Eliminate Religious Prejudice in Islamic Education Through Religious Pluralism Based on Al-Qur'an

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Abstract

Religious prejudice adorns socio-religious problems in Indonesia, including on public university campuses. Some student activists of Islam are aggressive in voicing minority groups (non-Muslim, Shi'a, and Ahmadiyya) as infidels. Their defenders of Muslim clerics and scholars became targets of bullying. The accusations of the Jewish and Shi'a agents were so easy for them to pronounce. Their negative prejudices, Christian/Hindu, are pagan because they have three Gods. Shi'a is the agent of the Jews. Shi'a, the cult of Ali, glorifies the Imams more than the Prophet and disbelieves in the Prophet's companions. Ahmadiyya is non Muslim. Yet, their accusations have no basis. The research aims to eliminate religious prejudice against students in teaching Islamic religious education (PAI) through a pluralism-Qur'ani—quasi-experimental approach. The research instrument is an inventory of 30 items of religious discrimination. The research respondents were 200 students: 100 were in the intervention class, and 100 were in the non-intervention class—data analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 24. The research on the pluralism-Qur'ani approach proved effective in eliminating student religious prejudice. Before college, half of the students had negative prejudices against minority religions/madhhab. However, after the lecture, their negative bias disappeared. They say that among non-Muslims, some believe and deserve to go to Heaven. Shi'a is the same as Sunni, and the same is Muslim. Ahmadiyya is still a Muslim. They also say that religious minorities have the right to develop their beliefs in Indonesia. The implication is that the Qur'an-based spiritual pluralism approach must be implemented in university PAI lectures.

Keywords: PAI, pluralism-Qur'ani, religious prejudice, minority religion, minority madhhab

1. Introduction

Religious prejudice and intolerance adorn socio-religious problems in Indonesia, including on public university campuses. Some student activists aggressively voice adherents of other religions, Shi'a and Liberal Islam, as infidels. Ulama, Muslim intellectuals, and Islamic religious education (PAI) lecturers who are defenders of different faiths and Muslim minorities are targets of bullying. The accusations of infidels, Jewish agents, and Shi'a agents are so easy to pronounce [1, 2]. This student activist group has something to do with clerics who like disbelieving followers of other religions/minority Islamic groups. They often play videos of famous clerics who are sure to disbelieve the two groups. But when searching on Google, the video is not there. Maybe the videos are only distributed privately for their benefit. One of

the *ustads* (Islamic teachers) studied at one of the universities in Bandung, and it is straightforward to establish a relationship with students of that university [3].

The study results show that most students view adherents of religions outside Islam as infidels [4, 5, 6]. If their views stop here, it can still be justified because most commentators say that the people of the book (followers of religions outside Islam) are infidels. The reason is that they do not believe in the Prophet Muhammad [7, 8, 9]. Shaykh Rashid Rida called them believers because they thought in the previous Prophets [10]. In the Qur'an, Allah says that among the people of the book, there are righteous, faithful, and pious, but most are disbelievers. As for their disbelief, only Allah knows. Therefore, the Prophet SAW called them people of ignorance because they did not know the straight religion. The complete verse translation is as follows:

- They are not the same. Among the People of the Book, a group acts uprightly. They read the verses of Allah at various times at night while they also prostrate (prayer). They believe in Allah, and on the last day, they will enjoin what is right, prevent what is wrong, and hasten to (do) various virtues; they are among the pious people. (QS 3/Ali Imran: 113-114).
- And indeed, among the People of the Book, some believe in Allah and in what was revealed to you and what was revealed to them while they are humble towards Allah and they do not exchange Allah's verses for a small price. They will receive the reward from their Lord. Indeed, Allah is speedy in calculating. (QS 3/Ali Imran: 199).
- Indeed, the believers, the Jews, the Christians, and the Shabiin, whoever believes in Allah, the Last Day, and does good deeds, will receive a reward from their Lord, nothing worry about them, and (nor) do they grieve. (QS 2/al-Baqarah: 62).
- Indeed, the believers, the Jews, the Shabiin, and the Christians, whoever (among them) truly believes in Allah, the Last Day, and does righteous deeds, then there is no worry for them nor (nor) they are sad. (QS 5/Al-Maidah: 69) [11].

