Investigating Islamic Religious Education learning in Public Higher Education: epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers

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Abstract

This study aims to identify epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers to Islamic Religious Education learning in public higher education. A qualitative approach with a case study design was used to collect data through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The findings indicate that students' difficulties connecting Islamic teachings with modern sciences, such as economics and technology, arise from epistemological barriers. As many as 75% of students complained about the lack of relevance of Islamic Religious Education materials to their fields of study. Ontogenic barriers are related to students' mental unpreparedness, including anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and inability to participate actively in learning. Unstable psychological conditions, such as stress and time management disorders, exacerbate this problem. On the other hand, didactic barriers were identified in using one-way lecture teaching methods that reduce student engagement and the lack of variation in learning strategies that connect theory to contemporary issues. This study suggests improvements in teaching methods, emphasizing interactive and problem-based approaches and increasing student involvement in discussions to deepen a comprehensive understanding of religion. In addition, strengthening practical learning, such as teaching Tajweed and applying religious teachings in a modern context, is expected to overcome these barriers.

Keywords:
Didactics, Higher Education, Islamic Religious Education. Learning Barriers

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi hambatan epistemologis, ontogenik, dan didaktik dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di perguruan tinggi umum. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa hambatan epistemologis muncul dari kesulitan mahasiswa dalam menghubungkan ajaran Islam dengan ilmu pengetahuan modern, seperti ekonomi dan teknologi. Hambatan ontogenik terkait dengan ketidaksiapan mental mahasiswa, termasuk kecemasan, kurangnya percaya diri, dan ketidakmampuan untuk berpartisipasi aktif dalam pembelajaran. Masalah ini diperburuk dengan kondisi psikologis yang tidak stabil, seperti stres dan gangguan manajemen waktu. Di sisi lain, hambatan didaktik teridentifikasi dalam penggunaan metode pengajaran ceramah satu arah yang mengurangi keterlibatan mahasiswa dan kurangnya variasi dalam strategi pembelajaran yang menghubungkan teori dengan masalah kontemporer. Penelitian ini menyarankan perlunya perbaikan dalam metode pengajaran, dengan penekanan pada pendekatan interaktif dan berbasis masalah, serta peningkatan keterlibatan mahasiswa dalam diskusi untuk mendalami pemahaman agama secara komprehensif. Selain itu, penguatan pembelajaran praktis, seperti pengajaran tajwid dan aplikasi ajaran agama dalam konteks modern, diharapkan dapat mengatasi hambatan-hambatan tersebut.

Kata Kunci:
Didaktik, Hambatan Pembelejaran, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Perguruan Tinggi
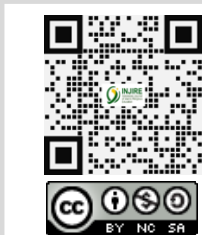
Introduction

Islamic Religious Education learning plays a vital role in shaping the character and knowledge of religion in students in Higher Education. Islamic Religious Education learning functions as a means of character education that aims to develop the spiritual, intellectual, and moral potential of students so that they become individuals who have noble morals and can face the challenges of the times based on Islamic values (Aladiin & PS; Kamal, 2023; Muhaimin, 2017). Therefore, Islamic Religious Education intracurricular activities are designed to improve students' understanding of Islamic teachings and strengthen character that can be applied in everyday life.

Teaching Islamic Religious Education in Higher Education has a strategic role in instilling universal values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance, which are very relevant in shaping the character of students as future leaders of the nation (Zubaidi, 2022; Haidir et al., 2023). However, along with the times, higher education faces new challenges in the context of increasingly complex globalization, digitalization, and pluralism (Bassar et al., 2021). This phenomenon demands an Islamic Religious Education learning approach that is relevant and adaptive to the ever-changing needs and socio-cultural situations. In addition, Islamic Religious Education in Higher Education must accommodate students' diverse backgrounds and perspectives, including those from different cultures and religious understandings (Adha et al., 2023; Fuadi, 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2020). Therefore, Islamic Religious Education in Higher Education is required not only to convey Islamic Religious Education religious dogmas but also to prioritize the development of values of inclusivity, tolerance, and humanism that are greatly needed in a multicultural society.

