



## **Institutionalizing Science Integration at UIN Sunan Kalijaga: Insights from Students' Perspectives**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The discourse of science integration within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) has now entered the institutionalization phase, though it still faces conceptual and practical challenges. This study explores the institutionalization process of the science integration discourse through a case study of the Integration-Interconnection (I-Kon) idea at the Graduate School of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN Jogja). Using a qualitative approach and case study methodology, the research involved literature studies, interviews, and observations to understand the implementation, outcomes and factors supporting or hindering the I-Kon idea, especially from the students' perspectives. The findings of this study reveal that the formal, informal, and hidden curricula at UIN Jogja complement each other in institutionalizing the I-Kon idea. Analysis on 334 student theses identified three main typologies: 'Linear-Concentration', 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration', and 'Multidisciplinary Cross-Concentration'. The study concludes that the success of I-Kon implementation depends on students' adaptability and the support of the academic environment. These findings offer critical insights for evaluating and developing the implementation of science integration in other PTKI.

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### **ABSTRAK**

*Wacana integrasi ilmu di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam (PTKI) saat ini telah memasuki fase institusionalisasi, meskipun masih menghadapi tantangan konseptual dan praktis. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi proses institusionalisasi wacana integrasi ilmu melalui studi kasus gagasan Integrasi-Interkoneksi (I-Kon) di Program Pascasarjana UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN Jogja). Dengan pendekatan kualitatif dan metodologi studi kasus, penelitian ini melibatkan studi literatur, wawancara, dan observasi untuk memahami implementasi, hasil, serta faktor yang mendukung atau menghambat gagasan I-Kon, terutama dari perspektif mahasiswa. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum formal, informal, dan tersembunyi di UIN Jogja saling melengkapi dalam menginstitusionalisasikan gagasan I-Kon. Analisis terhadap 334 tesis mahasiswa mengidentifikasi tiga tipologi utama: 'Linear-Konsentrasi', 'Multidisipliner Linear-Konsentrasi', dan 'Multidisipliner Lintas-Konsentrasi'. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keberhasilan implementasi I-Kon bergantung pada kemampuan adaptasi mahasiswa dan dukungan lingkungan akademik. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan penting untuk mengevaluasi dan mengembangkan implementasi integrasi ilmu di PTKI lainnya.*

### **KATA KUNCI**

institusionalisasi,  
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integrasi ilmu

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## Introduction

The discourse of science integration has now entered the phase of institutionalization (Diktis Kemenag, 2019, p. vi). This statement is written in *Pedoman Implementasi Integrasi Ilmu di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam (PTKI)* (*The Guidelines for the Implementation of Science Integration in Islamic Religious Higher Education*) (2019) published by the Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (abbreviated as Kemenag). The integration of science has a historical background before it institutionalized as it is today. It did not emerge in a vacuum.

Since the Islamization of knowledge gained momentum in the 1970s, scholars in Indonesia soon became involved. During this era, educated Muslims raced against the currents of modernity with all its debates and challenges. A major issue was the separation between science and religion; science is objective, while religion is subjective. The demands of the modern world not only marginalized religion but were also exacerbated by excessive specialization (overspecialization). While the separation of science and religion was addressed by religious scholars and intellectuals, overspecialization became a broader concern. From this, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary movements emerged, which are linked to the rise of postmodernism and poststructuralism (see Abdullah, 2021; Diktis Kemenag, 2019).

The global academic world eventually began to accept or appreciate religious sciences alongside the general sciences. By the 1990s, and continuing to the present, Indonesian Muslim scholars were actively engaged in the discourse on science and religion. Their perspectives spanned across positions like the Islamization of knowledge, the scientification of Islam, and the integration of science. The emergence of these three positions reflects differences in their underlying ideas. Nevertheless, these ideas have been realized within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI), particularly in State Islamic Universities (UIN). The current trend in the discourse on science and religion leans toward the integration of science, as institutionalized by the regulations of the Directorate General of Islamic Education (Kemenag). This tendency is evident in the two oldest UINs, which are the early pioneers in PTKI. In Jakarta, Azyumardi Azra at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta (UIN Jakarta) proposed the idea of 'Open and Dialogical Science Interaction', while in Yogyakarta, Amin Abdullah at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN Jogja) developed the concept of 'Integration-Interconnection' between religious and general sciences (Diktis Kemenag, 2019).

