

religions-839141-1.2.docx

by

Submission date: 11-Jul-2020 02:08PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1356069689

File name: religions-839141-1.2.docx (377.89K)

Word count: 7795

Character count: 46339

35
Type of the Paper (Article, Review, Communication, etc.)

Knowledge and Learning of Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding in an Indonesian Islamic college sample: an Epistemological Belief Approach

Abstract: The epistemological belief becomes the basis of how someone acquires knowledge and was used as a guide to behave everyday life. For religious fundamentalists, however, their belief in religious knowledge is very strong, including by negating different opinions and ideas. Because the radicalization process is closely related to the education process, two important epistemological concepts of belief about knowledge and belief about learning need to be tested to analyze the extent to which these two factors might be the predictor of the tendency of individual religious fundamentalism. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of epistemological beliefs on religious fundamentalism of muslim millennial youth. By using simple random sampling method, data collection was conducted by distributing Likert-scale questionnaires to 195 muslim undergraduate students at an Islamic institute in Kudus, Central Java. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The results showed that the proposed model was appropriate and eligible for hypothesis testing ($p = 138$, GFI = .965, AGFI = .934, TLI = .978 and RMSEA = .040). Furthermore, statistical analysis shows that epistemological beliefs in the form of belief about knowledge (C.R = 4.585, and $p = .000$) and belief about learning (C.R = 2.202, and $p = .001$) have significant and positive effects on religious fundamentalism. The results highlight the importance of developing the concept of critical thinking in learning and inclusiveness-oriented education to eradicate religious fundamentalism among millennials.

Keywords: belief about knowledge; belief about learning; religious fundamentalism

1. Introduction

Fundamentalism is one phenomenon that will trigger an interesting conversation when it is associated with religion. Fundamentalism in the world religious tradition is expressed through a variety of radical thoughts and actions and demonstrated through terrible violence and anarchism to achieve ideological-based political goals (Sullivan 2007). The fundamentalist movement is now usually synonymous with violence, terror and intimidation carried out in the name of God (Schmid 2011). Fundamentalism is the phenomenon of individuals and groups who attach themselves to exclusive understandings in both religious and non-religious domains that nullify the rights of other people with different views (Marranci 2009). Fundamentalism also promotes hatred of different parties and authorizes the use of violence against other groups (Kaldor 2012). The complexity of the problem of fundamentalism makes researchers and practitioners need many tools in the form of various scientific disciplines in an effort to better understand the factors that make an individual or group interested in fundamentalism.

A fundamentalist is someone who considers knowledge to be certain and becomes very afraid of 'wrongdoings', if he has the wrong view or is involved in 'wrong' behaviors from what is taught or trusted on 'approved doctrine' in his or her group (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005). Usually, a fundamentalist person considers knowledge to be definite and will behave in accordance with what his group teaches dogmatically. This tendency marks the fundamentalist different from that of an open-minded person. Fundamentalism can be formed from an early age through religious learning emphasizing on absolutism and simplification of ways of thinking. In addition, the teachings must also be learned from people who know better such as religious experts and religious leaders sources of religious knowledge. Further reports by Altemeyer and Hunsberger (2005) explained that

religious teachings for fundamentalists directly reinforce authoritarian attitudes. The teaching of religion is overemphasized in salvation based on the good relationship between individuals and God, and less good pressure among individuals and social relationships. The implication is that religious education and teaching make apologetic and polemical approaches, driven by exclusive theological attitudes. Thus, the study of religion in educational institutions is more inclined to the dualistic spirit of 'right and wrong'. Here, fundamentalism is not merely focused on theological-based violence, but more fundamentally, aimed at how one conceptualizes religious knowledge and believes it absolutely by negating the opposite view. Because fundamentalism is very strongly associated with the absolute belief in a truth from the knowledge it believes in, it will also simultaneously believe in learning and knowledge.

To verify this assumption, while examining the influence of knowledge and learning on religious fundamental thinking, this study takes the epistemological belief as its emphasis, and limits research to epistemology according to the educational psychology. Epistemological beliefs are henceforth divided into a belief about knowledge and belief about learning. Epistemological beliefs are individual beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning and the influence of this belief on cognitive processes, such as how to receive truth from information on individual beliefs, how to gain knowledge and to justify the knowledge (Jehng, Johnson, and Anderson 1993). Belief, when associated with epistemology, will be interesting to study because it will be the basis of knowledge and theory of knowledge acquired by humans and can be used to govern day-to-day behaviors. An individual belief in knowledge and how to know it has become part of the basic mechanisms of thinking or becoming part of the building of epistemology (Ryan 1984), and one of the driving forces in achieving intellectual abilities (Klaczynski and Robinson 2000). The belief about knowledge and belief about learning or often referred to as the epistemological belief is one of the factors that may be a predictor of the tendency of religious fundamentalism to understand an individual. In an Islamic perspective, the epistemology of knowledge and knowing has long been a major concern of thinkers with regard to its important implications in Islamic philosophy and life governance (Zarkasyi 2018). This study will examine the effect of belief about knowledge and belief in learning on the tendency of individual religious fundamentalism. This research was carried out on Muslim millennial students who were considered to be unstable in their search for identity and were still building stability in gaining knowledge, and learning authority that was in accordance with their personal ideals.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Epistemological Belief

