Islamic Religious Education Research in the Islamic Higher Education

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Abstract: Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a conscious effort to convey and realize the teachings of Islam. In an effort to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education, both theoretically and practically, studies must always be carried out, one of which is through research. Because the main marker that the Islamic Religious Education research which is the focus of study in The Islamic Higher Education (PTKI) is in a dynamic state in accordance with the nature of science is a scientific activity in the scientific community. However, Islamic Religious Education research activities in Indonesia, especially in the Islamic Higher Education, have not been seriously explored within the framework of Islamic studies as a whole. Islamic Religious Education research in the Indonesian context lags behind other fields of science. For this reason, this study aims to lay out the position of lecturer research within the framework of the Islamic Religious Education research study area based on cross matrix as introduced by Soedomo (Soedomo, 2009). This study uses a quantitative approach with descriptive type at the Islamic Higher Education in East Java. The study focused on the results of lecturer research in 2015 and 2016. The results showed that of 44 research titles, as many as 23 titles of research (52.27%) more studied the operational problems of education in schools or madrasas, 6 research titles (13.64%) examine operational problems of education in religious institutions, 5 research titles (11.36%) examine the problem of the structure of education in schools, 5 research titles (11.36%) examine the problem of the foundation of education in schools, 4 research titles (9.10%) review operational problems in education in the family, and only 1 research title (2.27%) examines the operational problems of education in youth organizations. Judging from the scientific method more reliant on research, it has not expanded to development and evaluation. For this reason, it is recommended that the Islamic Higher Education can develop a medium and long-term program for the development of Islamic Religious Education research.

1 INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education is a conscious effort to convey and realize the teachings of Islam (Muhaimin, 2015). Islamic Religious Education is felt in every person as a driver or principles that become life guidelines (Bisri et al., 2003). Islamic Religious Education occupies an important place in a person's life, up to a level, where people are better prepared to carry out religious teachings seriously. For that reason, Islamic Religious Education is not just a complementary subject in school, but something essential is expected to color the entire process of education in schools (Bisri et al., 2003).

Islamic Religious Education is different from Islamic Education. Islamic Religious Education emphasizes more on practical operational activities of religion in school institutions. While Islamic Education is more philosophical-theoretical and covers a wider area of study. Islamic Education discussed matters relating to the ins and outs of Islamic education knowledge ranging from the nature of Islamic education, the origin of Islamic education, the source of Islamic education, to the various types of Islamic education (Qomar, 2005).

Moreover, Islamic Education has at least 8 (eight) understandings and different contexts, namely: (1) *al-tarbiyah al-Diniyah*, (2) *Ta'lim al-Din*, (3*) al-Ta'lim al-Diniy,* (4) *al-Ta'lim al-Islam*, (5) *al-Tarbiyah in al-Islam*, (6) *al-Tarbiyah 'inda al-Muslimin*, (7) *al-Tarbiyah al-Muslimin*, and (8) *al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyah* (Langgulung, 2002). Islamic Religious Education is part of Islamic Education (Tafsir, 1992). However, these two terms cannot be separated, so there needs to be continuity and harmony between theoretical studies and practice in the field (Rahman, 2012).

In an effort to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education, both theoretically and

practically, studies must always be carried out, one of which is through research. Because the main marker that the Islamic Religious Education research which is the focus of study in Islamic Universities is in a dynamic state in accordance with the nature of science, by adopting the thoughts of Conant (Conant, 1951) is a scientific activity in the scientific community. For example, various scientific meetings on Islamic religious college science, both at the local, regional, national and international levels are often held. A number of publications that discuss Islamic religious college scholarship are pretty much pursued. Various studies have been done quite a lot. In fact, as a sign that is quite prominent, for those who intend to study Islamic religious college scholarship, education programs are available to the highest level or doctorate (S-3) (Soedomo, 2009). Complementing the markers of Islamic religious college scientific activities is research, development and evaluation activities. Such activities, both carried out by Islamic Higher Education and Islamic religious teachers in schools as well as students who are completing final college assignments, such as thesis, and dissertation mark the existence of Islamic religious education research that bridges the normative and empirical world (Bawani, 2016).