With the enactment of the Indonesian Law No. 12 of 2012 on Higher Education, the discourse on science integration gained further momentum. This acceleration is evident as seven UINs — out of the 17 operational UINs — have formulated the integration of science in their respective institutions. Despite being institutionalized and supported by a shared vision, this discourse is not without challenges (Diktis Kemenag, 2019).

In this phase of institutionalization, the discourse of science integration still faces conceptual and practical issues (Diktis Kemenag, 2019, p. vi; Hanun, 2023; Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022). Out of the 17 State Islamic Universities (UIN) in PTKI, only seven have formulated and implemented the idea of science integration. Based on these issues, the aforementioned *Guidelines* (2019) were published so that various PTKIs could learn from each other. As one of the seven UINs that have formulated the concept and practical guidelines for science integration, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (abbreviated as UIN Jogja) has been implementing it for two decades, starting in 2004 — the only UIN older than UIN Jogja in this regard is UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta (abbreviated as UIN

Jakarta), which began in 2002. It is undeniable that UIN Jogja — along with UIN Jakarta — are pioneers in transforming IAIN into UIN and have experience in institutionalizing the discourse of science integration (Muslih, 2017; Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022).

In an effort to fulfill the mandate given to all UINs to restore a comprehensive and holistic approach to knowledge (Diktis Kemenag, 2019, p. 2), UIN Jogja initially introduced a new paradigm known as Integration-Interconnection (I-Kon). This idea has continued to evolve over the past two decades and now has a new name, namely 'Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary' (MIT). Amin Abdullah (2021), as the initiator of science integration at UIN Jogja, stated that MIT is the "second path" of I-Kon. Essentially, I-Kon and MIT share the same core idea, which is the effort to link the trialectic relationship between Islamic religious sciences (*Ulum ad-Diin*), Islamic Thought (*al-Fikr al-Islamiy*), and Critical Islamic Studies (*Dirasat Islamiyyah*). This linkage aims to address the issue of dichotomy or separation between religious sciences and general sciences.

Although it has been in progress for two decades, UIN Jogja has not ceased making breakthroughs. With the publication of the aforementioned *Guidelines* (2019), UIN Jogja also welcomed and formulated more practical implementation guidelines. Waryani Fajar Riyanto (2021, pp. 6–7) stated that the Ministry of Religious Affairs' guidelines are still very general, thus requiring more practical and specific guidelines. Therefore, UIN Jogja created *Modul dan Bahan Pelatihan Penelitian Integrasi-Interkoneksi (Tesis dan Disertasi)* (*Module and Training Materials for Integration-Interconnection Research [Theses and Dissertations]*). This book is a practical offer that can serve as training material for science integration. More specifically, the module, which focuses on the master's and doctoral levels, is expected to be a guideline for implementing I-Kon in students' final assignments (2021, pp. 8–9). In line with the purpose of the book, this article also focuses on the postgraduate level.

To further strengthen this practical offering, this research examines the operationalization of the I-Kon idea in the Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (abbreviated as IIS) program at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja. This operationalization includes the implementation process and the outcomes of the I-Kon idea.

In fact, studies related to the operationalization of the discourse of science integration have been conducted previously (Kadafi & Ulpah, 2023; Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022; Mas'ud et al., 2019; Rais, 2017; Hanun, 2023; Syafii, 2018; Muttaqin, 2018). Some conducted extensive research with rich data (Kadafi & Ulpah, 2023; Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022; Mas'ud et al., 2019). Their research helps us to broadly capture the discourse of science integration for initial readings and data analysis. For instance, in the study by Kadafi and Ulfah, it is evident that there are still problems in implementation within PTKI, despite the availability of concepts and practical guidelines. The implementation requires support from lecturers' competencies and students' abilities (Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022), especially their knowledge production (Rais, 2017). Furthermore, resolving issues requires collaboration between faculties or study programs (Suprpto & Sumarni, 2022). Their findings strengthen what we aim to study, to see the challenges and opportunities in institutionalizing the discourse of science integration. On the other hand, in specific but in-depth studies (Hanun, 2023; Syafii, 2018; Rais, 2017; Muttaqin, 2018), their studies help us to see the direction of this research for further deepening.