Etymologically, epistemology comes from Greece, combined with the words 'episteme' and 'logos'. 'Episteme' means 'knowledge' while 'logos' usually shows 'systemic theory or knowledge' (Zerin 1995). The study of epistemology examines the source of knowledge, how to determine the truth of knowledge and how to obtain knowledge (King and Magolda 1996). This understanding of epistemology will determine the character of knowledge, even determine the truth; what is considered acceptable and what must be rejected.

Epistemology as a branch of philosophy is related to the nature of knowledge, and its relationship by means of knowing (Crotty 1998). As a philosophical discipline, epistemology is concerned with increasing an individual's set of beliefs from eliminating beliefs that cannot be justified and replacing them with more justifiable beliefs. In psychology, the topic of epistemology has been discussed by reviewing individual beliefs about the nature of knowledge and knowing traits (Hofer and Pintrich 1997). With this structure of belief, it is then labeled as a person's individual epistemology. Hofer and Pintrich (1997) state that the examination of individual conceptualizations of the nature of knowledge is usually done by examining individual beliefs about the certainty and simplicity of knowledge. For example, a person's belief in the nature of knowledge can be seen from the definite to the uncertain and from simple to complicated. Although the epistemologist is widely seen as only a philosophical principle that contains abstract and methodological values on how to

96 obtain knowledge, psychologically, epistemology is also considered to contain degrees of belief. This
 97 means that a person's beliefs in a knowledge can be epistemologically strong or low. According to
 98 (Schommer 1994), there is a difference between epistemological research in philosophy and
 99 educational psychology. While the epistemology philosophy focuses on the investigation of universal
 100 and absolute knowledge and truth, the psychology of education focuses on how an individual
 101 believes about the nature of knowledge and its effects on cognitive processes, such as how to receive
 102 truth information of individual beliefs, organize information, get knowledge and justify the
 103 knowledge. Hofer (2001) defines epistemology in the educational psychology as how individuals
 104 believe in how the knowledge occurs, how much knowledge is acquired, where it is obtained and
 105 how knowledge is built and evaluated.

106 Here, epistemological beliefs contain low or high values that can be verified empirically (Schraw
 107 2001; Hofer and Pintrich 1997). To test the existence of this belief, Perry (1970), one of the first
 108 researchers to examine empirical epistemology, led a team of researchers to conduct interviews with
 109 college students at Harvard University for four years. By using long indirect interviews³³ and paper-
 110 and-pencil instruments, called the checklist of educational views (CLEV), the findings reveal that
 111 each individual's beliefs about knowledge and learning can change over time. At the first level,
 112 students are dualistic in holding truth and error, have absolute views, and believe that truth can be
 113 known from the teacher's communication role. These first-level students believe that simple
 114 knowledge and unchanging facts are taught by people⁶ who know better. Along with the
 115 development of time, students become more aware and more realistic in believing complex and
 116 tentative knowledge from empirical thoughts and events. Perry (1970) hypothesized eight
 117 developmental positions and classified them into four categories that became part of dualistic
 118 thinking in students at the initial level to become relativist thinkers at the end of the fourth year of
 119 his research (Ren 2006). Students will more likely change their belief in knowledge in several phases,
 120 namely from knowledge that is simple, settled and unchanging, which is obtained from the authority,
 121 to belief in knowledge that is more complex and changing obtained from thought processes,
 122 empirical events, and enriched by the passage of time to become more mature Perry (1970)⁵³. Since
 123 then various studies that examine the beliefs¹⁰ of knowledge have emerged, such as Reflective
 124 Judgment model (King and Kitchener 1994), Women's Ways of Knowing from (Belenky et al. 1986),
 125 Argumentative Reasoning model (Kuhn 1999), epistemological reflection model and
 126 multidimensional epistemic model from (Schommer 1990; King and Magolda 1996).

