

Multicultural and multidisciplinary Islamic religious education and its significance for nurturing religious moderatism

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Abstract

In the last decade, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has received a negative image because it is associated with the growth of religious radicalism. Thus, the demands for applying religious moderation in IRE are getting stronger. This study aimed to find epistemological models that can direct IRE to align with religious moderation. Efforts to find answers were carried out by studying the thoughts of several figures of Islamic philosophy and contemporary Islamic studies, pursued by qualitative studies, supported by case studies, and enriched by surveys. The results showed that Musa Asy'arie's Multidimensional Concept, Amin Abdullah's Multidisciplinary-Interdisciplinary-Transdisciplinary Concept, and Siswanto Masruri's Science Collaboration Concept could serve as epistemological footholds in building a multicultural IRE that lead to religious moderation.

Akhir-akhir ini, Pendidikan Agama Islam memperoleh kesan negatif karena dikaitkan dengan bertumbuhnya radikalisme keagamaan didalamnya, sehingga tuntutan untuk menerapkan moderasi beragama pada Pendidikan agama Islam semakin menguat. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menemukan model epistimologis

yang dapat mengarahkan Pendidikan Agama Islam sejalan dengan moderasi beragama. Upaya untuk menemukan jawaban telah dilakukan dengan mempelajari pemikiran para filsuf islam dan studi islam kontemporer, yang dilakukan melalui penelitian kualitatif yang didukung dengan studi kasus, dan diperkaya dengan survey. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep multidimensional Musa Asy'ari, konsep multidisipliner-Interdisipliner dan transdisipliner Amin Abdullah; serta konsep kolaborasi Ilmu milik Siswanto Masruri mampu menjadi pijakan epistemologis dalam membangun Pendidikan agama Islam yang bercorak multicultural yang mengarah pada moderasi beragama.

Keywords: *Religious moderatism, Islamic religious education, Multicultural education, Collaboration*

Introduction

The contribution of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) to religious moderation has not been encouraging. On the one hand, IRE is the main gate for inculcating the values of religious moderation, but on the other hand, its practices that lead to extremism are also common. Educators have realized the reality of this paradox, but the efforts made have not yet produced the best formula to ensure moderation in Islamic religious education.

IRE is a subject that is questioned when the symptoms of intolerance, radicalism, and terrorism do not subside. It is not just a question of the IRE 's contribution to religious moderation; it is even more tragic that the IRE is associated with the growth of radicalism shoots. Some researches show this trend.

In 2016, the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah presented exciting findings on IRE in Indonesia. Its findings show that not a few IRE teachers at the primary and secondary education levels have an exclusive tendency toward religion and are intolerant of other groups, both intra-Muslim and non-Muslim groups. In addition, the IRE material has not provided sufficient space to foster an attitude of religious tolerance. IRE materials tend to complete the curriculum where the main focus is cultivating

moral values and worship. In the same year, PPIM also found that several IRE textbooks, some Islamic textbooks in schools, contained intolerance tendencies and had the potential to teach violence. In some research conducted in Jombang, Bandung, Depok, and Jakarta, PPIM found that some sensitive concepts such as infidel, polytheistic, and Khilafah did not receive sufficient explanation, so they could potentially be misunderstood and could encourage radicalism (PPIM, 2016).

A year later, PPIM reported the results of its research on educators (lecturers and teachers) and students in 34 provinces. The findings show the potential for intolerance and radicalism, which is quite worrying. As many as 49% of students do not agree that the government must protect adherents of sects considered heretical (Shia and Ahmadiyah), and 86.5% of students agree if the government prohibits the existence of groups that are considered deviant from Islamic teachings. While 37.71 % of students and 17.7% of teachers and lecturers agree that jihad means war against non-Muslims; then 26.35% of students and 6.83% of teachers agree that suicide bombing is jihad; In addition, 34.43% of students and 18.63% of teachers agree that apostates can be killed (Syafudin & Ropi, 2017).

In the same year, MAARIF Institute researched OSIS (Intra-School Student Organizations) in six cities in Indonesia, especially in the ROHIS (Islamic Spirituality) division. The research conducted in Padang, Sukabumi, Cirebon, Surakarta, Denpasar, and Tomohon, found that ROHIS became the gateway for the entry of radicalism in both private and public high schools. In addition, the research also highlights the vulnerability of schools (school principals and school committees), the threat of extra organizations that tend to be radical, and the role of teachers in the teaching and learning process who are less able to counteract radical ideas (Pribadi & Fitriyana, 2018).

