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TITLE AND ABSTRACT

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| Title | Evaluation Of Islamic Religious Education Materials In Higher Education: An Overview Of State Universities In North Sumatera |
| Abstract | Islamic religious education (PAI) is very important for students and lecturers because it can form people who are devout and obedient to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala, in carrying out their worship by emphasizing the development of the Muslim personality, namely the development of <i>akhlaqul karimah</i> . This research was conducted with the aim of evaluating the content of Islamic religious education (PAI) material at state universities in North Sumatera. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques involving observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out through reduction stages, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show several main findings: First, validity analysis shows that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatera can be considered good for PAI learning. Second, from the practicality analysis based on student responses, it was found that PAI material had a good level of practicality. Overall, this research highlights the potential to improve the quality of PAI learning materials at state universities in North Sumatera. Recommendations for improvement include updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives. |

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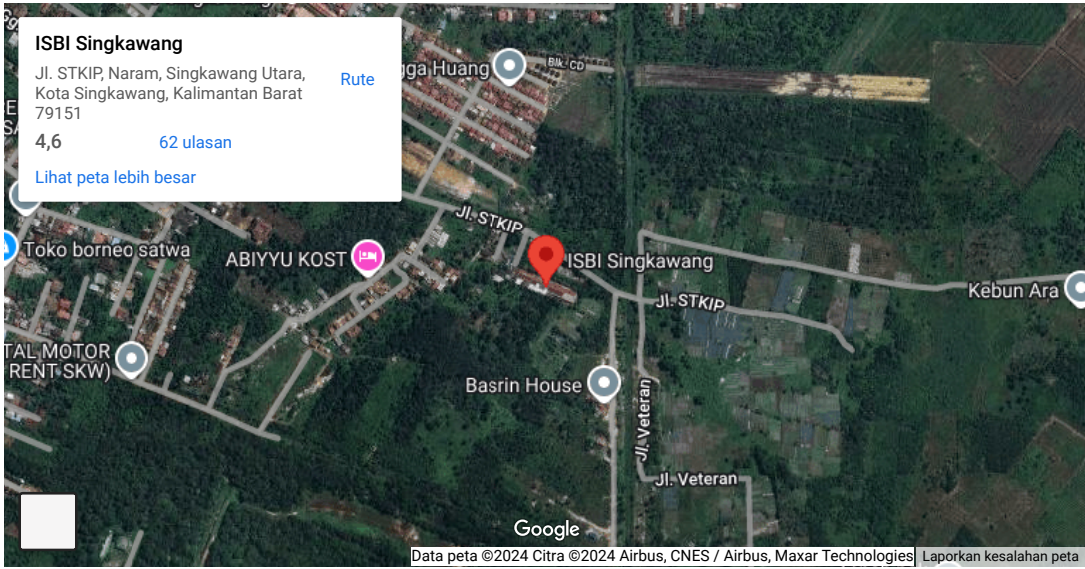
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EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATERIALS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW OF STATE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH SUMATRA

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Abstract. Islamic religious education (PAI) is very important for students and lecturers because it can form people who are devout and obedient to Allah SWT, in carrying out their worship by emphasizing the development of the Muslim personality, namely the development of akhlaqul karimah. This research was conducted with the aim of evaluating the content of Islamic religious education (PAI) material at state universities in North Sumatra. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques involving observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out through reduction stages, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show several main findings: First, validity analysis shows that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be considered good for PAI learning. Second, from the practicality analysis based on student responses, it was found that PAI material had a good level of practicality. Overall, this research highlights the potential to improve the quality of PAI learning materials at state universities in North Sumatra. Recommendations for improvement include updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Evaluation of Learning Materials, North Sumatra State University

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a learning process that aims to shape personality through instilling Islamic values in students at all levels and educational pathways, from primary education to higher education in Indonesia (Biantoro, 2019; Masturin, 2023; Muthoifin & Wachidah, 2017). The existence of PAI has a huge urgency and contribution in achieving national education goals as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (UUSPN). This law emphasizes that the aim of national education is "to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and are

devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens". In this way, achieving the goal of forming a human being who has faith, is devoted to God Almighty, and has noble character can be realized through Islamic education (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Khaidir & Suud, 2020; Risnita & Sari, 2020). PAI is an important foundation for equipping students with a deep understanding of Islamic values, so that they can develop character that is in accordance with the vision of national education mandated by this law (Eva Latipah & Hasan, 2023; Isnawati et al., 2023; Sundari & Nugraha, 2023).

Islamic religious education in higher education has a very important role in shaping students' character and moral

values, as well as providing deep religious insight (Biantoro, 2019; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Taja et al., 2021). Islamic education material generally includes three components, namely the components of faith, morals and worship (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Khaidir & Suud, 2020; Nugroho, 2019). This can be seen from the verses of the Al-Quran, Surah Luqman, verses 13 to 19, namely when Luqman gave teachings to his son. He first reminded his children not to associate partners with Allah, then he taught his children to be kind to their parents, then told his children to worship Allah as a sign of gratitude.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning materials experienced a change in direction from 2000 to 2006 (Misno et al., 2020; Nasikhin & Mahfud Junaedi, 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2022). The improvement of the PAI curriculum in State Universities is adjusted to the Decree of the Directorate General of Higher Education (SK Dikti) Number 263 of 2000 (Hanafi, 2020). In this decree, PAI material consists of 9 topics with several sub-discussions. Even though the material presented is still focused on the three main domains of Islamic teachings, namely faith, sharia, and morals, there are clear indications of repetition of PAI material at primary and secondary levels (Badriah et al., 2023; Biantoro, 2019; Nurmaliyah et al., 2023). In other words, PAI material at the tertiary level can be considered as a maturation of the material that has been studied previously at the high school level and below (Aprilianto, 2023; Suparjo, 2021; Alimni, 2019) (Amin & Alimni, 2019; Aprilianto et al., 2023; Suparjo et al., 2021). The visible differences mainly lie in the aspect of appreciation of the values (hikmah) in Islamic teachings, such as the wisdom of prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj (Hussien et al., 2021; Maimun et al., 2020; Saniati & Othman, 2019). Meanwhile, aspects related to faith still focus on the pillars of faith. Even though Human Rights (HAM) issues have been touched on in the 2000 PAI curriculum material, they have not received in-depth study, but are only considered as a complement to discussions about morals and piety (Abdul Hopid et al., 2023; Abitolkha & Mas'ud, 2021; Dahuri & Wantini, 2023).

The 2000 PAI curriculum was dominated by a doctrinaire theological approach, in contrast to the 2002 PAI curriculum which was more responsive to contemporary issues in the reform era. This change is manifested in the emphasis on links to social issues and a shift in focus from repeating material at high school level downwards. Islamic religious education is currently faced with fundamental changes, especially in preparing students to integrate into a multicultural society (Abidin & Murtadlo, 2020; Nugroho, 2019; Rosyad, 2020). In the Religious Education process, educators need to have a deep understanding of religious development and realize the importance of understanding various cultures, especially in a religious context (Hayati et al., 2020; King, 2003; Suroso et al., 2021). This lack of understanding can result in difficulties in overcoming understanding of radical Islam and potential discomfort among religious communities (Badruzaman & Adiyono, 2023; Larsen, 2021).

