can still build rapport with imprisoned militants convincing them to disengage or de-radicalize.

⁷¹ Lore Colaert, "De-radicalisation. Scientific Insights in Policy," Flemish Peace Institute, 70, accessed 17 December 2018, https://www.flemishpeaceinstitute.eu/.../de-radicalisation_-_conclusions_-_colaert.pdf.

⁷² Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 52.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 42.

⁷⁵ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 3.

⁷⁶ Jewel Topsfield and Amilia Rosa, "A Different Jihad: How a Convicted Man is Working to Redeem Terrorist's Children," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 July 2017, accessed 20 December 2018, <https://www.smh.com.au/world/a-different-jihad-how-a-convicted-man-is-working-to-redeem-terrorists-children-20170727-gxjtqg.html>.

Post-Release Programs

The conduct of aftercare initiatives might be the most critical and most challenging part of the program. Saudi Interior Minister Mohammed Bin Nayef said, “If we do not help them, someone else will.”⁷⁷ Ali Fauzi Manzi, a former JI bomb-maker, shares a similar view and highlights the necessity for post-release programs, “Because when a terrorist is out of jail while his environment ignores him, then it is possible he will return to their community.”⁷⁸ Thus, to inoculate former inmates from their previous group, close monitoring and continuous support should be an integral part of de-radicalization programs.

Post-release initiatives usually consist of close monitoring by security services, parole-like reporting, counseling, financial support, and even community involvement. However, the duration of the effort is dependent on the country’s resolve and resources, which affects its success. Singapore believes this process “never ends.”⁷⁹

Rationale on Using Comparative Case Study Analysis

The comparative case study analysis was used in this paper because the time of the research is minimal. Moreover, the number of “successful” de-radicalization programs in Southeast Asia is so minimal that the comparative method has to be used to

⁷⁷ Marisa L. Porges, “Reform School for Radicals,” *The American Interest*, Vacation July/August 2011, accessed 23 October 2018, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2011/07/01/reform-school-for-radicals/>.

⁷⁸ Ainur Rohmah, “Indonesia Uses Ex-Terrorists to lead Deradicalization Efforts,” *The GlobePost*, 09 December 2017, accessed 16 October 2018, <https://theglobepost.com/2017/12/05/indonesia-terrorism-deradicalization/>.

⁷⁹ Porges, “Reform School for Radicals,” 53.

optimize data gathering and analysis. Statistical and experimental methods are more preferred methods of contrasting and comparing variables; however, research limitations make comparative method the most feasible. Moreover, with the numerous but similar elements of de-radicalization programs, the comparative method “allow the establishment of relationships among a few variables while many other variables are controlled.”⁸⁰

Weakness of the Method

The weakness facing the comparative method can be concisely stated as “many variables, small number of cases.”⁸¹ Several countries introduced different de-radicalization programs heavily influenced by their type of government, culture, and threat situation. Some programs included the family, community, and aftercare initiatives, which they claimed to be successful. However, in this paper only three cases were examined; therefore, making the scope of the study limited. The danger of having a comparative method with a limited number of cases is the fallacy of attaching too much significance on negative results. Lijphart states, “The erroneous tendency to reject a hypothesis on the basis of a single deviant case is rare when the statistical method is used to analyze a large sample, but in the comparative analysis of a small number of cases even a single deviant finding tends to loom large.”⁸²

⁸⁰ Arend Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method,” *The American Political Science Review* 65, no. 3 (September 1971): 682-693, accessed 24 October 2018, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00030554%28197109%2965%3A3%3C682%3ACPATCM%3E2.0.CO%3B2-I>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

This chapter outlines Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines de-radicalization programs. The author will discuss the rationale behind choosing Singapore and Indonesia, the Muslim populace and their efforts, the existing programs and provide an evaluation of the programs presented. Next, this author will give an analysis based on the key components of successful de-radicalization programs.

Comparative Analysis on Singapore's De-radicalization Program

Singapore has not suffered any significant acts of terrorism like those in Indonesia and the Philippines; however, the country faces a perennial threat from JI. Singapore foiled several JI plans of terrorism within its territory. In December 2001 and August 2002, the Singaporean Internal Security Department (ISD)⁸³ conducted two significant operations against the JI elements, resulting in the detention of 31 members under the Internal Security Act (ISA). Singapore's ISA authorizes preventative detention for anyone suspected of being a threat to the country's national security.⁸⁴ The arrest

⁸³ A security agency overseeing the internal security of Singapore under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

⁸⁴ Zachary Abuza, "The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia: A Preliminary Assessment," in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, eds Tore Bjørge and John Horgan (New York: Routledge, 2009), 202, accessed 20 December 2018, <https://asia.library.cornell.edu/node/661>.

prevented the militant group from conducting a series of bomb attacks in Singapore, which could have been catastrophic.⁸⁵

The ISD became aware of JI's presence in Singapore when a member of the Muslim community tipped off a Singapore citizen who was believed to have links with al Qaeda.⁸⁶ The sudden arrests of most of JI's leaders and key operatives tremendously weakened JI's operational capabilities. The arrests and the continuous support of Singapore to the US War on Terrorism make the threat of JI still significant to retaliate at an opportune time. For this reason, the Singapore government adopted an integrated approach to combat terrorism, which is structured around the prevention, protection, and response domains.⁸⁷ One of the aspects of this integrated approach is the establishment of Singapore's de-radicalization program for Muslim extremists in prisons.

The Rationale for the Comparative Analysis on Singapore's Program

There are three primary reasons why Singapore is chosen; JI's influence, Muslim population, and having a close alliance with the United States. Like the Philippines, Singapore's jailed extremists are influenced by the JI's ideology. The Southeast Asian region shares the same threats. Abdullah Ali, who used the guerrilla name Muawiyah is a

⁸⁵ Ministry of Home Affairs, *The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism*, White Paper, Republic of Singapore, 07 January 2003, accessed 30 September 2018, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/jemaah-islamiyah-arrests-and-the-threat-of-terrorism-white-paper/oclc/51637316>.

⁸⁶ Hassan and Pereire, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism—The Singapore Perspective," 460.

⁸⁷ Ministry of Home Affairs, *The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism*, 4.

Singaporean JI leader operated in the southern Philippines.⁸⁸ The second reason is Singapore has a minority Muslim population like the Philippines. However, despite the minority of the Muslim populace, the two countries share the problem of radical Islamist militancy.⁸⁹ The last reason has to do with the two countries close association with the U.S. Like the most Muslim world, one of the “cumulative” reasons for being radicalized has something to do with U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. Global War on Terror is usually used as propaganda to recruit jihadists around the globe. For these reasons, the author used the Singaporean program to provide the best comparison for the Philippines.

The Muslim Populace

Singapore is home to a population of six million people, ethnic Malays comprise 14.3 percent, who are predominantly Muslims.⁹⁰ Over the centuries, the bustling multiethnic Malay traders helped ensure that Southeast Asian Islam developed a moderate and highly tolerant manner.⁹¹ The 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iranian

⁸⁸. The Associated Press, “Terror leader with \$5 million US bounty on his head reported slain in Philippines, officials say,” *Asia-Pacific on NBC News.com*, 02 February 2012, accessed 20 December 2018, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/46232542/ns/world_news-asia_pacific/t/terror-leader-million-us-bounty-his-head-reported-slain-philippines-officials-say/#.XHJY93dFzIU.

⁸⁹ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 95.

⁹⁰ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “Country Meters: Singapore,” accessed 16 January 2019, <https://countrymeters.info/en/Singapore>.

⁹¹ Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 41-50, 63-64, accessed 30 November 2018, <https://www.amazon.com/Malay-Muslims-Challenge-Resurgent-Southeast/dp/0802849458>.

revolution in 1979 influenced the development of the perspectives of Muslims in Southeast Asia.⁹² Southeast Asian Muslim leaders tried to revive Islam in the region using the Middle East as models.⁹³ This effort somewhat changed the image of Islam in the region. Despite of the trend, most Singaporean Muslims have remained politically and socially moderate, practicing their faith within Singapore's multiracial and secular democratic political framework.⁹⁴

Despite this restraint, Singaporean Muslims have struggled with identity-crisis making them vulnerable to the JI influence. Their Singaporean identity and their global linkages with the wider Malay and Islamic world created a structural tension.⁹⁵ Worsening the situation further is the perception of official distrust towards the Muslim community. There are Singapore policies that have appeared to discriminate against the Islamic populace. As Kumar Ramakrishna wrote:

Contentious issues include the perceived lack of representation of proportionate numbers of Muslims in sensitive appointments in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF); the decision by the government to introduce compulsory national education for all children of primary school age, thereby impacting the ability of Muslim parents to send their children to a religious school (*madrasah*); the recent ban on wearing headscarves or *tudung* by Muslim schoolgirls attending national schools; and the penchant of a number of employers to require Mandarin

⁹² Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, *From Islamic Revivalism to Islamic Radicalism in Southeast Asia* (New Castle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 3, accessed 05 November 2018, <https://newbooksinpolitics.com/political/from-islamic-revivalism-to-islamic-radicalism-in-southeast-asia/>.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁹⁴ McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, 41-50, 63-64.

⁹⁵ Joel S. Kahn, *Other Malays: Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the Modern Malay World* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006), 82 accessed 06 November 2018, https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/774151.Other_Malays.

proficiency as a job requirement, a prerequisite many Muslims consider a form of economic discrimination.⁹⁶

Geopolitical factors also affected the hidden resentment of Singaporean Muslims. Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories, the 2003 Iraq invasion, and the US "war on terrorism" after the 9/11 attack, intensified local Muslim discontent. There is also a trend of scholars seeing Islamic movements as a replacement for communism and the growing argument that Muslims must change their way of life to escape from being classified as fundamentalists, radicals, terrorists, and Salafists.⁹⁷ These global tendencies bred a serious awareness about a wider transnational Islamic identity to an average Singaporean Muslim. Combining these internal and geopolitical factors help explain why the Muslim community initially believed about the Singapore government "conspiracy" to undermine the image of Islam in the country.⁹⁸

Interestingly, the Singapore government's community-based initiatives involving Muslim communities and leaders has generated widespread support. The Singapore Muslim community condemned the JI's ideology in two waves; private Muslim organizations and leaders public statements and the development of a self-regulated system.⁹⁹ In the wake of JI members arrest in Singapore, several Muslim individuals and

⁹⁶ Kumar Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program," *CTC Sentinel* 2, no. 1 (January 2009), accessed 08 December 2018, <https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss1-Art3.pdf>.

⁹⁷ Bustamam-Ahmad, *From Islamic Revivalism to Islamic Radicalism in Southeast Asia*, 3.

⁹⁸ Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program."

⁹⁹ Muhammad Haniff Hassan, "Singapore's Muslim Community-Based Initiatives against JI," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 1, no. 5 (December 2007), 3, accessed 08

organizations publicly stated their disapproval about the terrorist's existence. In October 2002, Habib Hassan Alattas led 122 Muslim clerics, not only condemned terrorism and rejected ideological extremism, but also renewed their commitment to the Singapore government. This collective act showed the commitment and unity of the Muslim community leaders against extremism.

In early 2003, two Muslim groups published a book entitled, "Muslim, Moderate, Singaporean" that can guide Singapore Muslims' ideological stance on various issues.¹⁰⁰ In September 2003, Pergas, the association of Muslim scholars in Singapore, organized the Convention of *Ulama* (Muslim scholars) to urge Muslim scholars to define and combat extremism. The book entitled, "Moderation in Islam in the Context of the Muslim Community in Singapore" was a product of this event. According to Hassan and Pereire:

The book is particularly relevant in counter-ideological efforts in two respects. It highlighted the key extremist ideology and misinterpretation of Islam, and offered rebuttals using the approach adopted by al Qaeda and JI, that is, using the Quran, the *hadiths* and the opinions of Muslim scholars. Secondly, it offered a Charter of Moderation for the Muslim community in Singapore, which contained 27 points as a common basis. The charter has been useful in guiding the community to practice Islam in the context of Singapore, and for religious teachers in guiding the community towards moderation.¹⁰¹

The second wave was the development of a system to self-regulate religious instruction. In December 2005, a collaborative effort between Pergas and the Islamic Religious Council (MUIS) re-launched the Asatizah Recognition System. The system set

November 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/38443294_Community-based_initiatives_against_JI.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Hassan and Pereire, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism—The Singapore Perspective," 465.

the requirements for the certification and registration of *asatizah* or religious teachers, who has significant influence over the Muslim public interpretation of Islam.¹⁰² While such a self-regulatory system cannot be enforced by law, religious teachers can recommend the removal of any person who is guilty of misconduct from the database. Notably, many other Muslim institutions such as the Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP) and Jamiyah shared Pergas' efforts to counter ideological extremism. These civic groups introduced racial and inter-faith exchanges and dialogues to promote better understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.¹⁰³

The Program

In April 2003, the Singapore government launched its attempt to de-radicalize imprisoned extremists with the formation of the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG). A year earlier, whether by design or circumstance, Singapore had its breakthrough, which became the foundation of its de-radicalization program. The ISD invited two respected independent Muslim religious leaders, Ustaz Haji Ali Haji Mohamed, the chairman of the influential Khadijah Mosque, and Ustaz Haji Muhammad Hasbi Hassan, the president of the Singapore Association of Muslim Scholars and Teachers (Pergas), to have a dialogue with the JI detainees.¹⁰⁴ This act did not only dispel the conspiracy theory about the existence of JI in Singapore, but more importantly, it generated a national concern among

¹⁰² Hassan, "Singapore's Muslim Community-Based Initiatives against JI," 4.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program."

