



UDC 331

SPORTS EDUCATION AS AN EFFORT FOR FORMING CHARACTER IN THE COUNTER RADICALIZATION PROGRAM

Mayasari Ragil Ira*

Doctoral Program of Law with interest in Resilience Studies, University of Brawijaya,
Malang, Indonesia

Maftuch

Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Science, University of Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia

Istiqomah Milda

Faculty of Law, University of Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia

*E-mail: maiaiga38@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of sports education in counter-radicalization programs aimed at rehabilitating individuals exposed to extremist ideologies. It explores how structured sports activities can aid in character development and contribute to the successful reintegration of former extremists into society. The research employs an empirical juridical method combined with a socio-legal approach. Primary data were collected through field observations and documentation of program activities. Secondary data includes legal documents, official reports, and previous research on sports and deradicalization. The study finds that sports education significantly enhances character development among participants. Key benefits include improved physical health, reduced stress and anxiety, enhanced social skills, and greater discipline and responsibility. Programs in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Nigeria have shown that integrating sports into deradicalization efforts can lead to positive outcomes, such as reduced recidivism and successful societal reintegration. Incorporating sports education into counter-radicalization programs offers a promising strategy for character building and rehabilitation. A structured approach that includes regular evaluation and adaptation can ensure the programs remain effective and relevant. Training for coaches and educators is essential to maximize the benefits of sports in deradicalization efforts.

KEY WORDS

Sports education, character building, counter-radicalization, rehabilitation, social cohesion.

Sport is a physical activity carried out to maintain body health, improve physical fitness, and as a means of entertainment and competition. Sports include various physical activities such as running, swimming, soccer, badminton, gymnastics, and many more. Apart from that, sport can also help develop social skills, increase self-confidence, and strengthen mental health. Exercise has various benefits, including:

- Physical Health: Helps maintain ideal body weight, strengthens muscles and bones, and increases endurance;
- Mental Health: Reduces stress, anxiety and depression. Exercise can also improve mood and sleep quality;
- Social: Helps build social relationships and improve teamwork skills;
- Discipline and Concentration: Improves discipline, orderliness and concentration ability.

Perhaps the general public considers sport to be a physical activity intended for physical fitness, but in this sense sport has very diverse functions. One of them is an effort to build character. Based on Law No. 11 of 2022 concerning Sports, sports are divided into three pillars, namely Educational Sports, Achievement Sports and Recreational Sports.



In sports education, physical activity is designed and implemented in the context of formal and informal education. The main goal is to develop students' physical, mental and social skills through various forms of sport. Here are some of the main aspects of educational sports:

- **Physical Skills Development:** Through sports, students learn various basic motor skills such as running, jumping, throwing and catching. They are also introduced to specific techniques in various types of sports such as football, basketball, swimming, and others;
- **Health and Fitness:** Sports education focuses on improving students' health and fitness. Regular physical activity helps prevent various health problems such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes;
- **Character building:** Through participation in sports, students learn values such as teamwork, discipline, responsibility, fair play, and sportsmanship. It helps in the formation of good character and a positive attitude;
- **Social Development:** Educational sports provide opportunities for students to interact with peers, work in teams, and learn to respect others. This helps in the development of important social skills;
- **Holistic Education:** Sports are part of a holistic educational approach, which focuses not only on academic aspects but also on students' physical and emotional development.

In general, exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and can be done by anyone, from children to adults. Several countries are implementing sports programs as a deradicalization effort, namely Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is claimed to be one of the most successful in the world in its de-radicalization program, although it is not just the sports program that is responsible for this success. Measuring their success by past militants who are deemed to have been reintegrated into society, more than 4,000 participants completed the program between 2004 and 2010¹. Program features include counseling, vocational training, art therapy, sports, and religious re-education.

