

12-11-2021

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Recommended Citation

Budiman, Ahmad and Hannase, Mulawarman (2021) "The Polarization of the Hamas Movement in Palestine and Its Influence on Indonesian Defense Issues: A Geopolitical and Military Overview," *Jurnal Middle East and Islamic Studies*: Vol. 8: No. 2, Article 5.

DOI: 10.7454/meis.v8i2.138

Available at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/meis/vol8/iss2/5>

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THE POLARIZATION OF THE HAMAS MOVEMENT IN PALESTINE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON INDONESIAN DEFENSE ISSUES: A GEOPOLITICAL AND MILITARY OVERVIEW

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Abstract

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has implications for the birth of armed groups that continue to be polarized within Palestine, such as the PLO, Hamas, Fatah, and others to the PNA. However, one group that exists and has a strong resonance in the Islamic world is Hamas. The resonance also reached Indonesia. This study will examine the polarization of Hamas and its military activities which are considered to represent the interests of Palestinian Muslims. As a result, this has a snowball effect by generating bigger and stronger support which ultimately affects the issue of Indonesia's national defense. This study uses a qualitative method with an analysis of geopolitical theory. The results showed that the polarization that occurred was caused by the ideological differences between Hamas and Fatah and the different points of view between Hamas members. Hamas activities in Palestine have no effect on the issue of Indonesian defense because the forms of response are limited to humanitarian solidarity and equality of belief.

Keywords: Hamas, military activity, Indonesian defense

INTRODUCTION

The Middle East region is unique because of the strength of the geographical elements in it. There is diversity in it, both physical and social, so that it has great potential. With great potential, the Middle East must have strong regional politics because this potential is a trigger for major powers to enter into it. In the end this area became a smoldering area. This also gave rise to a point of view in international politics that the Middle East was the center of the world crisis and was experiencing a chronic war-prone situation with

prolonged conflicts from ancient times to the present.

Interestingly, the Middle East as a cake that is delicious and contested by many parties cannot be separated from its history. The Middle East is a continuation of the great civilizations that once triumphed such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, and various great civilizations that once existed in the ancient Middle East. The cultures of these civilizations were legendary even long before the arrival of Islam. Many cultures that are attached to the term such as about clothing and its

derivatives, the development of science, food, and various things that are attached to our daily lives originate from the Middle East and develop throughout the world. But the triumph of civilization is inversely proportional to what is in the media today. The Middle East is currently perceived as a region with a protracted war, oil, American invasion, revolution, terrorism, religion, Arab (Palestinian)-Israeli conflict. From a historical point of view, there is always a relationship between past events and what is happening today. The greatness of cultural heritage in the past with the crisis that has occurred until now in the Middle East has a strong line of relationship that forms a causality of the events that occurred there (Goldshmidt Jr. & Davidson, 2010).

In addition to the richness of culture on the historical lines it has, the Middle East also has a very strategic location. The Middle East lies at the naturally formed crossroads of the Afro- Eurasia region or which is another term used to describe Eurasia and Africa within the same region. This region is also a land that connects the seven seas. The sea area that stretches and is connected by this region starts from southern Ukraine and then to the Mediterranean, Black Sea, Bosphorus, Sea of Marmara, Dardanelles, to the Aegean Sea. The stretch between the Nile Delta and the Sinai Peninsula has also in various

phases of time become a crossing area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea so that it becomes one of the economic axis routes. The crossing became a highway for Asia and East Africa. It is not surprising that in the end this area was very attractive for trade which was later manifested as attractive for colonialism. The Middle East is a place with high accessibility compared to other regions in the world.

The strategy of this region is very tempting for the world's great powers. For example, Britain has lived under the principle of splendid isolation, which sees foreign affairs as something that is experienced by other people but is interesting to be involved in. The United States also sees itself as something separate from the outside. America's territory was his business so he didn't even have to worry about civil war or outside attacks. In this regard, America has always been involved in events that occur outside of itself. Even in the case of the Middle East, America has been there throughout its history (especially contemporary history) in terms of conquest, domination, ongoing interests. These are the things that are strong factors causing the crisis in the Middle East.

