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Knowledge and Learning of Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding in an Indonesian Islamic College Sample: An Epistemological Belief Approach

M. Nur Ghufron ^{1,*}, Rini Risnawita Suminta ² and Jamaludin Hadi Kusuma ³

¹ Kudus State Islamic Institute (IAIN Kudus), Jl. Conge, Ngembalrejo P.O. Box 51, Bae, Kudus 59327, Central Java, Indonesia

² Islamic Psychology Department, Kediri State Islamic Institute (IAIN Kediri), Jl. Sunan Ampel 07, Ngronggo, Kediri 64127, East Java, Indonesia; rinirisnawita16@iainkediri.ac.id

³ Faculty of Islamic Theology, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia; 17105030100@student.uin-suka.ac.id

* Correspondence: emnurghufron78@iainkudus.ac.id

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Abstract: Epistemological beliefs are the basis of how someone acquires knowledge and are used as a guide for behavior in everyday life. For religious fundamentalists, however, their belief in religious knowledge is very strong, causing them to negate different opinions and ideas. Since 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 predictors of an individual's tendency towards religious fundamentalism. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of epistemological beliefs on the religious fundamentalism of Muslim millennial youth. By using a 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 ($p = 138$, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.965, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.934, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.978 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.040). Furthermore, statistical analysis shows that epistemological beliefs in the form of beliefs about knowledge (critical ratio (C.R) = 4585 and $p = 0.000$) and beliefs about learning (C.R = 3202 and $p = 0.001$) have significant and positive effects on religious fundamentalism. These 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 world religious traditions, 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 by which individuals and groups 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 means that researchers and practitioners need many tools in the form of various scientific disciplines 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”, namely the fear that he has the wrong view or is involved in “wrong” behaviors relative to what is taught or trusted as “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 makes the fundamentalist different from an open-minded person. Fundamentalism can be formed from an early age through religious learning that emphasizes absolutism and the simplification of ways of thinking. In addition, these teachings must also be learned from people who know better, such as religious experts and religious leaders, as 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 overemphasizes salvation based on a positive relationship between individuals and God and places less emphasis on 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 towards the dualistic spirit of “right and wrong”. Here, fundamentalism is not merely focused on theological-based violence, but, more fundamentally, it is aimed at how one conceptualizes religious knowledge and believes it absolutely by negating the opposite view. Since fundamentalism is very strongly associated with the absolute belief in a truth derived from the knowledge that an individual believes in, it is also simultaneously associated with a belief in learning and knowledge.

To verify this assumption while examining the influence of knowledge and learning on religious fundamental thinking, this study takes epistemological belief as its emphasis and limits the research to epistemology according to educational psychology. Epistemological beliefs are henceforth divided into beliefs about knowledge and beliefs 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 derive truth from information about individual beliefs, how to gain knowledge and how to justify knowledge (Jehng et al. 1993). Belief, when associated with epistemology, will be interesting to study because it is the basis of the theory of the way in which knowledge is acquired by humans and can govern an individual’s day-to-day behaviors. An individual belief in knowledge and how to acquire it has become part of the basic mechanism of thinking and part of the building of epistemology (Ryan 1984), and it is one of the driving forces in achieving intellectual abilities (Klaczynski and Robinson 2000). Beliefs about knowledge and beliefs about learning, often referred to as epistemological beliefs, are one of the factors that may be a predictor of the tendency of an individual to understand religious fundamentalism. From an Islamic perspective, the epistemology of knowledge and knowing has long been a major concern of thinkers with regard to its important implications for Islamic philosophy and life governance (Zarkasyi 2018). This study will examine the effect of beliefs about knowledge and beliefs about learning on the tendency of individuals towards 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 terms of gaining knowledge and learning about authority that was in accordance with their personal ideals.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Epistemological Belief

Etymologically, epistemology comes from Greece, combining the words “episteme” and “logos”. “Episteme” means “knowledge”, while “logos” usually refers to “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 and even determine the truth—namely, what is considered acceptable and what must be rejected.