However, implementing Islamic Religious Education learning in Higher Education often faces various epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers that hinder its effectiveness. This is in line with the opinion that learning that has not shown significant results is caused by three barriers, namely (1) epistemological barriers, (2) ontogenic barriers, and (3) didactic barriers (Larasati et al., 2019). Epistemological barriers are related to the perspective or perception of religious knowledge, which is sometimes limited to dogma and does not pay attention to aspects of critical and contextual understanding (Herlambang, 2021). This makes it difficult for students to understand the relevance of Islamic values to modern life. On the other hand, ontogenic barriers are related to the mental unpreparedness of students before participating in learning. This barrier refers to the psychological development of students who are at the stage of searching for identity, so an overly authoritative approach can cause resistance, especially in Generation Z.

Generation Z, which is currently in the transition phase from adolescence to young adulthood, tends to prioritize freedom of thought and opinion. Their learning is also more open to social and technological change, and they tend to judge authority based on relevance and fairness, not just hierarchy or age (Hastini et al., 2020; Twenge, 2017). An overly controlling or authoritative approach can risk causing this generation to feel limited, reducing their motivation and involvement in the learning process. Research shows that Generation Z is more responsive to approaches that provide space for autonomy and experiential learning (Pratama, 2024; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Muhammad Ihsanul Arief & Najmi Pakhruji Hidayatullah, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to understand their psychosocial development and apply methods that encourage active participation and self-development rather than imposing overly strict rules.

Then, didactic barriers in teaching Islamic Religious Education in higher education include teaching methods that are often still one-way, with a dominance of lectures and a lack of discussion or participatory approaches. Students need a space for dialogue and critical reflection to understand Islamic teachings more profoundly and relevantly to the context of their lives. More interactive and dialogical teaching can help students internalize character values to create meaningful learning (Andreas & Bukidz, 2023; Charles et al., 2023; Nurmaidah, 2022). In addition to these barriers, technological developments provide challenges and opportunities for Islamic Religious Education in higher education. The use of technology in learning Islamic Religious Education, such as the use of digital applications and e-learning platforms, can increase

accessibility and attract student interest. However, using this technology needs to be balanced with the right pedagogical approach so that it not only replaces conventional methods but can also create a more effective and interactive learning experience (Sauri et al., 2021).

Moreover, teaching Islamic Religious Education requires serious attention. Higher education generally has a diversity of religions, tribes, and cultures. Islamic Religious Education serves to instill the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and harmony between religious communities.

Research on Islamic Religious Education in public higher education in the last five years has been conducted by several researchers, especially those who highlight the role of Islamic Religious Education learning in public higher education in the formation of religious and moderate character, such as Afwadzi & Miski, (2021); Hanafi et al. (2023); Suharman & Abzar, (2024). However, research that discusses the epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers to teaching Islamic Religious Education in public higher education still needs to be completed, so this research is expected to fill this gap and significantly contribute to the development of more effective Islamic religious education learning in public higher education.

This study aims to analyze various epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers to teaching Islamic Religious Education in public higher education. By understanding and identifying these barriers, implementing Islamic Religious Education in public higher education can be more optimal and answer the needs of students in the modern era. In addition, this study is essential to identify and overcome these obstacles so that Islamic religious education in state universities can take place optimally. By exploring the existing epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers, this study is expected to improve the quality of the curriculum, teaching methodology, and understanding of religion among students, as well as strengthen the integration of Islamic religious values in their social lives. This study also has relevance in a broader scientific context as part of the development of Islamic religious education theory that is more adaptive to the needs of the times.

Methods
Research Design
This study uses a qualitative case study design approach to deeply understand the process of learning Islamic Religious Education in public higher education. This case study approach allows for contextual and comprehensive analysis related to epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers in learning Islamic Religious Education. The focus of this case study is to explore the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the Islamic Religious Education learning process in the academic scope of higher education. In other words, researchers explore the perceptions, experiences, and perspectives of lecturers and students related to learning Islamic Religious Education.

Study Area and Participants
This research was conducted at a state public higher education in Jambi province. The university was selected based on representative criteria that included sufficient students and lecturers to provide a rich perspective in this case study. The study's participants were 50, consisting of 40 students and ten lecturers. This is summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Students		Lecturers		Total
Male	Female	Male	Female	
20	20	5	5	**50**

Meanwhile, the participants were selected by purposive sampling based on the characteristics of the subjects determined in this study. The criteria for research subjects determined in this study were (1) lecturers who teach religious courses, (2) teaching religious courses for more than five

years, (3) State Civil Apparatus lecturers, (4) students who contract religious courses from various regions, and (5) students who have a public school background.