Educational institutions, especially in the future, must have the capacity to produce Islamic scholars who have moderate insight, so that they can accommodate various ideologies that tend to be radical (Alam, 2020; Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Maghfuri, 2019). To realize this goal, all elements in the Islamic education system, especially in the context of Islamic religious learning, need to be re-evaluated (Mansir, 2020; Dhaifi, 2022) (Dhaifi, 2012; Mansir, 2020). Various efforts to develop Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material in state universities are currently continuing to be strengthened by referring to the spirit contained in the 2002 curriculum. One initiative is the development of multicultural Islamic Religious Education.

Changes in the paradigm and curriculum for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in higher education in 2002 basically reflect the needs of the Indonesian Muslim community in this era of reform (Hanafi, 2020; Sapdi et al., 2022; Suyadi et al., 2022). This curriculum also allows education to guide students in understanding global discourse from an Islamic perspective. In this way, Islamic Religious Education is expected to develop an Islamic perspective on reality, making Islam a living and dynamic religion in dialogue with all forms of change in the socio-cultural historical context, without losing its identity and originality. If we believe that Islam is the last religion sent by Allah SWT, then Islamic insight is expected to be able to answer the needs of society throughout the ages. Islam cannot be static because reality continues to change. In 2004, the Ministry of Religion through the Department of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia published PAI teaching materials. PAI teaching materials published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in 2004 emphasized that PAI's competency is to guide students to: 1) Master the teachings of the Islamic religion and be able to use them as a source of values and guidelines as well as a basis for thinking and behaving in applying the knowledge and profession they master; and 2) Becoming "intellectual capital" who has faith and devotion to Allah SWT, has noble character and an Islamic personality.

In connection with this, in 2004, the Directorate of Islamic Higher Education published a guidebook for Islamic Religious Education Teaching Materials in State Universities. 2006 PAI material, in accordance with Dikti Decree no. 43 of 2006 concerning Guidelines for Organizing Personality Development Course Groups in Higher Education, explains the basic substance of the study of Religious Education courses. Even though the Religious Education material has changed, the aim is still to form prospective scientists with good religious attitudes and able to apply them in real life. The most significant changes occurred in PAI material from 2000 to PAI material from 2002, 2004 and.

Thus, this research aims to evaluate Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in North Sumatra, identify potential changes that are needed, and detail issues that have not received adequate attention in the PAI curriculum. This evaluation is very important to ensure that PAI in higher education is able to shape student character and morals in accordance with the national education vision,

maintain the sustainability of Islamic values in a global context, and provide a solid foundation for the development of a deep understanding of religion, in accordance with the demands of a multicultural society. and the dynamics of the times.

II. METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. According to Sugiyono (2012) the qualitative method is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument, the data collection technique is triangulation, data analysis is inductive or qualitative, and the results of qualitative research place more emphasis on meaning rather than generalization. This research seeks to provide an assessment of the quality of Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in the North Sumatra region. Research sources in this study used primary data and secondary data. Primary sources were obtained from interviews with informants, FGD activities, observations, and reviews of PAI materials used by lecturers at state universities in North Sumatra. Meanwhile, secondary sources used include book articles or other references deemed relevant. The data collection techniques used in this research used interview, observation, questionnaire and FGD techniques.

This research was conducted at state universities in North Sumatra. Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, where the samples in this study came from state universities in North Sumatra. In each university, informants were taken from two faculties as research sites, which were adjusted to the number of departments at each university. These faculties can include 1 or 2 exact faculties and 1 or 2 social faculties. The selected research informants consisted of 114 informants involving 8 heads of study programs at the universities where the research was conducted, 26 lecturers teaching Islamic Religious Education courses, and 80 students taking part in Islamic Religious Studies. The following are the number of informants for each state university which can be seen in the table below.

TABLE 1.
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

| No. | State University | Number of Informants | | |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Study program leader | Lecturer | Student |
| 1. | A University | 2 | 8 | 20 |
| 2. | B University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| 3. | C University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| 4. | D University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| Amount | | 8 | 26 | 80 |
| Total | | 114 | | |

All informants will be given a questionnaire to provide an assessment of PAI material taught to students at state universities in North Sumatra. The following are the PAI material assessment criteria below.

TABLE 2.
PAI MATERIAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| Score | Description |
|-------------|---------------|
| ≥ 4.00 | Very Feasible |
| 3.00 – 3.99 | Feasible |
| 2.00 – 2.99 | Less Feasible |
| 1.00 – 1.99 | Not Feasible |

The data analysis technique in this research is according to Sugiyono(2012), namely: 1) Reduction, the researcher selects data that has been obtained from in-depth interviews with informants. Apart from that, the researcher also conducted a literature study of PAI materials spread across state universities, and several articles that were relevant to the research; 2) The data presentation stage is carried out by presenting a collection of information that has been selected and published in the form of narrative text; and 3) The stages of drawing conclusions and verification are carried out by re-examining the correctness of data previously obtained from interviews with sources and comparing them through literature studies, whether as statements, opinions or as grand theories. Then conclusions are drawn in the form of a description or description of the quality of Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in the North Sumatra region.

III. RESULT

A. Interview with Informant

Faculty leaders were asked about the content of PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra. Below are the gist of answers from several leaders interviewed.

"Apart from the dense material compared to the small number of credits, students also have a skewed view of PAI courses, students think PAI courses are not mandatory even though they are mandatory. Maybe because the Islamic Religious Education course does not have direct contact with his knowledge. Even though there are majors that are not related to Islam. That's why I don't agree with the terms religious knowledge and general knowledge, namely fardu ain and fardu kifayah because who says agriculture is not mandatory to study? Who says medicine and other sciences are not mandatory to study? Mandatory, but not fardu ain, only fardu kifayah. Actually, this problem depends on the leader, he said. If the leader makes a decision, the community will definitely follow it. For example, at UIN Malang, students who have not passed Islamic Religious Studies may not take other courses. "Here we don't have a policy like that that raises the level of Islamic Religious Education courses, so students take these courses for granted."

Based on the results of interviews, there are several factors that influence students' views on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) courses. Firstly, there is disagreement because the PAI material is dense compared to the small number of credits, creating the perception that this course is heavier than the others. Second, many students view PAI courses as not mandatory, even though they are actually considered mandatory courses. This view may arise due to the lack of direct connection between PAI and the major or science pursued by students. One respondent raised objections to the terms *fardu ain* and *fardu kifayah*, considering that all sciences, including agriculture and medicine, should be considered *fardu kifayah* which must be studied. In addition, the role of leadership is recognized as a key factor in determining students' views of PAI, as can be seen from the policy at UIN Malang which requires students who have not passed PAI not to take other courses. The non-adoption of a similar policy at the interview site results in a lack of appreciation for PAI courses, so that they are considered trivial by students.

Interviews were also conducted with several lecturers who teach PAI courses at universities in North Sumatra. The following are the results of interviews with lecturers that were conducted.

"To be honest, I see that some Islamic Religious Education curricula in several universities may no longer be relevant to current developments. There are several aspects that need to be updated to suit student needs and current societal conditions. First, there is a lack of integration of technology in teaching. I think this can hinder students from accessing wider information and educational resources. Apart from that, limited resources such as textbooks and laboratory facilities are also obstacles in developing higher quality teaching materials. Some Islamic Religious Education programs may not provide enough space for students to actively participate, discuss, or conduct independent research. This can hinder students from developing a deeper understanding. In a multicultural higher education environment, an inclusive approach needs to be considered so that conflict or inequality does not arise in the delivery of material. Islamic Religious Education materials should also include aspects of tolerance and inter-religious dialogue to create an inclusive and harmonious campus environment."

