

Fostering Tolerant Religious Education to Prevent Violent Extremism in Indonesia – **CONVEY Indonesia**

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This Policy Brief series is published as part of CONVEY Indonesia project organized by PPMUIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia.

CONVEY Indonesia aims to build peace in Indonesia and to prevent violent extremism and radicalism through a series of research-survey, policy advocacy, and public interaction based on the potential of religious education. CONVEY Indonesia project covers on the issues of tolerance, diversity, and non-violence among youth.

Research on Islamic Education Textbooks in Indonesian Public Universities

Main Findings

1. This research concludes that in general, Islamic education in the 5 universities under study can be considered as moderate and open religious education.
2. Although generally moderate, all the lecturers and teachers, permanent or otherwise in status, offer a religious understanding that is less tolerant on differences and their teaching model tends to be exclusive.
3. There are government efforts to strengthen the Islamic Education (PAI) curriculum on these public universities, but no competency standard exists that is generally accepted for Islamic Religious Education lecturers in the five universities. The PAI courses have been taught by lecturers from various study programs and various faculties.
4. From the aspects of the background and scientific discipline, a few competent PAI lecturers are found but, at the same time, this research also shows that a number of them have no PAI background nor have ever taken any PAI training.
5. There are differences in the PAI patterns, contents, and delivery styles in the five universities. One of the main reasons is rigid coordination and mechanism in one campus, while in other campuses lecturers may be given autonomy and discretion in modifying and innovating the use of materials or textbooks, curricula along with its syllabi, such as in Islamic Education Semesterly Learning Plan and Work Program (RPKPS). Therefore, students in Indonesian universities do not receive standardized and unified PAI materials.
6. There are variants of religious styles, both in the PAI textbooks published by each study program/faculty and in those actually delivered in classes. These variants are in accordance with the orientation and religious affiliation of individual lecturers, who are textualist-Islamist on the one hand, and moderate-contextualists or even liberals on the other.