Data Collection Method

Data collection techniques used in this study include in-depth interviews, where semi-structured interviews were conducted with lecturers and students to explore their perceptions regarding the epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers they face in learning Islamic Religious Education. This interview aims to understand the participants' views on how learning is carried out, the barriers faced, and the efforts that have been made to overcome these problems. Interviews with lecturers will focus on their understanding of epistemology in Islamic Religious Education, their barriers in teaching Islamic Religious Education material, and their experiences compiling curriculum and teaching strategies.

Meanwhile, interviews with students will focus on their perceptions of the way Islamic Religious Education is taught, the barriers they experience in understanding and following learning, and their experiences regarding interactions with lecturers and fellow students in the context of learning. Then, the researcher also observed several Islamic Religious Education learning sessions in class. This observation aims to assess the dynamics of interaction between lecturers and students and identify barriers that arise in the learning process.

Observations will focus on the teaching methods used by lecturers, student reactions and participation in learning, and barriers that arise in the delivery of Islamic Religious Education materials or understanding by students. The researcher will also collect and analyze Islamic Religious Education learning documents, such as syllabi, semester learning plans, teaching materials, and exams. This document analysis aims to assess the extent to which epistemological and didactic aspects are reflected in the curriculum and materials taught.

Data Analysis

Data collected from interviews, observations, and documents will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The steps of data analysis that will be carried out are as follows:

1. Data Transcription: All interviews and focus group discussions will be transcribed to facilitate analysis. This transcript data will be checked to ensure accuracy and completeness.
2. Coding: The researcher will identify the main themes from the data through the coding process. This coding will be done manually or using qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo and Atlas.ti. The resulting codes will be grouped based on main categories, such as epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers.
3. Identification of Main Themes: The coded data will be grouped into major themes relevant to the research objectives, namely the barriers that occur in learning Islamic Religious Education. The researcher will identify whether these themes are related to epistemological factors (knowledge and perspective), ontogenic factors (individual development in the context of learning), or didactic factors (teaching strategies and curriculum).
4. Interrelationship Between Themes: Once the main themes have been identified, the researcher will explore the relationships between them. For example, the researcher will look at how epistemological barriers influence lecturers' teaching strategies or how students' ontogenic factors influence their understanding of the material being taught.
5. Validation of Findings: To increase the validity of the findings, the researcher will conduct data triangulation, namely comparing findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis. In addition, the researcher can also ask for confirmation from research participants (member checking) to ensure that the interpretation of the data is based on their experiences.
6. Preparation of the Report: After the analysis is complete, the researcher will prepare a report summarizing the research findings, identifying the main barriers to learning Islamic

Religious Education in public higher education, and providing recommendations for overcoming these barriers.

Results

This study aims to identify epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers to Islamic Religious Education learning in public universities in Jambi province. Based on data collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the following findings were obtained:

Epistemological Barriers

Epistemological barriers refer to the difficulty in connecting religion with other sciences, where 75% of students need help understanding how Islamic teachings relate to general sciences such as economics, science, or technology. Some students feel that the Islamic Religious Education material taught focuses more on normative and ritualistic aspects of religion without linking it to developments in knowledge in other fields. The results of interviews with several students confirm this.

Student 12

Yes, I find it difficult. The Islamic Religious Education course material focuses more on worship and morality without connecting it to science or technology. For example, when learning about the concept of sustenance in Islam, we must explain how it relates to economics or financial management, which we study in other majors. There is a gap between religious teachings and the development of science.

Student 19

Most Islamic Religious Education material, such as discussions about faith, fiqh, or Islamic history, feels separate from the fields of science that we study in other majors. For example, in the technology field, Islamic teachings can be used as a guideline for using technology wisely, but this is rarely discussed. Religious education should be more relevant to the modern context.