Epistemology, as a branch of philosophy, is related to the nature of knowledge, and it is concerned with the means of knowing (Crotty 1998). As a philosophical discipline, epistemology is concerned with increasing an individual's set of beliefs by 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 a definite to the uncertain perspective, 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 obtain knowledge, psychologically, epistemology is also considered to contain degrees of belief. This means that a person's beliefs in a knowledge can be epistemologically strong or low. According to (Schommer 1994), there is a difference between epistemological research in philosophy and educational psychology. While the epistemology philosophy focuses on the investigation of universal and absolute knowledge and truth, the psychology of education focuses on what an individual believes about the nature of knowledge and its effects on cognitive processes, such as how to receive the true information of individual beliefs, organize information, acquire knowledge and justify the knowledge. Hofer (2001) defines epistemology in the educational psychology as how individuals believe in how the knowledge occurs, how much knowledge is acquired, where it is obtained and how knowledge is built and evaluated.

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

Schommer (1990) stated that epistemological beliefs require what students believe about the nature of knowledge and believe about learning (Schommer 2004). Hofer (2001) proposes three key perspectives that connect epistemology with learning and teaching: (a) epistemology is development, development is the purpose of education, thus, part of the purpose of education is to foster epistemological development; (b) epistemology exists in the form of belief, and learning is influenced by epistemological beliefs held by individuals; (c) epistemology is either like theory or exists as a finer epistemological resource, and in the learning process these theories and resources are activated and engaged in context-dependent ways. In summary, epistemological beliefs are individual beliefs about the nature of knowledge and

how that knowledge is obtained. Furthermore, [Schommer \(2004\)](#) developed epistemological beliefs by separating the belief about knowledge and the belief about learning.

2.2. *Belief about Knowledge and Belief about Learning*

The five epistemological beliefs taxonomy proposed by [Schommer \(2004\)](#) includes beliefs about: (1) simple knowledge such as knowledge that is organized simply or cut into pieces or correlated with various concepts, (2) certain, absolute, enduring or growing knowledge, (3) omniscient knowledge, emerging from the experience of people who have the authority to convey knowledge or coming from one's own thoughts followed by various evidences, (4) rapid learning as learning done quickly or gradually through an easy process or hard work, and (5) innate abilities in the form of congenital nature or changes which can develop at any time.

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

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

2.3. *Religious Fundamentalism*

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

Fundamentalism is seen as a psychological construct that is negative from the moral view. This refers to various research results that show that fundamentalism is a predictor of various social problems, such as authoritarianism and dogmatism ([Kirkpatrick et al. 1991](#)), fanaticism, racial prejudice, support for violence in the name of religion, prejudice against women, and ethnocentrism ([Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005](#)). [Hood et al. \(2005\)](#) explain religious fundamentalism more positively, even though it does not clearly define its construct. They conceptualize religious fundamentalism in an intellectual model, where individuals depend on their respective religious scriptures as a guide.

This intellectual model stresses on the process of reading text rather than the text content. Intellectuality intertwines with many of the abovementioned concepts. Specifically, fundamentalists must have holy texts and obtain absolute truth, for example, Muslims believe that there are no other gods but Allah, as written in the sacred text. By relying on scriptures, divinity is demonstrated through absolute truth, which is maintained by every fundamentalist perspective.

Fundamentalism is considered a rigid and dogmatic way to become religious (Spilka et al. 2003) and is a construct designed to show individual attitudes about their religious beliefs (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992). In religious fundamentalism, the sacred role is considered primarily related to the creation of a broad system of meanings, which results from obedience to and respect for certain texts, such as the Koran or the Bible (Hood et al. 2005). In understanding religious fundamentalism, it is important to note that the specific designation of what is defined as sacred by groups can vary from religion to religion. In contrast, group or individual beliefs about what they call sacred does not vary from religion to religion.