As an effort to deepen, distinguishing it from previous research, we examine several important aspects in sequence. This research delves into the experiences of students from the early stages of their studies to the process of writing their final projects, including capturing the concrete results of those projects and the conditions of their completion. This comprehensive portrayal aims to show how institutionalization occurs at the student level. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to solving issues in the phase

of institutionalizing the discourse of science integration in the PTKI environment, and specifically as an evaluation of the I-Kon implementation in the IIS.

Based on the explanations above, this research aims to understand the process of implementation and the outcomes of the I-Kon idea, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors for its success. To achieve the research objectives, a qualitative method with a case study design is applied, while data is collected through literature studies, interviews, and observations.

Through this methodology, this research seeks to answer three questions: How is the I-Kon idea implemented and how do students understand this idea? How does the academic environment support the institutionalization of the discourse of science integration at UIN Jogja? What are the trends in students' final assignments as products of the I-Kon idea implementation? The answers are elaborated in three main discussions below. In brief, the first section covers the implementation of the I-Kon idea and students' efforts to understand this idea, while the second section discusses the interrelation between the I-Kon implementation and students' efforts that form the academic environment support in institutionalizing the discourse of science integration at UIN Jogja. To see the concrete results from the first and second discussions, the third section discusses the trends in students' final assignments as products of the I-Kon idea implementation.

## Methods

This research uses qualitative methods with a case study model to deeply understand the process of implementation and outcomes of the Integration-Interconnection (I-Kon) idea in the Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (IIS) program at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja, as well as to examine the factors that support and hinder this idea. Through a case study, this empirical investigation allows for an in-depth exploration. As previously mentioned, UIN Jogja was selected because the I-Kon idea implemented here has not only remained at the level of theory and practice but has also continued to be transformed over time. The focus on IIS was chosen because this program offers more flexibility in practicing I-Kon compared to other faculties or programs that are constrained by their specific fields. It has also been established that the Graduate School of UIN Jogja is a laboratory for I-Kon application, which Noorhaidi Hasan referred to as the place where Amin Abdullah's Manifesto is implemented (Abdullah, 2021, p. ix).

The data collection was conducted through literature studies, observation, and interviews. For the initial study, including during the writing process, we conducted a literature study focusing on reviewing documents related to the general idea of science integration and specific documents related to the I-Kon idea applied at UIN Jogja. Additionally, the literature study also analyzed 334 theses from 2021–2022 in the IIS Program, excluding 35 theses from 2021 from the Islamic Studies Concentration. The review of these students' final projects aims to see the end products of the I-Kon idea implementation. For further in-depth study, researchers reviewed final projects with the criteria: (1) received an A grade, (2) recommended by lecturers as examples for students, and (3) conducted multidisciplinary studies that were not commonly done in their concentration and/or crossed their concentration.

For observation and interviews, researchers selected their subjects from active students in the IIS Program during the research period. These students came from various academic and social backgrounds, providing diverse perspectives on I-Kon implementation. Besides students, some teaching and administrative staff also acted as informants to provide additional context on I-Kon implementation.

Regarding observation, researchers were present directly in the IIS Program during the observation period from September 2020 to June 2024. This presence included classroom observation, participation in academic discussions, and in-depth interviews with students. This allowed researchers to gain a richer understanding of I-Kon implementation. During observations, researchers detailed the conditions and interactions using field notes and, if possible, audio and/or video recordings to ensure data accuracy.

For further in-depth study, researchers conducted in-depth interviews both face-to-face and online, with durations ranging from 60 to 120 minutes per interview, either individually or in groups. These in-depth interviews were conducted only with students, as this article focuses solely on them. These semi-structured interviews included questions on topics such as academic experiences, perceptions of I-Kon, and challenges faced. The interviews were recorded using voice recorders or Zoom/Google Meet applications to ensure transcription accuracy and were analyzed in depth. These interviews aimed to understand their conditions while being students in the IIS Program.

A descriptive-analytic approach was used to analyze the data, including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This was done by filtering relevant information, organizing data by theme, and interpreting the results to draw conclusions. The validity of the research findings was checked through data triangulation by comparing interview results, observations, and literature studies.