As a derivative of the great powers with a group power system, the crisis in the Middle East is shown, among other

things, by the ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel. The conflict between the two countries has been around for a long time and is still ongoing today. With the existence of two countries that are in overlapping territorial areas, conflict is characterized by various aspects of interest starting from issues of settlements, borders, to beliefs.

The conflict started from the Balfour Declaration or the Balfour Declaration which became the forerunner of the arrival of the Jewish people as a nation that eventually established the state of Israel (Ruslin, 2013). The declaration, which was initiated in 1917, was in the form of a letter sent by the British Foreign Minister Arthur James Balfour to Lord Rostchild as the leader of the British Jewish community to be submitted to the Zionist Federation. From the Balfour Declaration, a large-scale exodus of Jews from all over the world, especially mainland Europe to Palestine, ended with the establishment of the state of Israel which was the cause of the ongoing conflict between the two countries.

Since then, the Palestinians have fought against the Israeli occupation of their land. The occupation gave birth to a militancy movement in the form of the formation of armed groups in Palestine. In fact, this militant movement has been started since 1920 in the form of volunteer

troops throughout the Palestinian territories who opposed the contents of the Balfour Declaration because it triggered a Jewish exodus. The exodus gave birth to the encroachment of territory including Jerusalem and caused various new problems, including those related to population issues.

Militant movements continue to be manifested through the existence of armed groups that are formed. Even though they have the same main goal, namely to fight against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, there is no single force for the armed movement so that the history of armed groups in Palestine is a history that narrates the existence of polarization. Various armed groups carried out movements in resistance. Two groups that are quite dominating are Fatah and Hamas, which are political factions as well as owners of large military power.

However, between the two groups, this research focuses on Hamas which is the object of the case study. The actions of Hamas in various periods of time have had its own impact on the popularity of the internal Palestinian community as well as its popularity outside. As Suhartono (2021) states that Hamas' popularity skyrocketed after the eleven-day war against Israel in May 2021. Based on the results of a poll conducted by the Center for Policy and Research Survey of

Palestine, even if elections were held, Ismail Haniya (the leader of Hamas) could become president replace Mahmoud Abbas (leader of Fatah).

Support for Hamas is not only strong from within the Palestinian community, but also from Muslim communities outside the country, including the support of the Indonesian Muslim community. The Indonesian Muslim community, which consists of various organizational groups, at least has an interest in Hamas issues. This is evidenced by the support of Indonesian Muslims in three forms, namely pan-Islamism, diplomatic support, and humanitarian support. This has also become one of the factors so that Hamas has a strong network in various countries, including Indonesia (Hannase, 2016).

Based on this explanation, this research focuses on the polarization of the Hamas group, both in the context of armed groups involved in rivalry contestation with Fatah and internally, which often experience different views among members. Then the existence of Hamas, which has a strong resonance with the Muslim world, including Indonesian Muslim groups, can create a lot of potential. One potential that needs to be studied is the issue of the influence of the Hamas network on defense issues in Indonesia, considering that Hamas is a struggle group with a hard line (often

labeled as radical).

RESEARCH METHOD

To collect data, the method used is literature review. Researchers collected data from various literatures in the form of library sources such as books, journal articles, news articles, and various other types of documents. which contains information about the Hamas group in Palestine. Then a search was also conducted on the influence of Hamas on Indonesian defense issues identified through the movement of Muslim groups in Indonesia. The search for library sources is carried out on documents that are both physical and digital.

In addition to reviewing library sources as a literature study approach, data collection in this study was also carried out by in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted in a structured manner, where the researcher asked a list of questions. Interviews were conducted interactively and continuously by placing modified questions to explore emerging issues. Researchers used field notes during the interview process. The results of the interviews were recorded and then transcribed. This procedure is part of the in-depth interview approach (Creswell, 2012).