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

Moreover, Almond et al. (2003) describe five main characteristics of religious fundamentalist ideology. First, the reactions to the marginalization of religion are the ideological characteristics associated with the defense of the traditions of each group in response to the perceived threat of increasing modernization and secularization. Second, the ideological characteristics that affirm that groups choose aspects of their religion and distinguish themselves clearly from popular culture. The third ideological characteristic is the fundamentalist group conceptualizing the world dualistically, as in good and evil. Fourth, their scriptures show absolutism and inerrancy. This characteristic is related to the dependence on the sacred texts of each group as a source of absolute truth. The last characteristic of the ideology is related to millennialism and messianism, which refer to the sacred end of the world where believers will receive salvation at the arrival or return of holy characters, such as messiahs (Almond et al. 2003). Religious fundamentalism has a systemic impact on the global order and is a serious subtle threat by justifying the use of violence motivated by religion (Emerson and Hartman 2006). In first-world countries, fundamentalists tend to influence through the development of political and social change in a relatively non-violent manner. However, fundamentalists outside the first-world tend to act harder. Barkun (2012) emphasizes that the relationship between religion and violence is not always linear, suggesting that if a particular religion is characterized by fundamentalist characteristics, such as literalism and charismatic leaders, it is not always associated with violence. Apart from the most well-known cases of brutal violence perpetuated by religious fundamentalists, not all religious motives are rooted in fundamentalist ideology (Juergensmeyer 2003). Iannaccone (1997) argues that religious violence is related to government regulations on religion. He claimed that religious violence tends to occur under a government that suppresses religious freedom or which emphasizes the exclusivity of one religion.

2.4. Islamic Study and Millennial Students

Geopolitical instability and the rise of xenophobia and right-wing nationalism in several major countries over the last few decades have raised awareness of millennial youths to be actively involved in echoing their views (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2013; Ignazi 1992; Knutsen 2016), and in defending their group's collective identity (Milkman 2017). An example can be seen in Europe in the Islamophobia youth protests over the entry of Muslim immigrants (Hafez 2014). On the other hand, young Muslims consider the phobia as evidence of European antipathy towards Islam (Sageman 2008). The harshness shown by the two groups was targeted by fundamentalists to carry out acts of violence and terrorism against opposing groups that were considered to be endangering their common identity and interests (Abbas 2013; Israeli 2017; Wahyuni 2019). Generally, young people in the stage of searching for identity seek an established authority that is able to accommodate their desires (Herring 2008; Howe and Willam 2000). This characterization has long been used as a target for fundamentalists to strengthen their influence (Barkun 2012). In Indonesia, several Islamic study groups (*halaqah*) on state campuses have long been the basis of teaching radical content, with most participants being young millennial students (Arifianto 2018). Teachings that emphasize excessive indoctrination and dogma on the absolute truths of religion have made them justify, even engage in, radical actions and religion-based violence. Some of these groups are generally exclusive and less tolerant of the values of multiculturalism and differences in beliefs and religions (Wahid 2009).

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

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

2.5. Knowledge and Learning with Religious Fundamentalism

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

Regarding epistemological beliefs and religious fundamentalism, fundamentalism begins when individuals have specific epistemological beliefs. Previous research has shown that religiosity can influence how an individual resolves epistemic doubts (Bendixen and Rule 2004) and has explained that individuals who uphold orthodox religious views tend to be dualistic or "black and white" in their thinking (Desimpelaere et al. 1999), which is a characterization of the early stages of epistemological development (Perry 1970). Epistemological beliefs are also associated with the

ability of individuals to analyze misconceptions (Ricco 2007) although some evidence shows that many people are able to logically reason well but fail when evaluating two contradictory religious claims (Montgomery et al. 2005).