All participants in this research were informed about the research's objectives and procedures and were asked to give consent when audio/video recording began. Adhering to ethical considerations, all participants were given pseudonyms to maintain their confidentiality and privacy, except for the names of the thesis authors in IIS.

## Results and Discussion

### Result

This section presents the results from literature review, observations, and interviews, summarized in the following tables, diagrams, and interview excerpts.

The research data indicates that there are three types of curricula applied in the IIS Program at UIN Jogja: formal, informal, and hidden curricula. In Table 1, each column explains the curriculum implementation, field practices, and key findings in its application.

**Table 1.** The Implementation of Three Curricula at UIN Jogja in the IIS Program

<i>Category</i>	<i>Formal Curriculum</i>	<i>Informal Curriculum</i>	<i>Hidden Curriculum</i>
I-Kon Implementation in Curriculum	Classroom activities with credit hours that integrate faith, knowledge, and practice.	Student organizations or communities that support the science integration.	Values and norms that are not explicitly stated but influence the academic environment.
Practices in IIS Program	Teaching with a diverse range of perspectives.	Various activities discussing science integration managed by KMP.	Daily interactions that create a positive academic atmosphere and motivate students to learn about science integration.
Key Findings in Practice	Transformation of I-Kon at both the faculty and student levels, including changes in	Deepening of science integration through knowledge exchange among students and	Students' self-driven initiatives to apply and enhance their understanding of science

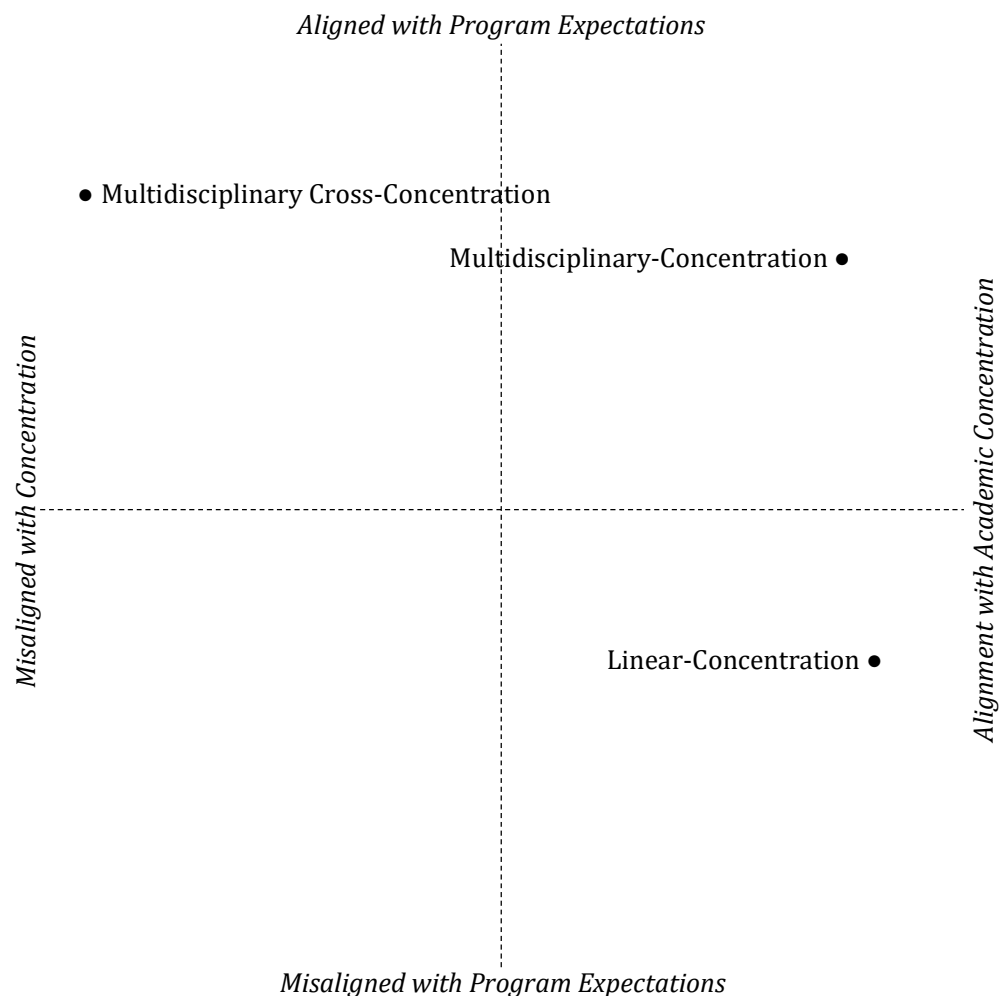
students' daily  
perspectives.

faculty outside the  
classroom.

integration both inside and  
outside the campus.