Muslim communities and organizations about the dangerous ideology that captivated the detainees. The two *asatizah* gathered together other Muslim scholars to discuss ways to correct the thinking of the JI detainees through a counter-ideological approach.¹⁰⁵ This initiative started the conceptualization of the RRG.

“The objectives of the RRG were to study the JI’s ideology, offer expert opinion in understanding JI misinterpretation of Islam, produce necessary counter-ideological materials, and to conduct public education for the Muslim community on religious extremism.”¹⁰⁶ The RRG is an unpaid entity, which consists of three sub-groups; the Secretariat Group, Resource Panel, and Rehabilitation Counsellors Panel.¹⁰⁷ The first element was composed of six volunteers from several Islamic bodies who handle administrative duties for RRG and the preparation of counter-ideological materials. The second element, the Resource Panel, consists of three independent Muslim scholars, one Muslim scholar from the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, and a judge from the Syariah Court of Singapore. This element scrutinizes the counter-ideological materials and gives the consultants the necessary feedback and advice before the start of counseling. The last element is composed of local Muslim scholars acting as religious counselors to detainees, supervisees (under restriction order), and eventually to families,

¹⁰⁵ Ramakrishna, “A Holistic Critique of Singapore’s Counter-Ideological Program.”

¹⁰⁶ Hassan and Pereire, “An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism—The Singapore Perspective,” 461.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 462.

wives, and children voluntarily.¹⁰⁸ RRG counselors are primarily volunteers who possessed formal Islamic educational credentials from both local *madrasas* as well as respected foreign institutions such as al-Azhar University in Cairo, the Islamic University of Medina and the International Islamic University in Malaysia.¹⁰⁹

The Singapore's de-radicalization program consists of psychological rehabilitation, religious rehabilitation, and social rehabilitation.¹¹⁰ Muhammad Hassan and Kenneth Pereire, research analysts of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) termed the Singaporean efforts as direct and indirect initiatives.¹¹¹ Singapore addresses the detainee's emotional needs through psychological rehabilitation. Psychologists from the Ministry of Home Affairs regularly assessed detainees in prison where the rehabilitation process began. Weekly visits are allowed as therapy to ease the detainees feeling of loneliness and separation and to let them realize that their families are suffering. The program believes that family and close friends can

¹⁰⁸ Hassan and Pereire, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism—The Singapore Perspective," 460.

¹⁰⁹ Mohamed Hassan and Ustaz Mohamed Feisal, "The Roles of the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) in Singapore," in *Fighting Terrorism: The Singapore Perspective*, ed. Abdul Halim bin Kader (Singapore: Taman Bacaan, 2007), 152, accessed 12 October 2018, <https://www.amazon.com/Fighting-Terrorism-Abdul-Halim-Compiled/dp/9810585772>.

¹¹⁰ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamic Extremists*, 96.

¹¹¹ Hassan and Pereira, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism – The Singapore Perspective," 461.

be influential in the process of disengagement or the decision to leave from terrorist groups.¹¹²

The role of each psychologist is to help the detainees manage their emotions and develop better analytical tools, but not change the prisoner's values because this aspect is the detainee's preference.¹¹³ Professional counselors also gave basic counseling techniques training to volunteers to standardize the methods of counseling. Most volunteers had attended the "Counseling Psychology," a formal training program.¹¹⁴ Also, the RRG trained each counselor in the use of their own "Jihad Manual" and held retreats for sharing and collaboration on the rehabilitation process.¹¹⁵ The goal of this process is to neutralize the danger posed by the detainee. A vital part of this rehabilitation process is the development of relationships of trust with case officers.

The second aspect of Singapore's program is religious rehabilitation. ISD's arrests and investigations found that JJ's terrorism plans were based on religious ideology.¹¹⁶ The terrorist inmate's belief system needed to be rehabilitated to prevent them from going back to militancy. In this regard, the program includes a theological

¹¹² Ebaugh, *Becoming an EX, The Process of Role Exit*, 75.

¹¹³ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 97.

¹¹⁴ Hassan, "The Roles of Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) in Singapore."

¹¹⁵ Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program."

¹¹⁶ Ali, *Coping with the Threat of Jemaah Islamiyah – The Singapore Experience*, 7.

dialogue to provide a “clear understanding of the religious concepts which they had misinterpreted.”¹¹⁷

Mainstream scholars engaged extremists with theological discussions to convince them that their radical interpretation of Islam is incorrect. Singaporean authorities enlisted a group of religious teachers and scholars from the Singapore Muslim community like the PERGAS, MUIS, and other religious-based organizations to assist the JI detainees to uncover the misinterpretations in the JI teachings. Religious counselors conduct counseling sessions with detained JI members, those who are under Restriction Order, and their family members.¹¹⁸ The goal of religious counseling is to enlighten the detainees to a more comprehensive understanding of Islam.

There are different reactions to the religious counseling program, which varies from individual detainee to another. RRG counseling efforts have no success in dealing with the “hardcore” detainees; on the other hand, other detainees demonstrated apparent changes in beliefs and behavior after six months to a year of counseling.¹¹⁹ These were the members who took the *bay`a*, or oath of allegiance involuntarily. Notably, most Singaporean detainees were in support roles within JI and had not engaged in actual terrorism.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Ali, *Coping with the Threat of Jemaah Islamiyah – The Singapore Experience*, 8.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹⁹ Ramakrishna, “A Holistic Critique of Singapore’s Counter-Ideological Program.”

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

The last aspect of the program is the social rehabilitation in preparation for the detainee's future reintegration into society. The detainees are provided with vocational skills training to improve educational and employment opportunities after their release. To some extent, the government arranged job opportunities waiting for the ex-radicals upon discharge.¹²¹ Part of the social rehabilitation is the inclusion of community and family. The involvement of the community has been part of Singapore's counter-terrorism and rehabilitation programs.¹²²

The government worked with numerous community-based organizations to ensure support to the detainee and his family. This effort creates the impression that the larger community does not tolerate terrorism.¹²³ The community-based Aftercare Services Group provided social and emotional support to the families. This action prevented vulnerable families from possibly relying on the JI extremist network for help. Moreover, providing support to the family aimed to compel the detainee or encourage the family to urge the detainee to cooperate with the rehabilitation program. Social rehabilitation prepares the detainee in his transition into normal society without the fear of stigmatism and ostracism, prevents recidivism, and more importantly addresses the concerns of the second generation of extremists.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Halim Kader, presentation at the International Conference on Terrorist Rehabilitation, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 24-26 February 2009.

¹²² Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 99.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 101.

As expected, RRG counselors met some resistance and suspicion. Initially, the JI detainees called the RRG counselors as *munafiq* (hypocrites) and “puppets of the government.”¹²⁵ Eventually, over time, the RRG counselors understood that some Singaporean policies, geopolitical factors, and the close alliance with the United States played as aggregate reasons leading to radicalization.¹²⁶ What seems to be the decisive factor was their common desire for “spiritual revival.” This desire to learn more about Islam exposed them with the Singapore JI leaders who “presented an extremist interpretation of Islam imbibed from Afghanistan that included a strong, anti-American, jihadist streak.”¹²⁷ Indeed, the detainees were radicalized to believe that the Islamic Caliphate’s restoration is through jihad, which is an obligation for all Muslims.¹²⁸ These findings highlighted the need for re-education.

Amanda Johnston wrote in her thesis, “Assessing the De-radicalization Programs for Islamic extremists,” the following excerpt about re-education based on Mohamed Hassan’s article, “*The Roles of Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) in Singapore.*”

Re-education is conducted in four phases. In the first phase of the program, the counselor identifies the detainee’s ideologies and misunderstanding of certain Islamic concepts. The second phase begins with the counselor refuting any incorrect beliefs. Third, the counselor replaces any misunderstandings with a

¹²⁵ Ramakrishna, “A Holistic Critique of Singapore’s Counter-Ideological Program.”

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Kumar Ramakrishna, “Jemaah Islamiah: Aims, Motivations and Possible Counter-Strategies,” Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 02 October 2002, accessed 20 September 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/38443039_Jemaah_Islamiah_aims_motivations_and_possible_counter-strategies.

¹²⁸ Hassan, “The Roles of Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) in Singapore.”

correct interpretation of the concept. Lastly, the counselor teaches the detainee the correct Islamic knowledge.¹²⁹

In order to “extricate” and “negate” the extremist’s ideology from the detainee’s mind, RRG focused on five specific areas: aspects of extremism, misinterpretation of certain Islamic concepts, the relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, concepts of jihad and sharia, and the anti-Western viewpoints of the detainees.¹³⁰

The RRG counselors included the whole household in the counseling program on a voluntary basis. This effort is on the understanding that the detainee’s family was either radicalized or vulnerable to such belief due to their affiliation. The RRG utilized female counselors to speak with detainee spouses who want counseling.¹³¹ The formation of the Interagency-After Care Group (ACG), which focused “on the welfare of the families of detainees” supported the RRG family counseling efforts.¹³² The help usually comes through education assistance to detainee’s children, monetary support, and job opportunities to enhance the financial capability of the family having their breadwinner in

¹²⁹ Amanda K. Johnston, “Assessing the Effectiveness of Deradicalization Programs on Islamist Extremists” (master’s thesis, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, December 2009), 52, accessed 20 October 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277755553_Assessing_the_Effectiveness_of_Deradicalization_Programs_for_Islamist_Extremists.

¹³⁰ Abuza, “The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia: A Preliminary Assessment,” 202.

¹³¹ Ramakrishna, “A Holistic Critique of Singapore’s Counter-Ideological Program.” 3.

¹³² Jeremy Au Yong, “The Straits Times – Care Group for Families of JI Detainees Lauded,” *Straits Times*, 14 November 2007, accessed 20 December 2018, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Issue/straitstimes20071114-1>.

jail. The RRG also conducted public talks, forums, publications, and established a website to lessen the effects of religious extremism in the Muslim community.

Evaluation

Due to its success, the Singaporean program is one of the most studied de-radicalization programs. In a country with a minority Muslim population, Singapore's de-radicalization program targeting Islamist extremists is significant.¹³³ Terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna declared the country's rehabilitation program for jailed extremists is "working."¹³⁴ Thus, the program could serve as a model in the development of de-radicalization programs in other non-Muslim majority countries like the Philippines.

Singapore's success can be attributed to its comprehensive approach, the participation of Muslim community organizations, and the legal provisions of the country. First, the program is a government-led, well-structured and focused, and well-resourced. The program is the government's recognition of the importance of an ideological response to counter the threats of al Qaeda and JI. The Singaporean government led by the Internal Security Department (ISD) of the Ministry of Home Affairs extended all possible help to the RRG. The ISD assisted the RRG members in accomplishing their roles through the regular briefing, training, and dialogue sessions. The program is an inter-agency effort designed to address the psychological, ideological, and social aspects of radicalization. The influence of these efforts go beyond the

¹³³ Johnston, "Assessing the Effectiveness of Deradicalization Programs for Islamist Extremists," 49.

¹³⁴ Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program."

detainees; preferably it includes their families and community. Singapore's program is well-resourced to monitor the whereabouts of released detainees or those under restriction orders.

Researchers, policy makers, and government security departments from all over the world commended Singapore's community-based initiatives against extremism. It became a prototype for many de-radicalization programs.¹³⁵ Since the start of the program, the government embraced the notion that the Singapore Muslim community has the primary responsibility for combating the al Qaeda and JI ideologies.¹³⁶ Singaporean Muslims responded affirmatively as individuals and civic organizations and inoculated their communities against false and dangerous religious teachings. They have been active partners in the conceptualization and implementation of Singapore's rehabilitation efforts.