127 Schommer (1990) stated that epistemological beliefs require⁴⁷ that students believe¹⁵ about the
 128 nature of knowledge and believe about learning (Schommer 2004). Hofer (2001) proposes three key
 129 perspectives that connect epistemology with learning and teaching: (a) epistemology is development;
 130 development is the purpose of education; thus part of the purpose of education is to foster
 131 epistemological development, (b) epistemology exists in the form of belief, and learning is influenced
 132 by epistemological beliefs held¹⁰ by individuals, (c) epistemology is either like theory or exists as a
 133 finer epistemological resource, and in the learning process²³ these theories and resources are activated
 134 and engaged in context-dependent ways. In summary, epistemological beliefs are individual beliefs
 135 about the nature of knowledge and how that knowledge⁴⁶ is obtained. Furthermore, Schommer (2004)
 136 developed epistemological beliefs by separating the belief about knowledge and the belief about
 137 learning.

138 2.2. ⁵ Belief about Knowledge and Belief about Learning

139 The five epistemological beliefs taxonomy proposed by Schommer (2004) includes beliefs about;
 140 (1) Simple knowledge such as knowledge that is organized simply or cut into pieces or correlated
 141 with various concepts, (2) Certain, absolute, enduring or growing knowledge, (3) Omniscient,
 142 emerging from the experience of people who have the authority to convey knowledge or coming
 143 from one's own thoughts followed by various evidences, (4) rapid learning as learning done quickly
 144 or gradually through the easy process or hard work, and (5) innate abilities in the form of congenital
 145 nature or change which can develop at any time.

146 Belief about knowledge consists of three dimensions. First, knowledge comes from authorities
147 or experts such as teachers, lecturers or reference books, compared to logic and thought. In this
148 dimension, individuals do not have a knowledge perspective, believing that information from
149 reference books is true, and that teachers must convey material in the learning process (Schommer
150 1990). This is different for students who have more sophisticated epistemological beliefs, which
151 emphasize the idea that knowledge comes from the construction of their own thinking. Second,
152 knowledge is definite, absolute, unchanging, and not tentative. Individuals who have sophisticated
153 epistemological beliefs tend to believe that knowledge is tentative and unpredictable, and does not
154 believe that knowledge is fixed and unchanging (Jehng et al. 1993). Third, a regular process. Jehng et
155 al. (1993) explain that the dimension of the regular process, or what is called rigid learning, is a
156 dimension of belief whether learning is a process that is passively accepted by individuals, or the
157 process of formulating the fact that individuals independently develop their ideas. In this dimension,
158 the perspective of individuals prefers learning by taking materials exactly or in the same way as what
159 they read in reference books and tends to follow what is written there from beginning to end (Jehng
160 et al. 1993). Learning is a normal process by only passively accepting what the teacher says. They
161 often show rigid learning behaviors such as memorizing facts without comprehending them
162 thoroughly, paying little attention to things from different perspectives, and accepting authority
163 without evaluating them thoroughly.

164 Furthermore, the belief about learning consists of two dimensions. First, quick learning. In this
165 dimension, individuals have a perspective that understanding something is very dependent upon
166 their first learning it. Individuals, who have good learning strategies, believe that learning through
167 hard work processes can increase the effectiveness of the learning strategies they use. Second, innate
168 ability. Innate ability is a level of belief that the ability to learn is innate, rather than acquired through
169 learning (Jehng et al. 1993).

170 2.3. Religious Fundamentalism

171 Researchers have tried to define religious fundamentalism. However, the word 'construction'
172 has many different definitions. Riesebrodt and Passion (1993) defines fundamentalism as "an urban
173 movement directed primarily at personal disclaimer, patriarchal notions of order and social relations
174 and substitutes for the principle of depersonalization." Almond et al. (2003) defines it as "a pattern
175 of religious militancy that can be seen through the efforts and efforts of individuals to become true
176 believers to resist erosion of religious identity, fortify the boundaries of religious communities, and
177 create alternatives that appropriate for secular institutions and behavior."

178 Fundamentalism is seen as a psychological construct that is negative from the moral view. This
179 refers to various research results that show that fundamentalism is a predictor of various social
180 problems, such as authoritarianism and dogmatism (Kirkpatrick et al. 1991), fanaticism, racial
181 prejudice, support for violence in the name of religion, prejudice against women, and ethnocentrism
182 (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005). (Hood et al. 2005) explain religious fundamentalism more
183 positively, even though it does not clearly define its construct. They conceptualize religious
184 fundamentalism in an intellectual model, where individuals depend on their respective religious
185 scriptures as a guide. This intellectual model stresses on the process of reading text rather than the
186 text content. Intellectuality is the intertwining concepts with one another. Specifically,
187 fundamentalists must have holy texts and obtain absolute truth, for example, Muslims believe that
188 there is no other gods but Allah as written in the sacred text. By relying on scriptures, divinity is
189 demonstrated through absolute truth, which is maintained by every fundamentalist perspective.