Data analysis was carried out after the researchers got the data and made a selection on the collected data. The

analysis of this data is to find out the results of the study and answer research questions that have been previously asked about the form of polarization of the Hamas group and its activities in Palestine and the influence of Hamas activities on the issue of Indonesian defense. Data analysis was carried out using an analytical knife in the form of group polarization theory by Isenberg (1986) and the theory of defense and defense threats by the Indonesian Ministry of Defense (2015) and geopolitical theory by Dodds

(2007).

The flow of data analysis was carried out using a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach consisting of three stages is aimed at the data that has been collected. The three stages are data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions as presented by Miles & Huberman (1992). In these stages, verification is also carried out so that it becomes a strengthening of the validity of the research results.

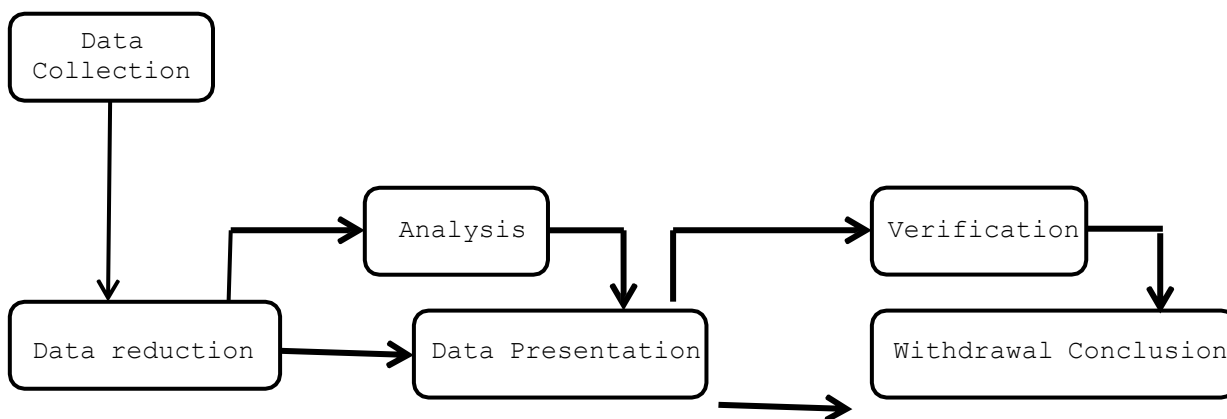


Figure 1. Analysis Flow

In addition, the data triangulation approach was carried out as described above. This data triangulation is to conduct a cross-check of data to data sources other than documents in the form of library sources as the main material for literature review. Another source of data to triangulate data is the results of interviews.

DISCUSSION

Hamas Polarization

The description of the polarization that occurs in the Hamas group, especially in terms of rivalry with Fatah, is obtained from library sources in the form of a book written by Schanzer (2008). The polarization of armed groups in Palestine has been going on for a long time because each group that took up arms with a common goal, namely the independence of Palestine from Israeli occupation, has metamorphosed over time into political factions that are full of interests. This, for example, happened to Hamas and Fatah, which have been rivals since the beginning of Hamas's emergence.

The rivalry between Hamas and Fatah became increasingly sharp and peaked in 2006. Hamas has experienced polarization both among armed groups and political factions as well as among Hamas members. The polarization that occurs between fellow members of the Hamas group is the occurrence of different views. Some members of the group who want to

continue to carry out a purely Islamic struggle that will not allow even an inch of Palestinian land to be under occupation. While some other groups have the view that there must be another way of struggle, namely being actively involved in practical politics as a form of struggle with the same goal.

These internal problems can be overcome by the presence of a mediator, namely the Al-Shura Assembly as the Hamas Consultative Council which is a high institution within the group. Based on the agreement brokered by the Al-Shura Assembly, Hamas began to participate in practical politics by participating in legislative elections so that in the future it can enter the parliamentary elements. If there is a representative in the parliament, it will make it easier to carry out strategic plans so that they are actively involved in determining national policies. As a result, Hamas contested legislative elections in 2006.