Singapore's ISA coupled with Singapore's Minister of Home Affairs robust security supervision weakens JI activities and limits its support in the country. ISA grants government security officials broad authority to impose preventive detention (PD) without trial against any person suspected of terrorist acts.¹³⁷ The Internal Security Department employs the ISA for the safety of its citizens and the overall security of

¹³⁵ Hassan, "Singapore's Muslim Community-Based Initiatives against JI," 6.

¹³⁶ Hassan and Pereire, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism – The Singapore Perspective," 461.

¹³⁷ Internal Security Act Revised Edition 1985 Chapter 143, Singapore Statutes Online, accessed 02 November 2018, <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/ISA1960>.

Singapore's territory.¹³⁸ The exercise of this power enabled the disruption of JI operational capabilities and also served as a factor of possible disengagement from terroristic activities.¹³⁹ The ISA also empowers the government to regulate an individual's movement, enforce curfews, and mandate other restrictive measures like mandatory religious counseling to guarantee national security.¹⁴⁰

The Singapore government and the community efforts in the de-radicalization resulted in some successes, but they are not without areas for improvement. Even though there were no terror attacks in Singapore, the threat is still imminent. Just this January 2019, a Singaporean businessman, who funded ISIS, and his friend were detained under ISA.¹⁴¹ The country needs to still improve its de-radicalization program particularly on the criteria for release and the use of ex-militants.

¹³⁸ Eugene K. B. Tan, "Selling Singaporeans on the ISA," *Channel News Asia*, 19 September 2011, accessed 20 December 2018, https://www.smu.edu.sg/sites/default/files/smu/news_room/smu_in_the_news/2011/sources/CNA_20110919_1.pdf.

¹³⁹ Johnston, "Assessing the Effectiveness of Deradicalization Programs for Islamist Extremists," 95.

¹⁴⁰ Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs, Parliamentary Speech on the Internal Security Act, 19 October 2011, Singapore Government, Minister of Home Affairs, accessed 16 February 2019, <http://www.mynewsdesk.com/sg/pressreleases/parliamentary-speech-on-the-internal-security-act-speech-by-mr-teo-chee-hean-deputy-prime-minister-coordinating-minister-for-national-security-695944>.

¹⁴¹ Zakir Hussain, "Singaporean businessman, who funded ISIS fighter, and his friend detained under ISA," *The Straits Times*, 15 February 2019, accessed 06 December 2018, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/two-radicalised-singaporeans-detained-under-internal-security-act-for-involvement-in>.

The program has no specific benchmarks for release.¹⁴² The assessments of case officers, prison wardens, psychologists, and religious counselors including the description of the detainee's level of involvement influences the decision for release. Singapore government also acknowledged that not all detainees could be rehabilitated and some deploy defense mechanisms.¹⁴³ This system could become subjective and could cause adverse consequences such as jealousy and distrust among detainees. Interestingly, despite any specific criteria for release, the rate of recidivism in Singapore is low. Nonetheless, in 2016, Singaporean citizens Rosli bin Hamzah and Mohamed Omar bin Mahidi still tried to travel to Syria to join the IS militant group.¹⁴⁴ The following year child care worker Syaikhah Al Ansari was detained for the same reason.¹⁴⁵ The fact is, released non-deradicalized militants could re-engage with their former group and seek refuge in other countries to continue their terroristic activities. Hence, criteria for release would be of help to prevent or minimize the threat.

The Singapore government puts some restrictions to former detainees. They have no public participation in counter-ideology efforts except doing roles behind the scenes. Ex-militants are prohibited from conducting sermons, lectures or making public

¹⁴² Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 103.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁴⁴ Reuters, "Singapore detains two 'Syria-bound militants' without trial," 19 August 2016, accessed 02 December 2018, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-singapore-security-idUKKCN10U111>.

¹⁴⁵ Admin, "Singapore detains 'Syria-bound radicalised woman'," *Malaysia Gazette*, 13 June 2017, accessed 30 November 2018, <https://malaysiagazette.com/en/2017/06/13/singapore-detains-syria-bound-radicalised-woman/>.

statements. The imposed restrictions are seen as significant setbacks for the program as former militants have the credibility with extremists. Moreover, the “power to convince the public of the danger of JI ideology is greater if it comes from former JI members.”¹⁴⁶ Their criticisms and public appearance would significantly improve the credibility of the government’s effort and suppress the conspiracy theory among the Muslim community. In some countries, ex-militants have significant roles in their de-radicalization program, which provided them another perspective on dealing with their rehabilitation efforts.

The interesting part of Singapore’s program are the efforts made towards the non-Muslim populace. The government showed sensitivity and restraint in handling the JI issue.¹⁴⁷ Special briefings and dialogue sessions were conducted with non-Muslim populations to maintain social accord. The Inter-Racial Confidence and Harmony Circle was established at workplaces and schools “to promote better inter-racial and inter-religious understanding between different communities.”¹⁴⁸ The underlying philosophy was, “If Singaporeans of all races and religions build for themselves a more cohesive and tolerant society, groups such as JI will find it much harder to establish a foothold in Singapore.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Hassan and Pereire, “An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism – The Singapore Perspective,” 474.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 463.

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Home Affairs, *The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism*, 23.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

In totality, the Singaporean de-radicalization program can be seen as a qualified success that still needs some innovations to become more relevant and viable in the long run. Its holistic approach is commendable and arguably the reason why there are no violent terroristic activities in the country.

Conclusion

The Singaporean integrated approach in its de-radicalization efforts led some observers like terrorism expert, Rohan Gunaratna, to declare it is useful. Singapore's program is a highly individualized, ideologically-inclined, and community-based comprehensive initiative with the goal of de-radicalizing or rehabilitating jailed terrorists into law-abiding citizens. Singapore set the standard for non-Muslim majority country on how to deal with extremists in prison and after release.

Singapore approaches jailed terrorists as individuals to determine the proper rehabilitation effort. They used psychologists to determine the actual condition of the detainees before the start of any counseling program. Also, Singapore embraces the theological aspect of the program designed to discourage extremists from the different Islamist interpretation of jihad, which connotes violent acts. Part of this effort is the re-education of detainees done by selected Muslim scholars to correct the misinterpretations of JI ideology.

Although Indonesia or the Philippines have a worse JI threat than Singapore, the Singaporean Muslim community's effort should not be undermined. The community-based initiatives have made the program successful and have been a symbol of a unified

effort between the government and the Muslim minority against terrorism. Particularly significant, “is the proactive role of the Muslim scholars in this drive.”¹⁵⁰

Comparative Analysis on Indonesia’s De-radicalization Program

Indonesia’s fight against terrorism is a sensitive matter due to its connection to Islamic belief. In 2001, Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, and the Philippines security, intelligence and law enforcement agencies collaborated to dismantle JI, Indonesia did not.¹⁵¹ Indonesia is the home of the JI, a secretive network established by two Indonesian clerics, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, in 1993 while in exile in Malaysia.¹⁵² JI has links with the 1940s and 1950s Darul Islam insurgency in Indonesia. Currently, most Southeast Asian programs intend to rehabilitate radicals associated with this exclusive, closely-knit regional Islamist terrorist organization.¹⁵³

In the *Research on Motivation and Root Causes of Terrorism* by Mufid et al., the writers explain “religious-ideological motives are found to be the predominant reason that motivates all kinds of perpetrators in Indonesia to participate in terrorist acts.”¹⁵⁴ Religious-ideological motives appear in all roles or layers while other motives such as

¹⁵⁰ Hassan, “Singapore’s Muslim Community-Based Initiatives against JI,” 5.

¹⁵¹ Rohan Gunaratna and Mohamed Bin Ali, *Terrorist Rehabilitation. A New Frontier in Counter-Terrorism*, Insurgency and Terrorism Series 7 (Singapore: Nanyang Technological University, Imperial College Press, 2015): 42.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 91.

¹⁵⁴ A. S. Mufid, S. W. Sarwono, M. Syafii, A. Baedowi, T. Karnavian, M. Zarkasih, and A. Padmo, *Research on Motivation and Root Causes of Terrorism* (Jakarta: Indonesian Institute for Society Empowerment, 2011).

solidarity, revenge, separatist, and situational appear on selected layers. As for the reasons for the acts of terrorism, the writers also describe cases in Indonesia are classified differently; structural, conducive, personal, and precipitating causes. Therefore, terrorism in Indonesia is more of a cultural issue rather than a security issue.¹⁵⁵

The Rationale for Comparative Analysis on Indonesia's Program

The influence of JI, the method of implementation, and legal impediments are the three reasons why Indonesian program is necessary for this study. Like the Philippines and Singapore, the Jemaah Islamiyah has significant influence among Indonesian jailed extremists. Indonesia's primary interlocutors, Nasir Abbas, and Ali Imron have connections to the Philippines terrorism experience. Abbas, a senior JI leader with Malaysian descent, was instrumental in the organization of the JI structure in the Southern Philippines.¹⁵⁶

On the other hand, Imron was part of the 2000 bombing of the Philippines ambassador's residence in Jakarta.¹⁵⁷ Second, Indonesia implements its de-radicalization program through an ad hoc committee.¹⁵⁸ Generally, the implementation is similar to the Philippines procedure. In both countries, police and jail personnel are the primary

¹⁵⁵ Mufid et al., *Research on Motivation and Root Causes of Terrorism*.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁵⁷ Gregorio B. Hernandez, "Indonesia and Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists" (master's thesis, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, June 2018), 30.

¹⁵⁸ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 94.

implementers of the program. Lastly, like the Philippines, Indonesia has problems in jail management and the legal system, which are contributory factors in the radicalization of jailed extremists. In both countries, there has been a shortage of political will to address radicalization and fully support de-radicalization programs. For these reasons, the author used the Indonesian program in addition to Singapore's to provide the best comparison to the Philippines.

The Muslim Populace

Indonesia is Southeast Asia's largest nation with Islam as its dominant religion. Based on the latest *countrymeters*' survey, approximately 235 million or 87.2% of the total population abides the Islamic belief. This archipelagic country is the world's largest Muslim country. However, due to historical, cultural and geopolitical factors, Islamic practices vary throughout Indonesia.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, pluralistic and secular Islamist groups have achieved political representation in Indonesia's political landscape and constitution. In recent years, the popularity of Salafi-based religious schools has affected the Islamic belief in the country.¹⁶⁰ Since the mid-1990s, radicalized and violent groups has been thriving in Indonesia.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Anthony L. Smith, "The Politics of Negotiating the Terrorist Problem in Indonesia," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 28, no. 1 (2005): 34, accessed 03 December 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233149941_The_Politics_of_Negotiating_the_Terrorist_Problem_in_Indonesia.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁶¹ Johnston, "Assessing the Effectiveness of Deradicalization Programs for Islamist Extremists," 39.

Despite the revelation and the series of high-profile arrests after the Bali bombing in 2002, Indonesia failed to recognize Islamist radicalization as a threat. This indifference can be attributed to the fact most Indonesians view the global war on terror as a war against Muslims and these Islamist groups are just part of the overall Islamic community.¹⁶² Also, the Indonesian government lacked the political will and effective security laws that could prevent JI and its organization from thriving.¹⁶³ The government chooses not to confront these radicalized groups due to concerns of alienating the mainstream Muslims.¹⁶⁴

At the onset of Islamic radicalism, mainstream civil society lacks the initiative to address the emerging threat. In 2003, Indonesian parliamentarians and academics criticized Minister of Defence Matori Abdul Djilil, who suggested enacting an Internal Security Act.¹⁶⁵ However, some individuals in their private capacities helped the police to rehabilitate terrorists from their organizations, as long as their identities were not disclosed.¹⁶⁶ Interestingly, despite little cohesive direction from the government and mainly operating on an ad hoc capacity, Indonesian state agencies and civil society

¹⁶² Smith, “The Politics of Negotiating the Terrorist Problem in Indonesia,” 37.

¹⁶³ Ali, *Coping with the Threat of Jemaah Islamiyah – The Singapore Experience*, 11.

¹⁶⁴ Smith, “The Politics of Negotiating the Terrorist Problem in Indonesia,” 38.

¹⁶⁵ Ali, *Coping with the Threat of Jemaah Islamiyah – The Singapore Experience*, 3.