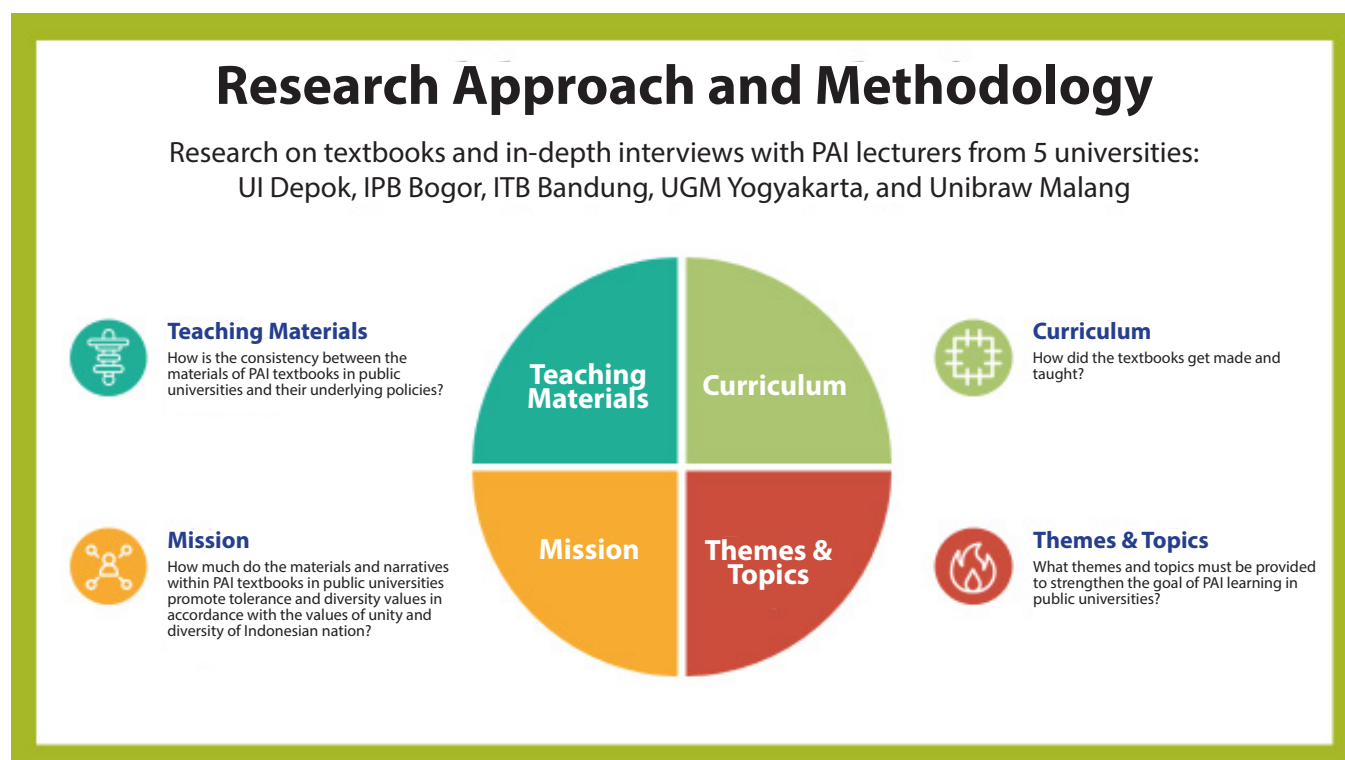
Background

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course, which is an important part of Religious Education in Higher Education in Indonesia, started in 1960 since the issuance of MPRS Decree No. II / MPRS / 1960. In Chapter III of Article 9 paragraph 2 sub b, there is a provision as follows: "In State Universities, Religious Education is given as a subject with the understanding that students have the right to not participate if they voice their objections."

Furthermore, on 27 March 1989, Law No. 2 of 1989 was promulgated to strengthen and clarify the position of Islamic Education in universities through a Law that is contained within the National Education goals as provided in Chapter II Article 4, which states that, "The National Education aims to educate the life of the nation and to develop the true Indonesian person, namely a person who is faithful and pious to the One and Only God and possesses virtuous traits, knowledgeable and skilled, healthy in the body and mind, strong characters, and independent as well as having responsibility to the society and nation."

"The problem of religious education that has recently been widely discussed is none other than the reflection of the problem of religious life in the country which has been trapped into religious formalism. The government is satisfied that it has made religious education a compulsory subject in the curriculum. Educators or lecturers are satisfied that they have taught the subject matter according to the curriculum. Students feel they have a religion by memorizing religious materials. All parties are satisfied with the objectification of religion in the form of curriculum and course values, although they are far from implementing noble religious values. This "radical" view emerged due to ideological and non-ideological factors. The ideological factor in this case is closely related to the already held beliefs and strong religious emotions. The majority agree that radicalism has many negative impacts, both on religion and on national unity. Radicalism, in many studies, has penetrated in many dimensions, including in the campus society. The easy target of radicalism wrapped in religion is prone to occur on public campuses. Thus that research to prove or strengthen this needs to be done.

Approach and Methodology



Religious Education in Indonesia: Legal Basis and Early Regulations

Legal Basis and Regulation on Religious Education at University Level

The history of the legal basis and regulation of the introduction of religious education at various levels of education including tertiary institutions in Indonesia, since 1960.

1960-1961

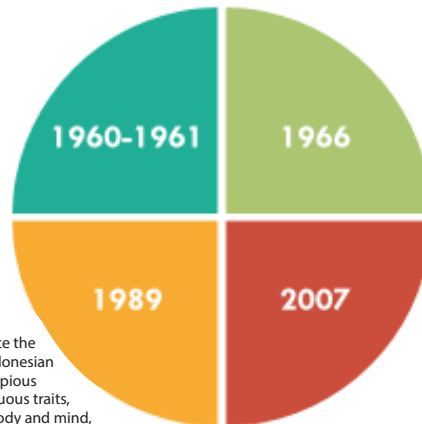


Parliament Decree No. II/MPRS/1960. The pre-1960 religious education was only provided from public schools to high school level. Chapter III Article 9 paragraph 2 sub b contains the following provision: "Universities shall provide Religious Education as a subject with the acknowledgement that students have the right to not participate if they voice their objection."