On January 26, 2006, about 3,000 people affiliated with or sympathizing with Hamas staged a euphoria in the West Bank area of Ramallah City. They waved the green flag with the symbol of Hamas. Even though the area is Fatah's power base. They are celebrating victory over the legislative elections that were held. Hamas won by a landslide against Fatah, which had been in power for a long time.

Fatah supporters who witnessed the euphoria could hardly believe it because the previous night they had celebrated the same victory by firing shots in the air at Manarah Square. This is because according to data from opinion polls conducted, Fatah is projected to win the legislative election by a far margin from Hamas.

With the celebrations carried out by Hamas, it is evident that the opinion polls do not reflect the real situation. Hamas has beaten Fatah in the electoral elections with a landslide victory. Fatah saw clearly that Hamas troops and their supporters were doing euphoria outside the Palestinian Legislative Council building. The celebrations had sparked the anger of offended Fatah members that a riot broke out around the Palestinian Legislative Council building which lasted about 30 minutes.

The first riots were just the beginning. After the victory and the euphoria, there was constant tension between Fatah and Hamas. Fatah, which has been in power for a long time, is not willing to relinquish its reins of power to Hamas. Hamas even with the victory it has won insists that they have lost the right to control the Palestinian Authority. A major conflict has started over these mutual claims.

This event is the beginning of a major conflict that will continue to take

place. Military attacks, takeover of the main command, control of the media, and control of government buildings by Hamas are steps that further fuel the escalation of the conflict. The fierce battle between Hamas and Fatah took place in June 2007. After four days of intense fighting, Hamas troops wearing black veils have been roaming the streets and areas of the city dusty from the war. Hamas does have a superior tactic of digging tunnels under the building and using explosive attacks. Only six days of fighting, Hamas has won the war.

The fierce battle has shown the identity of fierce competition. This took observers by surprise. For years, the news that has always been broadcast is Israel's battle with the Palestinians in the ongoing conflict. But with the incident, the world knows the internal conflict of interest that occurred. The image of Palestinian unity that has been describing the identity of togetherness has been lost with this incident.

The rivalry between Hamas and Fatah since the birth of Hamas continues. Rahman (2020) stated that the tension between Hamas and Fatah would be difficult to reduce. The problem between the two can be said to be an eternal enmity. This is clear because the root of the problem cannot be separated from the problem. The establishment of Hamas

itself is an answer to the dissatisfaction of some Palestinian people, especially at the grassroots level against Fatah's domination. Part of the Palestinian community in question is the grassroots community and members of Fatah itself. Hamas, which is close to the lower classes of society, captures various feelings of injustice, pressure, and so on. Hamas has a goal to liberate the people from this condition because the existing factions including the dominant ones (in this case Fatah) do not do it.

Rahman said that unity and peace between Hamas and Fatah is an almost impossible thing to do. The gulf between the two was too wide. Hamas considers that Fatah handed the Palestinians' necks to be beheaded by the West and Israel. Diplomatic efforts carried out by Fatah have only weakened Palestine and at the same time strengthened Israel's position in the ongoing conflict. Fatah's steps are seen as detrimental to Palestinian society in general. Hamas does not approve of the strategy undertaken by Fatah in realizing Palestinian independence.

Actually, Hamas and Fatah have the same goal as Hamas, which is to liberate Palestine in the land now occupied by Israel. However, with Fatah's approach, it is almost impossible because diplomatic steps will result in the giving of land that is

the rest of Israel. Meanwhile, with resistance, Hamas sees that there is an opportunity to reclaim land that has been occupied for so long by Israel.

Fatah, which was first formed from Hamas, has actually taken various ways to liberate its land. The struggle with weapons and the struggle with negotiations are two approaches that are taken one after another. Even with a battle in which one of the proud achievements was the victory of the Six Day War, Fatah became a very dominant faction in Palestine because it was able to win the hearts of the people since the 1960s and continued into the next period. This victory has made Fatah a very dominant force in Palestine and automatically eliminated other factions, especially the smaller ones on a regional scale.