However, Islamic Religious Education research activities in Indonesia, especially in Islamic Higher Education, have not been seriously explored within the framework of Islamic studies as a whole. Islamic Religious Education research in the Indonesian context lags behind other fields of science (Azra, 2000). Some of the markers include: Islamic Religious Education studies in doctoral dissertations are fewer than for example Islamic Thought. There are also not many specialized journals with national and international reputations and reputations that publish scientific papers on Islamic Religious Education research on a regular basis, both theoretical studies and research findings. Even if there are, only represented by 5 reputable national and international journals such as Ulumul Qur'an, Studia Islamika, Al-Jami'ah, and Journal of Indonesian Islam (JIIS), which focus more on Islamic studies, not on Islamic Religious Education, so writings on research on Islamic Religious Education do not get a strategic place. The absence of scientific discussion media in the form of publishing on a national and international scale resulted in Islamic Religious Education research scientific works being scattered and giving the impression that there was no Islamic Religious Education research activity.

The disorganization of Islamic Religious Education research activities in Indonesia, especially Islamic Higher Education, also appears from the research themes that are not significant, both for the purpose of developing Islamic Religious Education research and for enhancing efforts to improve the religious life of students. As a result, the research findings produced lacked adequate scientific weight.

The development of Islamic Religious Education research which is the result of organized scientific activities is a prerequisite for the professionalism of Islamic Higher Education. Professionalism is basically a process of using knowledge by practitioners (professionals) who require the discovery and development of concepts, principles, procedures, theories, models, and approaches by researchers, and development activities by experts (Islamic Religious Education experts). Through this process, it was shown that the development of Islamic Religious Education research occupies a strategic position for scientific development at Islamic Higher Education.

Based on a review of several journals, the research that developed in the Islamic Higher Education was seen from the title in a varied study area based on Soedomo's perspective (1992). For example in the Journal of Islamic Education, Vol. XI, No. 1, June 2014 UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, the titles include: (1) The Dynamics of Muslim Students' Religiosity in Non-Islamic Schools (areas of operational study in schools) (Setiawati, 2014), (2) Thematic Learning Models of Islamic Religion in Islamic Primary Schools (study area operational in schools) (Salamah, 2014), (3) The Learning Model of the Messenger of Allah in the Psychology Perspective (the area of fundamental study in schools and other institutions), and the Influence of Vak Learning Models (Visualization, Auditory, Kinesthetic) on Islamic Religious Education Learning Achievement (the area of operational studies in schools) (Faaizun, 2014). Like wise in the Journal of Islamic Religion Volume 02, Number 01, May 2014 UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, seen from the title shows the study area in the same direction, namely in the area of fundamental studies in schools and other institutions. These titles include: (1) Transcendent Taxonomy (New Paradigm of Islamic Education Objectives (area of fundamental studies in schools and other institutions), (2) Internalization of the Value of Environmental Awareness through Education (Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith Perspectives) (areas of fundamental study at schools and other institutions), (3) Academic Dishonesty 'Versus' School Integrity and Prestige Pacts in Implementing National Exams (areas of operational study at schools), (4) Learning Sources in Emission Theory (Philosophical Review of Education) (areas of fundamental studies in

schools and other institutions), (5) Conservation of Islamic Character Education in Hidden Curriculum Schools (areas of fundamental study in schools and other institutions), and (6) Significance of Maqamat and Practice in Sufism Education in Changing Human Behavior (region fundamental studies at schools and other institutions)

Departing from this thought, this study will explore some lecturer research in the faculty / department of tarbiyah Islamic Higher Education. With this, it will be known about the research area and the significance and methodology of the lecturers' research in providing scientific contributions to Islamic Religious Education in a wider area.

2 METHOD

This research aims to mapping the position of lecturer research in the framework of the Islamic Religious Education research area based on cross matrix as introduced by (Soedomo, 2009). This research uses a quantitative approach with descriptive types. The research was conducted at the faculty/department of Tarbiyah the Islamic Higher Education in East Java, with a sample of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training of Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang and the *Tarbiyah* Department of STAIN Kediri. Data collected from lecturer research report documents that received funding assistance from institutions in 2015 and 2016. There were 44 research titles related to Islamic Religious Education. In detail, 44 titles consist of 29 titles from Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University (2015 as many as 14 titles and 2016 as many as 15 titles) and 15 titles from Tarbiyah Department of STAIN Kediri (2015 as many as 7 titles and 2016 as many as 8 titles). These titles are then analyzed using percentages after their substance has been mapped based on the cross-matrix.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that of the 44 research titles, as many as 23 research titles (52.27%) more studied the operational problems of education in schools or madrasas, such as goals, material, methods, strategies, approaches, models, media, learning evaluation, motivation students, and extracurricular activities of students in schools or madrasas. 6 research titles (13.64%) examined the operational problems of education in religious institutions, such as the implementation of reading and writing al-Qurán in TPQ, the contribution of the *majlis ta'lim* to the formation of community morals, and the existence of *madrasah diniyah* in children's religious education. 5 research titles (11.36%) examine the problem of the structure of education in schools, such as the structure of the curriculum, organizational structure, and the structure of the formation of students from year to year. 5 research titles (11.36%) examine the problem of the foundation of education in schools, such as the philosophical foundation of Islamic Education, the philosophical foundation and operational of the school curriculum, the historical and sociological foundation for the establishment of educational institutions, and the operational basis of the implementation of extra-curricular activities in schools. 4 research titles (9.10%) examine the operational problems of education in families, such as family care strategies, parental motivation in children's education, and parental participation in children's education. Then only 1 research title (2.27%) examined the operational problems of education in youth organizations, such as: the role of Scouts in the formation of students' discipline.