Based on an interview with an Islamic Religious Education lecturer, it appears that some curricula in universities may no longer be relevant to current developments. An aspect that needs updating involves the lack of integration of technology in teaching, which is thought to hinder students' access to information and wider educational resources. Limited resources such as textbooks and laboratory facilities are also obstacles in developing higher quality teaching materials. In addition, some Islamic

Religious Education programs do not provide enough space for students to actively participate, discuss, or conduct independent research, which can hinder the development of a deeper understanding. Lecturers also highlighted the importance of an inclusive approach in a multicultural higher education environment to prevent conflict or inequality in the delivery of material. Islamic Religious Education materials should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, creating an inclusive and harmonious campus environment.

Furthermore, the researchers then asked students regarding PAI material at state universities. The following is a summary of answers from several lecturers interviewed.

"Lecturers who give Islamic Religious Education courses (in the first semester) present material about humans, religion, Islam, political history, and so on. This material is delivered using the lecture method. There is no book, only notes, the book was sought from another place. Apart from that, this mentoring activity is dominated by applied moral aspects, with the main focus on values such as Birrul Walidain. In addition to providing increased understanding of religion, this activity also provides supervision of student worship and morals, considering that this activity is carried out in the faculty prayer room."

Based on the results of the interview, it can be concluded that the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course in the first semester at the University of North Sumatra (USU) was delivered using the lecture method by a lecturer. Interestingly, the lecturer did not use a special textbook, but only relied on notes, while books were sought from other places. Apart from that, there are efforts to increase religious understanding and supervision of student worship and morals through mentoring activities, known as Islamic Mentoring. This activity, which was carried out in the faculty prayer room, was dominated by applied moral aspects with a main focus on values such as Birrul Walidain. Overall, this approach reflects the university's efforts to provide a holistic understanding of religion and maintain moral and ethical values among students, although in its implementation it still relies on lecture methods and notes as the main source of material.

B. Content Analysis of PAI Material in State Universities in North Sumatra

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course at University A has a Teaching and Learning Activity Plan (RKBM) which was distributed by PAI lecturers in 2015. The RKBM covers various main topics and in-depth subtopics, starting from the concept of divinity in Islam, faith and piety, to social and political aspects in Islam. In the RKBM, the general instructional objective or competency of PAI courses at University A is to develop students who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, think philosophically, have a rational and

dynamic mind, have broad insight, and participate in cooperation between people. religion for the development and utilization of science and technology for the sake of humanity and national interests.

The main topics and subtopics of PAI at University A include the concept of divinity, faith and piety, human nature according to Islam, law, human rights, democracy, corruption, ethics, morals, morals, science and technology in Islam, harmony between religions, society civil, Islamic economics, Islamic cultural history, and Islamic political system. All of these topics are developed with in-depth subtopics, such as the importance of believing in Allah, understanding faith, human nature according to Islam, law in Islam, and many more.

Apart from that, there is an emphasis on the relevance of PAI material to the scientific fields that students are involved in, such as at the Faculty of Medicine, University A. The Islamic religious material taught at the faculty is related to the medical sciences that students study, such as the use of contraception, menstruation, artificial insemination, abortion, and so on. However, there are several obstacles in implementing PAI lectures at University A. One of them is the large amount of material compared to the number of credits which is only one. This causes lectures to become busy, and students are less active in asking questions because of limited time. Some students also have a skewed view of PAI courses, considering them not mandatory even though they should be mandatory. Similar obstacles were also found in the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, where students underestimated PAI courses and were less enthusiastic about attending lectures. This idea was also acknowledged by several lecturers and faculty leaders, who stated that understanding of the obligation to study religious knowledge still needed to be improved among students.

At University B, the objectives of the PAI course include hard skills and soft skills in the Competency Standards. Hard skills include an understanding of faith, Islamic law, morals, and so on, while soft skills include attitudes of faith, Muslims, ihsan, sincerity, morals towards humans and the environment. However, there is a discrepancy between the credits listed in the RPS and the actual lecture time.

At University C, Competency Standards for PAI courses include understanding the basic principles of Islamic teachings and their application in everyday life. Material at University C is developed with topics and subtopics that include the history of human thought about God, human concepts in Islam, Islamic law, Islamic ethics, science and technology in Islam, civil society, Islamic culture, and the Islamic political system.

Meanwhile, at University D, there is a discrepancy between the number of credits listed in the RPS and the actual lecture time. In some classes, students are less enthusiastic about participating in the learning process because they do not yet understand the purpose and benefits of PAI. Lecturers at University D emphasize the need to increase student motivation and understanding of PAI subjects so that they can be implemented better in everyday life.

In general, PAI courses at various universities in North Sumatra have similar goals, namely developing students who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, think philosophically, have a rational and dynamic mind, have broad insight, and participate in cooperation. between religious communities. However, there are several obstacles in implementing lectures, such as a large amount of material, lack of student enthusiasm, and a mismatch between credits and lecture time. Efforts to improve and increase students' understanding of PAI courses need to continue so that learning objectives can be achieved well.

C. Analysis of Islamic Education Material Assessment in Higher Education in North Sumatra

Analysis of the PAI material assessment was carried out through distributing questionnaires. The questionnaire was prepared according to the needs of the research objectives. Respondents consisted of 114 respondents who came from state universities in North Sumatra. The results of the questionnaire analysis are presented in the following description.

1) Analysis of the Validity of PAI Material in Higher Education in North Sumatra

The validity of PAI material content in universities in North Sumatra was carried out by 8 study program leaders and 26 lecturers who taught PAI courses to assess it in terms of material, language and learning resources. A team of experts is involved to provide assessments and input on PAI materials used by students. The results of material validation are presented in the following table.

TABLE 3.
PAI MATERIAL VALIDITY RESULTS

| Aspect | Score | Information |
|--------------------|-------|-------------|
| Learning Resources | 3.50 | Good |
| Material | 3.49 | Good |
| Language | 3.78 | Good |
| Average | 3.59 | Good |

Based on the table above, it is known that all aspects of the assessment have a score in the good category. The average score shows the good category with the number 3.59. So based on the results above it can be concluded that PAI material in State Universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning. However, there are several notes given by study program leaders and lecturers which can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 4.
SUGGESTIONS FOR PAI MATERIAL

| No. | Suggestion |
|-----|---|
| 1. | There are updates in certain aspects to suit student needs and current societal conditions |
| 2. | Islamic Religious Education materials should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, creating an inclusive and harmonious campus environment. So that the |

content of the material is reflected in PAI teaching materials.

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that there is an update in the education curriculum, especially in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Material. These reforms should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, in order to create an inclusive and harmonious campus environment. This is important so that students can understand and appreciate differences in beliefs and be able to communicate effectively with people who have different religious views. Thus, this update will not only support students' intellectual development but also create an atmosphere that supports harmony and diversity in the campus environment.