190 Fundamentalism is considered a rigid and dogmatic way to become religious (Spilka et al. 2003)
191 and is a construct designed to show individual attitudes about their religious beliefs (Altemeyer and
192 Hunsberger 1992). In religious fundamentalism, the sacred role is considered primarily related to the
193 creation of a broad system of meanings, which results from obedience and respect for certain texts,
194 such as the Koran or the Bible (Hood et al. 2005). In understanding religious fundamentalism, it is
195 important to note that the specific designation of what is defined as sacred by groups can vary from

196 religion to religion. In contrast, group or individual's belief about what they call sacred does not vary
197 from religion to religion.

198 Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992) first compiled the scale of religious fundamentalism to
199 measure attitudes held by people regarding their religious beliefs which state that religious
200 fundamentalists uphold the following beliefs about their religious beliefs. Fundamentalism is also
201 interpreted as an attitude towards belief in several things in religion, namely; (1) that religion contains
202 very clear teachings; it cannot be wrong, both when speaking on the dimensions of humanity and
203 divinity, (2) the existence of negative forces like evil that are contrary to religion and must be opposed
204 and (3) the truth of religion must be followed as it is and lasts eternally for all time and does not need
205 contextualization (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005). In other words, all religious fundamentalists,
206 regardless of what they determine as sacred, believe that their sacred specifications are the correct
207 specifications, which allow them to have a special relationship with Allah and that the teachings
208 associated with these specifications are not only not unchangeable, but also opposed by evil forces,
209 which must be fought. Liht et al. (2011) divide religious fundamentalism into three aspects, namely:
210 (1) the source of external authority; (2) fixed perspective on religion as something that has been
211 completed; and (3) worldly rejection.

212 Moreover, Almond et al. (2003) describe five main characteristics of religious fundamentalist
213 ideology. First, reactivity to the marginalization of religion. It is the ideological characteristics
214 associated with the defense of the traditions of each group in response to the perceived threat of
215 increasing modernization and secularization. Second, the ideological characteristics that affirm that
216 groups choose aspects of their religion and distinguish themselves clearly from popular culture. The
217 third ideological characteristic is the fundamentalist group that conceptualizes the world
218 dualistically, as in good and evil. Fourth, their scriptures show absolutism and inerrancy. This
219 characteristic is related to the dependence on the sacred texts of each group as a source of absolute
220 truth. The last characteristic of the ideology is related to millennialism and messianism, which refer
221 to the sacred end of the world where believers will receive salvation at the arrival or return of holy
222 characters, such as messiahs (Almond et al. 2003)

223 Religious fundamentalism has a systemic impact on the global order and is a serious subtle threat by
224 justifying the use of violence motivated by religion (Emerson and Hartman 2006). In the first-world
225 countries, fundamentalists tend to influence through the development of political and social change
226 in a relatively non-violent manner. However, fundamentalists outside the first-world tend to act
227 harder. Barkun (2012) emphasizes that the relationship between religion and violence is not only
228 linear, suggesting that if a particular religion is characterized by fundamentalist characteristics such
229 as literalism and charismatic leaders, it is not always associated with violence. Apart from the most
230 well-known cases of brutal violence perpetuated by religious fundamentalists, not all religious
231 motives are rooted in fundamentalist ideology (Juergensmeyer 2003). Iannaccone (1997) argues that
232 religious violence is related to government regulations on religion. He claimed that religious violence
233 tends to occur under a government that suppresses religious freedom or which emphasizes the
234 exclusivity of one religion.

235 236 2.4. Islamic Study and Millennial Students

237 Geopolitical instability and the rise of xenophobia and right-wing nationalism in several major
238 countries over the last few decades have raised awareness of millennial youth to be actively involved
239 in echoing their views (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2013; Ignazi 1992; Knutsen 2016), and in defending
240 and defending their group's collective identity (Milkman 2017). An example can be seen in European
241 and Islamophobia youth protests over the entry of Muslim immigrants (Hafez 2014). On the other
242 hand, young Muslims consider the phobia as evidence of European antipathy towards Islam
243 (Sageman 2008). The harshness shown by the two groups was targeted by fundamentalists to carry
244 out acts of violence and terrorism against opposing groups that were considered endangering their
245 common identity and interests (Abbas 2013; Israeli 2017; Wahyuni 2019). Generally, young people in
246 the stage of searching for identity seek established authority that is able to accommodate their desires
247 (Herring 2008; Howe and Willam 2000). This character has long been used as a target for

248 fundamentalists to strengthen their influence (Barkun 2012). In Indonesia, several Islamic study
249 groups (*halaqah*) on state campuses have long been the basis of teaching radical content, with most
250 participants being millennial young students (Arifianto 2018). Teachings that emphasize excessive
251 indoctrination and dogma on the absolute truths of religion have made them justify, even engage in,
252 radical actions and religion-based violence. Some of these groups are generally exclusive and less
253 tolerant of the values of multiculturalism and differences in beliefs and religions (Wahid 2009).