1989



Law No. 2 of 1989, Chapter II Article 4 states that, "The National Education aims to educate the life of the nation and to develop the true Indonesian person, namely a person who is faithful and pious to the One and Only God and possesses virtuous traits, knowledgeable and skilled, healthy in the body and mind, strong characters, and independent as well as having responsibility to the society and nation."



1966



Parliament Decree No. XXVII/MPRS/1966, in which Chapter 1 Article 1 states that, "Religious education shall be established as a subject in schools starting from elementary schools to public universities."

2007



Article 3 paragraph (1) of PP No. 5 of 2007 concerning Religious and Religiosity Education stipulates that Islamic Education (PAI) is a mandatory subject for universities.

Islamic Education at University Level:

Referring to a number of regulations, the Islamic Education (PAI) curriculum has undergone several transformations. In the 2000 curriculum, PAI is included in the Personality Development Course (MPK). The 2000 curriculum is based on Decree No: 263/DIKTI/KEP/2000 concerning the Improvement of the Core Curriculum for Religious Education at Public Universities. Then in the 2002 curriculum, PAI is also included as MPK in accordance with the Minister of National Education Decree Number 045/U/2002. Finally, in the 2013 curriculum, PAI is included in the category of Mandatory University Courses (MKWU) based on Law no. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education and the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. No. 49 of 2014 concerning the National Standards for Higher Education. Islamic Education course is one of the three Mandatory University Courses (MKWU). Two other courses are Pancasila and Citizenship.

As MKWU, PAI has several important missions as follows: First, to develop learners' potential to have faith, piety, virtue, and good character (psycho-pedagogical mission); second, to prepare students for Islamic life, both as individuals, family members, community members, and as good citizens (psychosocial mission); third, to build a culture of spirituality as the main determinant in the life of the nation and state (sociocultural mission); fourth, to study and develop understanding of Islamic teachings that are integrated with various academic disciplines (academic missions).

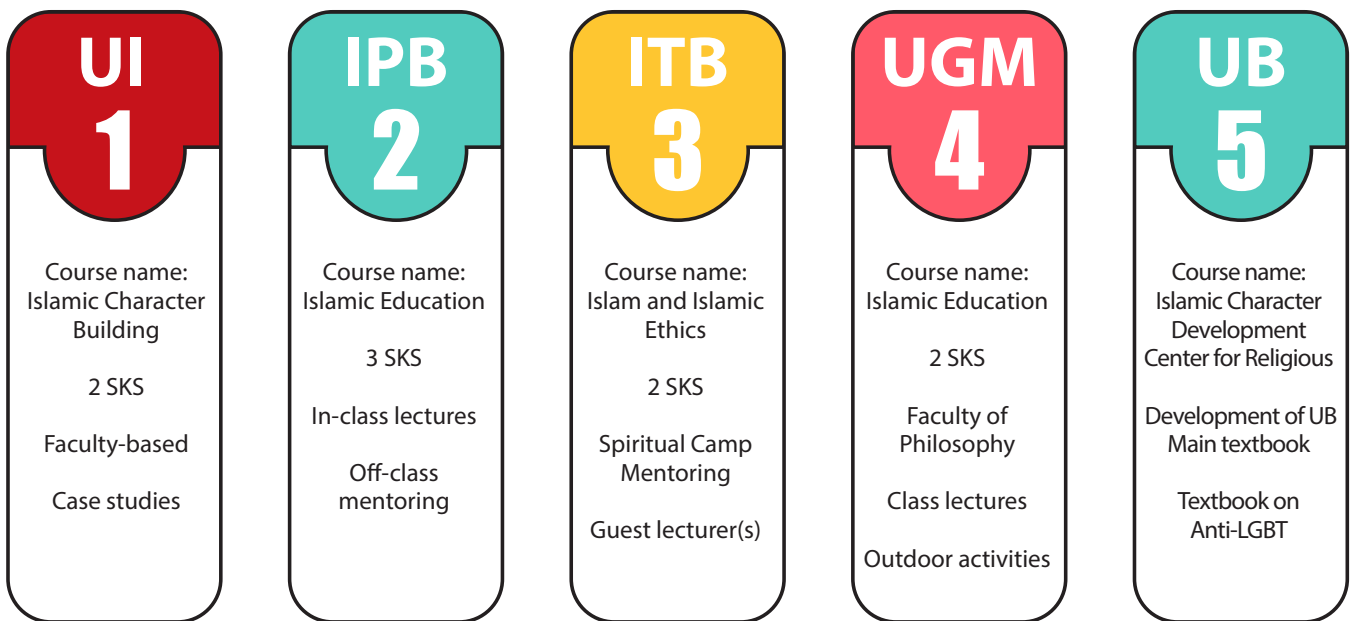
Conceptually, the 2013 curriculum relies on the achievement of several competencies, one of which is results. Based on the 2013 Competency Standards for PAI Curriculum Graduates, the desired competencies will then be translated into two competencies, namely Core Competencies (KI) and Basic Competencies (KD). Core Competence (KI) is a generic ability or competency that refers to: (a) National Education Objectives [Law Number 20/2003]; (b) Higher