2) Analysis of the Practicality of Material for Students in Higher Education in North Sumatra

Analysis of the practicality of the material was carried out on 80 students spread across several state universities in North Sumatra. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 5.
 PAI MATERIAL VALIDITY RESULTS BY STUDENT

| Aspect | Score | Information |
|--------------|-------|-------------|
| Content | 3.50 | Good |
| Practicality | 3.45 | Good |
| Language | 3.67 | Good |
| Design | 3.30 | Good |
| Average | 3.48 | Good |

Based on the table above, it is known that all aspects of the assessment have a score in the good category. The average score shows the good category with the number 3.48. So based on the results above it can be concluded that PAI material in State Universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning. However, there are several notes given by students which can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 6.
 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PAI MATERIAL BY STUDENTS

| No. | Suggestion |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Don't include too much material, just provide a summary so it's easy to understand |
| 2. | The design is too stiff, making it less interesting to read. It should be designed attractively so that it creates interest in reading |
| 3. | The material is too standard and less relevant to everyday life. It is best to provide examples of the material included with current phenomena so that it is easy to understand. |

Based on this table, it can be seen that regarding the preparation of material, it is recommended that there is not too much material contained. It's better to provide easy-to-understand summaries so students can quickly grasp the gist of each lesson. The second suggestion is related to the material design, which is considered too rigid. It is recommended to design it attractively so that it can arouse

interest in reading. An attractive design can increase the attractiveness of learning and help students become more involved in understanding the material. The third suggestion highlights the material's lack of relevance to everyday life. It is best if the material presented is equipped with examples related to current phenomena so that it can be more easily understood by students and increase its applicability in their daily lives. By implementing these suggestions, it is hoped that the student learning experience can be more optimal.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of interviews and analysis, there are several factors that influence students' views on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) courses at state universities in North Sumatra. Some of these factors include disapproval due to the density of PAI material compared to the small number of credits, students' views that PAI is not mandatory even though it is actually considered mandatory, and the lack of direct connection between PAI and the major or science pursued by students. In analyzing the content of PAI material, it can be seen that there are university efforts to develop a holistic understanding of religion and maintain moral and ethical values among students. However, several obstacles were found, such as the large amount of material compared to the limited number of credits, lack of student enthusiasm, and a mismatch between credits and lecture time. PAI material assessment analysis involves the validity and practicality of the material. In general, the validity results show that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning in the good category. However, there are suggestions for reforms in the PAI curriculum, especially including aspects of tolerance and interreligious dialogue. Furthermore, analysis of the practicality of the material based on student responses shows that PAI material has good practicality. However, there are suggestions for organizing material with summaries so that it is easy to understand, designing material attractively, and adding examples that are relevant to everyday life. Overall, there is potential to improve the quality of PAI learning at state universities in North Sumatra by updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives.

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#5259 REVIEW


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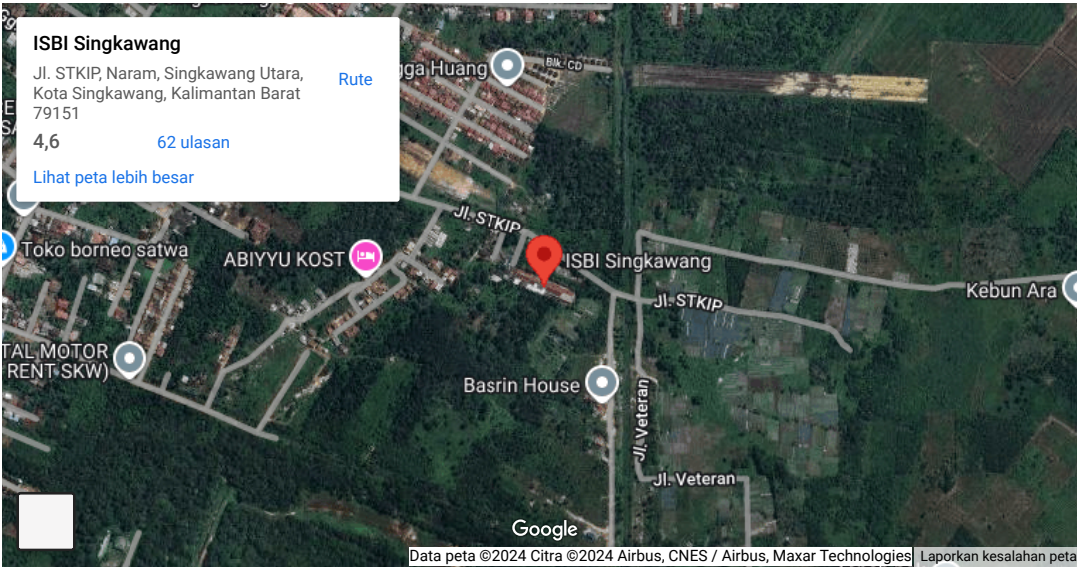
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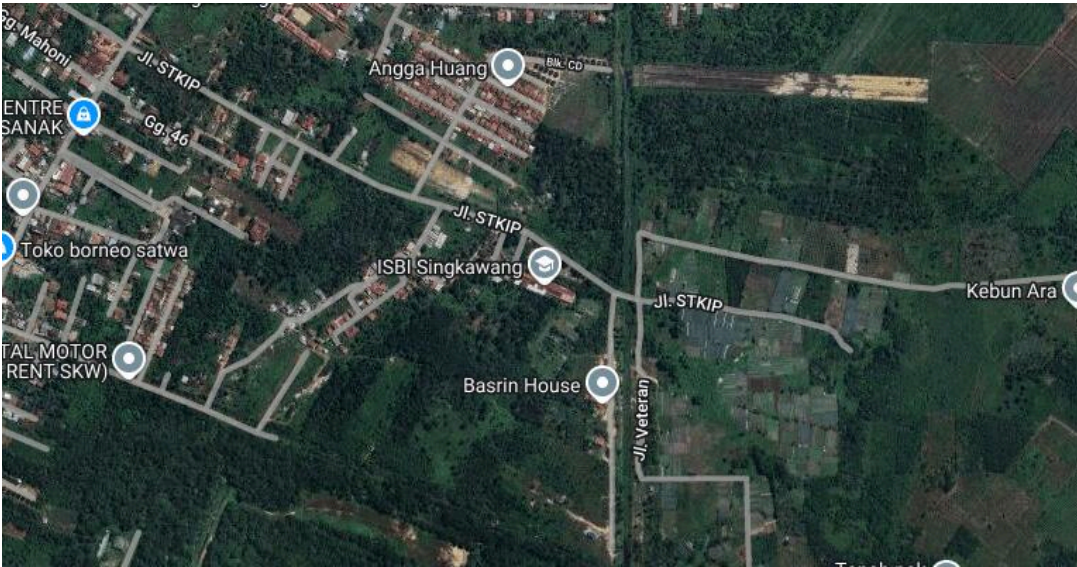
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EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATERIALS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW OF STATE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH SUMATRA

Yusnaili Budianti, Salami Mahmud, Nur Rois, Jafalzan Md Jali

ABSTRACT

Islamic religious education (PAI) is very important for students and lecturers because it can form people who are devout and obedient to *Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, in carrying out their worship by emphasizing the development of the Muslim personality, namely the development of *akhlaqul karimah*. This research was conducted with the aim of evaluating the content of Islamic religious education (PAI) material at state universities in North Sumatra. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques involving observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out through reduction stages, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show several main findings: First, validity analysis shows that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be considered good for PAI learning. Second, from the practicality analysis based on student responses, it was found that PAI material had a good level of practicality. Overall, this research highlights the potential to improve the quality of PAI learning materials at state universities in North Sumatra. Recommendations for improvement include updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives.