Additionally, the research data also shows that there are three typologies of student theses in the IIS Program at UIN Jogja. The typology in Figure 1 below illustrates the positioning of these three typologies based on two parameters: (1) alignment with the expectations of the IIS Program and (2) alignment with the students' field of study. This diagram shows the position of the 'Multidisciplinary Cross-Concentration', 'Multidisciplinary-Concentration', and 'Linear-Concentration' typologies across four quadrants.

**Figure 1.** Positioning of Three Thesis Typologies Based on Program Expectations in IIS



To support the understanding and analysis of the data presented in the tables and diagrams (including those not displayed here), the researcher also utilized interview data as an additional source. For example, the following two interview excerpts demonstrate how the informal curriculum helps students in the learning process outside the classroom. The complete data from the literature review, observations, and interviews will be further analyzed in the Discussion section.

*"Aku bisa merasakan dan mendapatkan hal banyak dari KMP. Waktu itu aku jadi divisi salah satu anggota riset KMP, di situlah aku belajar sama kakak tingkat, angkatan atas, bagaimana menulis artikel, dikasih beberapa bacaan, kita diskusikan bareng sampai kita bikin lingkaran belajar."* ("I benefited greatly from KMP. At that time, I was part of the research division in KMP, where I learned from seniors and upperclassmen how to write articles, was given several readings, and we discussed them together until we formed a study group.") (Interview with Fatimah Raihana, June 15, 2023)

*"Pada semester satu itu aku juga bingung sebetulnya persoalan interdisiplin itu. Interdisiplin itu apa? Apa sih integrasi-interkoneksi itu? Terus itu aku baca mandiri buku Prof. Amin, yang persoalan jaring laba-laba itu. ... saat ketemu [gambaran I-Kon dalam metafora] jaring laba-laba ini aku baru ketemu penjelasan ... ditambah lagi diskusi-diskusi di luar kelas. ... Jadi, pemahamanku seiring berjalannya waktu sih."* ("In the first semester, I was also confused about interdisciplinary issues. What is interdisciplinary? What is Integration-Interconnection? Then I independently read Prof. Amin's book about the spider-web issue. ... When I encountered the [I-Kon depiction in the metaphor of] the spider web, I finally found an explanation ... and then there were more discussions outside the classroom. ... So, my understanding developed over time.") (Interview with Ivan Naufal, August 02, 2023)

## Discussion

### Implementation of the I-Kon Idea

The learning system at UIN Jogja aligns with the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (abbreviated as KKNi) curriculum mandated by the Indonesian government. UIN Jogja implements both the Integration-Interconnection (I-Kon) curriculum and the KKNi curriculum, where they complement each other. The KKNi focuses on levels and qualifications based on learning outcomes, while the I-Kon curriculum complements it with deeper philosophical and practical insights. Through this integrated curriculum, students are expected to understand and develop their knowledge holistically and not partially, avoiding the dichotomy between different fields of science. In other words, UIN Jogja designs a curriculum based on the aspiration to reunite religious sciences and general sciences as a single entity while aligning with the national curriculum's development to meet societal needs (Tim Revisi Buku Sospem, 2021, pp. 54–76).

The I-Kon vision at UIN Jogja is actualized at all levels of education, from undergraduate, master, to doctoral levels. This vision is reflected in three forms of curriculum (Tim Revisi Buku Sospem, 2021, pp. 76–80). The following description also includes the research findings. *First*, the formal curriculum, which encompasses compulsory lectures with credit weights (abbreviated as SKS) that students must attend. The activities include both in-class and out-of-class assignments — such as homework. Its implementation starts from learning socialization before the lecture period to the completion of final assignments as graduation requirements. In the Graduate School of UIN Jogja, in the first semester, students take compulsory courses such as "Approaches in Islamic Studies," and in subsequent semesters, "Research Methodology," "Journal Articles," and "Thesis Proposal Seminar." In all IIS courses, particularly in these four, students are encouraged to articulate their understanding of I-Kon in daily assignments,

including in the initial draft of their thesis. Thus, from the beginning of their studies, I-Kon learning moves beyond theoretical to practical levels.