Furthermore, based on the results of observations, as many as 60% of students have yet to be able to read the Qur'an correctly according to the laws of tajweed, where they have difficulty reading short surahs in prayer. Many of them stutter and need to be more fluent to recite the readings of the Quran correctly. For example, in reading the Al-Fatihah surah, They often make mistakes in pronouncing certain letters, such as the letters 'ص' *(shod)* and 'س' *(sin)* in the word صراط. They also still stutter and are not yet fluent in their tajweed. In addition, when reading short surahs such as *Al-Ikhlas or Al-Falaq,* They often make mistakes in maintaining the length of the reading. They know it is essential, but sometimes it is difficult to remember the correct tajweed because there is no in-depth learning on campus. The problem of students' low ability to read the Al-Qur'an correctly is caused by backgrounds unfamiliar with reading the Al-Qur'an or never attended structured religious education before, often experiencing difficulties in learning recitation. They may not understand the hijaiyah letters, Maharaj (where the letters come out), and talk to him (thickening), which are very important in reading the Koran. Without a strong foundation, they will have difficulty understanding and mastering the more complex rules of recitation, such as those required in reading Surah Al-Fatihah correctly, where the pronunciation of letters such as 'ص' (shod), which is different from 'س' (sin) is very important to understand correctly.

Thus, the interview results show that students hope that the material taught will not only stop at theory and normative knowledge, but also be connected to practical applications in their

lives and professions, both in the fields of economics, technology, and other social sciences. In addition, as many as 45% of students complained that the teaching of Islamic Religious Education in state universities tends to be normative and one-way. They feel they are not given enough opportunity to analyze, discuss, or criticize the material taught. Many students are only taught to memorize and understand religious texts without being guided to connect them to social or scientific realities. Students limit their potential to develop critical thinking skills in understanding religious teachings. Islamic Religious Education learning that focuses more on memorization and conventional learning does not provide space for students to explore deeper epistemological dimensions regarding religious teachings. Thus, this limits students' potential to develop critical thinking skills in understanding religious teachings. Islamic Religious Education learning that focuses more on memorization and conventional learning does not provide space for students to explore deeper epistemological dimensions regarding religious teachings.

This is in line with the results of interviews with lecturers that

Lecturer 4

Many students cannot read the Qur'an well. The problem is that the education system in public universities often focuses on theoretical religious material, and the time available for practicing reading the Qur'an is minimal. Although we provide material on reading the Qur'an, no particular class discusses tajwid and the correct way to read it in depth.

Lecturer 7

I often find students who stutter when reading the Qur'an, even in group tadarus activities. This is due to a lack of knowledge and practice in reading the Qur'an beforehand. Universities could provide special classes or programs to deepen their reading of the Quran, which students can access.

Thus, the problem of students' difficulty in reading the Qur'an correctly, especially related to tajwid, is caused by a background unfanned to be more with reading the Qur'an and a lack of basic understanding of the hijaiyah letters, *maharaj*. With this basic understanding, students can understand more complex tajwid rules, such as correctly pronouncing the Al-Fatihah letter. This is exacerbated by the limited time and space for in-depth tajwid learning in public universities that focus more on theoretical religious material. According to lecturers, although material on reading the Qur'an is provided, no special classes intensively discuss tajwid and the correct reading procedures. Therefore, it is recommended that universities offer courses or programs to deepen reading of the Qur'an to help students in need.

Ontogenic Barriers

Ontogenic barriers related to psychological and mental unpreparedness refer to the challenges faced by students in adjusting to Islamic Religious Education learning. This unpreparedness is more directed at psychological and emotional aspects, affecting student's ability to absorb the material, actively participate in learning, and develop a reflective attitude towards religious teachings. These barriers often arise due to changes in the academic environment, differences in previous religious experiences, and the psychological condition of individuals needing more time to think more critically and deeply about religion.

The results of interviews with students regarding their learning readiness are summarized below.

Student 32

When I first took an Islamic Religious Education course, I felt very anxious and stressed when the lecturer asked me to read verses from the Qur'an. I felt unprepared to read, which made me feel insecure, and I often felt stressed during class.

Student 29

I need more focus and get sleepy quickly during lecture sessions.

This is confirmed by the observations that students appear less focused during learning activities in class and quickly fall asleep during lecture sessions. This shows signs of lack of sleep or unhealthy lifestyles, such as sleeping late at night due to non-academic activities or part-time work. In addition, students show signs of anxiety, such as being restless or overly worried when asked to answer questions in class or present material. This stress can hinder their ability to think clearly and participate actively.

In addition, students also experience unstable emotional conditions; where in group discussion sessions, it can be seen that some students are unable to contribute generously, most likely because they feel less confident and worried about being rejected by the group. In addition, students often show a lack of time management skills, as they have difficulty dividing their time between college assignments and other social activities. Some students tend to procrastinate, which causes a pile-up of assignments approaching the deadline.