KEYWORDS

Islamic Religious Education; Evaluation of Learning Materials; North Sumatra State University

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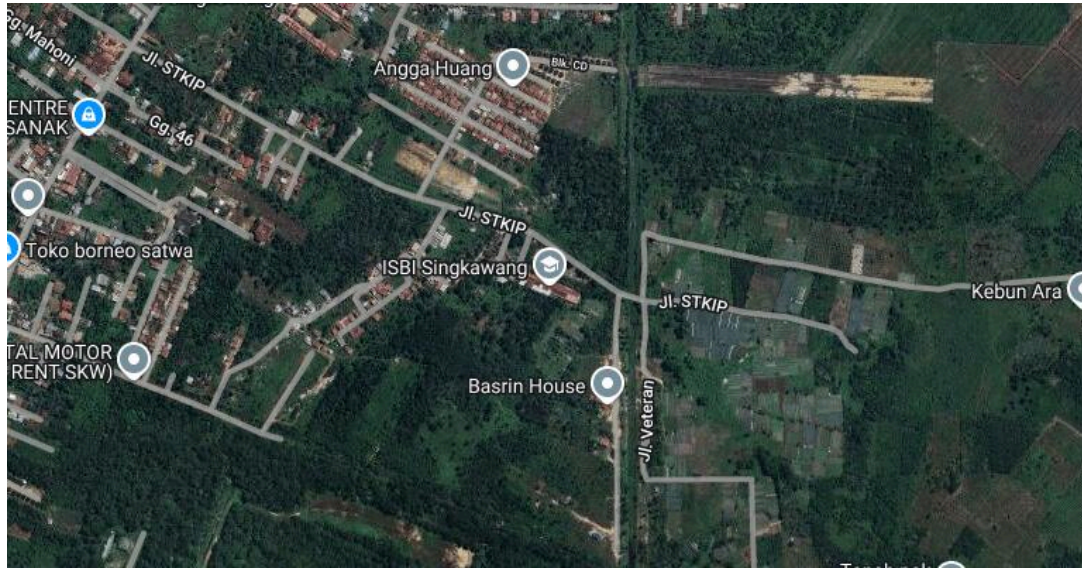
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EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATERIALS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW OF STATE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH SUMATRA

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Abstract. Islamic religious education (PAI) is very important for students and lecturers because it can form people who are devout and obedient to *Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*, in carrying out their worship by emphasizing the development of the Muslim personality, namely the development of *akhlaqul karimah*. This research was conducted with the aim of evaluating the content of Islamic religious education (PAI) material at state universities in North Sumatra. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques involving observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out through reduction stages, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show several main findings: First, validity analysis shows that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be considered good for PAI learning. Second, from the practicality analysis based on student responses, it was found that PAI material had a good level of practicality. Overall, this research highlights the potential to improve the quality of PAI learning materials at state universities in North Sumatra. Recommendations for improvement include updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education; Evaluation of Learning Materials; North Sumatra State University

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a learning process that aims to shape personality through instilling Islamic values in students at all levels and educational pathways, from primary education to higher education in Indonesia (Biantoro, 2019; Masturin, 2023; Muthoifin & Wachidah, 2017). The existence of PAI has a huge urgency and contribution in achieving national education goals as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (UUSPN). This law emphasizes that the aim of national education is "to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens". In this way, achieving the goal of forming a human being who has faith, is devoted to God Almighty, and has noble character can be realized through Islamic education (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Khaidir

& Suud, 2020; Risnita & Sari, 2020). PAI is an important foundation for equipping students with a deep understanding of Islamic values, so that they can develop character that is in accordance with the vision of national education mandated by this law (Eva Latipah & Hasan, 2023; Isnawati et al., 2023; Sundari & Nugraha, 2023).

Islamic religious education in higher education has a very important role in shaping students' character and moral values, as well as providing deep religious insight (Biantoro, 2019; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Taja et al., 2021). Islamic education material generally includes three components, namely the components of faith, morals and worship (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Khaidir & Suud, 2020; Nugroho, 2019). This can be seen from the verses of the Al-Quran, Surah Luqman, verses 13 to 19, namely when Luqman gave teachings to his son. He first reminded his children not to associate partners with Allah, then he taught his children to be kind to their parents, then told his children to worship Allah as a sign of gratitude.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning materials experienced a change in direction from 2000 to 2006 (Misno et al., 2020; Nasikhin & Mahfud Junaedi, 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2022). The improvement of the PAI curriculum in State Universities is adjusted to the Decree of the Directorate General of Higher Education (SK Dikti) Number 263 of 2000 (Hanafi, 2020). In this decree, PAI material consists of 9 topics with several sub-discussions. Even though the material presented is still focused on the three main domains of Islamic teachings, namely faith, sharia, and morals, there are clear indications of repetition of PAI material at primary and secondary levels (Badriah et al., 2023; Biantoro, 2019; Nurmaliyah et al., 2023). In other words, PAI material at the tertiary level can be considered as a maturation of the material that has been studied previously at the high school level and below (Aprilianto, 2023; Suparjo, 2021; Alimni, 2019) (Amin & Alimni, 2019; Aprilianto et al., 2023; Suparjo et al., 2021). The visible differences mainly lie in the aspect of appreciation of the values (hikmah) in Islamic teachings, such as the wisdom of prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj (Hussien et al., 2021; Maimun et al., 2020; Saniati & Othman, 2019). Meanwhile, aspects related to faith still focus on the pillars of faith. Even though Human Rights (HAM) issues have been touched on in the 2000 PAI curriculum material, they have not received in-depth study, but are only considered as a complement to discussions about morals and piety (Abdul Hopid et al., 2023; Abitolkha & Mas'ud, 2021; Dahuri & Wantini, 2023).

The 2000 PAI curriculum was dominated by a doctrinaire theological approach, in contrast to the 2002 PAI curriculum which was more responsive to contemporary issues in the reform era. This change is manifested in the emphasis on links to social issues and a shift in focus from repeating material at high school level downwards. Islamic religious education is currently faced with fundamental changes, especially in preparing students to integrate into a multicultural society (Abidin & Murtadlo, 2020; Nugroho, 2019; Rosyad, 2020). In the Religious Education process, educators need to have a deep understanding of religious development and realize the importance of understanding various cultures, especially in a religious context (Hayati et al., 2020; King, 2003; Suroso et al., 2021). This lack of understanding can result in difficulties in overcoming understanding of radical Islam and potential discomfort among religious communities (Badruzaman & Adiyono, 2023; Larsen, 2021).

Educational institutions, especially in the future, must have the capacity to produce Islamic scholars who have moderate insight, so that they can accommodate various ideologies that tend to be radical (Alam, 2020; Hasanah & Abbas, 2023; Maghfuri, 2019). To realize this goal, all elements in the Islamic education system, especially in the context of Islamic religious learning, need to be re-evaluated (Mansir, 2020; Dhaifi, 2022) (Dhaifi, 2012; Mansir, 2020). Various efforts to develop Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material in state universities are currently continuing to be strengthened by referring to the spirit contained in the 2002

curriculum. One initiative is the development of multicultural Islamic Religious Education.