Shaykh Mutahhari mentions non-Muslim scribes. But some believe and do good deeds [12], namely Fitri-Muslims = non-Muslims, but Islamic attitudes and behavior [13]. Nurcholis Madjid (1992) also has this view [14]. They have the right to Heaven [15]. Muṭahhari gave the example of Descartes [12], and Harun Nasution called Mother Theresia an expert in Heaven [16]. When the incumbent governor of DKI Jakarta (Indonesia), Basuki Cahya Purnama (of Chinese descent who is a Christian), quoted a verse from the Qur'an that offended fanatical Muslims, many Muslim scholars and scholars defended him, including Buya Syafi'i Ma'arif, Nasaruddin Umar, and Hamka Haq [3].

The student activist mistakenly discriminates against non-Muslims by saying that non-Muslims are not entitled to hold high positions in government and local government [4, 5]. Even though the commentators distinguish the level of disbelief of the people of the book, there are good and bad ones [17, 18]. Islam teaches its followers to respect other religions, prohibits insulting them, denounces their worshipers, and even Islam teaches its followers to recognize non-Muslims as brothers [19].

Even Shi'ism and Liberal Islam are accused of being infidels [5]. Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah, assert that Shi'ism is the same as Sunni; both are Islam [20, 21, 22]. At the World level, the World Conference of Scholars at Al-Azhar Egypt, January 2020, made an article that forbids takfir (accusing infidelity) by stressing that a Muslim has 99 characteristics of disbelief. However, if there is still one characteristic of Islam, he must be declared a Muslim [23]. Fifteen years earlier, the World's Ulemas issued the Amman Treatise (Risalah Amman), which stated that the Ja'fariyah

Shi'a and Zaidiyah Shi'ites are Islam as are Sunni Muslims who follow the Four Madhabs, the original 'Ibadi,' and the true Salafis [24].

2. Literature Review

Map of Religious Intolerance

Surveys and studies in the last decade show low levels of religious tolerance in Indonesia, including in educational institutions. Komas HAM, on February 23, 2016, reported that complaints regarding violations of freedom of religion and belief received by this institution increased from 74 complaints in 2014 to 87 complaints in 2015 [25, 26]. The Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace reported that from 2007 to 2016, religious minorities in Indonesia were the most prominent victims of acts and violations of freedom of religion and belief. In 2014, there were 134 violations in various regions of Indonesia; in 2015, it increased to 197, and in 2016 to 208 cases. The most violations occurred in West Java with 41 points, followed by DKI Jakarta with 31 instances and East Java with 22 cases [25]. Cases of violence against members of minority religions and sects occur in many areas [27]. For example, violence against Shiite adherents in Sampang, Madura [28]. This case is thought to be a Southeast Asian regional phenomenon because previously, in 2010, there was an attack on a minority of this sect in Kuala Lumpur [29]. This school of thought has existed in Indonesia for centuries [30, 31]. The government and the MUI (central) do not prohibit this school of thought [32]. Violence against Ahmadiyah also occurred in Pandeglang, Banten [6]. Even the houses of followers of the Tijaniyah Order – a religious organization that prioritizes exercising conscience – were burned by mobs south of Sukabumi [33]. This phenomenon is like an iceberg; on the surface, it looks small, but inside, it is significant. The research results in educational institutions also show the phenomenon of religious intolerance. At the SMP/MTs level, Islamic MTs and SMP students tend to be intolerant [34]. It is the same at the high school level, and students tend to be prejudiced [35]. Even in universities, the same results are shown: students tend to be exclusive and intolerant [36].