Based on the results of the study shows that most lecturers conduct research related to the operational problems of education in schools or madrasas. This result is different from the research titles contained in the Journal of Islamic Religious Education, Volume 02, Number 01, May 2014, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya and Journal of Islamic Education, Vol. XI, No. 1, June 2014, the more varied UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogjakarta. This shows that lecturer research has not spread to all areas of Islamic Religious Education study. According to Azra, in the midst of the dominant influence of western education models which emphasize on intellectual aspects or just teaching and taking place in a schooling system is nothing more than the transfer of knowledge and expertise within the existing techno-structural framework (Azra, 2000), Islamic Religious Education as a study dimension its broad scope is less prioritized for review and development within the Islamic Higher Education environment. Even though Islamic Religious Education can give color to national character education and strengthen national values (Muhaimin, 2016). The tendency of Islamic Religious Education research in Islamic Higher Education concerns more about operational problems in education, especially in the learning process in the classroom.

Islamic Religious Education as a conscious effort is often narrowed down to be a discussion about

religious subjects, and more narrowly becomes a halal-haram meaning in the learning process in class. It has not touched the socio-cultural aspects, so it is relevant to the current socio-cultural context of the millennial community (Muhaimin, 2016). As a result, research conducted in relation to Islamic Religious Education is only an operational problem, such as methods, media, motivation, interests, achievements, and learning outcomes, and is less appreciated in the study of educational institutions outside of school and the environment (social settings) that provide contribution to the development of Islamic Religious Education. With this mindset, the only obligation of Islamic Higher Education, especially faculty or department of education is to produce intelligent thoughts to appreciate Islamic Religious Education in the broader dimensions of educational institutions, so that Islamic Religious Education will be functional in the lives of students as a provision to become a caliph on earth (Abdurrahman, 1995).To that end, Islamic Religious Education research as part of the study of Islam in General, not just to find theories, approaches, models, strategies or methods of learning the Islamic Religious Education, but more than that the results should be able to improve the religious zeal for the subject of research (Muqim, 1994).

According to Abdurrahman (Abdurrahman, 1995) Islamic Religious Education is actually a very important part of the process of absorbing historical tasks for each student for the survival of civilization. From this thought it can be understood that, the effort to become a caliph on earth is not solely in classroom learning, but also outside the classroom. For this reason, the study of Islamic Religious Education does not rely on education in class/school/*madrasah*, but also must accommodate all educational institutions. Because basically, Islamic Religious Education is for all levels and types of education. With that, Islamic Religious Education as potential development, cultural inheritance, and interaction between potential and culture can work well (Langgulung, 2001).

Dimyati (Dimyati, 1988) introduces that there are currently five educational institutions, namely families, schools, religious institutions, youth organizations, and mass media. By looking at this definition, it appears that the dimensions of Islamic Religious Education's work are increasingly widespread, which has implications for the foundation and scientific structure of Islamic Religious Education. To determine the dimensions of Islamic Religious Education's work, can be crossed between educational institutions with the type of Islamic Religious Education problems. With this cross matrix, it can be known which fields have been worked on and which ones have not been further appreciated. The matrix can be described as follows:

Chart 1: Cross Matrix Type of Problem of Islamic Religious Education with Educational Institution.