Another country that uses sport as a deradicalization effort is Nigeria. Outlines Nigeria's strategy, the Program from the combined efforts of the National Security Advisor or the so-called "Office of the National Security Advisor" (ONSA) and the Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS). The program applies a variety of approaches including motivational interviewing, vocational and cultural training, art therapy, religious intervention, sports and games. After a period of eighteen months, program testimonials from both inmates and staff were largely positive.

MATERIALS AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

The research method that has been used is the empirical juridical research method. Meanwhile, the approach that has been used is through a socio-legal research approach. This socio-legal studies approach can be identified in two ways, namely: first, socio-legal studies carry out textual studies, articles in laws and regulations and policies can be analyzed critically and explain their meaning and implications for legal subjects, in this case it can explain how the meaning contained in these articles harms or benefits certain groups of society and in what ways. Second, socio-legal studies develop various "new" methods resulting from the combination between legal and social science methods, such as qualitative socio-legal research and socio-legal ethnography².

There are 3 types and sources of data here, namely primary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the community as the first source through field research. Obtaining primary data from field research is carried out through observation and documentation when activities occur. The second is secondary data, namely the primary law in this research is Law Number 11 of 2022 concerning sports, Presidential Decree Number 7 of 2021, the

¹Stern, J. (2010). *Thoughts on martyrdom: How to deradicalize Islamic extremists*. *Foreign affairs*, 95-108.

²Sulistiyowati I 2013 *Legal Research Methods: Constellations and Reflections* ed S Shidarta (Jakarta: Pustaka Obor Indonesia Foundation)



National Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Violent-Based Extremism Leading to Terrorism in 2020-2024, as well as all official documents containing relevant legal provisions in the form of several articles, journals and several related research results as well as tertiary data such as dictionaries and encyclopedias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Chapter 5 article 18 paragraph 1 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2022 concerning Sports it is also stated that educational sports as intended in Article 17 letter a are organized to instill character values and obtain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to develop a healthy active lifestyle throughout life.³ In article 22 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2022, it is stated that the development and development of sports is carried out as an integral part of national development, where the Central Government and Regional Governments are obliged to carry out sports guidance and development in accordance with their authority and responsibilities. The sports development and development as intended includes sports, personnel, organization, funding, methods, infrastructure and facilities, as well as sports awards. The objectives of sports coaching and development as intended are: forming character; provide basic knowledge of exercise; increase the level of fitness and health; create lifelong healthy and active lifestyle habits.

Thorough and planned character formation is considered as one of the fundamental efforts in instilling moral principles among students, which not only reflect nationality, but also strengthen the cultural and moral essence in national life.⁴ Not only that, sport is also used as a means of preventing acts of extremism. A youth mentoring program that focused on sports was carried out in Melbourne, Australia under the name "More than a Game". This program aims to develop a community-based resilience model using team-based sports. Sport is used to address issues of identity, belonging, and cultural isolation among Muslim youth to counter violent forms of extremism.⁵ There is a need for an appropriate educational sports concept to overcome threats from radical groups who also use sports as a means of spreading their teachings. Sport can be used as a "hook", combined with a counter-narrative approach that promotes the values of cultural and religious diversity, civil society and democracy.

Sport offers direct and indirect benefits to people at all levels of society. The direct benefits that can be felt when DOIng sports are gaining body comfort, getting pleasure or excitement, maintaining or improving self-quality, getting extraordinary physical and psychological sensations. Meanwhile, the indirect benefits that can be obtained from sport are optimal individual development according to their potential; achieve competitive advantage; happy in living life; income as an athlete.⁶ Apart from providing benefits to the body, sport can also shape national character, such as being honest, disciplined, sportsmanlike, responsible and working together. The benefits of sport are not only limited to physical fitness and acquiring skills, but also to the development of positive attitudes and values.

In Chapter 5 article 18 paragraph 1 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2022 concerning "Sports" it is also stated that educational sports as intended in Article 17 letter a are organized to instill character values and obtain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to building a healthy, active lifestyle throughout life." The law also states that "Sports education in the formal education pathway is carried out at every level of education; carried out under the guidance of a Sports teacher/lecturer and can be assisted by other Sports Personnel prepared by each educational unit. Meanwhile, sports education on the non-formal education route can be carried out guided by tutors in a structured and tiered manner and can be assisted by other sports personnel".

³Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2022 concerning Sports

⁴Anwar, S., "The role of Islamic religious education in shaping national character", *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Journal of Islamic Education*. 2017; 7(2):157-170.

⁵Johns, A., Grossman, M., & McDonald, K. (2014). "More Than a Game": The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violent Extremism". *Social Inclusion*, 2(2), 57-70. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v2i2.167>

⁶OkI Candra., Tri Prasetyo., 2023. *Character Formation Through Sports*. Purbalingga: Eureka Media Aksara. p. 206-207



Individual character plays an important role in acts of extremism for various psychological, social, and environmental reasons. Understanding individual character in the context of extremism can help in preventing exposure to violence-based radicalism which leads to acts of terrorism. Approaches that consider individual psychological and social aspects can be more effective in reducing the risk of extremist actions and helping individuals return to a more constructive path. Strong character can help someone to reject extremist ideology. Sport is one way to shape a person's character, with the slogan "Sports for All" is a strategic first step towards character formation. The cultural character of a nation is not only shaped by culture but also by the specifics of the sport played. Many positive characters are formed through sportsmanship training. Through sport, people become responsible, have respect and care for others.

There are six pillars of character proposed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics in 1995 to fortify the younger generation in living their lives. The six pillars are:

- **Honesty (trustworthiness).** Honesty is essential to building positive relationships with others. People who have the principle of honesty will not care about what other people say about the principles they believe in. They dare to do what is right even though it is difficult to do or may experience failure;
- **Apply respect.** Be tolerant and able to accept differences, use polite language, pay attention to other people's feelings, don't hurt anyone. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Respect the dignity, privacy and freedom of all individuals;
- **Responsibility.** Responsibility involves the fundamental belief that each of us has a mutual agreement with others, is willing to do our part and bear the consequences of our actions;
- **Caring.** Caring means being able to understand other people and treat them with kindness, compassion, generosity and forgiveness. Caring includes the virtues of love, sympathy, generosity, kindness, compassion, altruism, kindness and sharing;
- **Justice (fairness).** Being fair means treating everyone equally, not showing favoritism in making decisions and not exploiting other people. Fairness means not being careless in assigning responsibility to others, taking what is only our share and sharing it with others;
- **Citizenship.** A person with character is a good citizen, does his part, helps society, plays by the rules, and respects applicable rules and laws. Good citizens go beyond their own interests, show empathy for others and understand that they are responsible for improving the quality of their society, country and world.

One of the aims of educational sports is to shape character, which is done through coaching and developing educational sports. Educational sports coaching and development can use a sports-based learning approach, sports modification, or a movement-based approach by utilizing various games, traditional sports, and outdoor activities. Sport is a positive medium for developing life values, including social values. Sports activities should reflect real life. The values in sports are closely related to the cultural traditions of society which are passed down from generation to generation.

Counter-radicalization in Government Regulation No. 77 of 2019 Article 1 (5) is defined as a planned, organized, systematic and sustainable action carried out against individuals or groups of people who are vulnerable to being exposed to radical ideas of terrorism with the aim of stopping the spread of these ideas. Counter radicalization according to the government program in Government Regulation Number 77 of 2019, is carried out in three ways:

- Counter-narratives are carried out through spreading narratives or messages of peace through the media, applying an understanding of the principles of peace-loving nationality and religion. The emphasis of the counter-narrative is on fighting the spread of radical messages;
- The counter-propaganda contained in BNPT regulation Number 2 of 2023 is an effort to counter the influence of radical terrorism in literary media such as oral and written, directly or indirectly. Propaganda can be said to be a political appeal that attempts to



deliberately invite and direct to exert influence, persuasion or persuasive action so that people can accept the views, values or ideology of the propagandist⁷;

- Counter-ideology in BNPT regulation Number 2 of 2023 takes the form of activities aimed at preventing the spread of radical terrorism ideologies or doctrines. The recent outbreak of socio-political issues is often linked to religious philosophy.