The results of interviews with lecturers reinforce this condition

Lecturer 8

Students with social anxiety or who feel inadequately competent in the material often do not participate in class discussions or group presentations. They tend to be quiet or prefer to listen rather than speak.

Lecturer 4

Based on the analysis of transcripts, students with insufficient basic knowledge or skills in the Qur'an reading test often have difficulty reading it.

The conditions revealed through interviews with lecturers show that students who experience social anxiety or feel inadequate often do not actively participate in class discussions or group presentations, preferring to listen rather than speak. In addition, students who need more fundamental knowledge or skills in the Quran reading test also need help carrying out the task, as seen in the analysis of transcripts.

Didactic Barriers

Didactic barriers in Islamic Religious Education refer to challenges related to teaching strategies, methods, and learning processes used in delivering Islamic Religious Education material in higher education. These barriers can include lecturers' lack of pedagogical skills, the lack of variety in learning methods, and limitations in adapting materials to students' needs. These factors can affect the quality of learning and hinder students' understanding of the material being taught.

The teaching methods used often make me feel less involved. Most Islamic Religious Education lectures are long lectures without much opportunity for discussion or questions. This makes me feel unable to dig deeper into the material and often feel bored.

In line with the results of classroom observations, most Islamic Religious Education lectures use a one-way lecture method, where the lecturer is the center of attention and students listen more. Although there are several opportunities to ask questions, interaction between lecturers and

students tends to be limited. In addition, the material taught in Islamic Religious Education sometimes needs to connect theory to the social context or contemporary problems relevant to students' lives. This makes students feel alienated and less motivated to participate in learning.

In several group discussion sessions, it was apparent that despite attempts to implement an interactive approach, many students still needed to become accustomed to the dynamics of more active discussions. Some students felt awkward speaking up, and discussions often fell flat without an in-depth exploration of the material. Students more dominant in the debate usually brought subjective opinions that were only sometimes supported by academic evidence or more robust theoretical concepts, reflecting a lack of preparation and skills for productive discussion.

Based on the study of the syllabus and course materials, much of the material taught in Islamic Religious Education classes still focuses on the theoretical aspects of religion, with little connection to social practices or problems faced by students in everyday life. Some topics, such as the philosophy of religion or theories of Islamic ethics, are only sometimes easily connected to practical realities. A lack of diversity in teaching methods is also evident, with much of the material being delivered through lectures without problem-based or active learning approaches that could trigger deeper student engagement.

In addition, based on the analysis of assignments and exams, students are often given questions that focus more on memorization and basic understanding rather than on applying the material or solving more complex problems. This suggests that although the academic goals in Islamic Religious Education include understanding religious concepts, a practical and applicable approach needs to be taken in assignments to reduce students' motivation to connect religious theory to real life.

Thus, didactic barriers to learning Islamic Religious Education in higher education include problems related to the dominant teaching method with one-way lectures, lack of variety in approaches, and limitations in linking the material to social contexts and contemporary issues. This leaves students feeling less engaged and unmotivated, mainly due to the need for more interaction and opportunities for in-depth discussions. Despite attempts to use interactive approaches, many students need to be used to the dynamics of active discussions. In addition, lecture materials that focus more on the theoretical aspects of religion and the need for a problem-based approach reduce the relevance of learning to students' daily lives. Assignments emphasizing memorization rather than practical application also hinder students' understanding of religious concepts in a more real-world context.

Discussion

This study identified three main barriers to learning Islamic Religious Education in public universities in Jambi Province: epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers. These three barriers are interrelated and affect the quality of learning and students' understanding of the material.

First, epistemological barriers relate to students' difficulties connecting religious teachings with other sciences, such as economics, technology, and social sciences. As many as 75% of students need help understanding how Islamic Religious Education material, which is normative and ritualistic, can be applied in the context of the development of modern science. This shows a separation between religious knowledge and more practical general science. Several students expressed the hope that Islamic Religious Education material would not only stop at theory but also be connected to practical applications in their lives, especially in economics and technology.

This phenomenon is in line with Durkheim's (1912) view on the role of religion in modern society, where religion should be able to connect religious morality with social practices and scientific progress. Miller et al. (2019) also stated that religious education must be relevant to

developing science and technology so that students can see the relationship between spiritual values and their daily lives.