PPIM (2018) reported its latest findings related to the opinions and intentions of teachers at the Kindergarten to Senior High School levels in

Indonesia. The research found that 50% of the teachers had an intolerant opinion, and 46.09% had a radical opinion. As for the action-intention aspect, the figure reached 37.77% intolerant and 41.26% radical.

In 2019, CISForm UIN Sunan Kalijaga released the results of its research in ten cities in Indonesia, namely Padang, Lampung, Jakarta, Banten, Yogyakarta, Solo, Malang, Makassar, Banjarmasin, and Lombok. The research was conducted on private and public and 19 Islamic Religious Higher Education (PTKI). The CISForm questioned the IRE teachers' production system and produced several findings: (1) PTKI has prioritized pesantren alumni but still provides opportunities for General High School alumni who lack an Islamic base. (2) IRE curriculum at PTKI is quite good, but its implementation is lacking, so prospective IRE teacher students are not equipped with Islamic knowledge in a competent manner, (3) There are still some lecturers who are less able to access Islamic primary sources, as well as some lecturers who are less tolerant. It was recorded that 14.2% of lecturers supported the caliphate system. Even 47.1% of students studied also support the caliphate system (Wildan et al., 2019).

Some of these research reports certainly increase the vigilance of any institution that organizes Islamic IRE at the undergraduate, master, and doctoral levels. Identification of the problem can be started from the essential aspect, namely, what is the epistemology of IRE so far? Why does this epistemology still provide space for the emergence and growth of intolerance to radicalism within the scientific and institutional bodies of IRE? One thing that can be targeted is the strong monodisciplinary tendency in IRE.

Method

This article resulted from a literature review and was supported by a survey. Despite displaying several numerical data, this study was still qualitative. The survey was used to show the tendency to take sides with religious moderation

with a case study at one of the IRE educational institutions in Surakarta. The survey was conducted on 32 doctoral students or 52% of the 60 students population. Samples were taken randomly. This article's data generated from the survey was not the primary source. The main discussion focused on finding a formula for building religious moderation in IRE context. This effort was carried out by taking the thoughts of several figures and then reflecting on them in IRE context.

Literature review

The implementation of IRE to strengthen religious moderation has been studied by several researchers. For example is an article written by Harto & Tastin (2019) entitled *Pengembangan Pembelajaran PAI Berwawasan Islam Wasatiyyah : Upaya Membangun Sikap Moderasi Beragama Peserta Didik* (Development of Islamic Religious Education in Wasatiyah Islam: Efforts to Build Students' Religious Moderation Attitudes). His study shows that applying a contextual scientific approach is a must because this approach touches three domains: attitudes, knowledge, and skills. IRE learning in this study is directed at the IRE concept with a *wasatiyyah* Islamic perspective. According to Harto and Tastin, this Concept is prospective enough to: First, encourage students to be more aware of their own religion's teachings and of the reality of the existence of other religions with the specificity of their teachings. Second, students can understand and appreciate other religions. Third, encourage students to participate in social activities involving various adherents of different religions. Fourth, students can develop their full potential, including their diversity potential, to control their own lives, and in this way, they are more empowered.

Another study was conducted by Anwar & Muhayati (2021), in their article entitled “*Upaya Membangun Sikap Moderasi Beragama Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Mahasiswa Perguruan Tinggi Umum*” (Efforts in Building Religious

Moderation Attitudes through Islamic Religious Education in Students of Public Higher Education). According to the study, IRE, which is taught to students as a primary subject, is an opportunity to form an attitude of religious moderation. This qualitative research describes and analyzes IRE courses' efforts in instilling religious moderation values and building moderation attitudes for students. The research shows that IRE 's efforts to build students' religious moderation are carried out through understanding the methodology of Islamic teachings, directing the substance of the content to moderate characters, providing examples through the attitudes of IRE lecturers, providing discussion rooms, BBQ programs, mentoring and fostering student activity units, and evaluation. Likewise, in senior secondary education, there is research conducted by Gunawan et al. (2021) on IRE learning at SMA Cerdas Mulia, Bandung. The research proves that the internalization of religious moderation values can be developed through IRE learning, then it can be applied through religious guidance, which is carried out through planning, implementing, and evaluating IRE learning.