Problems of Islamic Religious Education	Educational Institutions				
	Family	School	Religion Institution	Young Organization	Mass Media
Fundament		5(11,36 %)			
Structure		5(11,36 %)			
Operasional	4 (9,10 %)	23(52,27 %)	6 (13,64 %)	1 (2,27 %)	

By looking at the matrix, it appears that Islamic Religious Education research activities are more focused on operational activities in the classroom, not yet spread on various problems and educational institutions. For that reason, what needs to be further appreciated is how Islamic Religious Education research is more spread in various dimensions, so that it appears the breadth and robustness of Islamic Religious Education itself, so that it can provide the widest possible benefits, not only in school but outside of school. Because Islamic Religious Education is not a separate activity with aspects of the life of the wider community. School is one vehicle that is probably not the main one. Outside of school, many parties are equally important, such as family, playmates, and religious atmosphere in the community (Fadjar and Barizi, 2005).

In addition, from this matrix can be mapped the advantages and disadvantages of Islamic Religious Education, in terms of the type of problem and the institution. This mapping should be the responsibility of the Islamic Higher Education as ammunition to take policy. For example, mapping at the operational level in schools. From here it will be known, what school and where is it at a good operational level, so that it can be used as a flagship? Likewise mapping at the operational level with the mass media. From here will be known which media and what types of events can affect students in Islamic Religious Education? Likewise seen from the environment, in which educational environment can Islamic Religious Education grow and develop properly? Because the educational environment will create a pattern of understanding one's religion. If the environment in

which a person is located is tolerant, flexible, and respects personal freedom in thinking and acting, then it can be considered as a starting point for creativity in religion (Langgulung, 2001).

Likewise, in terms of the scope of the Islamic Religious Education study, research on Islamic Religious Education problems often comes out of its scientific discipline. This results in a lack of focus on Islamic Religious Education research, especially for students in completing the final project, either in the form of a thesis, thesis, or dissertation. The idea of this scope departs from the view that each discipline has its own scope of study that must be different from the others. In the Tarbiyah faculty, many departments or study programs often intersect with others, making it difficult to distinguish. For example between the Department of Islamic Religious Education and Islamic Education Management. Often thesis titles for students from this department are the same, for example: Efforts of Madrasah Heads in Impproving Teacher Professionalism. Such a title, should be in the Management of Islamic Education department. Because it contains managerial elements and planning strategies. But it is not infrequently used as the title of students from Islamic Religious Education majors, not only in undergraduate programs but also in postgraduate programs. For this reason, a wider scope of Islamic Religious Education study is needed.

In my opinion, the scope of Islamic Religious Education can be described as follows:
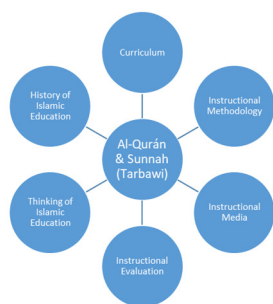

Figure 1 : Scope of Study in Islamic Religious Education

The implications of this scope, all Islamic Religious Education research must lead to some of these components accompanied by the educational arguments in the Qur'an and Sunnah. If there is research outside this scientific framework, then it must be straightened out, so that the core of Islamic Religious Education's knowledge becomes clearer. Because often many people cut corners by making the final project based on what is read and can be an example to accelerate their research, without considering the scope of science. Here are some notes

on Islamic Religious Education research issues that need attention from all parties.

This scope also clarifies that, the area of Islamic Religious Education study is not limited to teaching in schools, such as Al-Qurán-Hadith, Aqidah-Akhlak, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History, or limited to outputs, approaches and methodologies, material teaching and educator (Mastuhu, 1999), but broader than that, covering all aspects that are the starting point in building the content and substance of thinking about the issues of the nature of the main components of Islamic Religious Education activities (Muhaimin, 2003).

Based on the chart, it appears that the Islamic Religious Education study in Indonesia is still at the operational level and relies on research alone. By adapting Gheophart's thinking in (Miarso, 2003) that scientific studies / scientific methods (including in the field of Islamic Religious Education), can be done in three ways, namely research, development and evaluation. With these three methods, it is expected to produce an effective, efficient, interesting, practical, and effective Islamic Religious Education learning model that has broad implications for improving the religious quality of students.

These three ways can be used as a basis for improving the quality of Islamic religious education in a sustainable manner, so that it is very beneficial for the parties concerned. Sustainable quality in the field of Islamic Religious Education, according to (Muhaimin, 2016) concerns 5 main components, namely: (1) strategies for empowering teachers and students, (2) opportunities and challenges for Islamic Religious Education in facing conditions and changing times, (3) increasing the role of Islamic Religious Education scientists in the development science, (4) the contents of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum which is anticipatory towards the development of the era, and (5) The desired in-put and out-put and out-come in the Islamic Religious Education.