Theoretically, religious harmony is determined by three factors: government policy, the behavior of religious communities, and existing laws and regulations. The first and third factors are generally good, although some problems remain. The government is very concerned about protecting minority groups. Judaism is also recognized as a religion; Ahmadis and Shiites are protected. However, some minority groups and human rights activists criticized the government's approach, which emphasizes stability and security more than protecting minorities [37]. The second factor relates to their views on the meaning of Muslim (Islamic person) and believer (believer) versus kafir (unbeliever), which has implications for religious tolerance.

The Problem of Religious Prejudice

"Prejudice" is a condition of thought, feeling, and interest, not an action. However, said Longres, prejudice influences the actions of a person (group) towards other people or groups. However, prejudice stems from groups (group-based), which is, of course, a social phenomenon. So, prejudice is not an individual's biases or a person's dislike of another person or group; instead, it is a "group attitude." In accessible language, prejudice is expressed as follows: "I, as a member (of) a group, don't like "you" as a member of another group" [38]. For students with religious prejudices: "I am a defender of Islam, that Islam is the only true religion approved by Allah. I don't like other religions; I also don't like people who claim their religion is Islam but defend other religions!" Or, "I am a defender of Islam, that Islam is the only true religion

approved by Allah. I don't like Shi'a, Ahmadiyya, and Liberal Islam; I also don't like people who claim Islam is their religion but defend these minority groups!"

Whether prejudice gives rise to discriminatory actions can be seen in the following table.

Table 1: Typology of Prejudice and Discrimination [39]

Person is \ Person	Dikriminatif	Tidak Diskriminatif
✔ Prejudiced	Bigot	Timid bigot
✔ Not Prejudiced	Fair-weather liberal	Liberal

The typology of prejudice and discrimination can be observed in the following characters: "bigot" usually refers to someone who is full of prejudice and acts consistently discriminatory, while "liberal" is the opposite of bigot, namely someone who is consistent "not" prejudiced and "not" biased, or *husnu dzan* and inclusive. The "timid bigot" and "fair-weather liberal" are between the two bigot and liberal positions. An example of a "bigot" in Islamic circles is a Muslim full of prejudice and consistently discriminatory towards followers of other religions and minority Islamic groups. In contrast, the "liberal" example is a Muslim who adheres to *husnu dzan* and is inclusive towards adherents of different faiths and minority Islamic groups. In the view of the "liberal" type, followers of other religions are like adherents of Islam. Some are believers, some are infidels, and others are those whose faith or infidels are not stated. Not all followers of Islam are experts in Heaven, as the Prophet has said many times, including being an expert in worship (obligatory prayers, circumcision prayers, and *tahajjud* prayers; obligatory fasting and circumcision fasting, giving a lot of charity, but his words often hurt his neighbors, the Prophet SAW stated that he expert of Hell). This means that belief and disbelief depend on total goodness and badness. Moreover, for adherents of Islam, the Prophet SAW warned against accusing someone of infidelity because Allah SWT will sentence the accused or accuser to cheating [40, 41].

If so, does religion substantially justify injustice? And is this what makes Marx's teachings in the past, even artificially today, still receive strong support? Likewise, the Khawarij and Khawarijism, which easily convert other Muslims, still receive strong support. Of course, "pure" religion teaches truth, justice, and virtue. But it is the religious sentiment that makes people commit blind acts. By examining the findings of Gordon Allport & Michael Ross, Myers questions the results of their study. The problem is, as Allport & Ross found, other data shows that church members who study religion deeply and live their religious life for universal good are much more tolerant. They generally do not have racial prejudice [38].

3. Method

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Qur'an-based learning model of religious pluralism to counteract the religious prejudices of Muslim students. According to the purpose, the research method uses a mixed approach. We tested the model in the intervention class (100 Islamic activist students). To see the effectiveness of our model, we compare the profile of religious prejudice between the intervention class (the class that uses the "Qur'an-based religious pluralism" approach) and the non-intervention class (100 other Islamic students). All samples (respondents) were 200 students.