A reasonable comprehensive study was conducted by Chadidjah et al. (2021) who examined the implementation of religious moderation through IRE learning in primary, secondary, and higher education at the same time. This study found that the implementation of moderation values in elementary, junior high, high school, and tertiary institutions have the same conceptual basis, namely *wasatiyyah*, which consists of *tasamuh* (tolerant), *tawazun* (balanced) and *i'tidal* (upright).

Still related to learning, Aziz and Najmudin's research also needs to be mentioned. This study aimed to determine religious moderation in teaching materials for Islamic Religious Education courses at Private Public Universities with STIE Putra Perdana Indonesia in Tangerang. The results showed that the book used as a reference for IRE teaching materials at STIE Putra Perdana did not explicitly discuss the theme of religious moderation, but the content of the

study contained moderate values. Moderation values are internalized in the discussion of religion and humans, religion and the universe, the primary sources of Islamic law, the basic framework of Islam, faith, sharia and morality.

Besides learning and material content, religious moderation study in the IRE context also examines the curriculum aspects, for example, Suprpto's study entitled "*Integrasi Moderasi Beragama dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam*" (Integrating Religious Moderation in Developing the Curriculum of Islamic Religious Education) (Suprpto, 2011; Baker, 2020). Another example is Yahiji's work which investigates the internalization of religious moderation in expanding the development of the IRE curriculum based on independent learning campuses. The results show that the internalization of religious moderation relies not only on policy makers or curriculum decision-makers but also on the central role of educators. Therefore, educators' competence and understanding of religious moderation values are essential prerequisites for achieving curriculum goals.

Rosyidi (2021) conducted a study at the NU Ma'arif Educational Institution of Kudus, which has a role in education with *Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah* character and *wasatiyyah* characteristics in religion. The finding shows a model of religious moderation in high school's Islamic religious education curriculum. Several curriculum models are used to integrate the values of religious moderation, namely: Written/prescribed/intended curriculum, Taught curriculum, and Hidden curriculum, implemented by integrating the values of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and multiculturalism with a contextual understanding of IRE materials; Emphasizing them into self-development activities, extracurricular and habituation activities; Using a rational, exemplary, cultural learning approach in learning activities; Efforts to continue controlling and assisting religious activities in schools and also on social media; Efforts to develop Islamic moderation insight through strengthening Aswaja activities at schools.

Looking at some related previous studies on IRE for religious moderation, there are still very few studies that provide an epistemological basis for IRE. Generally, they still scrutinize on the Concept of *wasatiyyah* and are free to learn. Therefore, the study offered in this study has significance because it seeks to provide the epistemological paradigm through the philosophical views of several Muslim thinkers.

IRE needs to leave monodisciplinary thinking

Specialization of science is a necessity in the history of philosophy of science. Science is growing and has many branches, so expertise in particular fields is needed. Moreover, a person cannot master many sciences. This understanding, in turn, leads academics to focus on only one science. If necessary, all levels of education and academic careers are taken linearly. This kind of specialization in linearity is an indication of a monodisciplinary style of epistemology.

Now the monodisciplinary style is starting to be abandoned. Even structurally monodisciplinary institutions are still trying to build a curriculum that allows the development of interdisciplinary knowledge. For example, in the study of Lindvig et al., he explores how interdisciplinary education and teaching emerge and develop in universities lacking interdisciplinary scholarship infrastructure. Using qualitative data from multipart case studies, Lindvig et al. (2019) examined the development of various interdisciplinary educational efforts within traditional (monodisciplinary) structured universities. They then mapped out how educational elements of the interdisciplinary model have been created, supported, challenged, or even strengthened by pre-schools—existing monodisciplinary structure.

Interdisciplinary is also proven to produce more innovative students. A study by Mirjam Braßler and Martin Schultze shows how innovation develops differently between interdisciplinary and monodisciplinary student teams. The results of the latent change approach from a sample of 69 student teams

showed significant changes in student innovation over time. In the early stages, the monodisciplinary student team outperformed the interdisciplinary student team in promoting ideas (convincing potential allies). However, the interdisciplinary student team outperformed the monodisciplinary student team in generating new, appropriate ideas in the middle of the semester. The results show that interdisciplinary student teams have an advantage in generating new ideas even though it takes more time because they must first access different disciplines (Hardaker, 2007; Braßler & Martin Schultze, 2021).