Altemeyer and Hunsberger (2005) and Hood et al. (2005) show that many followers of fundamentalist religions begin their attitudes and actions from an epistemological view that is characterized by believing that knowledge in religion has is simple, definite, and has derived from an omniscient authority. It can also be explained that the epistemological structure of fundamentalists is consistently associated with authoritarianism and resistant to receiving knowledge that is different or contrary to their view (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005; Laythe et al. 2001). Hathcoat (2004) revealed that followers of a high fundamental religion would tend to believe in knowledge with certainty. They have an unchanging determination. They believe in people who have authority. Learning can be done quickly. Tabak and Weinstock's (2008) study observed students studying in the natural science program and students studying in the religion program. Students in these two domains hold absolute epistemological beliefs, because these two disciplines include special programs. Science is verifiable, while religious teaching is somewhat unquestionable and doctrinal. Here, the position of belief in knowledge comes from an expert in knowledge. Knowledge is certain, and the regular process of the individual can determine the level of fundamentalism of the individual's religion. Likewise, the position of belief in individual learning can be done quickly. The individual abilities are deemed innate, which also determines the tendency of fundamentalist positions in one's religion. In other words, the higher the belief in knowledge and belief in learning, the more likely they are to be a religious fundamentalist.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design

The research design used in this study is quantitative. This type of quantitative research was used because of the view that reality/phenomena can be classified, relatively fixed, concrete, observable, and measurable. This study aims to examine the effect of epistemological beliefs on the tendency of religious fundamentalism in students. The selection of respondents is at the tertiary level because at this time the age of development is in the early adult stage which is characterized by the start of students being abstract and critical in terms of dealing with problems—especially related to morals and even religion.

3.2. Sampling

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

3.3. Variable Measurement

The data collection techniques used in this study were questionnaires in the form of scales adopted from previous studies. There are two scales used in this study, namely the scale of epistemological beliefs, and the fundamental scale of religion, measuring interfaith and intercultural understanding. The scale model developed was adopted from the Likert developed model with five alternative answers—namely strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)—so that the distribution of respondents' attention to the answer options was not too broad and so that the suitability of the choices is more realistic.

The epistemological belief scale in this study is divided into two components of belief. First, the belief in knowledge is an individual's belief in the nature of knowledge, which includes these following aspects: (1) knowledge comes from an expert who is a person who knows better, (2) certain

knowledge and (3) orderly processes. In general, it can be said that the higher the value obtained, the more naive the belief of the knowledge possessed. The number of items on the scale of belief statements of knowledge are 8 statement items. An example of the point is, “I like the class where the lecturer before teaching sets the lecture program”, “The answers contained in the reference book are very helpful because I am not sure of my own solutions”, and “I feel comfortable when dealing with uncertain learning conditions”. Meanwhile, belief in learning is an individual’s belief in learning which includes: (1) quick learning and (2) innate abilities. This epistemological belief was measured by using a modified epistemological belief scale developed by (Jehng et al. 1993). In general, it can be said that the higher the value obtained, the more naive the belief in learning is. The number of items in the statement of belief scale on learning is 6. An example of this point is, “If I can’t understand something quickly, usually I have difficulty learning it as a whole”, and “Students, who have moderate achievements in high school, will remain the same and have moderate achievements when they are students in tertiary institutions.”

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

3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis technique in this study used structural equation modeling (SEM). This analysis technique has the ability to test a series of complicated correlations between one or several dependent variables simultaneously. Each variable can be in the form of a single factor or variable which is directly observed or measured in the research process (Ferdinand 2000). The data analysis techniques with this structural equation model used the AMOS Program.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

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

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		

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

4.2. Model Testing Criteria

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

Table 2. Model testing criteria.

Index	Cut-Off-Value	Results
Chi-Square		31.581
CMIN/DF	76.527/60	1.316
Significance	>0.05	0.138
RMSEA	<0.05	0.040
GFI	0.90	0.965
AGFI	0.90	0.934
TLI or IFI	0.95	0.978

Based on the analysis with structural equation models, the chi-square = 31. 581 (degree of freedom [DF] = 24, $p = 138$) contrast media-induced nephropathy/degree of freedom [CMIN/DF] = 1.316, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.965, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.934, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.978 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.040, with a probability score >0.05. Thus, the criteria for the acceptance of the model are met and this indicates that the proposed model is in accordance with empirical data.