The research instrument "religious prejudice" is in the form of Yes - No to each statement, as many as 30 items. Examples of items: "Christians are disbelievers because they have three Gods," "A good Hindu can

go to heaven," and "Shi'a as a deviant Islam; I will allow Shi'a Islam to establish Islamic educational institutions in my area." All items are valid at alpha 0.01 and 0.05. The reliability is $r = 0.88$ (significant at alpha 0.01). Data analysis used descriptive statistics in the form of percentages. After four interventions (4x100 minutes), we distributed research instruments and compared the profile (percentage) of religious prejudice in the intervention class with the non-intervention class.

4. Research Findings

Learning Process

The lecture themes in the intervention classes discussed the meaning of Islam, non-Islam, faith, disbelief, and the right to preach. The question is, are faith and doubt related to religious identity? Does every Muslim automatically believe, while every non-Muslim (Christian, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian) automatically disbelievers? Is it permissible for Muslims to accuse adherents of religions outside Islam of being "Kafir"? The reference for learning is the Qur'an using a thematic digital Qur'an approach. Then, the Christian Religion reference from the Ink Jesus blog (one of the credible Christian sources). Likewise, Hinduism is from the IloveHindu blog (one of the credible Hindu sources).

Lectures in four meetings (4x100 minutes). The first meeting discussed the meaning of faith in the Qur'an. Meeting II, the definition of the infidel in the Qur'an. In the Qur'an, the third meeting of the faith and disbelief of the People of the Book, Jews, Christians, etc. The fourth meeting discussed the concept of the Trinity in Christianity and the Trinity in Hinduism and its relationship to QS 4/An-Nisa verse 171 and QS 5/Al-Maidah verse 73.

The meaning of "faith" in the Qur'an relates to people who have good Character, namely:

a. love Allah, which is manifested by willingly prostrating to the Messenger of Allah (willing to hear and obey the Messenger of Allah, not following his lust and lust);

b. humble oneself to Allah and the Messenger of Allah and humble oneself to humans;

c. have a significant concern for removing human burdens;

d. Most potential Muslims believe. But there are also Ahl al-Kitab whom Allah has appointed as believers and will enter Paradise.

The meaning of "kafir" in the Qur'an relates to people who have evil characters, namely:
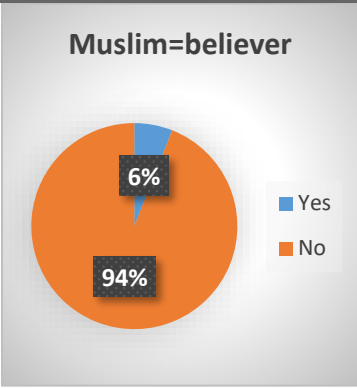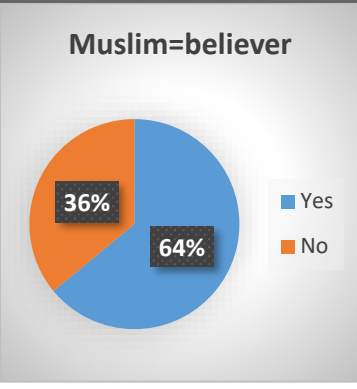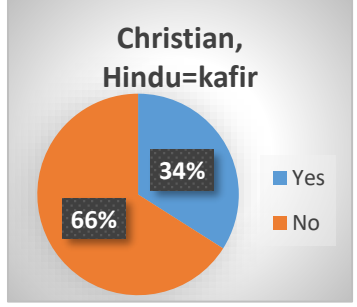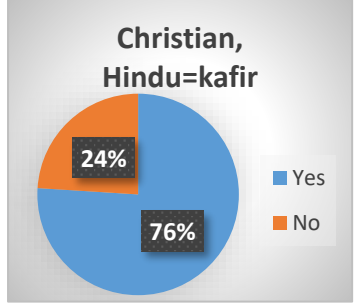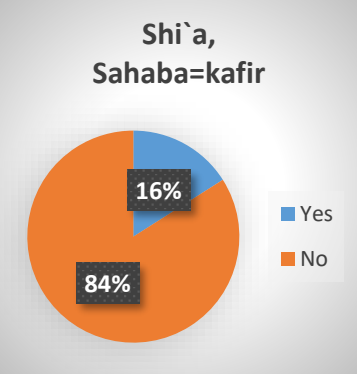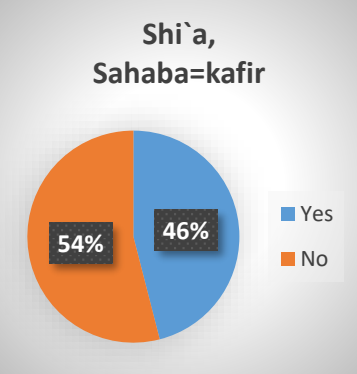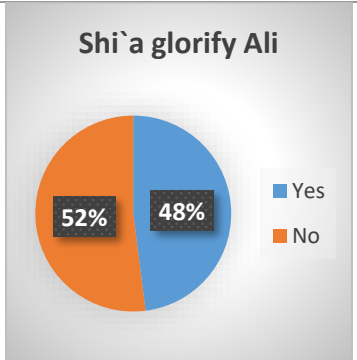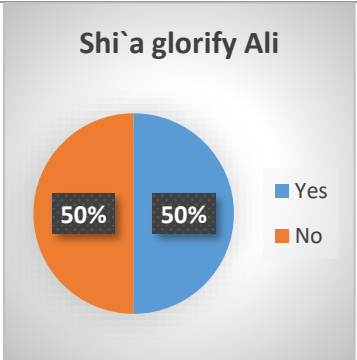
a. A character like a devil, namely refusing to prostrate (obedient) to the Messenger of Allah because he is arrogant and feels himself better;