¹⁶⁶ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 10.

organizations established various initiatives.¹⁶⁷ The perennial bombings, which caused massive deaths and injuries to civilians, could have initiated this sudden outburst of condemnation. These civil society organizations adopted reasonable goals and took a more personalized approach to counter violent extremism than the government.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conducted programs in prisons throughout Indonesia. Their goal is to disengage prisoners from violence and train officers to effectively handle jailed terrorists. The University of Indonesia's Research Centre for Police Studies (PRIK) is a group which runs prison-based programs with the goal of de-radicalizing inmates. Since 2009, PRIK has operated with parolees and detainees to change their mindsets.¹⁶⁸ In 2010, the Search for Common Ground (SFCG) conducted short programs focusing on tolerance, empathy, and cooperation. SFCG promotes conflict management instead of addressing ideology or religion in Indonesia prisons.¹⁶⁹ *Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian* (YPP) is another Indonesian non-governmental organization (NGO) making similar efforts. This NGO is working in cooperation with the Directorate General of Corrections (DGC). According to Cameron Sumpter, associate research fellow of Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), the entity conducts four programs.

The first is working to empower the capacity of prison officers to manage the psychological and ideological features of their relationships with extremist inmates, and the capacity of parole officers to assist former prisoners' transitions back into society. YPP's second programme attempts to address a difficult issue: how to engage hard-line supporters of IS who are self-contained and antagonistic

¹⁶⁷ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 113.

¹⁶⁸ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 132.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 130.

towards group outsiders. The idea is to get cooperative terrorist inmates to work with the more hardened ideologues and militants in order to slowly soften their positions, so that they may be open to further dialogue. Cooperative prisoners are trained in effective strategies to engage their cellmates.¹⁷⁰

In 2016, Civil Society against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE), which is composed of 23 organizations, was established to enhance the national strategy against terrorism. Its mission is to “build and develop a national network of civil society organizations to promote synergy and effective performance in combating radicalism and violence.”¹⁷¹ A recent promising rehabilitation initiative comes from *Aliansi Indonesia Damai* (AIDA) which started to include victims during dialogues within prisons. AIDA tries to humanize violence by establishing meetings between victims and terrorist inmates.¹⁷²

The majority of the non-governmental and civil society organizations’ prevention work is directed at the youth sector.¹⁷³ They engaged youth in schools and universities through prevention activities and discussions that promoted options for positive activism, tolerance, and diversity. The Wahid Foundation introduced a pilot project to identify the most vulnerable schools to target. They engaged students through constructive discussions, which involved topics such as peace, acceptance of cultural difference, and discrimination towards minority groups.¹⁷⁴ AIDA also conducted school seminars and activities promoting peace and the importance of constructive response towards injustice

¹⁷⁰ Sumpter, “Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia,” 131.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 131.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

other than violence. From 2014-2017, 29 victims and four former terrorists have been involved in seminars and reached out to over 3000 youths in schools across the country.¹⁷⁵ SFCG also conducts programs focusing on promoting leadership training, dialogue, and conflict management skills. A key success feature of SFCG's approach is empowering students using media through radio and short films or documentaries about tolerance and pluralism.¹⁷⁶

Maarif Institute, a Muhammadiyah¹⁷⁷ based organization, map out schools to identify institutions affected by radicalism/extremism in West and Central Java. The strength of Maarif's activities is the annual youth camp on 'character building.' The camp involves outdoor activities, and meetings with people from the nation's six official religions.¹⁷⁸ They also conduct Maarif Institute's Peace Journalism Workshop to strengthen the media literacy of participants particularly concerning how youth can be more critical of what they see and read online. These NGOs and civil societies are part of the government's tertiary interventions alongside the prisons and inmate management and Indonesia's de-radicalization program.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 132.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 123-124.

¹⁷⁷ Muhammadiyah is one of the two major Islamic organisations in Indonesia. It was established in 1912 and has a membership base of almost 30 million people.

¹⁷⁸ Indonesia's six official religions are Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Catholicism, and Confucianism.

¹⁷⁹ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 127-132.

The Program

There is still no coherent, coordinated multi-stakeholder prison-based program to rehabilitate inmates convicted of terrorism charges in Indonesia despite persistent efforts from various government and non-government organizations over the past several years.¹⁸⁰ The DGC runs regular programs, which are mostly the same as for the general prison population, only with occasional extra classes promoting tolerance. Since its formulation, Indonesia has no structured de-radicalization program and its approaches are centered on two capabilities; its counter-terrorism unit, and ex-jihadists.

In contrast to other de-radicalization programs like Singapore and Saudi Arabia, Indonesia's approach started with no formal "theological dialogue." The country's methodology is called cultural interrogation "whereby the officers displayed their faith in Islam, treated detainees with respect and attempted to build trust."¹⁸¹ In 2005, Indonesia's government brought together a group of Muslim scholars in an attempt to counter Islamist radicalization and teachings.¹⁸² Unfortunately, the effort did not take-off. The group is uncommitted with the necessity of the project, and some are unknowledgeable about jihadist teachings. This failure gave way to a police-centered disengagement initiative run by a counter-terrorist force, Detachment 88 or Densus 88.

Detachment 88 is an Indonesian Police Special Forces designed to counter terrorism. It went operational in 2003 after the Bali bombings. The United States and

¹⁸⁰ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 128.

¹⁸¹ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 107.

¹⁸² International Crisis Group, "'Deradicalization' and Indonesian Prisons," *Asia Report*, no. 142 (2007): 11.

Australia funded, equipped, and trained Densus 88 to become capable of countering various terrorist threats, from bomb threats to hostage situations. As part of the police counterterrorism efforts, Brigadier General Surya Dharma, Chief of Detachment 88, developed and implemented his program towards imprisoned terrorists. It was an ad hoc program, which relied heavily on voluntary contributions to carry out its activities.¹⁸³ The primary objective of the program is to extract intelligence information against other jihadists from prisoners.¹⁸⁴

The implementation of the program was based on two assumptions: jihadists only listen to other jihadists, and jihadist perception of police can be changed through kind treatment.¹⁸⁵ The program relied on reformed jihadists rather than religious scholars to talk to prisoners in a belief that radicals can relate to these former radicals.¹⁸⁶ Of significance, reformed senior JI leaders were used in the program, which is helpful in the Indonesian hierarchical culture deferential to authority figures.¹⁸⁷ Nasir Abbas and Ali Imron are two former Indonesian jihadists who are the primary “de-radicalizers.” They

¹⁸³ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 94.

¹⁸⁴ International Crisis Group, “‘Deradicalization’ and Indonesian Prisons,” 12.

¹⁸⁵ Kirsten E. Schulze, “Indonesia’s Approach to Jihadist Deradicalization,” *CTC Sentinel* 1, no. 8 (2008): 8, accessed 09 December 2018, <https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2010/06/Vol1Iss8-Art3.pdf>.

¹⁸⁶ Shaun Waterman, “Indonesia Tries Deradicalization,” *Middle East Times* (22 July 2008): 1.

¹⁸⁷ Abuza, “Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia,” 199.

encouraged other former jihadists to help the government and approached terrorist inmates to challenge their JI ideology.

About the second assumption, the police's violent retribution from previous rebellions caused many jihadists to distrust them.¹⁸⁸ Coincidentally, Police Brigadier General Surya Dharma, the pioneer of Indonesia's "soft approach" program, saw the opportunity of de-radicalizing jailed extremists on a personal level. Being a devout Muslim, he believed "he had a religious obligation" to help these terrorist inmates find true Islam.¹⁸⁹ Thus he designed Indonesia's program based on humane treatment and respect for the detainee's Islamic practices.¹⁹⁰ Since most of the police who manage the rehabilitation program are Muslims, maintaining Islamic values enhanced their reputation. Most of the leaders of the police counterterrorism unit are fervent believers of Islam who stop interrogation sessions to pray.¹⁹¹ Besides, interrogators are given access only after the intervention of former jihadists who are working as part of the rehabilitation program. These approaches and personal devotion helped curb distrust.

In 2010, the government established the National Agency for Combating Terrorism (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme/BNPT*) through Presidential

¹⁸⁸ Schulze, "Indonesia's Approach to Jihadist Deradicalization," 8.

¹⁸⁹ Di Martin, "Bali Bomber Now Campaigns to Stop Terrorism," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation News*, 20 September 2007, accessed 15 January 2019, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2007-09-20/bali-bomber-now-campaigns-to-stop-terrorism/676116>.

¹⁹⁰ Abuza, "The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia," 198.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 200.

Decree No. 46. Based on this Decree, the agency has three primary duties, *first* to establish national policies, strategies, and counterterrorism programs; *second*, to coordinate related government agencies in the field of counterterrorism; and *third*, to implement the policy by forming the task forces consisting of elements of relevant government agencies.¹⁹² Also, BNPT has three main coaching programs to perform the de-radicalization. These are personality mentoring, independency mentoring, and continuous mentoring. Praditya wrote:

Personality mentoring aims to fix the radical ideology which is not in accordance with the philosophy of *Pancasila*. This mentoring is being done with the help of the inmate's family who supports the program. Meanwhile, the independency mentoring aims to equip the inmates with soft-skills to get the work after release from the prison. The soft-skills are needed to develop and enhance every detainee capability, thus they will be more ready for the integration process with the civil society. Lastly, the continuous mentoring aims to prevent the potential of post-release recidivism.¹⁹³

The BNPT's current approach is generally based on the *Blueprint Deradikalisasi* (De-radicalisation Blueprint) published in 2013. According to the BNPT 2013 report, this internal publication was expected to serve as "a guide for all agencies involved in the prevention and control of radical understanding" in Indonesia. However, the publication was too broad to offer any concrete direction. To execute the program, the Blueprint also identified four stages: "identification, rehabilitation, re-education, and re-socialisation." Sumpter elaborated these stages as follows:

¹⁹² Yosua P. Suratman, "The Effectiveness of De-Radicalization Program in Southeast Asia: Does It Work? The Case of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore," *Journal of ASEAN Studies* 5, no. 2 (2017): 140, accessed 15 January 2019, https://www.academia.edu/36578559/The_Effectiveness_of_DeRadicalization_Program_in_Southeast_Asia_Does_It_Work_The_Case_of_Indonesia_Malaysia_and_Singapore.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

Identification involves interviewing prisoners to determine their level of involvement, ideological understanding, and affiliations. This initial stage highlights how little is often known about some of the convicted terrorism offenders, which is not helped by the general reluctance to share information between relevant state agencies. The rehabilitation and re-education stages comprise “ideological moderation ... carried out through dialogue and a persuasive approach”, yet the language used in the Blueprint is vague with few details given as to how dialogue sessions are conducted, or whether they are applied personally or to groups.¹⁹⁴

The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict reported the BNPT has two significant programs in prisons. The first is aimed to determine the prisoner’s radicalization level. The second BNPT program is to establish business opportunities for cooperative prisoners to earn extra income.¹⁹⁵ The BNPT approach also acknowledges that, “ideology lies at the heart of an individual’s decision to become involved in terrorism.” The restraint of religious belief is now considered fundamental to the state-led de-radicalization program.¹⁹⁶

Evaluation

There are differing reviews about the Indonesian de-radicalization program. Such differences are expected because no “one size fits all” program. Analysts like Rabasa, Abuza, and Schulze corroborated this belief when they acknowledged it is difficult to determine the success of a particular de-radicalization program because there are no standard means to measure success. Nevertheless, the analysts concluded that the

¹⁹⁴ Sumpter, “Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia,” 128-129.

¹⁹⁵ Ainur Rohmah, “Deradicalization Through the Eyes of a Former Terrorist,” *The Globe Post*, 09 December 2017, <https://theglobepost.com/2017/12/05/indonesia-terrorism-deradicalization/>.

¹⁹⁶ Sumpter, “Countering violent extremism in Indonesia,” 119.

Indonesian program is distinct and has some level of success. This chapter will provide the reader an analysis of what factors led to its success and the weakness of the program.

The Indonesian program is distinct in two ways, its conceptualization and the use of ex-jihadists. The program was conceptualized based on the interaction between police interrogators and detainees. Unlike the comprehensive approaches found in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Singapore, the program started basically as a police intervention in support of its counter-terrorism efforts. Its goal is to get intelligence information about the terrorist's group and not change the belief of the detainees.

The program was successful in terms of accomplishing its primary goal of intelligence gathering.¹⁹⁷ It has successfully targeted and dismantled terrorist organizations throughout Indonesia.¹⁹⁸ In 2007, the police were able to dismantle a major terrorist base in Poso, which gained praise as “one of the world's few triumphs in fighting terrorism.”¹⁹⁹ In addition, the Indonesian parliament decided to institutionalize the program as an acknowledgment of its success.²⁰⁰ British counterterrorism expert Nick O'Brien stated the Indonesian program was able to exploit the internal split within the

¹⁹⁷ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 109.