Handles and Scheuble in an analysis of sports-based prevention and control of violent extremism stated that there has been an increase in the use of sport as a prevention and response to violent extremism. They identified three focuses on using sport as a tool to prevent radicalization, namely as follows⁸: interventions that focus solely on exercise; partnership collaboration with sports clubs to increase individual resilience; incorporate elements of exercise into a larger prevention program.

Australia developed a sports scheme applied to young people called "More than a Game", which uses team sports to develop a community-based resilience model. This program aims to increase the sense of belonging within the team, increase self-confidence, communication and conflict resolution skills in young people.⁹ Several countries also use sport to prevent radicalism, including Tunisia with the "Sport for Peace" program; Pakistan with the "Football for Peace" program; Egypt with the "Sport Against Terrorism" program; the Netherlands with the "Football for Unity" program; England with the "Football United" program; America with the "Peace Players International" program; even in Indonesia with the "Football for Peace" program. Sports as part of the counter-radicalization program carried out as part of values/moral education which will later produce good character, namely the implementation stage (moral acting).

So it can be concluded that sport is not only seen as physical activity, but also as a holistic learning tool, where individuals can improve social, emotional and moral skills. Thus, sport has an important role in making individuals with integrity, responsibility and commitment to hard work, which in turn can have a positive impact on society as a whole. Using an "integrated" perspective, where sport, if accompanied by good training and a supportive environment, can be an effective tool in character education.

The attitudes required in sports can be used for mental development purposes, such as team building. Internal factors are factors that shape and build a person's perspective, and external factors are the experiences a person gains during the learning process. Developing a counter-radicalization program based on the concept of sports education requires a planned and measurable strategic approach. It is important to ensure that the counter-radicalization program implemented through the educational sports concept is integrated harmoniously with character formation. By detailing development strategies and ensuring integration with character education, it is hoped that the counter-radicalization program based on the concept of educational sports can achieve the goal of character formation effectively. It also provides a basis for regular program evaluation and updates to ensure long-term sustainability and success. Instructor and trainer training is absolutely necessary, because they have an important role in making this integration program a success. This trainer or instructor knows how to apply the optimal learning model for the situation, learning environment and child resilience. Young people usually like group games because of group competition, teamwork and positive emotions¹⁰.

CONCLUSION

By implementing a structured approach and continuous evaluation cycle, counter-radicalization programs based on the concept of educational sports can continue to develop and increase their impact in positively shaping the character of participants. A careful

⁷Alfiyanti, N. (2018). *Social media as a political communication strategy. Portraits of Thought*, 22(1), 57–69. <https://DOI.org/10.30984/pp.v22i1.762>

⁸J. Handle., S. Scheuble. (2021). *The role of Sports in Violent Right-wing Extremist Radicalization and P/CVE. Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN)*, December, 1–22

⁹Johns, A., Grossman, M., & McDonald, K. (2014). "More Than a Game": *The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violent Extremism*. *Social Inclusion*, 2(2), 57-70. DOI: <https://DOI.org/10.17645/si.v2i2.167>

¹⁰Barus, D. (2019). *Recommended Learning Models for Vocational School Level in Facing the 21st Century*. In: *Proceedings of the National Seminar on Educational Technology. The Role of Educational Technology in Developing and Improving the Professionalism of Educators in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0*, 30 November 2019, Digital Library, Medan State University.



evaluation process will allow the program to remain relevant and responsive to societal dynamics and radicalization challenges that may develop over time. It is recommended that educational sports-based counter-radicalization programs carry out regular evaluation and adaptation of the model. This involves adapting learning materials and methods based on changing social and cultural dynamics, as well as strengthening training for trainers and educators in character building approaches.

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