b. Infatuated with the world and stingy;

c. Firm in his disbelief. They are consistently arrogant, feel themselves better, like to do bad things, and are stingy;

d. Unbelievers can be from any religion, namely, those who are arrogant, feel themselves better, like to do bad things, and are stingy;

QS 4/An-Nisa verse 171 and QS 5/Al-Maidah verse 73, which states, "it is an infidel who believes that God is one of the three" (DigitalQur'an, 2013) cannot be blamed on Christians and Hindus. The meaning of God in the concept of the Trinity and the idea of Trimurti is not the same as the concept of God/Allah in Islam. All religions, including Christianity and Hinduism, have One God, God the Almighty Creator. In Christian terms, the Supreme God, namely God/God the Father. In Hindu terms, the Supreme God, namely Lord Brahmin. The God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in Christianity, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva in Hinduism are the same as holy creatures in Islam, namely the Prophets/Apostles/Guardians and Angels.

Model Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the "Al-Qur'an-based pluralism" learning model can be seen in the respondents' answers to the inventory of religious prejudices. The intervention class had less religious intolerance than the non-intervention class. The most pronounced differences are eight items as follows:

No.	Religious Prejudice	Intervention Classes (100 Students)	Non-intervension Classes (100 Students)
1.	Every Muslim automatically believer	Muslim=believer — Yes 6%, No 94%	Muslim=believer — Yes 64%, No 36%
2.	Every Christian or Hindu is an kafir because they have three Gods.	Christian, Hindu=kafir — Yes 34%, No 66%	Christian, Hindu=kafir — Yes 76%, No 24%
3.	Shi'a kafir because they disbelieve in the Sahābas of the Prophet.	Shi`a, Sahaba=kafir — Yes 16%, No 84%	Shi`a, Sahaba=kafir — Yes 46%, No 54%
4.	I believe that the Shi'a glorify Ali ibn Abu Talib more than the Prophet.	Shi`a glorify Ali — Yes 48%, No 52%	Shi`a glorify Ali — Yes 50%, No 50%