Education Objectives [Law Number 12/2012]; (c) KKNi [Minister of Education and Culture Regulation 73/2013]; and (d) SKL [Minister of Education and Culture Regulation on SNPT]. KI serves to integrate the competence of group of subjects/courses. Overall, KI is categorized into four groups, namely: KI 1 (reflects spiritual attitudes), KI 2 (reflects social attitudes), KI 3 (reflects knowledge), and KI 4 (reflects skill).

Core competencies 1 and 2 (KI 1 and KI 2) are developed coherently and harmoniously as a result of the nurturant effects. Core competencies 3 and 4 (KI 3 and KI 4) are developed consistently and interactively as instructional effects.

Philosophically, KI 3 and KI 4 serve as ontological and epistemological vehicles. Core competencies 1, 2, 3, and 4 must be understood and addressed as a whole entity of learning outcomes in the context of intact pedagogical-psychological processes (andragogical), and as a process of achieving and realizing national education goals. Basic Competency (KD) is specific and it describes the abilities related to the substance of the course, in this case the subject of Islamic Education as one of the four elements of the Mandatory University Courses (MKWU). In the context of KKNi, KD is equivalent to the concept and position of learning outcomes.

Patterns and models Islamic Education in 5 Public Universities



Analysis on Islamic Education Textbooks



Tolerance

Many aspects in the textbooks do encourage students to be open-minded, respectful of plurality, and tolerant toward people of different persuasion/school of thought.



Counter Violence Extremism

Textbook contents are still somewhat weak; they tend to remain ambiguous in countering intolerance, radicalism and terrorism (CVE).



Inclusivism

The spirits of inclusivism, cosmopolitanism, and tolerance are explicitly observable in PAI textbooks.



Contemporary Issues

The textbooks were created or reconstructed by each team of writers and have been wrapped in current, modern and popular narratives. As Islamic scholarship materials, they need to be sharper and more powerful.



Radicalism

The PAI textbooks do not contain any teachings that directly encourage students to become radicals or terrorists.



Mission

The textbooks still tend to focus on religious aspects and are not maximal in promoting the values of civic education.