With this continuous quality improvement expected, the weaknesses that occur in Islamic Religious Education can be minimized. These weaknesses, according to Muhaimin's analysis (Muhaimin, 2016) are: (1) Islamic Religious Education is less able to change cognitive knowledge that is cognitive to be meaningful and valuable; (2) Islamic Religious Education is less able to cooperate or synergize with non-Islamic Religious Education programs, and (3) Islamic Religious Education lacks relevance to social change.

More than that, judging from the approach or scientific method, Islamic Religious Education research uses more quantitative approaches with

descriptive types and qualitative approaches to the types of case studies. Even though there are many different approaches and types of research. As written by Creswell (Creswell, 2012), many offer a variety of experimental research, correlational, survey, Grounded theory, ethnography, narrative, mixed methods, and action research. Also Gay and Mills (Mills and Gay, 2016) offer that educational research (including Islamic Religious Education) can use a quantitative approach with survey types, correlational, causal-comparative, experimental, qualitative approaches with narrative types, ethnography, case studies, and joint approaches (mixed methods). McMillan (McMillan, 1992) offers phenomenological studies/research in the field of education by observing a variety of unique educational symptoms that appear at certain loci. With a variety of research methodologies will enrich the findings in the field of Islamic Religious Education, although the research may be carried out in a simple, narrow scope, which is designed and implemented alone in a relatively short time, as well as complex research that covers many aspects with a broad scope and involves many people and need a relatively long time (Sukmadinata, 2007).

Islamic Religious Education research can also adopt some educational thoughts in general, for example in methodology, Islamic Religious Education learning can adopt Reigeluth's thoughts in Uno (2014: 2) which studies learning into 3 (three) variables, namely learning conditions, learning methods and learning outcomes. Learning conditions are factors that influence the effects of methods in improving learning outcomes, learning methods are different ways to achieve different learning outcomes under different conditions, and learning outcomes are effects that are used as indicators of the value of using the method under conditions different.

One type of research that is also important as a Islamic Religious Education research methodology and often forgotten is character studies or character research. Whereas with the study of figures can explore various thoughts, perceptions, motivations, aspirations, and ambitions of an educational figure and his ability to build educational institutions to be successful (Arief and Agus, 2005). With this character research, it is hoped that it can inspire and give examples of all people, so that they can succeed in education as well as the intended character.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the results of the study show that out of 44 research titles, as many as 23 research titles (52.27%) studied more operational problems in education in schools or madrasas, 6 research titles (13.64%) studied the operational problems of education in religious institutions, 5 research titles (11.36%) examined the problem of the structure of education in schools, 5 research titles (11.36%) examined the problem of the foundation of education in schools, 4 research titles (9.10%) examined the operational problems of education in family, and only 1 research title (2.27%) examines the operational problems of education in youth organizations. Judging from these results, the Islamic Religious Education research study area has not varied, because it has not spread to various other dimensions, for example in families, religious institutions, youth organizations, and the mass media. Judging from the scientific method, it is more based on research, does not extend to development and evaluation.

For this reason, it is recommended that Islamic Higher Education can develop a medium and long-term program for the development of Islamic Religious Education research. Medium-term program, for example by conducting an intensive study of various areas of Islamic Religious Education study based on the cross-matrix. Moreover, it is necessary to examine various scientific methodologies in addition to research, namely development and evaluation as well as conducting critical analysis, involving various experts. With this, it is hoped that a more robust Islamic Religious Education scientific study building will be born. While the long-term program begins with the identification of the Islamic Religious Education study area based on Islamic religious studies and making priorities for the study, as well as expanding and intensifying the flow of Islamic Religious Education scientific communication. Thus, structuring, coordinating and distributing specific tasks between scientific activities is increasingly clear. Through this Islamic Religious Education scientific study sketch that is not clear enough and has not been studied much, it can be further emphasized and filled with gaps that are still empty.

Finally, parties who have a moral responsibility to develop scientific knowledge of Islamic Religious Education need to emphasize attitudes, so that Islamic Religious Education as a social reality can be developed towards a better direction. This is important, because the weakness that seems common

to Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia is to address and treat Islamic Religious Education values and their supporting science tools as a product, and not to be appreciated as a process or method of thinking (*manhaj al-fikri*) that needs more in-depth study. with the social settings that accompany it.

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