5.	The Pillars of Faith Shi'a not mentioning Malaikat indicates that Shi'a does not believe in them.		
6.	I agree with Prof. KH Quraish Shihab that the Shi'a believe in the six pillars of faith.		
7.	Ahmadiyya followers are kafir because they believe in Prophet Mirza Gulam Ahmad.		
8.	In my opinion, Ahmadiyya is still classified as Islam.		
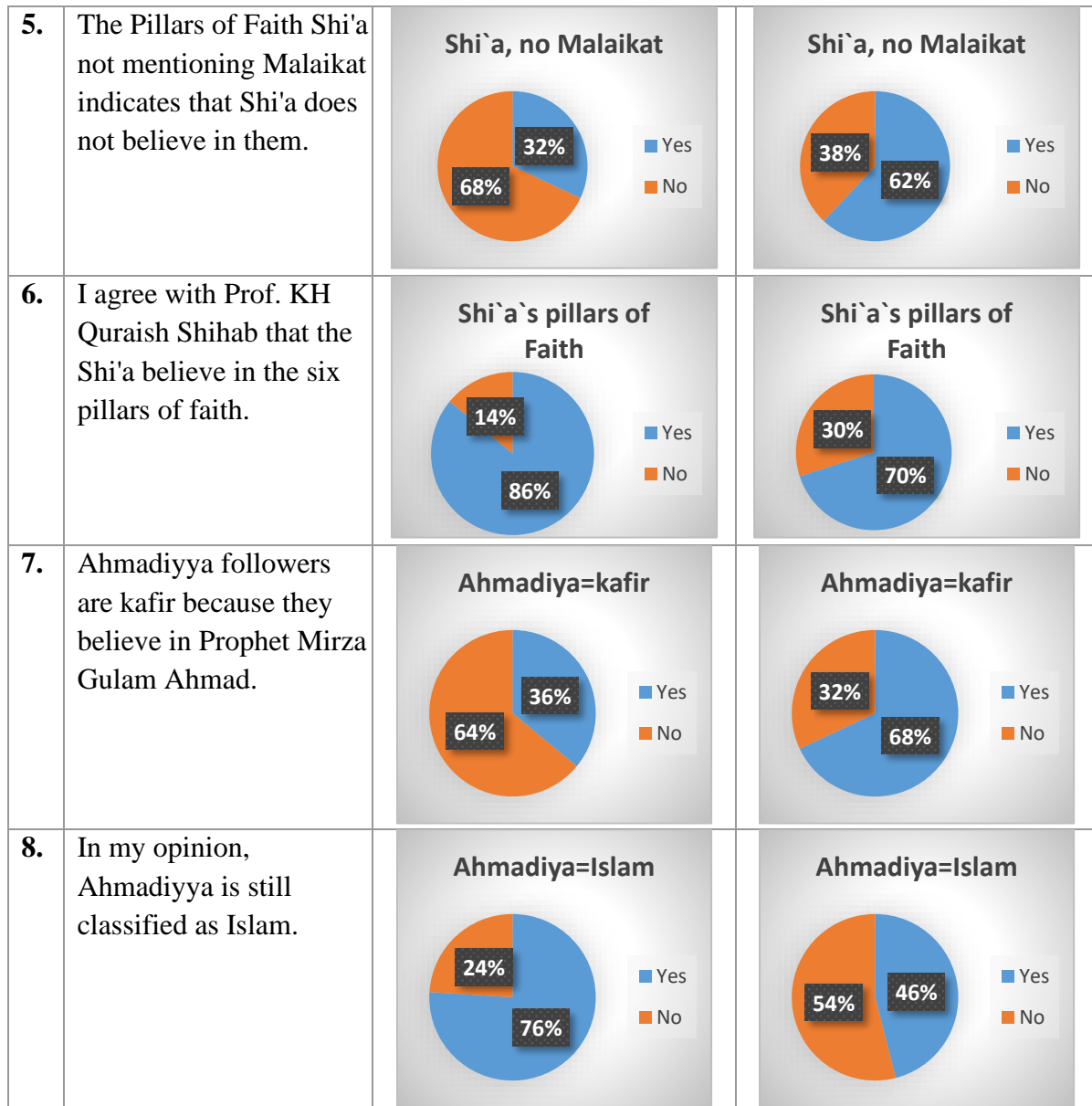
Figure 1: Profile of students' religious prejudices in intervention and non-intervention classes