This continued until the birth of Hamas in 1987. Hamas, which came from a social movement and was very close to the community, was able to grab people's attention so that it automatically became a threat to Fatah's existence. This is proven and continues with a very strong rivalry. Even the peak was in 2006 when Hamas managed to enter the parliament and dominate it by winning legislative elections. Fatah's dominance fell and it was the fire that was ignited so that the rivalry broke out into a big conflict.

The Hamas movement was preceded

by an ideology that they professed and became the basis of the basis of the movement. Organizationally, Hamas is a child of the Muslim Brotherhood which was formed in Egypt in 1928 and has a strong network, including in Palestine. Islamic ideology is the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood which was later handed down to Hamas and in the end it became a reference for their goal of establishing an independent and sovereign Islamic Palestinian state.

In its rivalry with Fatah, the existence and popularity of Hamas cannot be underestimated. In fact, Hamas' popularity continues to rise in every battle with Israel. Suhartono (2021) says that after 11 days of fighting against Israel in May 2021, Hamas' popularity continues to skyrocket. The opposite happened to Fatah with its popularity dropping drastically.

This is known from a poll conducted on the Palestinian people. As many as 40 percent of respondents voted for Hamas and 30 percent of respondents voted for Fatah. Palestinian society is dominated by voices stating that Hamas is more suitable to lead Palestine than Fatah to continue its reign.

The same thing was conveyed by Faqih (2014). Faqih explained that the popularity of Hamas continued to increase after the fierce battle with the Israeli army. This is measured by a poll conducted by

the Center for Policy and Survey of Palestine. As many as 61% of respondents expressed support for Hamas.

The public supports the military approach taken by Hamas. In a span of 8 years, it was the first thing that Hamas got, namely the full support of the Palestinian people to carry out a military movement. The fierce fighting that lasted for 7 weeks was carried out by Hamas. The public also supports that Hamas will continue to carry out attacks if Israel does not immediately break the blockade it has imposed on the Gaza Strip.

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Indonesian Muslim Community Response

Hamas activities in Palestine related to attacks on Israel have always elicited a response for Muslims in Indonesia. These responses included various forms of solidarity actions carried out by Muslim groups and Indonesian Muslims in general.

Rahmadi (2010) reported that an Islamic group as well as a party namely the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) held a

solidarity action for Palestine. Thousands of people who are PKS members and sympathizers staged demonstrations around the National Monument (Monas). The action is a return to the attitude of solidarity with Palestine.

The solidarity action is a form of condemnation of the military aggression carried out by Israel against the Palestinian people. Israel in early January 2010 pounded the Gaza area with continuous bombardment. Attacks come from land, sea and air. The people of Gaza who do not have strong protection can only accept the open attack so that they become a living shield (Rahmad, 2010).

Soebijoto (2010) reported that mass gatherings from various pro-Palestinian cross-group groups held large demonstrations at three points in Jakarta. The demonstrators denounced Israel's actions that have carried out attacks on Palestinians.

In 2015, hundreds of Muslims held demonstrations as a form of concern for the Palestinian people. The demonstration was held in front of the American Embassy, Jakarta. In addition, the action was also held at the Hotel Indonesia roundabout. The mass demonstrations were carried out as a form of concern for the Palestinian people (Nailufar, 2015).

In 2021, a solidarity action for Palestine was held by the masses of

workers. The solidarity action of workers who are members of the Indonesian Workers Union Conference (KSPI) was held in front of the offices of the Representatives of the Nations and in front of the American Embassy.