254 A person who holds a fundamentalist religious orientation may be embedded from an early age,
255 where he gets the learning and understanding of religion not only limited to certain knowledge and
256 simple. Moreover, these teachings must also be learned from many religious leaders as a source of
257 authoritative religious knowledge. Furthermore, (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005) report that
258 fundamentalist religious teachings can directly strengthen authoritarian attitudes. This can happen
259 if seen from the nature of religious teachings which tend to emphasize salvation based on good
260 relations between the 'individual' and 'his God', and do not give more emphasis on the relationship
261 between individuals with each other (Ghufroon 2020).

262 The findings of research conducted by Kusuma and Susilo (2020) indicate the need for the
263 promotion of education and interfaith meetings to overcome the threat of ethnocentrism and increase
264 interaction amid diversity of socio-cultural identities. In addition, this study also encourages the
265 strengthening of understanding, competence and communication in intercultural sensitivity among
266 young people throughout Indonesia.

267 2.5. Knowledge and Learning with Religious Fundamentalism

268 In everyday life, religion is something that can provide comfort and tranquility. But, on the
269 contrary, religion can also be something that is frightening for humanity. Religion is something that
270 gives comfort when religion can make life peaceful. In contrast, religion can be a scary thing when it
271 makes people suspicious of each other, attack each other and even kill each other. Although religious
272 or interreligious violence may have been motivated by various social and political factors, violence
273 that occurs throughout the world seems to be exacerbated by conflicts between religious extremists
274 although it seems to be the reason for the tendency for violence (Juergensmeyer 2017), religion also
275 seems to function as a source of meaning and personal satisfaction for many people around the world.
276 This contradictory manifestation of religiosity has also been noted by Allport, who stated in his
277 investigation of intolerance that the role of religion is paradoxical. It can either lead to prejudice or
278 weaken prejudice (Hathcoat 2004).

279 Regarding epistemological beliefs and religious fundamentalism, fundamentalism begins when
280 individuals have specific epistemological beliefs. Previous research has shown that religiosity can
281 influence how an individual resolves epistemic doubts (Bendixen & Rule, 2004) and has explained
282 that individuals who uphold orthodox religious views tend to be dualistic 'black and white' in
283 their thinking (Desimpelaere et al. 1999) which is a form of character in the early stages of
284 epistemological development (Perry 1970). Epistemological beliefs are also associated with the ability
285 of individuals to analyze misconceptions (Ricco 2007) although some evidence shows that many
286 people are able to do logical reasoning well but fail when evaluating two contradictory religious
287 claims (Montgomery, Sandberg, and Zimmerman 2005).

288 Altemeyer and Hunsberger (2005), Hood et al. (2005) show that many followers of
289 fundamentalist religions begin their attitudes and actions from an epistemological view that is
290 characterized by believing that knowledge in religion has a simple, definite, and derived from the
291 omniscient authority. It can also be explained that the epistemological structure of fundamentalists
292 is consistently associated with authoritarianism and resistant to receiving knowledge that is different
293 or contrary to their view (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005; Laythe et al. 2001). Hathcoat (2004)
294 revealed that followers of a high fundamental religion would tend to believe in knowledge with
295 certainty. They have an unchanging determination. They believe in people who have authority.
296 Learning can be done quickly. Tabak and Weinstock's (2008) study observed students studying in the
297 natural science program and students studying in the religion program. Students in these two
298 domains hold absolute epistemological beliefs, because these two disciplines include special

299 programs. Science is verifiable, while religious teaching is somewhat unquestionable and doctrinal.
300 Here, the position of belief in knowledge comes from ⁸ an expert in knowledge. Knowledge is certain,
301 and the regular process of the individual can determine the level of fundamentalism of the
302 individual's religion. Likewise, the position of belief in individual learning can be done quickly. The
303 individual abilities are deemed innate, which also determines the tendency of fundamentalist
304 positions in one's religion. In other words, the higher the belief in knowledge and belief in learning,
305 the more likely they are to have fundamentalism in religion.