*Second*, the informal curriculum includes student-organized activities outside the classroom not related to credit weights. Such activities are found in the student senate (SM), student activity units (LKM), student executive board (BEM), or specific communities. In the Graduate School of UIN Jogja, an example of this informal curriculum can be found in the Graduate Student Family (abbreviated as KMP). All activities in this informal curriculum must remain consistent with the I-Kon vision. As seen in their activities, KMP frequently organizes discussions, seminars, and workshops related to expanding and deepening the discourse of science integration. These activities range from dissecting recent studies in the form of articles or books to research methodology classes, either officially — e.g., KMP cooperation with the Graduate School of UIN Jogja — or simply forming study groups among graduate students.

The implementation of the two curriculums above (formal and informal) by UIN Jogja, particularly in the IIS Program, is also accompanied by students' efforts to understand the discourse of science integration as seen in observation and interview data. In the formal curriculum, students gain an initial understanding of science integration, including further exploration for those who were exposed to the discourse during their undergraduate studies. Through discussions and mandatory readings in class, students gain many insights that help them understand science integration, including enhancing their knowledge of contemporary Islamic studies. Not only impacting the conceptual realm, but students also acknowledge that classroom learning changes their everyday perspectives. For instance, students acknowledge that the learning at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja significantly changed their perspective, allowing them to view phenomena from various angles, whereas they previously only saw things from a single viewpoint, often becoming intolerant. These findings align with and enrich previous studies on issues of tolerance or religious moderation in higher education institutions (Gaffar et al., 2022; Jati & Bachtiar, 2024; Mukhibat et al., 2024; van Es et al., 2021).

As for the informal curriculum, students also acknowledged gaining enlightenment through activities organized by KMP. For those who already understood the discourse of science integration — though with varying degrees of understanding — they gained deeper insights into the discourse. For others who had not grasped science integration in class, various KMP activities helped them review the learning outside the classroom. If the formal curriculum is the university's effort to institutionalize the discourse of science integration, the informal curriculum represents the students' side in understanding this discourse. These two curriculums are further strengthened by the next curriculum.

*Third*, the hidden curriculum, which relates to interactions among campus residents, encompassing values, norms, communication ethics, and knowledge exchange. The formal and informal curriculums are structured and documented activities, whereas the hidden curriculum consists of unstructured activities that have a significant impact on campus residents. Its significant influence stems from daily interactions. Through the hidden curriculum, the I-Kon vision is actualized within each individual member of UIN Jogja's academic community. Specifically for students, the hidden curriculum — directly or indirectly — motivates them to understand and deepen the discourse of science integration. This is evident when students organize activities related to the discourse of science integration.

This section has generally described how the I-Kon idea is implemented at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja, along with students' efforts to understand this idea. The discussion below delves further into various factors and impacts of the I-Kon idea implementation.



## Support from the Academic Environment

The above implementation of the I-Kon idea demonstrates two mutually supportive aspects of the discourse of science integration at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja. On one side, the university strives to provide a curriculum aligned with the KKNi within the vision of science integration through a formal curriculum. On the other side, the students utilize the informal curriculum to complement the formal curriculum. These two curriculums also receive support in a more fluid form, namely from the hidden curriculum. The interplay among these three curriculums establishes a healthy academic environment and makes the Graduate School of UIN Jogja a supportive environment for students in their academic pursuits. This section further elaborates on how the implementation of the I-Kon idea has become a tradition. The discussion begins with why the I-Kon idea has persisted and evolved. The subsequent discussion details the steps taken by students to understand or deepen the discourse of science integration. These two discussions aim to illustrate the form of support provided by the academic environment.