Changes in the paradigm and curriculum for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in higher education in 2002 basically reflect the needs of the Indonesian Muslim community in this era of reform (Hanafi, 2020; Sapdi et al., 2022; Suyadi et al., 2022). This curriculum also allows education to guide students in understanding global discourse from an Islamic perspective. In this way, Islamic Religious Education is expected to develop an Islamic perspective on reality, making Islam a living and dynamic religion in dialogue with all forms of change in the socio-cultural historical context, without losing its identity and originality. If we believe that Islam is the last religion sent by Allah SWT, then Islamic insight is expected to be able to answer the needs of society throughout the ages. Islam cannot be static because reality continues to change. In 2004, the Ministry of Religion through the Department of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia published PAI teaching materials. PAI teaching materials published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in 2004 emphasized that PAI's competency is to guide students to: 1) Master the teachings of the Islamic religion and be able to use them as a source of values and guidelines as well as a basis for thinking and behaving in applying the knowledge and profession they master; and 2) Becoming "intellectual capital" who has faith and devotion to Allah SWT, has noble character and an Islamic personality.

In connection with this, in 2004, the Directorate of Islamic Higher Education published a guidebook for Islamic Religious Education Teaching Materials in State Universities. 2006 PAI material, in accordance with *DIKTI* Decree no. 43 of 2006 concerning Guidelines for Organizing Personality Development Course Groups in Higher Education, explains the basic substance of the study of Religious Education courses. Even though the Religious Education material has changed, the aim is still to form prospective scientists with good religious attitudes and able to apply them in real life. The most significant changes occurred in PAI material from 2000 to PAI material from 2002, and 2004.

Evaluation of PAI material in higher education is important due to various factors, ranging from the continuity of religious traditions to teaching national education standards. Basically, this evaluation aims to ensure that PAI material taught in universities reaches the expected standards in providing a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, relevance to current developments, and providing a positive impact on students in their lives (Nasir, 2021; Sahin, 2018; Tambak et al., 2021). The specific objectives of evaluating PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be divided into several aspects. First, is to coordinate PAI material with the national curriculum and Islamic religious education standards set by the Ministry of Religion. This includes an examination of the material content, teaching methods, and learning objectives set out in the curriculum. Apart from that, the evaluation also aims to measure the relevance of PAI material to student needs and current developments. This is important so that PAI material can

provide understanding that is not only theoretical, but also practical and relevant in students' daily lives, and able to respond to challenges and changes in contemporary society (Isnawati et al., 2023; Meliani et al., 2022; Mufidah, 2022). Another aspect assessed in the evaluation of PAI materials is the quality of teaching and learning effectiveness. This includes assessing the competency and qualifications of lecturers who teach, the teaching methods used, as well as the facilities and resources available to support PAI learning.

The criteria for determining PAI material quality can include several things. First, validity analysis includes evaluation of learning resources, materials and language used in Islamic Religious Education materials in Higher Education. The validity of learning resources includes the accuracy of the information, the validity of the material considering aspects of Islamic diversity, and the validity of the language refers to the clarity and accuracy of the language. Furthermore, the analysis of the practicality of the material for students includes evaluating content for relevance to current developments, the ability of material related to Islam to contemporary issues, teaching methods that stimulate student interest, clarity of language, and material design that facilitates understanding.

Thus, this research aims to evaluate Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in North Sumatra, identify potential changes that are needed, and detail issues that have not received adequate attention in the PAI curriculum. This evaluation is very important to ensure that PAI in higher education is able to shape student character and morals in accordance with the national education vision, maintain the sustainability of Islamic values in a global context, and provide a solid foundation for the development of a deep understanding of religion, in accordance with the demands of a multicultural society. and the dynamics of the times.

II. METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. According to Sugiyono (2012) the qualitative method is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument, the data collection technique is triangulation, data analysis is inductive or qualitative, and the results of qualitative research place more emphasis on meaning rather than generalization. This research seeks to provide an assessment of the quality of Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in the North Sumatra region. Research sources in this study used primary data and secondary data. Primary sources were obtained from interviews with informants, FGD activities, observations, and reviews of PAI materials used by lecturers at state universities in North Sumatra. Meanwhile, secondary sources used include book articles or other references deemed relevant. The data collection techniques used in this research used interview, observation, questionnaire and FGD techniques.

Observation allows researchers to directly observe the learning process of PAI material in class, including how the

material is delivered by the lecturer, interactions between lecturers and students, as well as student responses to the material being taught. In addition, the FGD opens an open discussion space for lecturers, students and other related parties to share views, experiences and opinions about the PAI material being taught, which can provide deeper insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the material. The interview method allows researchers to obtain in-depth information from related parties such as lecturers, study program coordinators, or students, regarding aspects of PAI material such as suitability to the curriculum, relevance to student needs, or obstacles in the learning process. Meanwhile, questionnaires allow for broader and systematic data collection from a number of representative respondents, both lecturers and students, regarding various aspects of PAI material such as relevance, diversity of material, or student satisfaction with the learning process.

This research was conducted at state universities in North Sumatra. Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, where the samples in this study came from state universities in North Sumatra. In each university, informants were taken from two faculties as research sites, which were adjusted to the number of departments at each university. These faculties can include 1 or 2 exact faculties and 1 or 2 social faculties. The selected research informants consisted of 114 informants involving 8 heads of study programs at the universities where the research was conducted, 26 lecturers teaching Islamic Religious Education courses, and 80 students taking part in Islamic Religious Studies. The following are the number of informants for each state university which can be seen in the table below.

TABLE 1.
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

| No. | State University | Number of Informants | | |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Study program leader | Lecturer | Student |
| 1. | A University | 2 | 8 | 20 |
| 2. | B University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| 3. | C University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| 4. | D University | 2 | 6 | 20 |
| Amount | | 8 | 26 | 80 |
| Total | | 114 | | |

All informants will be given a questionnaire to provide an assessment of PAI material taught to students at state universities in North Sumatra. The following are the PAI material assessment criteria below.

TABLE 2.
PAI MATERIAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| Score | Description |
|-------------|---------------|
| ≥ 4.00 | Very Feasible |
| 3.00 – 3.99 | Feasible |
| 2.00 – 2.99 | Less Feasible |
| 1.00 – 1.99 | Not Feasible |

The data analysis technique in this research is according to Sugiyono(2012), namely: 1) Reduction, the researcher selects data that has been obtained from in-depth interviews with informants. Apart from that, the researcher also conducted a literature study of PAI materials spread across state universities, and several articles that were relevant to the research; 2) The data presentation stage is carried out by presenting a collection of information that has been selected and published in the form of narrative text; and 3) The stages of drawing conclusions and verification are carried out by re-examining the correctness of data previously obtained from interviews with sources and comparing them through literature studies, whether as statements, opinions or as grand theories. Then conclusions are drawn in the form of a description or description of the quality of Islamic Religious Education Material in State Universities in the North Sumatra region.

III. RESULT

A. Interview with Informant

Faculty leaders were asked about the content of PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra. Below are the gist of answers from several leaders interviewed.

"Apart from the dense material compared to the small number of credits, students also have a skewed view of PAI courses, students think PAI courses are not mandatory even though they are mandatory. Maybe because the Islamic Religious Education course does not have direct contact with his knowledge. Even though there are majors that are not related to Islam. That's why I don't agree with the terms religious knowledge and general knowledge, namely fardu ain and fardu kifayah because who says agriculture is not mandatory to study? Who says medicine and other sciences are not mandatory to study? Mandatory, but not fardu ain, only fardu kifayah. Actually, this problem depends on the leader, he said. If the leader makes a decision, the community will definitely follow it. For example, at UIN Malang, students who have not passed Islamic Religious Studies may not take other courses. "Here we don't have a policy like that that raises the level of Islamic Religious Education courses, so students take these courses for granted."