306 ⁷ 3. Research Methods

307 3.1. Research Design

308 The research design used in this study is quantitative. ²⁹ This study aims to examine the effect of
309 epistemological beliefs on the tendency of religious fundamentalism in students. ⁴¹ The selection of
310 respondents at the tertiary level because at this time, the age of development is in the early adult
311 stage which is characterized by the start of students being abstract and critical in dealing with
312 problems. Especially related to moral and even religious.

314 3.2. Sampling ³

315 This study seeks to analyze the extent to which millennial attitudes assume the importance of
316 knowledge and learning and the effect on religious fundamentalism. In this study, research was
317 conducted on Muslim students, at an Islamic campus in Central Java, the Islamic State Institute in
318 Kudus. The simple random sampling technique is used to ensure that any bias in the population will
319 be spread equally between the study samples. The number of samples obtained was 195 students.
320

321 3.3. Variable Measurement

322 The epistemological belief scale in this study is divided into two components of belief. First, the
323 belief in knowledge is an individual's belief in the nature of knowledge which includes these
324 following aspects: (1) knowledge comes from an expert as people who know better (2) certain
325 knowledge and (3) orderly process. In general, it can be said that the higher the value obtained, the
326 more naive the belief in the knowledge possessed. The number of items on the scale of belief
327 statements of knowledge are 8 statement items. An example of the point is, "I like the class where the
328 lecturer before teaching sets the lecture program;" "The answers contained in the reference book are very helpful
329 because I am not sure of my own solutions," and; "I feel comfortable when dealing with uncertain learning
330 conditions." Meanwhile, belief in learning is an individual's belief in learning which includes; (1) quick
331 learning and (2) innate abilities. This epistemological belief is adopted by using a modified
332 epistemological belief scale developed by (Jehng, Johnson, and Anderson 1993). In general, it can be
333 said that the higher the value obtained, the more naive belief in learning is possessed. The number of
334 items in the statement of belief scale on learning is 6 statement items. An example of the point is, "If
335 I can't understand something quickly, usually I have difficulty learning it as a whole," and; "Students, who
336 have moderate achievements in high school, will remain the same and have moderate achievements when they
337 are students ³ in tertiary institutions."

338 The religious fundamentalism is the belief that there is one religious teaching that clearly
339 contains fundamental, intrinsic, essential, and innocent truths about humanity and divinity, and that
340 this essential truth is basically opposed by evil which must be fought with vigorously, and ¹³ that this
341 truth must be followed today in accordance with basic practices that cannot be changed in the past
342 and that those who believe and follow these basic teachings have a special relationship with religious
343 leaders. The tendency of religious fundame¹²lism in this study was revealed by the scale of religious
344 fundamentalism with the modification of the religious fundamentalism scale developed by
345 (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005). It contains a component of belief in the learning of Islam, comfort
346 in life brought by the religion, and the presence in mosques and religious ethnocentrism. As an
347 example the point of the question is, "What is taught in religion must be carried out even if it must be with
348 violence," and "I cannot be calm if Islam has not yet been embraced by all humans."
349

350 3.4. **Data Analysis**

351 Data analysis technique in this study is by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This
 352 analysis technique has the ability to test a series of complicated correlations between one or several
 353 dependent variables with one or several independent variables simultaneously. Each variable can be
 354 in the form of a single factor or variable which is directly observed or measured in the research
 355 process (Ferdinand 2000). Data analysis techniques with this structural equation model used the
 356 AMOS Program.

357 **4. Results**358 4.1. *Descriptive statistics*

359 The descriptive statistics from each construct is presented before the analysis, as summarized in
 360 Table 1.

361 ²⁸ **Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief about Knowledge	195	14.33	6.056
Belief about Learning	195	12.78	6.202
Religious Fundamentalism	195	26.14	6.357
Valid N (listwise)	195		

362 As shown in Table 1, the belief of the knowledge variable has an empirical average score of 14.33
 363 with a standard deviation value of 6.056. The learning variable belief has an empirical average score
 364 of 12.78 with a standard deviation value of 6.202, and the religious fundamentalism variable has an
 365 empirical average score of 26.14 with a standard deviation value of 6.357.

366 4.3. *Model Testing Criteria*

367 Table 2 shows the types of criteria and standards of acceptance, in determining whether the
 368 proposed model is appropriate.

369 **Table 2.** Model Testing Criteria.