4.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

According to Ghozali (2008), the testing of unidimensionality of each construct must be done by the confirmatory factor analysis before analyzing the structural equation models. The test was conducted to determine the reliability of the construct measuring indicators. The unidimensionality test in this study was conducted to identify the significance of the power of discrimination (item correlation with total) of the construct indicators. This test is conducted to obtain the convergent validity of variables or loading factor scores of each indicator. A confirmation analysis was carried out between exogenous variables and endogenous variables. The exogenous variable in this study is the belief in knowledge and learning beliefs and the endogenous variable in this study is religious fundamentalism. Based on the results of the confirmation analysis between exogenous variables and endogenous variables, the fit criteria are achieved. The significant value of the standard loading parameter estimation is also above the score of 0.0, which means that the fit criteria are also obtained (Figure 1).

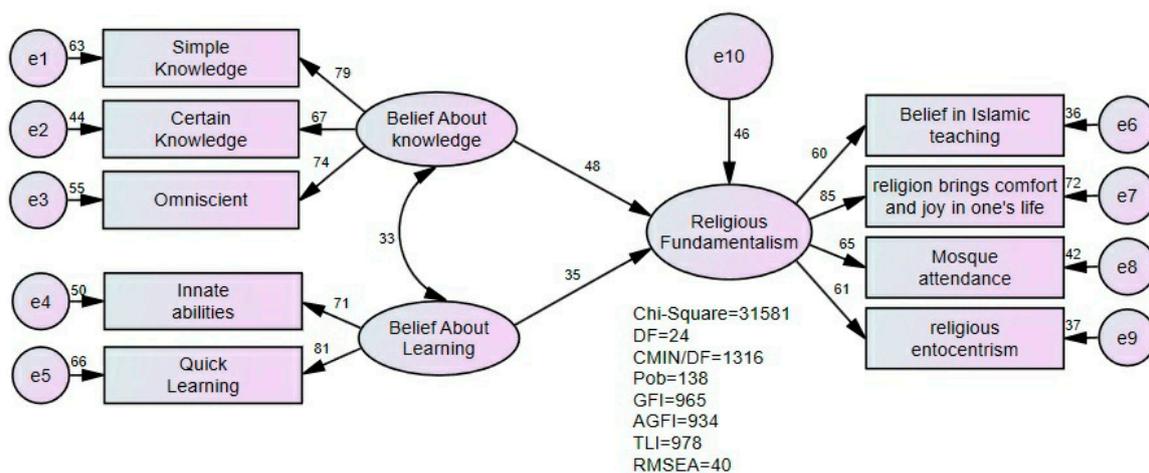


Figure 1. Full model.

5. Hypothesis Testing

The estimation results or lambda values, i.e., regression quality evaluations between the latent variables and degrees of freedom (DF) critical ratio (C.R) scores or t-counts (significance probability values of 0.05) can be determined after an analysis using the AMOS statistical program. The results of the regression quality in the causality test are presented in Table 3.

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

The regression analyses show the significant and positive effects of the belief about knowledge variable on religious fundamentalism (estimate = 0.0343, C.R = 4.585, and $p = 0.000$). Similarly, the statistical testing shows a significant and positive influence of belief about learning on religious fundamentalism (estimate = 0.0229, C.R = 3.202, and $p = 0.001$). It means that epistemological beliefs consisting of beliefs about knowledge and beliefs about learning have a significant positive influence on religious fundamentalism. The determination coefficient (R^2) of religious fundamentalism is 0.46, which means that 46% can be explained or predicted through a variable of belief in knowledge and belief in learning.