Monodiscipline is still not bad but has a less than encouraging side effect. The good side of monodisciplinary lies in maintaining the continuity of central ideas in one field. The continuum of ideas learned also makes it easier to see the structure of the science. Monodiscipline also emphasizes depth analysis in a field to produce specialists in that field. In the context of IRE, a monodisciplinary focus is generally characterized by strengthening pedagogical skills for prospective educators. Students are directed to become Islamic teachers and lecturers who master learning strategies and education science. However, although religious materials are taught, the tendency to master technical skills in education is more dominant than paradigmatic abilities. As a result, the skills possessed are not balanced with the ability to think critically. The teacher candidates are skilled in carrying out learning from planning to evaluation but are not good at criticizing the complex social realities in education. This inequality makes IRE less responsive in identifying dangerous potentials such as intolerance to radicalism.

When IRE is placed as part of Islamic studies (Dirasat Islamiyah), monodisciplinary is also a problem, because a monodisciplinary approach in the religious sciences will result in the understanding and interpretation of religion losing contact with reality, even losing its relevance to the life around it (Abdullah, 2020; Lee, 2020).

Therefore IRE requires a new way of thinking; a new culture of thinking that is independently able to dialogue on the subjective, objective, and intersubjective sides. The subjective side represents religious tendencies, where every religion must have a truth claim. This claim is, in principle, subjective because the recognition of religion itself as the most correct does not come from other parties but unilateral claims based on inherited scriptures. The objective side represents science, where the truth of science is the result of an empirically tested acknowledgment, which is justified by sensory observations and assistive devices. The objectivity of science can also be seen from the measurability, all-measurable character driven by a positivistic paradigm. Therefore, the truth is built based on what the object shows, not what the subject claims. The intersubjective side represents the character of philosophy. Philosophy is recognized as the mother of sciences (the mother of all sciences), but philosophy as science means the accumulation and dialogue of knowledge produced by many subjects who think with their subjective paradigm. Therefore, philosophy's nature is intersubjective, namely a lively and dynamic dialogue between various subjectivity.

IRE thus needs to adopt a way of thinking that combines religion, science, and philosophy. Several paradigmatic offers accommodate all three. Among them are Multidimensional Thinking, MIT Method Thinking, and Collaborative Thinking.

Multidimensional thinking

Multidimensional Thinking was called for by one of the Indonesian Muslim philosophers, Musa Asy'arie. For him, humans are multidimensional beings because they consist of body, life, and spirit. In contrast to J. Cote's model, which sees human multidimensionality consisting of social, personal, and psychological, Musa Asy'arie's multidimensionality summarizes the three potentials of human nature and is a capital for humans to reason about complex

realities. This must be done because human tasks are also complex; besides Abdullah, he is also Khalifatullah (Cote, 1996; Zaprul Khan, 2020; R'boul, 2021). Therefore, the human mindset must be set to respond to various dimensions of life. This multidimensional view can be understood as an invitation to have responsive skills to the various realities. The dimension of the body invites humans to see the physical reality changed by the transfer of technology and information, as well as other physical factors. Meanwhile, the dimension of life invites humans to see a living and growing reality, from climate change to public health issues that education must pay attention to. At the same time, the spiritual dimension focuses on efforts to increase empathy, sympathy, and sharpness of feeling to respect other parties, and it is no less important to feel the presence and power of the Most Absolute.

Because of these complex demands, in the context of education, an educator must be professional in his duties as a learner, but how he can live in the social context so that the educational process cannot be separated from the real conditions in society. This kind of educator is not entrenched in the ivory tower of scholarship, nor is he confined within the walls of a school. He is a translator of social reality for the younger generation to read.

Multidimensional thinking does not mean leaving seriousness to focus on one skill, as done by the monodisciplinary paradigm, but invites awareness of complex social realities. The benefit of this multidimensional thinking skill is the attitude not to ignore the nearest and current issues to be able to respond to situations quickly. Individuals who think multidimensionally will not easily say, "*oh, that is not my field, not my business*"; "*Sorry, my focus is not there, please ask the experts*"; and similar sentences. A person accustomed to multidimensional Thinking will say, "*with my expertise in this field, what contribution can I make to this problem*"; "*The new problem you present is fascinating; maybe my expertise can provide a solution*." Thus, multidimensional thinking trains a person to be open to seeing

the reality around him and encourages him to actively contribute to being a problem solver.

Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary (MIT) thinking

In line with Musa Asy'arie, another Muslim philosopher, M. Amin Abdullah, emphasized the importance of the MIT (Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, Transdisciplinary) method. MIT can be a methodological framework in synergizing multidimensional science, so it can answer how to synergize IRE with various surrounding realities and related sciences.