¹⁹⁸ Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggot, “The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment” (monograph, Rand National Defense Research Institute, Santa Monica, CA, 2005). 154, accessed 06 December 2018, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG846.html>.

¹⁹⁹ Joshua Kurlantzick, “Doing It Indonesia's Way,” *Time*, 09 August 2007, accessed 20 November 2018, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1651213,00.html>.

²⁰⁰ Abuza, “The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia,” 199.

JI.²⁰¹ Police recruited those jihadists who opposed the use of violence against civilians and used them as interlocutors to co-opt and influence other jihadists.

The Indonesian initiative remains unique in its utilization of ex-terrorists as fundamental to the de-radicalization process. The importance given to the role of ex-jihadist like Nadir Abas and Ali Imron is one of the most effective aspects of the Indonesian approach. Given the Indonesian hierarchical culture, which tends to respect authority, the use of Abbas and Imron who are high ranking JI operatives provided officials a level of insight that only an ex-terrorist can make available. Ali Fauzi Manzi, once a chief bomb maker of JI, said to The Globe Post, “Only a former terrorist could handle a radicalized person in the right way.”²⁰² Mr. Agus Martin, JI weapons supplier, whom Mr. Manzi recruited said his heart was touched “when the person who recruited me was advising” and not touched by the efforts of the BNPT in jail.²⁰³

There are several weaknesses to the de-radicalization program. Primarily, the program lacks coordinated effort from other state agencies. The Indonesian de-radicalization has an “ad hoc” nature. It was seen as a primary weakness since the start. In 2010, the government acknowledged it through the establishment of the BNPT. Unfortunately, the creation of BNPT failed to address the lack of guidance and direction in the Indonesian de-radicalization program. According to one participant, “The BNPT lacks commitment in implementing their programs” and “ex-offenders do not trust the

²⁰¹ Waterman, “Indonesia Tries Deradicalization.”

²⁰² Rohmah. “Indonesia Uses Ex-Terrorists to Lead Deradicalization Efforts.”

²⁰³ Ibid.

BNPT.”²⁰⁴ BNPT visits tend to be infrequent and inconsistent, stir up jealousy among inmates, and made false promises, which resulted in resentment and mistrust.²⁰⁵ Despite the numerous de-radicalization efforts of governmental and non-governmental organizations, these efforts are fragmented and limited its significant potential.

Second, the ideological de-radicalization itself is limited. Some critics of the Indonesian program argue that ex-militants continue to espouse radical beliefs and they do not promote a truly moderate ideology.²⁰⁶ Interestingly, Abas and other ex-terrorists confirmed this view. The success of attempting to change the *jihadis*’ mindset through ex-terrorists has been restricted. In many cases, participants were inmates who have already misgivings to violence against civilians. Only Afgan veterans found interest in Abas and Imron’s efforts, but not the Bali bombers when they were approached.²⁰⁷ This finding is important because it shows such programs, as in the case of Singapore, tend to be more effective for less extreme radicals. Otherwise, it could be another case of Mr. Manzi where terrorists tend to listen to their recruiters.

Third, there is no systematic, thought-out rehabilitation or after-care program for released jihadist prisoners. Though some civil societies are working on reintegration programs for freed extremists in Indonesia, the efforts seem to be ad hoc and inadequate. Many of the programs are independent without BNPT’s guidance. Most of the released

²⁰⁴ Sumpter, “Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia,” 135.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 129.

²⁰⁶ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 116.

²⁰⁷ Schulze, “Indonesia’s Approach to Jihadist Deradicalization.”

prisoners have few skills, are financially unstable, and have few opportunities, which can cause them to return into the jihadist community and be re-exposed to militant ideas. The high rate of recidivism can be attributed to the lack of post-jail efforts. In 2016 alone, three former prisoners conducted terroristic attacks in the country. Juhanda attempted to detonate a homemade bomb, and Sunakim and Muhammad Ali were involved in the Thamrin bombing. Interestingly, Sunakim was released from prison for good behavior only five months before the attack.²⁰⁸

Lastly, the structure and corruption in the Indonesian prison system are undermining the de-radicalization program.²⁰⁹ “Jihadist prisoners have been able to spread their ideas to non-jihadists in integrated prisons and have been able to radicalize moderate jihadists in segregated prisons.”²¹⁰ Even inside prison walls, terrorist inmates were able to connect to their organization outside due to the proliferation of mobile phones, laptops and other electronic devices among jihadists. The system is so corrupted that police officers are doing “their best to keep top terrorists at police headquarters, out of the normal prison system, because the chances of backsliding are so high.”²¹¹

Conclusion

There are certain aspects of the Indonesian de-radicalization program that showed success despite its fragmented and uncoordinated efforts. Through the years, the

²⁰⁸ Sumpter, “Countering violent extremism in Indonesia,” 133.

²⁰⁹ Schulze, “Indonesia’s Approach to Jihadist Deradicalization.”

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ International Crisis Group, “Deradicalisation and Indonesian Prisons,” 16.

Indonesian government tried to address the weaknesses of its program such as embracing a more ideological persuasive approach, providing social and financial support to families, and the establishment of an overall counterterrorism agency to give the necessary direction and leadership. BNPT's programs consist of a "cultural interrogation approach, whereby the officers displayed their faith in Islam, treated detainees with respect and attempted to build trust."²¹²

Despite the lack of funding, overcrowded prisons, and incoherent de-radicalization efforts, Indonesia has been able to establish a somewhat successful de-radicalization program. The former militants' public recantations and rejection, their setting of foundations and Islamic schools, and volunteering as interlocutors are substantial pieces of evidence of this success. Noteworthy is the continuous development of the program, which started as a police effort into a "should-be" inter-agency approach. Some inter-agency works have to be done.

Indonesia's current de-radicalization program may not be viable in the long run due to some weaknesses within the program. Nonetheless, Indonesia has shown its willingness to address the weaknesses as evidenced in the progression of their program. Indonesia's de-radicalization program carries excellent potential. The greatest obstacle to the program's success is in its implementation. The Indonesian government efforts to tackle the terrorism and radical groups must be praised. Since 2002, Indonesia experimented initiatives aimed at countering violent extremism is developing as can be

²¹² Sumpter, "Countering violent extremism in Indonesia," 118.

seen with the establishment of the BNPT in 2010 and the integration of the ideological aspect of its program.

Comparative Analysis on Philippines De-radicalization Program

Since the 1970s, Islamist separatists have planned and executed numerous attacks throughout the Philippines. According to the Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents, the Philippines suffered more than 593 attacks of varying degrees between 1969 and 2010.²¹³ From 2011 to 2019, Islamic extremists tried to seize urban areas, specifically Zamboanga City in 2013 and Marawi City in 2017. Militant groups also carried out bomb attacks that killed and injured over thousands of Filipino civilians. The latest was the Jolo Cathedral bombing last January 27, 2019, which resulted in at least 23 people killed and 109 others injured.²¹⁴ The presence of several Islamist militant groups, who are active in the region, makes the southern islands of the country a “haven” for terrorists.²¹⁵

Despite the establishment of the National Counter Terrorism Unit (NCTU) in 2007, the de-radicalization program in the Philippines failed to develop into a viable system like the other countries in Southeast Asia. The Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence, and Terrorism Research (PIPVTR) conducted an assessment of terrorist inmates and found out most of the detainees claimed to be “victims of harsh

²¹³ Counter Extremism Project, “The Philippines: Extremism and Counter-Extremism.”

²¹⁴ Rambo Talabong, “What we know so far: Jolo Cathedral bombing,” *Rappler*. 04 February 2019, accessed 10 February 2019, <https://www.rappler.com/nation/222109-jolo-bombing-january-2019-what-we-know>

²¹⁵ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 213.

circumstances.” Some of them claimed they were “victims of mistaken identity” while only a few admitted they had waged ‘jihad’ or did not feel “guilty” about it.²¹⁶ Jones and Morales argued that, “socioeconomic marginalization and retaliation to repressive military action” is the main reason behind the acts of violence in the region “rather than religion and militant extremist ideologies.”²¹⁷

Hence, as part of the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007, the National Anti-Terrorism Strategy was released. This document encourages all government agencies together with the Philippine society to fight radicalization and recruitment; however, “the Philippine government did not actually implement de-radicalization programs as understood abroad.”²¹⁸ Making matters worse, the HSA has been unproductive because the safety measures surrounding the legislation have discouraged authorities from using it.²¹⁹ For instance, the Philippine National Police are hesitant to arrest a suspected terrorist under the HSA because the penalties that could be imposed to arresting officers are worse in the event of wrongful detention.

The Muslim Populace and Roots of Terrorism

The majority of the Philippines population are Roman Catholics; however, about six percent or approximately 20 million practice the Islamic faith. Despite this significant number, Muslim Filipinos remained outside the mainstream of national life. Their

²¹⁶ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines*, 12.

²¹⁷ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 215.

²¹⁸ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines*, 9-10.

²¹⁹ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 213.

religion and way of life began in the 16th century. The arrival of Roman Catholic Spanish colonialists set them apart. Muslim Filipinos or Moros²²⁰ were confined almost entirely to the southern and western Mindanao and southern Palawan of the mainland Luzon. At present, Muslim enclaves in the northern regions of the country are increasing, in contrast to the situation a half-century ago.

In the 1950s, the Philippine government encouraged hundreds of thousands of Filipinos from Luzon and Visayas regions to migrate into Muslim territories in Mindanao.²²¹ This influx of Christians resulted in land disputes with religious undertones, which inflamed Moro hostility in the Southern Islands.²²² Moros also regarded the public school system as a government intervention for the promulgation of Christian teachings.²²³ Distrust and resentment spread in the region and was increased by the declaration of Martial Law. Armed fighting erupted between Christians and Muslims where the latter accused Philippine government troops sent to restore peace and order as protectors of Christians and not peacemakers.²²⁴ With all the turmoil in their territorial

²²⁰ The Spaniards named them Moros (Muslim) after the hated “Moors” who had once ruled Spain.

²²¹ Ronald E. Dolan, ed. *Philippines: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1991), accessed 20 January 2019, <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/>

²²² Alan R. Luga, “Muslim Insurgency in Mindanao, Philippines” (master’s thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 31 May 2002), 83.

²²³ Dolan, *Philippines: A Country Study*.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

domains, the Moro population increased their connection with the worldwide Islamic community particularly Indonesia, Malaysia, Libya, and other Middle Eastern countries.

Filipino nationalists envisioned a united country in which Christians and Muslims would have a peaceful coexistence.²²⁵ The government made concessions to Muslim religion and customs such as their exemption from laws prohibiting polygamy and divorce. The government also attempted to blend Philippine law with the Muslim customary law. In 1990, the government enacted a significant step towards the vision of peace. The establishment of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) gave Filipino Muslims the authority to govern the region, except national security and foreign affairs. However, the supposed end of Muslim dissatisfaction became the dawn of another security concern.²²⁶

Muslim Filipinos, by nature, are strongly interdependent entities, where alliances are made within tribes. Different languages and political structures divide them and conflict between tribes was widespread for centuries. They take pride in their separate identities with the belief that no country has ever won a war against them.²²⁷ Moreover, their differences do not only spring from demographics but also in their Islamic orthodoxy. However, commonalities of historical experiences vis-a-vis non-Muslims, and shared social, cultural, and legal traditions outweighed internal differences.²²⁸

²²⁵ Dolan, *Philippines: A Country Study*.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ YouTube, Interview with Nur Misuari, *Vice News*, 10 May 2016, accessed 15 January 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbdq-effkQk>.

²²⁸ Dolan, *Philippines: A Country Study*.

For centuries, the Moros struggled for fair access to political institutions, economic participation, and acceptance or recognition. The conflict between the state and Muslim separatist groups in Mindanao are primarily rooted in the following: (1) the low degree of political participation for the protection of Muslim way of life; (2) the inability of the state to adequately meet the basic socio-economic needs of the Muslim community; (3) Perceived discrimination and alienation.²²⁹

The Program

The Philippine government's de-radicalization efforts are patterned with the Singaporean multi-pronged strategy.²³⁰ This program includes correctional staff education about terrorism, staff awareness on radicalization threat and prisoner management; prison reforms pertaining corruption and living conditions; improvement of rehabilitation programs; and, examination of other countries de-radicalization programs.²³¹ The BuCor and the BJMP also conducted radicalization and de-radicalization seminars with regional partners from Southeast Asia, including Australia, with regards to de-radicalization strategies.²³²

²²⁹ Warren O. Daroy, "Philippine Fight Against Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG): Quo Vadis?" (master's thesis, National Defense University, Fayetteville, NC, June 2017), 18.