Based on the results of interviews, there are several factors that influence students' views on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) courses. Firstly, there is disagreement because the PAI material is dense compared to the small number of credits, creating the perception that this course is heavier than the others. Second, many students view PAI courses as not mandatory, even though they are actually considered mandatory courses. This view may arise due to the lack of direct connection between PAI and the major or science pursued by students. One respondent raised objections to the terms fardu ain and fardu kifayah,

considering that all sciences, including agriculture and medicine, should be considered fardu kifayah which must be studied. In addition, the role of leadership is recognized as a key factor in determining students' views of PAI, as can be seen from the policy at UIN Malang which requires students who have not passed PAI not to take other courses. The non-adoption of a similar policy at the interview site results in a lack of appreciation for PAI courses, so that they are considered trivial by students.

Interviews were also conducted with several lecturers who teach PAI courses at universities in North Sumatra. The following are the results of interviews with lecturers that were conducted.

"To be honest, I see that some Islamic Religious Education curricula in several universities may no longer be relevant to current developments. There are several aspects that need to be updated to suit student needs and current societal conditions. First, there is a lack of integration of technology in teaching. I think this can hinder students from accessing wider information and educational resources. Apart from that, limited resources such as textbooks and laboratory facilities are also obstacles in developing higher quality teaching materials. Some Islamic Religious Education programs may not provide enough space for students to actively participate, discuss, or conduct independent research. This can hinder students from developing a deeper understanding. In a multicultural higher education environment, an inclusive approach needs to be considered so that conflict or inequality does not arise in the delivery of material. "Islamic Religious Education materials should also include aspects of tolerance and inter-religious dialogue to create an inclusive and harmonious campus environment."

Based on an interview with an Islamic Religious Education lecturer, it appears that some curricula in universities may no longer be relevant to current developments. An aspect that needs updating involves the lack of integration of technology in teaching, which is thought to hinder students' access to information and wider educational resources. Limited resources such as textbooks and laboratory facilities are also obstacles in developing higher quality teaching materials. In addition, some Islamic Religious Education programs do not provide enough space for students to actively participate, discuss, or conduct independent research, which can hinder the development of a deeper understanding. Lecturers also highlighted the importance of an inclusive approach in a multicultural higher education environment to prevent conflict or inequality in the delivery of material. Islamic Religious Education materials should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, creating an inclusive and harmonious campus environment.

Furthermore, the researchers then asked students regarding PAI material at state universities. The following is a summary of answers from several lecturers interviewed.

"Lecturers who give Islamic Religious Education courses (in the first semester) present material about humans, religion, Islam, political history, and so on. This material is delivered using the lecture method. There is no book, only notes, the book was sought from another place. Apart from that, this mentoring activity is dominated by applied moral aspects, with the main focus on values such as Birrul Walidain. "In addition to providing increased understanding of religion, this activity also provides supervision of student worship and morals, considering that this activity is carried out in the faculty prayer room."

Based on the results of the interview, it can be concluded that the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course in the first semester at the University of North Sumatra (USU) was delivered using the lecture method by a lecturer. Interestingly, the lecturer did not use a special textbook, but only relied on notes, while books were sought from other places. Apart from that, there are efforts to increase religious understanding and supervision of student worship and morals through mentoring activities, known as Islamic Mentoring. This activity, which was carried out in the faculty prayer room, was dominated by applied moral aspects with a main focus on values such as Birrul Walidain. Overall, this approach reflects the university's efforts to provide a holistic understanding of religion and maintain moral and ethical values among students, although in its implementation it still relies on lecture methods and notes as the main source of material.

B. Content Analysis of PAI Material in State Universities in North Sumatra

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course at University A has a Teaching and Learning Activity Plan (RKBM) which was distributed by PAI lecturers in 2015. The RKBM covers various main topics and in-depth subtopics, starting from the concept of divinity in Islam, faith and piety, to social and political aspects in Islam. In the RKBM, the general instructional objective or competency of PAI courses at University A is to develop students who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, think philosophically, have a rational and dynamic mind, have broad insight, and participate in cooperation between people. religion for the development and utilization of science and technology for the sake of humanity and national interests.

The main topics and subtopics of PAI at University A include the concept of divinity, faith and piety, human nature according to Islam, law, human rights, democracy, corruption, ethics, morals, science and technology in Islam, harmony between religions, society civil, Islamic economics, Islamic cultural history, and Islamic political

system. All of these topics are developed with in-depth subtopics, such as the importance of believing in Allah, understanding faith, human nature according to Islam, law in Islam, and many more.

Apart from that, there is an emphasis on the relevance of PAI material to the scientific fields that students are involved in, such as at the Faculty of Medicine, University A. The Islamic religious material taught at the faculty is related to the medical sciences that students study, such as the use of contraception, menstruation, artificial insemination, abortion, and so on. However, there are several obstacles in implementing PAI lectures at University A. One of them is the large amount of material compared to the number of credits which is only one. This causes lectures to become busy, and students are less active in asking questions because of limited time. Some students also have a skewed view of PAI courses, considering them not mandatory even though they should be mandatory. Similar obstacles were also found in the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, where students underestimated PAI courses and were less enthusiastic about attending lectures. This idea was also acknowledged by several lecturers and faculty leaders, who stated that understanding of the obligation to study religious knowledge still needed to be improved among students.

At University B, the objectives of the PAI course include hard skills and soft skills in the Competency Standards. Hard skills include an understanding of faith, Islamic law, morals, and so on, while soft skills include attitudes of faith, Muslims, ihsan, sincerity, morals towards humans and the environment. However, there is a discrepancy between the credits listed in the RPS and the actual lecture time.

At University C, Competency Standards for PAI courses include understanding the basic principles of Islamic teachings and their application in everyday life. Material at University C is developed with topics and subtopics that include the history of human thought about God, human concepts in Islam, Islamic law, Islamic ethics, science and technology in Islam, civil society, Islamic culture, and the Islamic political system.

Meanwhile, at University D, there is a discrepancy between the number of credits listed in the RPS and the actual lecture time. In some classes, students are less enthusiastic about participating in the learning process because they do not yet understand the purpose and benefits of PAI. Lecturers at University D emphasize the need to increase student motivation and understanding of PAI subjects so that they can be implemented better in everyday life.

In general, PAI courses at various universities in North Sumatra have similar goals, namely developing students who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, think philosophically, have a rational and dynamic mind, have broad insight, and participate in cooperation between religious communities. However, there are several obstacles in implementing lectures, such as a large amount of material, lack of student enthusiasm, and a mismatch between credits and lecture time. Efforts to improve and

increase students' understanding of PAI courses need to continue so that learning objectives can be achieved well.

C. Analysis of Islamic Education Material Assessment in Higher Education in North Sumatra

The PAI material assessment analysis was carried out with the aim of providing an assessment related to the PAI material used in universities in North Sumatra. Assessment analysis is carried out through distributing questionnaires. The questionnaire was prepared according to the needs of the research objectives. Respondents consisted of 114 respondents who came from state universities in North Sumatra. The assessment analysis consists of validity and practicality analysis. The results of the questionnaire analysis are presented in the following description.