Figure 1 above shows that the percentage of religious prejudice in the intervention class is less than in the non-intervention class. 94% of students in the intervention class did not associate faith with religious identity. As for the non-intervention class, it only reached 36%. 66% of students in the intervention class did not accuse Christians and Hindus of having three gods. They say that the God of Christianity and Hinduism is the only God, namely God the Father (Christian) and God Brahmin (Hindu). In Christianity, God the Son and the Holy Spirit are not God the Creator. Likewise, in Hinduism, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva are not God's Creator. As for the non-intervention class students, only 24% were.

Only 16% of students in the intervention class accused Shi'a of being infidels for infidels, the companions of the Prophet, while in the non-intervention class, it was 46%. Most intervention class students said that Shi'a only classified the faith or disbelief of the Prophet's companions based on the Qur'an, which states that some are believers and some are unbelievers. Indeed, there are Shi'a-takfiri who disbelieve in Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman, as the Sunni-takfiri who disbelieve in Shi'a. More than half of the students in

the non-intervention class had this opinion. Meanwhile, some students in the intervention and non-intervention classes thought that the Shi'a honored Ali bin Abu Talib more than the Prophet (48% and 50%).

Most non-intervention class students accused Shi'a of not having faith in the Angels (62%). But in the intervention class, only 32% had this prejudice. Other items reinforce this: most of them accept the views of Prof. KH Quraish Shihab: "Shi'a believe in the pillars of the Sunni faith" (86%). The strange thing is that most non-intervention class students also agree with Quraish Shihab (70%), even though, in the previous item, they accused Shi'a of not believing in the Angels.

Most non-intervention class students accused Ahmadiyya of being infidels for believing Mirza Gulam Ahmad to be a Prophet (68%). But in the intervention class, only 36% charged so. This is reinforced by another item that most consider Ahmadiyya to be still classified as Islam (76%). As for the non-intervention class, students have this view, only 46%.

Figure 1 above shows that the "Al-Qur'an-based religious pluralism" approach has proven effective in warding off religious prejudice among UPI students.

5. Discussion

Religious Prejudice

Several things need to be discussed from the findings of this study. First, before the lecture, students assumed that every Muslim automatically believed while every non-Muslim automatically disbelieved. Meanwhile, after we implemented the Qur'an-based religious pluralism approach, students had the correct view: "Not every Muslim automatically believes (94%), and not every non-Muslim automatically disbelieves (66%)." The student's opinions in the intervention class are in line with God's Word that among non-Muslims, there is a God who has decreed faith and will go to Heaven (Surah 3/Ali Imran:199 and QS 5/Al-Maidah:65-66) [11]. This finding aligns with Mutahhari about non-Muslims who believe in and do good deeds [12] or in other books called Fitri-Muslims [13] in line with Nurcholis Madjid [15]. Therefore, they are entitled to Heaven [16]. Muṭahhari gives the example of Descartes [12], and Harun Nasution mentions Mother Theresia as a non-Muslim who will reach Heaven [16].

Second, before college, students thought Shi'a was a heretical sect. The reason is that Shi'a disbelieved in the companions of the Prophet (46%) and did not believe in the Angels (62%). As for after we implemented the Qur'an-based religious pluralism approach, students had the correct view: "Shi'a believes in the companions of the Prophet but explains the position of the companions of the Prophet based on QS 9/Al-Taubah: 99-102, namely that there are very good and very bad, there are even apostates (84%). This view is under Puyu's research [26]. Shi'a also believe in the Angels because believing in them is a consequence of believing in Nubuwah and Imamah (68%). Most intervention class students did not have a lousy prejudice against Shi'a. They say Shi'a is Muslim. Their views align with Amman's Treatise [24] and Indonesia's largest Islamic organization, which states that Shi'a is the same as Sunnis. Both are Muslims [20, 21, 22].