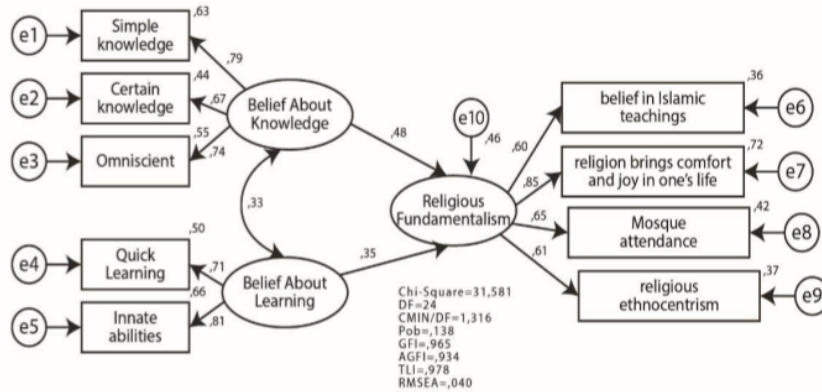
Index	Cut-off-value	Results
Chi-Square		31.581
CMIN/DF	76.527/60	1.316
Significance	> .05	0.138
RMSEA	< .05	0.040
GFI	.90	0.965
AGFI	.90	0.934
TLI or IFI	.95	0.978

370 Based on the analysis with structural equation models, the chi-square = 31. 581 (DF = 24, p = 138)
 371 CMIN / DF = 1,316, GFI = .965, AGFI = .934, TLI = .978 and RMSEA = .040, with a probability score (>
 372 .05). Thus, the criteria for acceptance of the model are met and this indicates that the proposed model
 373 is in accordance with empirical data.
 374

375 4.4. *Confirmatory factor analysis*

376 According to Ghozali (2008), the testing of unidimensionality in each construct must be done by
 377 ³⁹ confirmatory factor analysis before analyzing the structural equation models. The test was
 378 conducted ³⁸ to determine the reliability of the construct measuring indicators. The unidimensionality
 379 test in this study was conducted to identify the significance of the power of discrimination (item
 380 correlation with total) construct indicators. This test is conducted to see the convergent validity of
 381 variables or loading factor scores of each indicator. Confirmation analysis was carried out between

382 exogenous variables and endogenous variables. The exogenous variable in this study is the belief in
 383 knowledge and learning beliefs and endogenous variables in this study are religious
 384 fundamentalism. Based on the results of the confirmation analysis between exogenous variables and
 385 endogenous variables, the fit criteria are well achieved. Significant value of the standard loading
 386 parameter estimation is also above the score of 0.0, which means that the fit criteria are also obtained.



387

388 **5. Hypothesis Testing**

389 The estimation results or lambda values, i.e. regression quality evaluations between latent
 390 variables and degrees of freedom (df) C.R scores or t-counts (significance probability values .05), can
 391 be determined after analysis using the AMOS statistical program. The results of the regression quality
 392 in the causality test are presented in Table 3.

393 **Table 3.** Regression Weights.

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Belief about Knowledge on Religious Fundamentalism	0.343	0.075	4.585	0.000
Belief about Learning on Religious Fundamentalism	0.229	0.072	3.202	0.001

394

395 The regression analysis show the significant and positive effect of the belief about knowledge
 396 variable on religious fundamentalism (estimate = .0343, C.R = 4.585, and p = .000). Similarly, the
 397 statistical testing show a significant and positive influence of belief about learning on religious
 398 fundamentalism (estimate = .0229, C.R = 3.202, and p = .001). It means that epistemological beliefs
 399 consisting of belief about knowledge and belief about learning have a significant positive influence
 400 on religious fundamentalism. Determination coefficient (R²) of religious fundamentalism is 0.46,
 401 which means that 46 percent can be explained or predicted through a variable of belief in knowledge
 402 and belief in learning.

403 In particular, the results of this analysis indicate that belief about knowledge and belief about
 404 learning has a positive and significant influence on religious fundamentalism. This means that,
 405 the more an individual has belief about knowledge with the measurement items of 'knowledge is certain,
 406 knowledge is simple and knowledge can only be obtained by an expert' and the higher the belief
 407 about learning with the measurement items of 'learning can be done quickly and learning ability is
 408 innate', the higher the fundamentalist tendency. A fundamentalist is usually regarded as a person
 409 who truly adheres to doctrines, points of view, or a set of principles that are considered original and
 410 'pure'. This doctrine may be theological. Many of fundamentalist beliefs and behaviors that emerge