In addition, the lack of opportunities to develop critical thinking skills in one-way Islamic Religious Education learning also exacerbates this epistemological barrier. As many as 45% of students complained that Islamic Religious Education teaching focused too much on memorizing religious texts and provided little space for deeper analysis or discussion. In this regard, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social interaction and conversation in developing a deeper understanding of the teaching material. Active involvement of students in discussions is essential for creating a more comprehensive experience. Thus, epistemological barriers arise from students' difficulties linking religious teachings with other sciences, such as economics, technology, and social sciences. Students need help understanding the application of Islamic Religious Education material in the context of modern scientific developments. Many students hope this material will be more connected to practical applications, especially in economics and technology. This barrier is exacerbated by the need for more space for students to develop critical thinking skills. The teaching method focuses more on memorizing religious texts and provides little space for in-depth analysis or discussion. Students complain that this one-way teaching approach limits their understanding of the material. The active involvement of students in discussions is expected to improve their knowledge of the material more comprehensively.

Second, ontogenic barriers relate to student's mental and emotional readiness to face Islamic Religious Education learning. Interview results show that students face problems of anxiety and lack of self-confidence when asked to participate in learning activities, such as reading the Qur'an or discussing in class. These barriers often arise due to differences in previous religious experiences and emotional and psychological pressure due to changes in the academic environment.

This phenomenon reflects the concept of academic anxiety introduced by Sarason (1978), which states that anxiety can affect students' ability to think clearly and actively participate in learning. This mental unpreparedness often hinders students' ability to adapt to a more critical and reflective way of learning. Observation results also show that many students need help to divide their time between lectures, social activities, and part-time jobs, which causes them to be less focused during lectures. Baumeister & Vohs (2007), in self-regulation theory, also show that students who experience stress or anxiety tend to have limited ability to manage time and focus during the learning process. Students' self-confidence greatly influences their participation in the learning process. Students who feel less competent or have social anxiety tend to be less active in discussions or presentations (Bandura, 1997; **Long & Neff, 2018**; Strahan, 2023).

Therefore, this mental unpreparedness often hinders students' ability to adapt to more critical and reflective learning methods. Observations show that many students need help managing time between lectures and social activities, which results in a lack of focus during lectures. Students' self-confidence levels also significantly impact their participation; students who feel less competent or have social anxiety tend to be passive in discussions or presentations.

Third, didactic barriers refer to difficulties arising from ineffective and less varied teaching methods. Most Islamic Religious Education lectures still need to be dominated by one-way lecture methods, making students feel uninvolved and less motivated. The study's results showed that this monotonous teaching method reduces the opportunity for students to discuss and analyze the material in more depth. Dewey (1938) emphasized that effective learning must involve students in active learning processes, such as discussions, experiments, and problem-solving.

This aligns with research findings showing that despite efforts to implement an interactive approach, many students need to be used to the dynamics of more active discussions. Some students feel uncomfortable and need help to express opinions based on academic evidence. In

addition, the material taught still focuses on theoretical aspects of religion, such as the philosophy of religion and Islamic ethical theory, which are difficult to connect with students' practical lives. Schön (1983) emphasizes the importance of problem-based learning, which can connect theory with practice in reflective practice. This will increase the relevance of religious education in students' daily lives. Constructivism suggests that learning should focus on memorization and finding meaning through discussion and social interaction. Most teaching is still dominated by one-way lectures, making students feel uninvolved and less motivated. This monotonous approach reduces the opportunity for students to discuss and analyze the material in depth. Although there are efforts to apply interactive methods, many students are not yet accustomed to the dynamics of active discussion, so they feel awkward and less able to convey scientifically based opinions. In addition, the material presented still focuses on theoretical aspects of religion that are difficult to apply in students' daily lives.

Conclusion

This study identified various epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers to Islamic Religious Education learning in public universities. Epistemological barriers include students' difficulties connecting religious teachings with other sciences, such as economics and technology, as well as complaints about teaching that focuses more on memorization and provides less space for critical analysis. Ontogenic barriers reflect students' psychological unpreparedness, such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and stress, which hinder active participation in learning. On the other hand, didactic barriers are related to teaching methods that are predominantly one-way lectures, lack of variation in learning approaches, and limitations in connecting material with social reality.

Recommendations for further research are to explore innovative ways of integrating religious education with practical sciences and designing more interactive and problem-based teaching strategies to increase student engagement and the relevance of learning to everyday life contexts.

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