²³⁰ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 51.

²³¹ Jones and Morales, "Integration versus Segregation," 251.

²³² Cynthia Nuval-Andrada, "Philippine Corrections Delegation to Australia," *The Philippine Corrections* (Philippines: Bureau of Corrections, October 2009), 12.

In the Philippines setting, two independent departments of the government are responsible for handling captured extremists. The BuCor under the Department of Justice (DOJ) governs the National Bilibid Prison (NBP), which houses convicted felons including terrorists. The BJMP, under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), is in-charge of “accused” extremists who are jailed in a remand facility run by the Metro Manila District Jail (MMDJ). These terrorist inmates are still in the trial process. Notably, these two government agencies adopted different methods of handling terrorist inmates.

The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSRPV) and the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (NCSTRT) provided three methods for handling terrorist inmates; isolation, concentration, and dispersal.²³³ The BJMP embraced the concentration method for jailed Muslim extremists. This method means alleged terrorists are “held in one place” called the Special Intensive Care Area 1 (SICA-1) away from the general prison population. The method was favored over the isolation process of jailing to reduce the possibility of mental illness and address the concern of limited resources.

Unfortunately, anecdotal evidence from my personal discussions with prison staffs revealed this practice allowed inmates to maintain an organizational hierarchy, harden their ideology, and engage in violent activities. Morales and Jones shared the same observation.²³⁴ Interestingly, the British government’s strategy of detaining Irish

²³³ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 17.

²³⁴ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 219.

Republican Army prisoners into a separate block prevented recruitment, but “it also preserved the organizational hierarchy, the group’s identity and facilitated the development of training camps.”²³⁵ The siege of SICA-1 in 2005 that left twenty-three inmates, one policeman, and three jail guards dead was evidence of this.²³⁶

The rampant corruption and poor prison security allow the terrorist inmates held in the SICA-1 to maintain a group structure, a belief system, and communication with the outside world.²³⁷ Contraband, such as mobile telephones and radical Islamist paraphernalia were able to find their way on the hands of inmates. The terrorist inmates, specifically the members of the ASG has successfully converted some Christian inmates held on the floors above them into Islam.²³⁸ This observation proves the possibility of radicalization taking place in the SICA.

In 2009, Jail Senior Inspector Michelle Bonto, who was a Jail Officer III in 2005 when the SICA-1 siege incident happened, conducted her study on radicalization inside SICA-1. She stressed, “The siege which took place in SICA-1 jail on March 15, 2005, which lasted for more than 72 hours was a manifestation of radicalization in jail.”²³⁹ Her assertion was based on her documentary analysis of the events that transpired before and

²³⁵ International Crisis Group, “Deradicalisation and Indonesian Prisons,” 7.

²³⁶ Vaughn and Reyes, “Revisiting the Bicutan Siege: Police Use of Force in a Maximum Security Detention Centre in the Philippines,” 25–45.

²³⁷ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 219.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 220.

²³⁹ Hernandez, “Indonesia and Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists,” 47.

during the siege. She identified the absence of counter-radicalization and de-radicalization programs inside the jail system as contributing to the siege.²⁴⁰ Bonto started a personal initiative, unofficially recognized, and not a government-supported program to de-radicalized terrorist inmates at SICA-1.

In 2011, BJMP approved Bonto’s recommended plan of action that consists of “custodial rehabilitation for the beneficiaries, after-care services to the families [of the detained terrorists], and social and economic reintegration of the beneficiaries into the community.”²⁴¹ Nevertheless, the structural organization of the Anti-Terrorism Council created under the HSA prevented fully supporting her proposal. As a result, Bonto settled for custodial rehabilitation focusing on staffs and high-risk inmates inside SICA-1.²⁴²

Bonto argues:

[t]he prison/jail facility and staff will either deter and mitigate or increase the radicalization process when not properly trained and resilient . . . [I]f a prison staff physically assaults or mentally torments the beneficiary undergoing rehabilitation, the gains made by the rehabilitation team to transform him will be lost.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Michelle Bonto, “The Custody & Management of Suspected Terrorist Detainees: Challenges, Case Studies & Areas for Future Research,” workshop presented at the Global Counter Terrorism Forum, Inaugural Southeast Asia Capacity Building Working Group Meeting, Semarang, Indonesia, 07 March 2012.

²⁴¹ Michelle Bonto, “Winning Hearts & Minds of Suspected VEOs thru Positive Engagement: The Philippines SICA 1 Jail Experience,” lecture presented at the Roundtable Discussion on Enhancing Inter-Agency Collaboration/Multi-Stakeholder Engagement in Furtherance of AFP DSSP “KAPAYAPAAN,” Headquarters, Philippine National Police, 05 May 2017.

²⁴² Hernandez, “Indonesia and Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists,” 48

²⁴³ Bonto, “Winning Hearts & Minds of Suspected VEOs thru Positive Engagement.”

In 2013, BJMP formally launched Bonto's de-radicalization initiative. Bonto reinforced her alternative learning system (ALS) program with the lateral thinking tool (LTT). Her goal is to break the current thinking patterns of the terrorist inmates. Bonto also introduced a complementary program aimed to teach moderation of Islam for her Muslim students.²⁴⁴ To gain cooperation for her ALS program, Bonto implemented a "dynamic security" approach. The goal is to create a learning environment inside SICA-1 by gaining the trust and support of the inmates.²⁴⁵ However, the number of participants is limited due to scarce resources. It was on a voluntary basis, which was open to all high-risk inmates and not specifically for Muslim extremists.²⁴⁶

The NBP practices the dispersal of terrorist inmates into the general prison population.²⁴⁷ Due to the large prison population and scant resources, NBP adopted this method of integrating terrorist inmates with the existing prison gang without special status or category. The aim is to cause a psychological detachment from their militant past and result in a new attachment and a sense of belonging. Though, it is not mandatory for terrorist inmates to join the gang, "the group pressure, a need for protection, acceptance, and a sense of belonging" usually result in joining. Prison gangs provide a sense of social identity, shared purpose, and camaraderie, which the terrorist inmate

²⁴⁴ Hernandez, "Indonesia and Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists," 53.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁴⁶ Michelle Ann Ramirez, "Michelle Bonto: The Warden Is a Teacher," Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Kababaihan at Kapayapaan, Philippines, March 2015, 30.

²⁴⁷ Jones and Morales, "Integration versus Segregation," 219.

desperately needs in order to live in such a hostile environment.²⁴⁸ Gangs in NBP also form an important “governing function” over the general prison population.²⁴⁹

While Bonto introduced ALS as part of the program in the MMDJ, this aspect has been part of NBP’s rehabilitation efforts. The terrorist inmates in the NBP are provided formal and informal educational opportunities for their future reintegration back into their societies. Elementary, high school, and college education are parts of the formal education while non-formal education includes basic literacy skills classes, fine arts, and vocational skills training.²⁵⁰

Most of the Philippines’ program focuses on prison staff and inmates, while efforts to involve the inmates’ families in rehabilitation programs are also being developed. BuCor and BJMP facilities acknowledge “families are an integral part of Philippines society and culture” and should be the backbone of existing rehabilitation programs. The family’s “attitude may have a significant impact” on the rehabilitation of an inmate.²⁵¹ The inclusion of family assures a support structure during the incarceration time and particularly upon the inmate’s release.²⁵² Therefore, engaging and rehabilitating

²⁴⁸ Mark S. Hamm, “Prisoner Radicalization: Assessing the Threat in U.S. Correctional Institutions,” *National Institute of Justice Journal* 261 (2008): 14–19, accessed 20 February 2019, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/224085.pdf>.

²⁴⁹ Lucas Muntingh, *Reducing Prison Violence: Implications from the Literature for South Africa*, Civil Society Prison Reform Research Report (Western Cape: Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape, 2009).

²⁵⁰ Resurrecion S. Morales, “One Bright Spot in Prisons,” *The Philippine Corrections* (Philippines: Bureau of Corrections, 2009), 17.

²⁵¹ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 21.

²⁵² Ellie B. Hearn and Nur Laiq, “A New Approach? Deradicalization Programs and Counterterrorism,” based on the IPI, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the

the inmate's family have become an essential part of de-radicalization efforts to limit both the spread of terrorism and the regeneration of militants in the southern Philippines.²⁵³

Indeed, the Philippine agencies have two distinct methods in handling terrorist inmates. While important to assess which method is more effective, there is no available data. Such a study would have been an important aspect of this research.

Evaluation

The absence of reliable data about how the two independent rehabilitation programs worked complicates the overall assessments. However, there are some structural aspects of the program that can be assessed. The Philippine de-radicalization program is patterned on Singapore's program; however, the implementation is more similar to the Indonesian initiative. The NCTU was tasked to lead in the development and implementation of de-radicalization programs in the Philippines. However, activities were limited to training of wardens and jails guards and not detainees.²⁵⁴ Banlaoi's claim that "there has been no actual implementation of programs of the Philippine government focusing on the de-radicalization and rehabilitation of Muslim detainees" carries some

Arab Thought Forum Conference entitled *Countering Violent Extremism: Learning from Deradicalization Programs in Some Muslim-Majority States* (Amman, Jordan: International Peace Institute, 2010). 6, accessed 16 February 2019, https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/a_new_approach_epub.pdf.

²⁵³ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 100–101.

²⁵⁴ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines*, 10.

truth. The program involves all high-risk inmates and not solely for Muslim extremists. Nonetheless, there are aspects of the program showing strengths and deficiencies.

The sole bright spot of the program is its acknowledgment of the involvement of the inmate's family members in the rehabilitation process. This approach though is seen as part of the Filipino culture of having close family orientation. Their inclusion, as part of the program, provides a significant influence on the rehabilitation of the inmates. However, unlike other programs where financial, social, and psychological support are extended to the family, the Philippine program's support to the family is limited to visitation privileges. Inmates' wives and children are invited during graduation ceremonies and other educational milestones to celebrate the achievement.²⁵⁵ According to Bonto, "Some Muslim wives were also inspired to enroll in the ALS Program in their community."²⁵⁶ However, no data show their actual involvement.

The Philippine de-radicalization program through the BJMP and BuCor have several limiting factors. First, there is limited government support in the implementation of the program. Ramirez pointed out there are no allocated government funds to support its activities. Bonto, personally and collectively, through donations from friends, financed the educational materials needed by the inmates.²⁵⁷ The NCTU, as the governing body, also failed to spearhead the much needed structural changes to support the de-

²⁵⁵ Bonto, "Winning Hearts & Minds of Suspected VEOs thru Positive Engagement."

²⁵⁶ Hernandez, "Indonesia and Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists," 54

²⁵⁷ Ramirez, "Bonto: The Warden Is a Teacher," 31.

radicalization program. Second, corruption inside SICA-1 and NBP are rampant, which undermined the de-radicalization initiatives. Terrorist inmates continue to impose their influence within and outside their prison walls. While noting BJMP and BuCor's efforts to reduce corruption, the proliferation of weapons, mobile telephones, and illegal drugs inside prisons and jails is still a primary concern. Jones and Morales revealed "the ASG inmates held in the SICA maintain a group structure and belief system, and continue to operate and communicate with outside members."²⁵⁸ A definitive example was when inmates inside SICA-1 posted a video showing their support and allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi while gathered around an ISIS black flag in July 2014.²⁵⁹

On the aspect of the de-radicalization program itself, the Philippine initiative has no counter-ideological program. According to Bonto, she proposed the introduction of vetted Islamic scholars and clerics to teach moderation. Muslim inmates' group leaders eventually accepted this. Bonto's declaration is in contrast to the revelations of some personal acquaintances who have first-hand knowledge on the program. According to these individuals, terrorist inmates usually choose preachers among themselves or other imams. The program also lacks a monitoring system for released terrorist inmates. Once the inmate is released, the government has no idea on his whereabouts. The lack of after-release programs denied valuable inputs to assess the program's effectiveness.

²⁵⁸ Jones and Morales, "Integration versus Segregation," 219.

²⁵⁹ Rommel C. Banlaoi, "Self-Proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security," Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July, 2015, accessed 16 November 2018, <http://iag.org.ph/index.php/blog/1165-self-proclaimed-isis-followers-in-thebangsamoro-homeland-threats-to-philippine-security>.