In particular, the results of this analysis indicate that beliefs about knowledge and beliefs about learning have a positive and significant influence on religious fundamentalism. This means that, the more beliefs an individual has about knowledge, with the measurement items of “knowledge is certain, knowledge is simple and knowledge can only be obtained by an expert”, and the higher the belief about learning with the measurement items of “learning can be done quickly and learning ability is innate”, the higher the fundamentalist tendency. A fundamentalist is usually regarded as a person who truly adheres to doctrines, points of view, or a set of principles that are considered original and “pure”. This doctrine may be theological. Many of fundamentalist beliefs and behaviors that emerge from them, at least cognitively, are a reflection of their fundamental doctrine. For fundamentalists, there is no room to consider views that conflict with the doctrine they accept and conflicting views will usually be rejected or strongly opposed, often using violence. Conversely, someone who is “open-minded”, unlike fundamentalists, may still have a strong view and may even have a very careful position on certain issues. They will usually behave according to their views and conscience. However, even so, they will usually also show a willingness to seriously reflect on alternative views or actions before rejecting them. In addition, they tend to accept suffering, in one form or another, as a result of maintaining an opinion or conformity of conscience, and they do not use violence to “defend” what had become their belief. In addition, a key component of fundamentalism is the dependence and respect of the scriptures to produce a comprehensive system of meaning or worldview (Hood et al. 2005). This implies that regardless of whether religious leaders have a deep knowledge or are considered omniscient or not, more emphasis will be placed on the side of conformity with the sacred text. In other words, religious fundamentalists believe that knowledge in the religious domain is definite, simple, and comes from an infallible authority that knows everything.

Kuhn (1999) states that knowledge is basically factual and exact, and Kłaczynski and Robinson (2000) found that students who develop more critical epistemological beliefs tend to have perceptions that are more friendly and tolerant in learning and criticizing than students who master and rely on naive beliefs. The results of Tabak and Weinstock’s (2008) study on elementary school students in Israel—which evaluated students’ potentials to hold absolutist views, or pluralist or evaluative positions about the knowledge and truth in social and physical spheres—found that those who study in the religion program are more likely to hold absolute epistemological beliefs in accordance with their view that religious matters are unquestionable. In addition, individuals with high fundamentalist

tendencies are more likely to demonstrate a tendency to show the general belief outside of the religious domain that knowledge is certain, originating from the omniscient authority and that learning takes place quickly or not at all (Hathcoat 2004). The results of this study are consistent with the results of research by Jehng et al. (1993) which shows that the disciplines studied have an effect on student confidence. Thus, it can be stressed that it is also possible that the disciplines studied have an effect on epistemological beliefs.

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

6. Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that an individual who has a high belief in knowledge is more likely to have a tendency towards high religious fundamentalism. Knowledge belief is an assumption that knowledge is definite, simple, and can only be obtained from an expert. Furthermore, the belief in learning has a positive and significant impact on the understanding of fundamentalism. This means that the higher the belief in learning, the more likely it is that a person will increase their understanding of religious fundamentalism. The belief in learning assumes that learning can be done quickly and that learning ability is innate.

The epistemological model of belief in knowledge and individuals who tend to have fundamentalist religious ideas has many implications related to behaviors. In educational institutions, students with fundamentalist orientations tend to have special weaknesses in classroom if the material or teachings are considered to be contrary to their understanding of religious meaning. In such situations, it is possible to have conflicts between the teachings conveyed by the teacher and the religious teachings or views of fundamentalist students. It is possible that these people will fail to see the teaching figure as an omniscient authority and believe that knowledge in the scientific domain is certain because of the potential threats taught by these teachings to their current system of meaning, and the ideas included in them. This form of scepticism is motivated by the receipt of information that may potentially damage the teachings that the individual holds. In a skeptical position, students will likely be in two conditions, namely by having a more radical view in of the teachings that they have or by changing to believe in the more complex and tentative knowledge obtained from their own thinking process.

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