The action, which was carried out in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, was closely guarded by thousands of Polri personnel. Action participants are also required to comply with health protocols. The participants of the action said that the demonstration was carried out in response to concern for the Palestinian people, especially the Gaza population due to attacks carried out by Israel in the conflict against Hamas. The action was not only carried out in Jakarta, but also in West Java, Banten, Central Java, East Java, Lampung, North Sumatra, Bengkulu, Riau, Riau Islands, Aceh, South Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara, South Sulawesi, Gorontalo, and various other regions (Novelino, 2021).

Meanwhile, Hannase (2016) explained that Hamas has a very wide network, including in Indonesia. But the network in question does not indicate a militant movement. However, the Indonesian Muslim community responded to Hamas in the form of support which was divided into three classifications. Support in the framework of pan-Islamism

is support based on beliefs about Islam. Then diplomatic support, namely carrying out diplomatic efforts in support of Hamas or Palestine in general. The last is a form of social support related to humanity.

Influence on Indonesian Defense Issues

Wahyuni (2021) provides a description of the Indonesian government's attitude regarding the terrorist label given to the Hamas group. Countries that give Hamas a terrorist label are Israel, the United States, Britain, the European Union, and several other countries.

The Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has expressed its stance on the labeling. For Indonesia, Palestine and even Hamas have relations with Indonesia. Hamas is part of the political elements in Palestine. Perhaps these countries give Hamas a terrorist label. But that is the attitude of the colonizer towards the colonized people. Meanwhile, from the side of Hamas as a colonized society, it is a struggle. Indonesia positions itself as Palestine or Hamas because it was once in the position of the colonized people. Thus, despite being labeled a terrorist, Hamas is not a threat to Indonesia's defense.

Hannase (2016) also provides a similar description. Indonesian people do have a response to Hamas activities. However, it is a form of support based on faith and the spirit of humanity.

Likewise Resource Person 1 and Resource Person 2. Based on extracting information from both of them, there is no indication that the Indonesian people have responded to activities in the form of Hamas activities in the form of attacks. The responses given were limited to small explosions such as protests and solidarity. The rest is a form of humanity and is based on the same faith as Muslims.

The polarization that occurs between groups and between members within the Hamas group can be classified into two classifications as presented by Isenberg (1986), namely the process of social comparison and persuasion argumentation. The second category of classification is fulfilled in the case of Hamas.

Since its inception, Hamas has compared its group identity with existing factions and groups, including Fatah, which later became the main rival in its political development. Fatah is considered a group that does not fight for the Palestinian people, especially at the grassroots level or the grassroots level. That is the reason for the formation of Hamas. From the reason alone has shown the forerunner of polarization, as well as on the way, it becomes stronger.

In another classification, namely persuasive arguments, the polarization between Hamas and Fatah is very clear. However, internal polarization also occurs

due to differences in viewing angles. There are differences of opinion within the group such as the choice to join practical politics or not, although through the al-Shura Assembly it was decided that Hamas would join practical politics and be involved in legislative elections. Another difference in point of view is that when Hamas has entered the world of practical politics, some members of the group consider that the movement is no longer in accordance with its original basis.

Meanwhile, Schanzer (2008) and Rahman (2020) explain clearly that the polarization that occurs between Hamas and other groups as well as within Hamas itself is influenced by the main factor, namely ideology. Ideological differences create a very deep gulf between Hamas and Fatah. The differences are almost impossible to reconcile. Therefore, it is certain that Hamas will choose its own path of struggle through war and Fatah will stick with the diplomacy it chooses in accordance with the direction of the movement.

Next in relation to the issue of Indonesian defense, the activities of the Hamas group in Palestine have no influence on the issue of Indonesian defense. Muslim groups in Indonesia responded in the form of small explosions which were still within normal limits. This is as stated by Hannase (2016) and

Wahyuni (2021) that the Indonesian community identifies the Palestinian community, especially Hamas as a society that has the same fate. It cannot create a potential threat to defence.

CONCLUSION

The polarization that occurs between groups and between members within the Hamas group can be classified into two classifications as presented by Isenberg (1986), namely the process of social comparison and persuasion argumentation. The second category of classification is fulfilled in the case of Hamas.

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