The most interesting part of the Philippine de-radicalization effort is the integration of terrorist inmates with the general prison population. There are both negative and positive consequences associated with NBP's gang strategy. Despite the lack of data or study on the impact of this BuCor's approach, the situation could provide the terrorist inmates with "vulnerable targets for recruitment and radicalization."²⁶⁰ Several studies show examples of individuals radicalized in prison and committing (or attempted to commit) terroristic acts after their release.²⁶¹ New and stronger networks or an "unholy alliance" could also develop if terrorist inmates and other criminals inside prisons are linked.²⁶² Therefore, instead of de-radicalizing or rehabilitating inmates, the government's approach "may exasperate the threat by combining terrorist ideologies with ordinary criminal methodologies."²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Peter R. Neumann and Brooke Rodgers, *Recruitment and Mobilisation for the Islamist Militant Movement in Europe* (London: The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, Kings College, 2007), accessed 10 January 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/doc_centre/terrorism/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_mobilisation_tactics_en.pdf.

²⁶¹ These studies include: Frank J. Cilluffo, *Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?*, Testimony Before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (Washington, DC: Homeland Security Policy Institute, 2006); Frank J. Cilluffo, Sharon L. Cardash, and Andrew J. Whitehead, "Radicalization: Behind Bars and Beyond Borders," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 13, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2007): 112–121; Silber and Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat, Intelligence Assessment*; Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*.

²⁶² Audrey K. Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 253.

²⁶³ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 26.

On the other hand, the integration of a terrorist inmate into the prison gangs could have a positive impact on the inmate's de-radicalization. Though the terrorist inmate is not mandated to join the gang, the pressure and need for protection to survive to be in an unfamiliar and hostile territory force him to join. With this, the terrorist inmate conforms with his new group for acceptance and security. Also, poverty is a common reason for joining a militant group.²⁶⁴ Inside the NBP, gangs generate income from legitimate and illegitimate businesses to sustain their families.²⁶⁵ In this context, the socioeconomic influence that led individuals toward radicalization could be possibly addressed with the income from gang operations. Indeed, gang's social and psychological influences could override the terrorist inmate's behavior, which gives him an opportunity to disengage from his militant group's behavior.²⁶⁶ This disengagement may lead to de-radicalization.

Conclusion

The Philippine de-radicalization program is an ad hoc. Despite the establishment of NCTU to give the overall direction for the country's process, de-radicalization and rehabilitation plans seem to "remain in the conceptual and preparatory stage."²⁶⁷ The BJMP and the BuCor are carrying out their mandated tasks as separate entities with their approaches and goals. The BJMP, through the efforts of JINSP Bonto, used the concentration method of handling terrorist inmates and introduced the ALS, LTT and the

²⁶⁴ Jones and Morales, "Integration versus Segregation," 215.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 221.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

²⁶⁷ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippines*, 10.

“dynamic security” approach as parts of the de-radicalization efforts of the agency.

However, the newness of the program makes it impossible to assess its effectiveness.

On the part of the NBP, there is no specific program for jailed Muslim extremists. The rehabilitation efforts are generally conducted for all high-risk prisoners and not specifically tailored for terrorist inmates. With the limited data and studies regarding this matter, it is hard to say if the integration of terrorist inmates rehabilitates them and it is even harder to assess its effectiveness. However, the more precise result of the integration is BuCor uses it as a means of prison control, looking at gangs as “governing function” over the general population.²⁶⁸

The Philippines’ current de-radicalization program needs significant improvement in order to be viable in the long run. With the security concerns posed by Islamic extremism, the government needs to focus on its de-radicalization efforts as part of its overall counterterrorism strategy. Unlike other terrorists who are driven by religion and militant extremist ideology, terrorist inmates in the Philippines are mostly driven by socioeconomic marginalization and retaliation to repressive military action.²⁶⁹ This offers a significant opportunity as a potential platform for rehabilitation and de-radicalization.

²⁶⁸ Muntingh, *Reducing Prison Violence: Implications from the Literature for South Africa*.

²⁶⁹ Jones and Morales, “Integration versus Segregation,” 215

Comparing and Contrasting the Programs

This section provides a comparative analysis of the three de-radicalization programs. The author analyzed them following Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez and Boucek’s key components of successful de-radicalization programs – counter a radical’s affective, pragmatic, and ideological commitment to an extremist group; continued support and monitoring after the individual completes the formal program; and the use of credible interlocutors to discredit radical Islamism.

Table 1. Programs Overview

Characteristic	Singapore	Indonesia	Philippines
Location	Prison	Prison	Prison/Jails
Objective	De-radicalization and Counter-radicalization	De-radicalization, Counter-radicalization, and Intelligence	De-radicalization and Rehabilitation
Radicals Included	Peripheral members	All	All
Affective component	Psychological counseling for detainees and families	Cultural integration method, situational strategy	Family visits
Pragmatic Component	Education, training, help in obtaining a job, Aftercare Services Group	Support for militants and Families by Government and NGOs	Alternative Learning System
Ideological Component	Religious dialogue	Discussions with ex-militants	Contentious
Interlocutors Used	Ulama & religious organizations	Ulama, Prison Guards, and Ex-militants	None
Post Program	Close monitoring, religious counseling	Start-up assistance	None

Source: Modified by author using Angel Rabasa, Stacie Pettyjohn, Jeremy Ghez, and Christopher Boucek, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation Research Center, 2010), 37.

The three programs have several similarities as well as differences. However, Singapore's de-radicalization program has all the key components of a successful program. Among the three programs studied, it is the ideal type.

Affective, Pragmatic, and Ideological Influence

Singapore's approaches are highly individualized to ensure the affective, pragmatic, and ideological components of militancy are addressed. RRG not only standardized the methods of counseling, but more importantly, all-volunteer counselors are required to take part in Counseling Psychology with government psychologists. The training is to prepare counselors in their dealings with militant detainees and their families. Families are included because of the government's belief that families are radicals that need to be reformed.²⁷⁰ The Singaporean program also focuses on social rehabilitation to deal with the pragmatic aspect. The government extended educational, financial, and job opportunities to inmates and their families. The government also involved the community in preventing stigmatism of former inmates once released into normal society. The government enlisted religious teachers, scholars, and religious-based organizations to deal with the ideological aspect of radicalization. These religious individuals and entities engaged terrorist inmates in theological discussions to uncover the misrepresentations in JI's ideology.

The Indonesian program is similar to Singapore's program to some extent. Like Singapore, Detachment 88 conducts counseling to inmates to deal with the psychological

²⁷⁰ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 54.

and emotional aspect of de-radicalization.²⁷¹ Unlike Singapore, the counseling program excludes the family, and no data shows that counselors have formal training. They also adopted the “cultural interrogation” approach to emphasize humane treatment to terrorist inmates and the “situational strategy” to jail captured terrorists near their families to encourage visitation. Support to families in the form of monetary, medical, and education are also provided. However, most of the support comes from NGOs with little direction from the government. The counter-ideology aspect of the program is not being pursued despite the acknowledgment of the Indonesian government of its necessity. The government relied on ex-militants to argue with the terrorist inmates. However, the ex-militants themselves still espouse radical beliefs. They are trying to achieve inmates’ disengagement from terroristic activities.

Like Singapore and Indonesia, the Philippines de-radicalization program embraces the involvement of families in the process. Family visits are allowed and encouraged to facilitate the rehabilitation of their loved ones. Nonetheless, there are no other incentives or support extended to the family, unlike the two other Asian countries. For its pragmatic component, the program relies on the alternative learning system that offers formal and non-formal education and training to inmates. On the counter-ideological aspect, Bonto introduced a complementary program for the moderation of

²⁷¹ M. Aslam, I. B. Othman, and N.A.K. Rosili, “De-radicalization Programs in South-East Asia: A Comparative Study of Rehabilitation Programs in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, & Singapore,” *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 4 (June 2016): 156, accessed 20 January 2019, jesoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/KC4_81.pdf.

Islam to counter false Islamic ideology; however, this claim is refuted by individuals who know the program. The contrasting opinion makes this aspect contentious.

Use of Interlocutors

The Singaporean and Indonesian approaches recognize the significant role of interlocutors in delivering their programs. Both programs use religious clerics to varying degrees. In Singapore's program, religious teachers or "ulamas" served as interlocutors in the implementation. Worthy to note, aside from being competent Islamic scholars, "clerics need to train as counselors and demonstrate their ability to relate to prisoners' psychological needs."²⁷²

Interestingly, one area for improvement in Singapore's program lies with interlocutors. The government prides itself for having a low recidivism rate; however, they failed to optimize the potential of ex-militants in their program, unlike Indonesia. This failure would have addressed two perennial concerns about the program; the legitimacy of the Islamic scholars and the "conspiracy" theory among the Muslim community.

Indonesia is known for using of ex-militants as interlocutors. Abas and Imron are just two of several ex-militants who joined the fold of the government to rehabilitate terrorist inmates. Ex-militants may not have much religious knowledge, but terrorist inmates see them as "credible if not charismatic" particularly those they recruited and

²⁷² Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 52.

trained.²⁷³ This method has given the government's program some level of credibility and authority, where the Singaporean program is criticized.²⁷⁴ Prison guards had been used, and recently, in 2013, Indonesia began using ulamas in this capacity.²⁷⁵ However, the use of jail guards is not possible in the case of the Philippines. Unlike Indonesia, most jail guards are Christian believers, which means they do not have the knowledge and expertise to act as interlocutors. Bonto introduced the use of clerics in the program; however, there is no other corroborating data to show that the Philippine program uses interlocutors.

Post-release Monitoring and After Care Program

In the disengagement and de-radicalization framework, post-release monitoring and after-care are intended to integrate prisoners back into society and prevent recidivism. Accordingly, Singapore, which is structured and well-financed invested considerable resources for an effective after-care provision. In Singapore released detainees are put into continuous surveillance, which has deterred them from participating in any activity that might cause their reentry in jail. Singapore's ISD requires continuous religious counseling to released inmates to provide a "constant source of positive religious guidance."²⁷⁶ Moreover, religious counselors, ISA officers,

²⁷³ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 52.

²⁷⁴ Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Program."

²⁷⁵ Sumpter, "Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia," 129.

²⁷⁶ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 103.

and support group issue restrictive orders to monitor released terrorist inmates while the aftercare group of the RRG provides social services to released inmates and their families. The government believes these efforts are necessary because not all released militants are completely rehabilitated.

The programs of Indonesia and the Philippines lacks these robust after-release mechanisms. Indonesia lacks the political will to fund post-release monitoring due to the link of terrorism with Islam, which makes it a susceptible issue.²⁷⁷ They only give some monetary assistance and job opportunities to released inmates, but not monitor them. The Philippines has no effort on this aspect.

Other Differences and Similarities

The country's social and political setting cannot be isolated in the conduct or establishment of disengagement and de-radicalization programs. It is important to consider external conditions that influence the result of the program to judge its success.²⁷⁸ Among the three cases, Singapore is the only comprehensive and structured program run by its central government. Programs of Indonesia and the Philippines are both run through an ad hoc capacity. Interestingly, like Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines established national agencies to lead their de-radicalization programs. Indonesia has the BNPT while the Philippines has the NCTU; however, the programs of both countries were initiated and implemented by Detachment 88 and BJMP/NBP respectively with little influence from the government's mandated agencies.

²⁷⁷ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 116.

²⁷⁸ Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism. Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, 55.

Singapore and Indonesia also rely on the assistance of civic and non-governmental organizations. Notably, these organizations are well organized and supervised in Singapore, which is also not the case in Indonesia. Civic and NGOs in Indonesia are independent of each other with little direction from the government. Sadly, the Philippines has not embarked on exploiting this potential element of the de-radicalization efforts. Madrasahs are also monitored in Singapore to prevent the spread of radical teachings. Teachers of Islam are vetted for the same reason. Unfortunately, such strict monitoring does not occur in Indonesia and the Philippines.

Singapore was able to educate the non-Muslim population in which the Philippines government failed. The Singapore government saw the need to improve ties between Muslims and non-Muslims to maintain social harmony. They established a Harmony Centre for this reason. Worthy to note, all countries acknowledged the critical role of developing trust between the guards and the inmates. Indonesia emphasized this through its “cultural rehabilitation” while the Philippines adopted the “dynamic security” approach. Singapore showed their support in this cause by educating all security staffs on terrorism awareness and Counseling Psychology.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

A de-radicalization program is necessary to defeat the threat of Islamist extremism and terrorism. Though de-radicalization entailing a change in the individual's belief system is not realistic according to some scholars,²⁷⁹ such programs nonetheless are necessary to defuse the threat posed by these individuals permanently.