MIT (Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, Transdisciplinary) is a continuation (second path) of the Integration-Interconnection (Icon) paradigm in a more methodologically practical direction. Integration-Interconnection is a paradigm that asserts that all sciences can be integrated and connected. In Islamic scholarship, the center of knowledge is in the texts, and all knowledge is connected to that center. Amin Abdullah illustrates this with his Scientific Cobwebs.

In addition to the Qur'an and Sunnah as the center, the sciences in the second layer and so on, interact with each other, discuss (dialogue) and respect each other or consider and are sensitive to the presence of other knowledge. From this picture, it is clear that the dichotomy and all other forms of separation of knowledge are no longer known. Even though the Qur'an and Sunnah are central, it does not mean that they are the only sources of truth. To get a comprehensive understanding of the truth between the two, the help of other sciences, both from nature and humans themselves, is needed. The latter truth is implemented in the social sciences and humanities. With the development of an increasingly complex era, even discussing or dialoguing about knowledge from the three sources is not enough. However, it is also necessary to pay attention to information and issues that arise in the contemporary era, such as human rights, gender, religious pluralism, the

environment, etc. This description illustrates that the scientific structure of spider webs here describes the anthropocentric-integralists scientific structure.

The Cobweb of Science picture has a dotted line at each knowledge boundary. This shows that rigid and tight partitions do not limit that science, but there is a gap to seep and influence each other (semipermeable). This is what Amin Abdullah wants to emphasize through the MIT epistemology (Abdullah, 2020).

Multidisciplinary occurs when a problem is approached with many sciences at once. However, these sciences remain at their limits, not seeking cross-sectoral collaboration. Interdisciplinary is done by bringing together data, methods, and theories from two or more disciplines to find solutions to problems outside of one particular discipline. At the same time, Transdisciplinary is an interdisciplinary practice with a broader participatory level, namely scientists involving non-scientists, such as clergy, activists, practitioners, etc. All parties can test each other's arguments (intersubjective testability).

If the three schemes are applied in the context of IRE to overcome the problem of intolerance and radicalism, then the demand is the need for IRE to synergize with the social sciences and humanities. This can be done by considering inputs from various disciplines to solve problems (multidisciplinary patterns), integrating content from various sciences into the school curriculum (interdisciplinary), as well as involving broader parties, including stakeholders and practitioners (transdisciplinary pattern). This kind of openness makes schools better prepared to prevent any possible entry of intolerant and radical ideas. If IRE is able to make this breakthrough, then this achievement is evidence of the existence, in Amin Abdullah's terms, of creative imagination. Namely, imagination to create something new.

Collaborative thinking

Collaborative thinking is initiated by Siswanto Masruri, a professor at UIN Yogyakarta whom Amin Abdullah has dubbed the lobbyist because of his expertise in collaborating on many things. For Siswanto Masruri, the most realistic encounter between sciences is collaboration, where each science with its characteristics contributes to joint work. Each science is only united in *ma'rifat* or *tarekat* not at the essence level. Science collaboration is not an antithesis paradigm but rather enriches the demands for the integration of science that have been widely voiced. It takes three levels, namely basis, process, and result.

There is a need for scientific understanding at the base level, namely the need to know other sciences. At the process level, collaborative activities can be increased to scientific cooperation, where each science can help the other. Meanwhile, the ability to organize various approaches for a scientific project is required at the highest level.

This scientific collaboration, in Siswanto Masruri's view, requires non-linear science. If integration is putting something into something (running as a unit), then linearity is maintaining the one and ignoring the other (running independently), and non-linearity is maintaining the one and inviting the other (going together).

Scientific non-linearity for individual educators themselves will be very useful because someone does not leave the discipline, institution, or career place. One's scientific career does not have to develop linearly. On the ground, market temptations sometimes demand non-linearity. It must be admitted that there is a misalignment between the culture of science and humanity so that many things cannot be solved alone. For this reason, it is better if there are fewer S1 study programs so that higher education is better directed to generalists-specialists.

In Siswanto Masruri's view, the current generation faces increasingly diverse realities because their world is not just a piece of ground. Since globalization has been rolling freely on the wheels of new media, encountering the world's diversity has become increasingly unstoppable. The world is small, like a village, and all diversity can be quickly met. The challenge of globalization today is facing Westernization and Arabization, Japanization, Chinaization, Koreanization, and other cultures that are no less great. The invasion of foreign cultures has been rolling since, to borrow Stewart Hoover's term, the emergence of the Media Age, marked by digital technology and internet networks (world wide web). Since then, the temptation of non-linearity summoned the human race in this world (Kirylo, 2017; Suwartini & Wiranto, 2021).