Third, before the lecture, the students thought the Ahmadiyya was a deviant sect. The reason is that Ahmadiyyas believe in Mirza Gulan Ahmad as a Prophet (68%). Meanwhile, after implementing the Qur'an-based approach to religious pluralism, students had the correct view: "Allah only knows a person's disbelief. Humans have no right to condemn someone who is an infidel." Their opinions align with the hadith, which mentions the dangers of punishing an infidel because disbelief can happen to him [40]. Even the Al-Azhar Conference emphasized, "If in a person there are 99 characteristics of doubt, but there is still

one characteristic of Islam, then we must determine that that person is Muslim [23]. Ahmadiyya people have Islamic elements because they believe in the six pillars of faith and practice the five pillars of Islam. Muslims generally do not believe in Mirza Gulam Ahmad as a prophet.

Model Effectiveness

Based on model testing, the al-Qur'an-based religious pluralism learning model has proven effective in eliminating religious prejudice in students. This learning model is relatively new but still aligns with similar research. The Al-Qur'an-based learning model for religious studies has increased students' religious tolerance [4, 42]. The school typology learning model has succeeded in growing students' religious moderation towards fellow Muslims of different schools of thought. Increasing religious tolerance [43] and the Sufism-based PAI learning model increased students' religiosity and religious tolerance [44, 45, 46].

Why did it work? First, theoretical prejudice can be eliminated. Discrimination is not innate but results from learning and the influence of the environment, such as parents, friends, teachers, and the media. Parents prejudiced against particular groups will pass this attitude on to their children through social processes. Children who have racial attitudes will transmit these attitudes to their friends. This process is repeated until it forms a cycle. This cycle must be broken by stopping learning prejudice from the environment. Children must be made aware of the differences and then encouraged to accept and appreciate the differences that exist [47, 48]. It is hazardous and can lead to war and destruction if not eliminated. A famous example is World War I because of Hitler's prejudice to purify the Aryan race by exterminating other races that were considered polluting. Bosnian Muslim ethnic cleansing; Bin Laden attacks on September 11, and most recently, the Kikuyu tribal war with the Luo in Kenya [49].

Second, in building a multicultural society, Islam has a pluralist view. In QS 2/al-Baqarah: 256 and 109/Al-Kafirun: 6, everyone has freedom of religion and belief [11].

Teaching models that are open, moderate, inclusive, and tolerant have indeed succeeded in increasing students' religious tolerance. This year, the study of the typology model of the Sunni-Shi'a school succeeded in increasing student acceptance of Shi'i Islam [5]. In 2018, a survey of the NU-Muhammadiyah madhhab typology model succeeded in increasing student acceptance of Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations [50]. The typology model of the Sufi-Islamic Syare'at school has succeeded in increasing student acceptance of Sufism and *tariqat* (Sufi order) [51]. Based on limited model trials, the Qur'an-based study of religions has increased students' religious tolerance [38].

6. Conclusion

Based on trials of the research model, it was found that students in classes that implemented the "Al-Qur'an-based religious pluralism" approach had a much higher percentage of religious moderation than students in non-intervention classes. As for qualitatively, students in the intervention classes have the following religious views. First, one's faith is not related to religious identity. It is possible that Muslims in the sight of Allah do not believe. On the other hand, Jews, Christians, etc., may be judged in the presence of Allah as a believer. But Muslims have more faith potential because they have more original religious references. Second, Shi'a is not a deviant Islamic sect, much less an infidel. Shi'a is the same as Sunni; both are Muslim. Sunni-Shi'a differences have a strong basis in the Qur'an and hadith. Third, the Ahmadiyya are still classified as Islam because they believe in the six pillars of faith and the five pillars of Islam. The difference is that the Ahmadiyya believe Mirza Gulam Ahmad is a prophet. But they still

believe in the Prophet Muhammad as a great prophet. Mirza Gulam Ahmad is just a prophet who propagates the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

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