Singapore's experience defines the importance of collaboration of all government agencies to ensure the success of de-radicalization programs. The seamless cooperation between the Muslim scholars, ISD, non-governmental organizations, Muslim and non-Muslim communities, and certain individuals inoculated Singaporean Muslims from extremist ideology. Their collaborative efforts provided a correct understanding of Islam and a sense of belongingness, which protected the general Muslim populace from the influence of terrorist's propaganda. Singapore's significant efforts towards the community are rooted in their belief terrorist groups need popular support to succeed.

Indonesia's program is an example of the continuing development of a de-radicalization program. The program started as an intelligence gathering initiative of Detachment 88. It is called cultural interrogation focusing on the humane treatment of terrorist inmates. Due to its success, several community-based organizations and individuals established their efforts to help the cause. These activities prompted the

²⁷⁹ See, for instance, John Horgan, "Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Analysis," in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, eds. Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan (New York: Rutledge, 2008).

government to establish the BNPT to give direction to all these efforts and embraced an ideologically-based program. Unfortunately, BNPT has yet to perform in accordance with its mandate. Currently, Indonesia has successfully used ex-militants in its de-radicalization program.

Though it is too early to say the real outcome of the Philippines de-radicalization program is successful, assessing it using the key components of successful programs indicates the program is postured for failure. Of the three key components presented by Rabasa et al., the Philippines' program failed to satisfy even one of the parameters. The Philippines' program only has family visits for its affective element.

Several factors influence program success. One crucial factor is to address the root cause of radicalization. There are several reasons individuals radicalize. In Singapore and Indonesia, most terrorist inmates joined their group due to religious-ideological reasons. Interestingly, Singapore experienced success while Indonesia was not that successful. Singapore embraced a counter-ideological approach with psychological, religious, and ideological rehabilitation. On the other hand, Indonesia did not see the importance of religious and ideological influences during the initial stage of their program.

Radicalization in the Philippines is not a product of religion and ideology. Instead, it can be attributed mainly to socioeconomic marginalization and retaliation to repressive military action.²⁸⁰ The current rehabilitation program of the Philippines does not address this cause of radicalization. The program does not have economic support to inmates or

²⁸⁰ Jones and Morales, "Integration versus Segregation," 215.

their families. Moreover, the government military forces have not made any effort to correct the detainees' negative impression of them.

One interesting aspect needing further study is the Philippines' methods of handling terrorist inmates. "There are no hard and fast rules" whether terrorist inmates should be concentrated or separated, dispersed and isolated. The effectiveness of the program depends on how it is implemented and, more importantly, on the "nature and dynamics of the group in question."²⁸¹ The assumption behind the NBP's use of dispersal method and the BJMP's adoption of concentration method is related to the lack of facility and training resources. No data contradicts this.

The NBP's dispersal method is competent in handling ASG members because they are known for creating organizational structures increasing their potential for violence. The SICA-1 incident is a clear example. Distributing terrorists to different prison gangs will diminish their identity and can be the start of disengagement towards new affiliation. On the other hand, the BJMP's concentration method is valuable in handling the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Moro National Liberation Front members. The Philippine government is engaged in peace processes with these two Muslim separatist organizations, thus bringing them together may contribute to furthering conflict resolution.

The Philippines de-radicalization is not tied with the government's overall counterterrorism strategy. This failure prevents a holistic approach to success. "Individual disengagement and de-radicalization programs do not occur in a political and societal

²⁸¹ Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 21.

vacuum.”²⁸² The Philippine de-radicalization program must be evaluated within the context of the country’s politics, society, and culture, as part of future studies.

Challenges in the Assessment of the Philippines Program

There are challenges in assessing the Philippines de-radicalization program accurately. First, the newness of the Philippines de-radicalization program impacts the assessment of its effectiveness. Though the Philippines embarked on the idea of a “soft approach” in support of its lethal counterterrorism efforts since 2007, the idea of rehabilitating jailed terrorists was only formally started in 2013. Nonetheless, there should be some information to assess its short-term impact. However, the absence of a comprehensive effort driven by the national government makes it difficult.

Second, no available data shows the effectiveness of the approaches adopted in the BJMP and NBP. This concern is affected by the newness of the program, the lack of post-release monitoring, and the absence of evaluation criteria. It is too early to assess the effectiveness of Bonto’s “Teaching Moderate Islam” as an extension program of ALS and “dynamic security.” It is impossible to evaluate the success or failure of this program because “releases and convictions of suspected terrorists detained in SICA-1 were infrequent during the period 2013–2017.”²⁸³ Moreover, released inmates were not monitored.²⁸⁴

²⁸² Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*.

²⁸³ Hernandez, “Indonesia and the Philippines: Lessons on Deradicalization Programs for Detained Terrorists,” 57.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

Third, there is a possibility of personal biases on some of the data gathered specifically on the SICA program. Most of the analyses are derived from data personally gathered by Bonto, proponent of the Philippines de-radicalization program. No other study was conducted on the effectiveness of the program. Due to the unavailability of other sources to corroborate Bonto's evaluations and observations, assessing even just the immediate impact of the program is difficult.

The most significant challenge to measuring success is the Philippines political and societal environments. The success of disengagement and de-radicalization cannot be judged without taking into account the political factors where the program takes place. For example, the rehabilitation program in Singapore, which is widely seen as a success, may have produced entirely different results had it been introduced in the Philippines where an insurgency is still a primary concern. The successful use of jail guards in Indonesia to implement cultural interrogation may not have the same success in the Philippines since most guards are Christians. Indeed, there is no program that fits all. What works with one country may not apply to another due to the cultural, social, legal, and political landscapes. Nevertheless, methods in one country can be a basis for improvement in the other countries.

Potential Best Approaches from Singapore and Indonesia

Transferability is one of the debates about the rehabilitation process. Can best practices be copied or replicated? What works in one country could not certainly be expected to work in another. There is no one size fits all program, thus no 'template' or 'blueprint' that could be copied and pasted. Programs not only depend on the context and political environment in which they are implemented, they often rely on distinctively

local dynamics and structures such as culture. These customs and traditions cannot be recreated elsewhere. However, there are certain general principles associated with these programs that can be a basis for improvement.

The Singaporean effort on educating the non-Muslim populace gives an invaluable insight to Filipinos. For years, Muslim Filipinos have experienced unjust treatment and were frequently at the center of prejudice and false accusations. The general population is ignorant of the whereabouts of Filipino Muslims which often leads to discrimination. The government should engage non-Muslim populace to educate them about the Filipino Muslim culture. The government could use schools to propagate this knowledge in order for Filipino Christians to better understand their Muslim brothers. They could also build a museum dedicated to Filipino Muslims to showcase their proud heritage. This effort will address the feeling of stigmatism and alienation. “It takes two hands to clap. Thus, the war against terrorism cannot be won by countering extreme ideology in the Muslim community without countering prevailing prejudiced views among non-Muslims that cast doubt on Muslims.”²⁸⁵ Without this effort, peaceful coexistence between the Christians and Muslim Filipinos is unrealistic.

Indonesia uses ex-militants as interlocutors. Based on personal knowledge, some ex-militants are helping the government in intelligence gathering. These ex-militants could do more by using them as interlocutors in prisons to encourage rehabilitation of jailed terrorists. They can also be speakers in schools and public conventions to promote awareness against terrorism and recruitment. The government could also assist them in

²⁸⁵ Hassan and Pereire, “An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism – The Singapore Perspective,” 469.

writing a book denouncing extremism. These ex-militants' credibility could significantly enhance the legitimacy of the government's drive against terrorism.

The government should encourage NGO's to support the program. Singapore and Indonesia mostly benefitted from the support provided by community-based organizations. Singapore highlights the significance of their role as the primary entity responsible for fighting the influence of JI ideology. Indonesia, on the other hand, has several NGOs (local and foreign) conducting rehabilitation efforts in schools, prisons, and workplaces. Hence, the Philippine government should encourage NGOs to help in the rehabilitation of jailed terrorist, prevention of radicalization, and support to the inmate's family. The rampant corruption in the government could have affected such initiatives. Nevertheless, engaging these community-based organizations and international agencies will help solve the issue of lack of sufficient support from the government. Engaging community-based organizations will also promote awareness and involvement.

Recommendations

From 2008 to 2014 the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research (PIPVTR) made a study on what lines of effort the Philippines de-radicalization should possess. Banlaoi recommended the following: Visitation, Counseling, Legal Assistance, Social and Economic Assistance, and After Care.²⁸⁶ This recommendation holds ground and should be adapted to radically change the country's de-radicalization efforts.

²⁸⁶ Banlaoi, *Deradicalization Efforts in the Philippine*,. 13.

Visitation

The goal of this effort is to build a relationship between the de-radicalizers and the inmate. Visitations create a bond of trust and confidence among all the people involved in the process. Through this, the de-radicalizers better understand the actual condition of the inmate on a personal level and not just part of a group. Based on several research, personal conversions of radicals from violence to peace can be attributed to a peaceful relationship with a mentor or friend. Like Singapore, the Philippines should implement an individualized program. Personal profiling of inmates is very crucial to developing an effective program.

Counseling

Bonto introduced the use of credible Muslim clerics at SICA1 to engage the inmates' radical beliefs. Though there are different comments on its supposed implementation, it is still commendable on Bonto's part to think of such an initiative. Singapore's Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) aimed to counter the ideological misunderstanding of the JI members through counseling. Indonesia also embraced the use of jail guards and clerics in their program for this purpose. The Philippines should create and train a similar group of Muslim clerics and scholars to provide counseling to terrorist inmates.

Legal Assistance

All inmates at SICA1 are accused and not convicted. With some of them claiming as "victims of mistaken identity," it is vital for the government to provide legal assistance to offer them hope of prison release or at least a sense of impartiality. Their years inside

jail could create uncertainties making them susceptible to radicalization. Legal assistance can also be an excellent stimulus for inmates to participate in the process.

Social and Economic Assistance

The provision of social and financial support to detainees and their families answers the pragmatic component of a successful program. Singapore and Indonesia have been using this scheme and have been successful in enticing detainees to participate in the rehabilitation efforts. Worthy to note, this aspect can prevent regeneration of terrorists. “If the children are not included they will follow their parent’s ideology.”²⁸⁷ The example is the son Imam Samudra²⁸⁸ who was killed in Syria fighting for Islamic State in 2015. Social support from the community is also necessary to address stigmatism and alienation.

After Care

Singapore exemplifies a comprehensive post-release program - continuous monitoring by ISD, counseling by RRG, and economic and social support by community-based organizations. Even Indonesia saw the need for this and offers start-up programs for released detainees. Interestingly, the Philippines has PAMANA and E-CLIP (Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program) whose goal is to help former rebels and their families rebuild their lives. These government programs could also be offered to inmates and released detainees.

²⁸⁷ Topsfield and Rosa, “A Different Jihad.”

²⁸⁸ Imam Samudra was executed in 2008 for the Bali bombings.

Recommendation for Further Study

The author used the Key Components of Successful De-radicalization Programs as its assessment tools, which may provide researchers a framework on similar studies. However, this framework is inconclusive to assess the effectiveness of the program because it does not include some aspects that influence implementation. In addition to this study, the author recommends further studies on the political and societal factors in the Philippines affecting the conduct of its program. It would also be beneficial to have studies regarding the impact of the methods of handling Muslim extremists by BJMP and NBP for future assessment of the de-radicalization program.

Recommendation for National Policy

Being one of the hotspots for terrorists, the Philippines should have a comprehensive de-radicalization strategy. The author recommends the framework presented by Muhammad Rana of the PAK Institute for Peace Studies, which is shown in Table 2. She presented security, societal, ideology, and political approaches as a program basis. These approaches are based on the idea that rehabilitation programs for detainees are part of the country's counterterrorism strategy. De-radicalization programs do not exist in a vacuum and are most effective when tailored to the condition at hand. To have a comprehensive program, it should be a program within the context of an all-inclusive strategy.

Table 2. De-radicalization Approaches

Approach	Focus	Strategy	Objective
Security	Detainees	Rehabilitation	Reducing Security Threats
Societal	Vulnerable Communities	Engagement	Developing moderate tendencies
Ideological	Clergy	Highlighting Religion's Emphasis on Peace	Developing counter arguments/narratives
Political	Society at large	Winning Hearts & Minds	Neutralizing Security Threats

Source: Muhammad Amir Rana, "Swat De-radicalization Model: Prospects for Rehabilitating Militants," *Conflict and Peace Studies* 2, no. 2 (April-June 2011): 1, accessed 20 January 2019, <https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/129.pdf>.

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