Multidimensional thinking, MIT thinking, and Collaborative thinking can be applied as paradigms to encourage any field, including IRE, to be more capable and responsive in dealing with changes and developments.

IRE experiences at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS)

IRE Doctoral Program at UMS has special characteristics that distinguish it from other IRE s. It is known by its extended name "Doctoral Program in Islamic Religious Education, Democracy and Multiculturalism." The emphasis on democracy and multiculturalism is not just a slogan but is seen as the "spirit" of this IRE program. In fact, this spirit is also instilled at the Bachelor's and Master's levels, at least by enriching the material for several courses so that students begin to recognize the reality of multiculturalism and scientific methodological efforts to respond to it. This is, for example, carried out in the Philosophy of Science and Methodology of Islamic Studies courses, where philosophical foundations are introduced. This is important, considering that a clear philosophical foundation will make it easier to practice multicultural education in the future (Wiranto et al., 2021).

At the doctoral level, his distinctive long name affects all courses at IRE UMS, which are always associated with issues of democracy and multiculturalism. With this effort, it is not surprising that most of the students' dissertations have multicultural content. The following data is presented from the research results of the Dissertation Mapping for S3 IRE UMS Students. Data were collected through a survey conducted on February 14-15, 2022. The subjects were 32 IRE UMS doctoral students. This number represents 52% of the total population of 60 students. The sample was randomly collected because they were only invited to fill out the survey voluntarily.

Most of the students, namely 87.5% stated that the dissertation they wrote had multicultural content, 9.4% doubted the multicultural content in their dissertation, and only 3.1% stated that their dissertation was not multicultural.

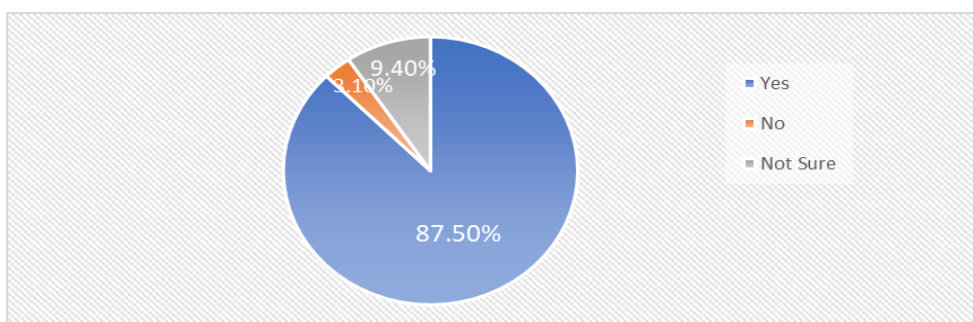


Figure 1. Most students admit that the dissertation they write contains a multicultural dimension

The multicultural content in question is the five dimensions of multicultural education referring to Banks & Banks theory:

1. content integration;
2. knowledge construction process;
3. prejudice reduction;
4. equity of pedagogy; and
5. empowering school culture and social structure (Banks & Banks, 2018).

This survey found that all dimensions of multicultural education are a concern for students' dissertations. Most dimensions of multicultural education are in the fifth dimension, as shown in the following diagram:

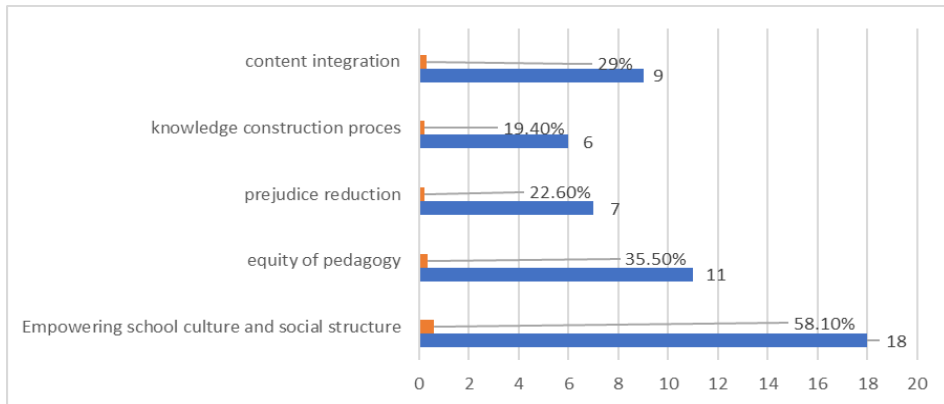


Figure 2. The choice of multicultural education dimensions as the concern of students

In turn, the content of the dimensions of multicultural education in students' dissertations gives rise to optimism that their dissertation finding will contribute to religious moderation efforts, especially in the Indonesian context. Some students feel very optimistic that their work will contribute to religious moderation. A few are also quite optimistic, and not a single student feels pessimistic about the contribution of his dissertation to religious moderation.

