

# THE STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING APPROACH IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS A STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING RADICALISM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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**Abstract.** The rise of radicalism among students poses a serious challenge to the national education system, particularly in the teaching of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This situation indicates an imbalance between the ideal of Islamic education, which is oriented towards moderation, and pedagogical practices that are still teacher-centered and tend to be doctrinal. One pedagogical approach that is considered capable of overcoming this problem is Student-Centered Learning (SCL), a learning model that prioritizes the active involvement of students in constructing knowledge, developing critical reflection, and internalizing contextual and humanistic religious values. This study aims to systematically examine the relevance and effectiveness of applying SCL in PAI as a strategy to prevent radicalism in educational institutions. This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, analyzing 30 scientific articles published between 2015 and 2025 from the Scopus, ERIC, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, and DOAJ databases. The results show that the application of SCL encourages a paradigm shift in learning from a teacher-centered approach to a participatory, reflective, and collaborative model. SCL has been proven to contribute to strengthening critical thinking skills, social empathy, and religious moderation values such as tolerance, justice, and balance. Therefore, SCL functions not only as an effective pedagogical strategy but also as an ideological instrument for building inclusive religious awareness and rejecting extremism. This study recommends curriculum reform, improvement of teacher competence, and SCL-based Islamic education policies to strengthen religious moderation and promote sustainable social peace.

**Keywords:** student-centered learning; Islamic religious education; religious moderation; radicalism prevention; systematic literature review.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of religious radicalism developing among students is a serious challenge for the national education system, particularly in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Radicalism, manifested in the form of intolerance, exclusivism, and rejection of diversity, has infiltrated learning spaces [1], [2]. Data from the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) in 2022 indicates that some of the younger generation are vulnerable to extremist ideas due to their low critical thinking skills and moderate religious reflection (M. N. Imanulyaqin, E. Malihah, 2022; Subairi, 2024). In this situation, PAI plays a strategic role as an instrument for shaping religious character oriented towards the values of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin. However, learning practices in various Islamic educational institutions are still dominated by a teacher-centered approach, which places teachers as the center of information and students as passive recipients. This kind of pedagogical pattern has the potential to foster a dogmatic and textual understanding of religion,

thus requiring a reformulation of a more dialogical and participatory learning approach.

Conceptually, the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach offers an educational paradigm that places students as active subjects in the process of knowledge construction [3]. This model emphasizes the role of students in exploring, reflecting on, and conceptualizing meaningful learning experiences through collaborative and contextual activities [4]. In the context of PAI, SCL focuses not only on the aspect of religious knowledge transfer (ta'lim) but also on the dimensions of spiritual and social awareness formation (tarbiyah). Through the application of methods such as problem-based learning, inquiry learning, and cooperative learning, SCL contributes to the development of critical thinking skills, social empathy, and values of tolerance that are essential to prevent the infiltration of radical ideologies in the educational environment [5].

However, various studies show that the implementation of the SCL approach in PAI learning in Indonesia is not yet optimal. A study by Altinyelken (2021) reveals that most educators still rely on lecture and memorization methods,

while students are not given space to argue or engage in critical dialogue on contemporary religious issues. Similar results were reported by Suhendar et al., (2023), who found that the participatory approach in PAI is still experimental and has not been systematically integrated into the curriculum. On the other hand, international research by Mustakim et al., (2021) and Solahudin et al., (2023) shows that the application of SCL in religious education can strengthen the values of moderation and reduce the tendency for extreme thinking among students. Thus, there is still a research gap in comprehensively understanding the effectiveness of SCL as a strategy for preventing radicalism in the context of Islamic education.

The novelty of this study lies in its approach, which uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines to identify, evaluate, and synthesize empirical evidence on the application of SCL in Islamic education over the last decade (2015–2025). This approach contributes scientifically by presenting a conceptual mapping and empirical findings on the relationship between participatory learning models and the prevention of radicalism.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

Therefore, this study aims to systematically examine how the application of Student-Centered Learning in PAI can function as a preventive pedagogical strategy against radicalism among students. The urgency of this research lies in the vital role of Islamic education in developing a young generation that is moderate, critical, and adaptive to social and cultural diversity. The results of this study are expected to provide a conceptual basis for the development of Islamic education curricula and policies oriented towards strengthening religious moderation and global peace.

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This study applies a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach oriented towards critical analysis and comprehensive synthesis of previous research results [9]. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the application of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and its potential in preventing radicalism in the educational environment. The research design follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework (Page et al., 2021), which emphasizes systematic procedures through four main stages: literature identification, screening, eligibility determination, and final inclusion.

The data in this study were obtained through exploration of a number of reputable international scientific databases, including Scopus, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Google Scholar to

broaden the scope of publications. The search strategy was designed using a combination of Boolean logic to ensure that the results obtained were relevant and specific to the research topic. The search keywords used (in Indonesian and English) were: “Student-Centered Learning” AND “Islamic Religious Education” Student-centered learning“AND ”PAI“ Active learning” AND “Islamic education” Deradicalization“AND”religious education“ Radicalism” AND “learning methods” AND ‘Islam’ Critical thinking“ AND ”Islamic religious education“Problem-based learning” AND “Islamic education” Religious moderation“ AND ”active learning”

The range of publications reviewed was limited to the period between 2015 and 2025 to ensure currency and contextual relevance to the dynamics of contemporary Islamic education. Articles considered included empirical studies, conceptual research, and theoretical reviews that had undergone peer review.

## III. CONCLUSIONS

The results of a systematic review show that the implementation of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) plays a strategic role in strengthening the function of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as a means of forming moderate religious awareness and preventing radicalism. Through an approach that places students as active subjects, SCL encourages a dialogical, reflective, and collaborative learning process, so that students not only acquire theological knowledge but also internalize universal Islamic values such as tolerance, justice, and balance. This model has proven effective in building critical thinking skills and reflective awareness, which are important foundations for rejecting extremist ideologies and strengthening religious moderation in the educational environment.

Theoretically, SCL can be viewed as a form of transformative religious pedagogy that integrates the cognitive, affective, and socio-spiritual dimensions of learners. This approach positions religious education not merely as a means of transmitting doctrine, but as a space for the formation of critical awareness oriented towards humanity and peace. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen policies, improve teacher competence, and reconstruct the PAI curriculum so that the participatory, reflective, and moderate values in SCL can be implemented systematically. The synergy of these three aspects is expected to make Islamic education an effective ideological bulwark in preventing radicalism in the modern era.

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