1) Analysis of the Validity of PAI Material in Higher Education in North Sumatra

The validity of PAI material content in universities in North Sumatra was carried out by 8 study program leaders and 26 lecturers who taught PAI courses to assess it in terms of material, language and learning resources. A team of experts is involved to provide assessments and input on PAI materials used by students. In analyzing the validity of Islamic Religious Education material in Higher Education, there are several criteria or standards used to evaluate the applicability of the material. First, the validity of learning sources refers to the accuracy of the information presented in PAI materials, by checking whether the sources are trustworthy and in accordance with correct Islamic teachings. Then, the validity of the material considers the diversity of aspects of Islam presented in the material, including taking into account the various perspectives and interpretations that may exist in the Islamic religion. Finally, language validity emphasizes the clarity and accuracy of language use in delivering PAI material, so that it can be understood well by students without ambiguity. The results of material validation are presented in the following table.

TABLE 3.
 PAI MATERIAL VALIDITY RESULTS

| Aspect | Score | Information |
|--------------------|-------|-------------|
| Learning Resources | 3.50 | Good |
| Material | 3.49 | Good |
| Language | 3.78 | Good |
| Average | 3.59 | Good |

Based on the table above, it is known that all aspects of the assessment have a score in the good category. The average score shows the good category with the number 3.59. So based on the results above it can be concluded that PAI material in State Universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning. However, there are several notes given by study program leaders and lecturers which can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 4.
 SUGGESTIONS FOR PAI MATERIAL

| No. | Suggestion |
|-----|---|
| 1. | There are updates in certain aspects to suit student needs and current societal conditions |
| 2. | Islamic Religious Education materials should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, creating an inclusive and harmonious campus environment. So that the content of the material is reflected in PAI teaching materials. |

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that there is an update in the education curriculum, especially in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Material. These reforms should include aspects of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, in order to create an inclusive and harmonious campus environment. This is important so that students can understand and appreciate differences in beliefs and be able to communicate effectively with people who have different religious views. Thus, this update will not only support students' intellectual development but also create an atmosphere that supports harmony and diversity in the campus environment.

2) Analysis of the Practicality of Material for Students in Higher Education in North Sumatra

Analysis of the practicality of the material was carried out on 80 students spread across several state universities in North Sumatra. Analysis of the practicality of Islamic Religious Education material in higher education can be carried out based on student responses to certain aspects. The practicality of the material includes an evaluation of the teaching methods used, whether they are able to stimulate student interest and involvement in learning. For example, students can provide feedback that the use of conventional lecture methods is less interesting and does not stimulate their interest in learning. In addition, the language aspect of material practicality involves assessing the clarity and ease of understanding of the language used in PAI material. For example, students may criticize that the language used is too rigid and difficult to understand, thus hindering their understanding of the material. Finally, the material design is evaluated to ensure the layout, visualization, and format facilitate understanding and learning for students. For example, students may state that the material design is too rigid and uninteresting, thereby affecting their interest and motivation to learn. By receiving direct feedback from students regarding these aspects, teachers can make necessary improvements to increase the practicality of PAI material and the effectiveness of learning. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 5.
 PAI MATERIAL VALIDITY RESULTS BY STUDENT

| Aspect | Score | Information |
|--------------|-------|-------------|
| Content | 3.50 | Good |
| Practicality | 3.45 | Good |
| Language | 3.67 | Good |
| Design | 3.30 | Good |
| Average | 3.48 | Good |

Based on the table above, it is known that all aspects of the assessment have a score in the good category. The average score shows the good category with the number 3.48. So based on the results above it can be concluded that PAI material in State Universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning. However, there are several notes given by students which can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 6.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PAI MATERIAL BY STUDENTS

| No. | Suggestion |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Don't include too much material, just provide a summary so it's easy to understand |
| 2. | The design is too stiff, making it less interesting to read. It should be designed attractively so that it creates interest in reading |
| 3. | The material is too standard and less relevant to everyday life. It is best to provide examples of the material included with current phenomena so that it is easy to understand. |

Based on this tabel, it can be seen that regarding the preparation of material, it is recommended that there is not too much material contained. It's better to provide easy-to-understand summaries so students can quickly grasp the gist of each lesson. The second suggestion is related to the material design, which is considered too rigid. It is recommended to design it attractively so that it can arouse interest in reading. An attractive design can increase the attractiveness of learning and help students become more involved in understanding the material. The third suggestion highlights the material's lack of relevance to everyday life. It is best if the material presented is equipped with examples related to current phenomena so that it can be more easily understood by students and increase its applicability in their daily lives. By implementing these suggestions, it is hoped that the student learning experience can be more optimal.

IV. DISCUSSION

The research results show several important findings that can become the basis for further improvement and development. First, it was found that the PAI curriculum at various universities has the same goal, namely developing students who are faithful, devout, have noble character, think philosophically and have a broad outlook, as well as contributing to cooperation between religious communities. However, there are several obstacles in implementing lectures, including a large amount of material, lack of student enthusiasm, and a mismatch between the number of credits and lecture time.

To overcome these obstacles, practical steps can be implemented. First, updating the curriculum can be done by updating the material content so that it is relevant to current developments and student needs. For example, including material about tolerance and interfaith dialogue to create an inclusive and harmonious campus environment. Second, adjustments to the amount of material need to be made by reducing the burden of too much material so that students

can focus and understand each topic in more depth. Third, increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material can be achieved by using innovative teaching methods, including examples that are current and relevant to everyday life, and designing material that is interesting and makes it easier to understand.

Apart from that, the results of the PAI material assessment analysis show that the validity and practicality of the material in universities in North Sumatra is generally considered good. However, there are several suggestions that need to be considered, such as reducing the amount of material, increasing the attractiveness of the material design, and adding examples that are relevant to everyday life. This is important to increase student interest and involvement in PAI learning.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of interviews and analysis, there are several factors that influence students' views on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) courses at state universities in North Sumatra. Some of these factors include disapproval due to the density of PAI material compared to the small number of credits, students' views that PAI is not mandatory even though it is actually considered mandatory, and the lack of direct connection between PAI and the major or science pursued by students. In analyzing the content of PAI material, it can be seen that there are university efforts to develop a holistic understanding of religion and maintain moral and ethical values among students. However, several obstacles were found, such as the large amount of material compared to the limited number of credits, lack of student enthusiasm, and a mismatch between credits and lecture time. PAI material assessment analysis involves the validity and practicality of the material. In general, the validity results show that PAI material at state universities in North Sumatra can be used in PAI learning in the good category. However, there are suggestions for reforms in the PAI curriculum, especially including aspects of tolerance and interreligious dialogue. Furthermore, analysis of the practicality of the material based on student responses shows that PAI material has good practicality. However, there are suggestions for organizing material with summaries so that it is easy to understand, designing material attractively, and adding examples that are relevant to everyday life. Overall, there is potential to improve the quality of PAI learning at state universities in North Sumatra by updating the curriculum, adjusting the amount of material, and increasing the attractiveness and relevance of the material to students' daily lives.

Research findings on the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning materials at state universities in North Sumatra have a significant impact on improving the quality of learning and the education system as a whole. Identifying obstacles, such as excessive amounts of material, lack of student interest, and a mismatch between the number of credits and lecture time, allows universities to make improvements in designing curriculum and managing PAI learning more effectively. Wider implications include

opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the education system as a whole by developing a more relevant curriculum, reducing material load, and improving the design of PAI learning materials to encourage the use of innovative teaching methods. This effort will not only increase students' understanding of Islamic teachings, but will also help them integrate these values in their daily lives, as well as prepare them to become moral and positive contributing members of society.

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