Islamic Education Textbooks in Public Universities and the Threat of Radicalism

Thus far, the implementation of Islamic Education (PAI) in public universities has shown uniformity although in some cases there are still certain technical and local variations. In general, PAI management in several public universities shows similarities, especially in terms of the coordination of PAI lecturers both in formal and non-formal units. However, some PAI teaching and learning activities are used as an arena for cultivating certain Islamic ideology by lecturers according to their backgrounds, affiliations and alignments with certain community organizations or Islamic movements. Such condition reflects the dynamics of the life of the Muslim campus community, which is often

colored by tensions and ideological contestation among various Islamic variants in campuses.

Overall, the PAI textbooks/texts on the five campuses studied do contain many aspects or materials that encourage students to be open, respectful of pluralism, and tolerant of other people of different persuasion/understanding/school of thought. However, sometimes the spirit of inclusiveness, cosmopolitanism and tolerance, which is made explicit in the textbooks and which is the general vision of most PAI lecturers, is colored by personal attitudes and views of some lecturers and teachers who may be less tolerant and less open to differences, for instance in their interpretations of religious texts, social problems, or other issues. Although the PAI textbooks already contain the spirit of inclusiveness, cosmopolitanism and tolerance, this research points out some weaknesses in the materials in the spirit to strengthen or sharpen it in the fight against intolerance, radicalism and terrorism.

Recommendations for Policy Makers at University Level

1 Strengthen campus system and administration: the government needs to encourage campus leadership to manage PAI teaching system and administration in a more structured and transparent manner, including in terms of syllabus, materials delivered, as well as the methods that can be used; teaching system and mechanism need not to be uniformed, centralistic or autonomous, but everything must be deliberated and coordinated including in the aspect of lecturer monitoring and evaluation;

2 Support the development of lecturer's religious perspective: the government needs to provide more capacity building program for lecturers so they can increase their capacity and religious perspective to ensure that, for example, moderate Islam materials are not only used as mere slogan or discourse but can become a perspective that facilitate the development of balanced religious and national perspective.

3 Strengthen the mainstreaming of Islamic education textbooks that are in line with applicable curriculum; Islamic education textbooks in universities need not to be uniformed, but its structure, materials, and approaches must refer to the currently applicable curriculum that prioritizes a friendly, inclusive and tolerant religious teaching;

4 Formulate Islamic education curriculum and teaching module that have relevance with academic world and social life of students. Religion will only be relevant if it can solve basic and contemporary problems faced by society, especially students and young generation; materials and discussion topics should be provided using perspective which enables creativity, inclusivity and forward thinking on socio-religious problems faced by society, including students.

Policy Recommendations for Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education

1 Disseminate Textbook for General Course of Islamic Education published by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education so that there is a similarity in the learning material of Islamic Religious Education in Public Universities.

2 Conduct a workshop on the preparation of Islamic Education Semesterly Learning Plan and Programs (RPKPS) for all lecturers of Religious Education in Public Universities.

3 Increase moderate and inclusive materials about religion as well as dialogues with other religions/beliefs in the Islamic education curriculum.

4 Design a model of religious education in higher education as a dialogical process that can be used as the main reference of students in learning religion.

5 Establish competency standards for Islamic Education lecturers at Public Universities.

About PPIM UIN Jakarta

Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM), or Center for the Study of Islam and Society, is an autonomous research institute within the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Currently PPIM is a university-based think-tank institution in Indonesia with vast experience in of religious studies and social issues, and extensive publications and networks both at home and abroad.

About This Research on Islamic Education Textbooks in Indonesian Public Universities

PPIM UIN Jakarta, from October 2018 to March 2019, carried out this research with a dual focus on reviewing the standard textbooks used in Islamic Education (PAI) classes and on exploring the understanding, models, and styles of teaching of PAI conducted by lecturers from 5 (five) public Universities in 5 (five) cities: IPB Bogor, UI Depok, ITB Bandung, UGM Yogyakarta, and UB Malang.

Designed to obtain a complete initial picture of the PAI textbooks, patterns and teaching styles used in those leading public universities, the study undertook two stages: text reviews and qualitative research including interviews with around 20 lecturers in the five cities.



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