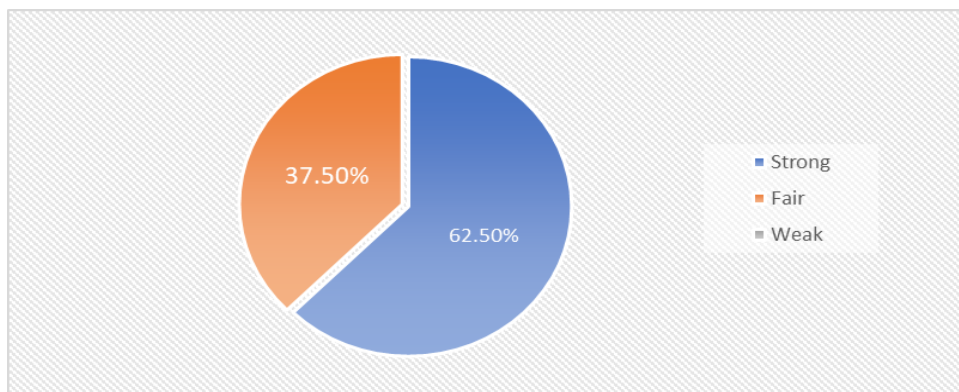


Figure 3. The level of student optimism about the contribution of their dissertation to religious moderation

Of course, this optimism is not without reason. The prospect of religious moderation has become clear from several dissertation titles submitted by students. Most students explicitly mention the word multicultural in the title of their dissertation. Some show aspects of multicultural acceptance through the themes of disability and gender equality. Others use the keywords deradicalization, *wasatiyyah*, and moderation. These indications are intentionally bolded in the table below to show students' alignment with multicultural issues and religious moderation

Table 1. List of student dissertation titles and keywords for multicultural and religious moderation content

| No | Titles |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Multicultural -Based “ <i>Al-Islam and Study of Muhammadiyah</i> ” Learning at IKIP Muhammadiyah Maumere |
| 2 | Islamic Religious Education for Autistic Students: Phenomenological Studies at Al-Firdaus Inclusive School |
| 3 | Learning Tahfidz Al-Quran for the Blind |
| 4 | Implementation of Islamic Religious Education with Multicultural Insights as an Effort for Deradicalization in Central Java Schools |
| 5 | The Role of MUI in the Process of Deradicalization and Religious Moderation in Surakarta City |
| 6 | The Role of Parents in Instilling Islamic Perspective Sexual Education in Children |
| 7 | Design of Tahfidz Al Qur'an Learning in Islamic Elementary Schools: Case Studies in Multisites |
| 8 | Philosophical Foundations of Multicultural Education in Islam and Buddhism |
| 9 | Education for mentally disabled children in the family from an Islamic education perspective |
| 10 | Self-Regulation of Tahfidz Program Students in Online Learning amid the Covid-19 Pandemic |
| 11 | Justice in the Perspective of Islamic Education (Case Study of Polygamous Households) |
| 12 | Multicultural Education in Muhammadiyah schools |
| 13 | Inclusive Education Culture for the Children with Special Need |

| | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14 | Democracy Education at the Modern Islamic Islamic Boarding School Assalaam Surakarta |
| 15 | Creative Leadership of Case Study Principals at SMAM MBS Piyungan Sleman Yogyakarta and SMAM Pondok Modern Imam Syuhodo Blimbing Sukoharjo. |
| 16 | Theory Construct and Development of Wasatiyyah Measurement Instruments |
| 17 | Multicultural Education Development Model at SBM Klaten |
| 18 | Integration of Multicultural Values in the Learning Process for Strengthening Humanist Characters at API Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School Magelang |
| 19 | Studying the Multicultural Education Values in Islamic Boarding School Clinical Supervision Activities |
| 20 | Thoughts on Islamic Education by Ustadz Abdullah Thufail Saputro |
| 21 | IRE 's Multicultural Content and its Implications for the Students' Ethics at SMAN 4 Magelang |
| 22 | Development of the Multicultural Education Curriculum at SMA IT Nur Hidayah Kartasura |
| 23 | Increasing Student Entrepreneurial Intentions Through Modeling Techniques |
| 24 | Quantum Learning Method to Improve Internalization of Islamic Values in BA |
| 25 | Multicultural and Anti-Multicultural Values in Learning Management at Darusy Syahadah Islamic Boarding School Simo Boyolali |
| 26 | Wasatiyyah Education Management at Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School Al-Mujahidin Balikpapan |
| 27 | The Effect of Family Education on Differences in the Quality of Human Resources at SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Samarinda |
| 28 | Entrepreneurship Education Management at MAN 2 Kulon Progo and SMKN 1 Purworejo |
| 29 | The Concept of "Al-Islam and Study of Muhammadiyah" Learning during the Pandemic Period Based on Prophetic at PTM |
| 30 | Integration of Science and Religion in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools in Solo Raya |
| 31 | Internalization of Minang Indigenous Values at Islamic Boarding Schools in Minangkabau Village, West Sumatra |
| 32 | Multicultural Education Values in the Higher Education System at Darussalam University Gontor |

Some titles above have been written into dissertations, but some are still in progress, even just proposal titles. However, at least from the list, it can be seen that the diversity of student orientations shows multidimensional sensitivity.

The multicultural orientation at the IRE Doctoral Program of UMS also occurs because of the diversity of students. Although a comprehensive study of the student's background has not yet been carried out, the author's experience as the head of the study program, which selects new students through interviews, is sufficient to prove that IRE UMS doctoral students have diversity in terms of race and ethnicity, educational background, and scientific interests. This has an impact on the style of dissertation research they do. Students with a background in psychology research multicultural education with a psychological perspective so that the results of their studies are transdisciplinary in the pattern of IRE. There are also students whose background is Comparative Religion in order that the IRE research conducted is also a form of comparison of Islamic education with other religious education. Students who have an interest in gender studies also research this theme. Therefore, this diversity is exciting and has become one of the widespread rich IRE studies, permeating various other sciences. The hope of the IRE Doctoral Program of UMS is the presence of superior, innovative, new IRE studies according to social dynamics in Indonesia and globally.

The moderate IRE

Of course, not all IRE study programs have to carry a multicultural identity or religious moderation, but the quality of content and activities is more important than identity. The content and activities are closely related to the scientific perspective. Without a multidimensional thinking perspective, sensitivity in seeing various realities will not be honed and will not be done thoughtfully. Otherwise, it only raises lazy tolerance (not the absolute tolerance, called "*amung*

lamis" in Javanese). So to seek Moderated IRE or IRE that is far from being intolerant or radical, it should be started by Multidimensional Thinking.

Furthermore, methodologically, the multidimensional perspective is carried out with a willingness to involve other related sciences (disciplines), whether it is carried out in a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary manner. IRE that is open to other sciences will grow more responsive to the surrounding reality, so it will not be easily trapped in a narrow and exclusive paradigm.

Applicatively, IRE needs to be skilled in collaborating with other sciences. Scientific collaboration allows IRE to remain a scientific discipline of Islamic education without changing or merging with other sciences. The sought integration can be in scientific collaboration, namely collaboration with other sciences in several educational and teaching activities programs.

With the ability to open up and work together, IRE will appear more moderate. Finally, a moderated IRE will be at the forefront of forming a religious, noble, knowledgeable, and brilliant generation.

Conclusion

Institutionally, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) faces the threat of exclusivity to radicalism. However, IRE can face this threat by making paradigmatic changes as a scientific discipline. The change is shifting from a monodisciplinary tendency to a more open and moderate scientific direction. The method taken is to update the epistemology of IRE with the three approaches offered in research.

The multidimensional approach encourages IRE to see the surrounding reality so that it avoids exclusive attitudes and leads to an education model that is always contextual. The MIT approach encourages IRE to be more open scientifically, namely realizing that other sciences are also essential to be involved in the development of contextual education so that science is not only

monodisciplinary. The scientific collaboration approach requires practical steps through cross-disciplinary collaboration without fusing diverse sciences. Interdisciplinary is realized in scientific cooperation, both institutionally and scientifically.

This study still has limitations in exploring the three main ideas offered and providing practical examples. However, it is expected these limitations may become the potential research for other researchers in the future by providing more examples of the application of effective multicultural education to achieve religious moderation.

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