411 from them, at least in cognitive point, are a reflection of their fundamental doctrine. For
412 fundamentalists, there is no room to consider views that conflict with the doctrine they accept and
413 conflicting views will usually be rejected or strongly opposed, often using violence. Conversely,
414 someone who is 'open-minded', unlike fundamentalists, may still have a strong view and may even
415 have a very careful position on certain issues. They will usually behave according to their views and
416 conscience. However, even so, they will usually also show a willingness to seriously reflect on
417 alternative views or actions before rejecting them. In addition, they tend to accept suffering, in one
418 form or another, as a result of maintaining an opinion or conformity of conscience and they did not
419 use violence to 'defend' what had become their belief. In addition, a key component of
420 fundamentalism is the dependence and respect of the scriptures to produce a comprehensive system
421 of meaning or worldview (Hood et al. 2005). This implies that regardless of whether religious leaders
422 have deep knowledge or are considered omniscient or not, the more emphasis will be on the side of
423 conformity with the sacred text. In other words, religious fundamentalists believe that knowledge in
424 the religious domain is definite, simple, and comes from an infallible authority that knows
425 everything.

426 Kuhn (1999) states that basically knowledge is factual and exact, and Klaczynski & Robinson
427 (2000) found that students who develop more critical epistemological beliefs, tend to have
428 perceptions that are more friendly and tolerant in learning and criticizing than students who master
429 and rely on naive beliefs. The results of the Tabak and Weinstock's (2008) study on elementary school
430 students in Israel evaluating students possibility of holding absolutist views, pluralist, or evaluative
431 positions about the knowledge and truth in social and physical spheres, found that those who study
432 in the religion program are more likely to hold absolute epistemological beliefs in accordance with
433 their view that religious matters are unquestionable. In addition, individuals with high
434 fundamentalist tendencies are more likely to demonstrate a tendency to show the general belief
435 outside the religious domain that knowledge is certain, originating from the omniscient authority
436 and that learning takes place quickly or not at all (Hathcoat 2004).

437 In the context of Indonesian people who are very concerned with religious formalities, they will
438 face a dilemmatic situation in encouraging the direction and pattern of religious diversity of their
439 people. On the one hand, they are required to continue to preserve religious values both formally
440 and informally in life, but on the other hand, they will face the emergence of a dominating orientation
441 of religious fundamentalism in society. In addition, in Indonesia alone religious education
442 institutions play the most role in the transmission of religious values. When there are students who
443 tend to be low in the orientation of religious fundamentalism, they will be considered contrary to the
444 religious norms they hold so far. Understanding the tendency of fundamentalist religious
445 understanding and believing that knowledge is certain and comes from omniscient authority, can
446 help educators to be better able to understand students in dealing with situations in the classroom.
447 This is possible if what is conveyed in class is an understanding that has never been accepted by
448 students or is not in accordance with their religious understanding. In some cases, lectures that
449 discuss inclusivism in religion, students, especially in the early semester, will feel a conflict between
450 the teachings he has believed so far with the knowledge gained in lectures. In such a situation it will
451 fail to see the lecturer as an omniscient authority, and believe that knowledge in a particular scientific
452 domain is a potential threat to their religious understanding and beliefs. Finally, it is important for
453 educators to better understand why students choose to, based on their beliefs, adopt certain views in
454 the classroom, while rejecting other views. By providing balanced and proportional views and
455 perspectives in various learning materials, especially religious material, will be able to provide broad
456 insights and will be more evaluative in students' thinking.

457 6. Conclusion

458 The results of this study indicate that an individual who has a high belief in knowledge is more
459 likely to have a tendency towards high religious fundamentalism. Belief about knowledge is an
460 assumption that knowledge is definite, simple and can only be obtained from an expert. Furthermore,
461 the belief about learning has a positive and significant influence on understanding fundamentalism.

462 This means that the higher the belief about learning, it is more likely that a person increases
 463 understanding of religious fundamentalism. The belief about learning assumes that learning can be
 464 done quickly and learning ability is innate.

465 The epistemological belief model in the form of belief about knowledge and belief about learning
 466 in individuals who tend to have fundamentalist religious ideas has many implications related to
 467 behaviors. In educational institutions, students with fundamentalist orientation tend to have special
 468 weaknesses in class if the material or teachings are considered to be contrary to their understanding
 469 of religious meaning. In such situations, it is possible to have conflicts between the teachings
 470 conveyed by the teacher and the religious teachings or views of fundamentalist students. It is possible
 471 that these people will fail to see the teaching figure as an omniscient authority and believe that
 472 knowledge in the scientific domain is certain because of the potential threats taught by these
 473 teachings to their current system of meanings, and the ideas included in them. This form of
 474 skepticism is motivated when receiving information that may potentially damage the teachings that
 475 individuals hold. In a skeptical position, students are possible in two conditions, namely having a
 476 more radical view in holding the teachings that they have or changing to the belief in more complex
 477 and tentative knowledge obtained from their own thought process.

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