## I-Kon: An Idea that Endures and Transforms

The idea of I-Kon that endures and transforms continuously can be seen from both epistemological and sociological perspectives. From an epistemological standpoint, the I-Kon framework is broader in scope compared to other ideas on the science-religion discussion. For instance, this idea does not fall into the two opposing camps of proponents and opponents of the Islamization of knowledge discourse (see Chande, 2023; Muqowim & Lessy, 2019). From an epistemological viewpoint, the openness of I-Kon allows it to embrace various opinions. Following the metaphor of a spider web, the idea of Islamization of knowledge still confines its web to certain disciplines, despite efforts to integrate science and religion. Meanwhile, I-Kon in the spider web has reached the stage of dialoguing, communicating, and discussing between disciplines (Abdullah, 2015, 2017). It is evident here that the Islamization of knowledge is one variant of integrating science and religion, which ultimately needs to be incorporated into the I-Kon idea to unite these various ideas. The Kemenag document (2019, p. 13) states that UIN Jogja's proposal intersects with the Islamization of knowledge movement. Therefore, the openness of the I-Kon idea can embrace and complement other ideas — especially major ideas such as the Islamization of knowledge and the scientification of Islam.

In relation to sociological factors, the openness of I-Kon towards the integration of science and religion allows for various opinions or interpretations to emerge in its implementation, both from UIN Jogja academicians and its students. This openness enables the I-Kon idea to continuously transform. The analysis of this research data shows that there is a range of views from UIN Jogja academicians on the I-Kon idea. Simply put, differing opinions on I-Kon can be seen from two perspectives. The first perspective is that differing opinions arise from academicians based on a comprehensive understanding of the I-Kon idea, but they do not align with it or have different interpretations of the discourse of science integration. If this is the case, differing interpretations of I-Kon are not problematic because the I-Kon idea is open in this regard. In other words, this interpretation is in line with I-Kon which, for instance, does not dichotomize religious science and general science. Problems arise when disagreements are based on a lack of understanding of the I-Kon idea as a whole. This is the second perspective. If this is the case, in the context of understanding, the differing views are not about interpreting the I-Kon concept but rather a misunderstanding of I-Kon.

These two perspectives are possible because, based on this research data and previous findings (Abdullah, 2017; Suyadi & Sutrisno, 2018; Riyanto et al., 2022; Juhaidi, 2024), it is shown that an idea is rejected not based on knowledge but, for instance,

because it is assumed to contradict religious and moral beliefs. It is assumed that a critical idea contradicts religion. In other words, this rejection is not based on a comprehensive understanding. However, separate research is needed to explore the understanding of lecturers in this Graduate School — which is not the primary focus of this research. Nonetheless, it can be confirmed that there are differing views among UIN Jogja academicians on I-Kon. Generally, these differing views are not a deficiency but rather an added value in the academic environment of UIN Jogja, allowing students to learn from various perspectives on the discourse of science integration.

Such an academic environment at UIN Jogja provides students with support to understand the discourse of science integration. Based on the analysis of research findings, not all students can understand this discourse in the early semesters after entering the Graduate School of UIN Jogja. The reason is that they do not have an educational background equivalent to the IIS program curriculum. Moreover, not all students consciously choose their study program or concentration (see also Juhaidi, 2024). This means that before entering the IIS program, they do not know the curriculum content. One of the IIS program curricula is the ability to read foreign literature. Especially for students who are not from reputable campuses, where during their undergraduate studies, they did not engage much with foreign literature (see also Widodo et al., 2019). However, once they enter the IIS program, they are required to read a lot of foreign literature, both for course assignments and thesis writing. This inequality is certainly related to other factors as well, such as the ability to read texts outside their field due to the interdisciplinary program demands. This ability requires students to have foundational skills that should have been acquired during their undergraduate studies. At the very least, these skills should be obtained from self-matriculation against the IIS program curriculum before entering it. Besides that, other issues can affect them, ranging from financial aspects with all its implications (Handayati et al., 2021; Rapina et al., 2023) to psychological issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, and lack of motivation (Puspitasari et al., 2020; Kaloeti et al., 2019; Kotera et al., 2022; Choemue & Mbato, 2020). These various issues often affect their learning process. In the context of IIS, according to the analysis of research findings, these issues influence them when trying to understand the discourse of science integration until the thesis writing process. Ultimately, their theses are completed as simply as possible — if not just passably — and the results fall far short of the IIS Program's expectations. However, not all data indicate this. Some students, despite having such conditions, such as not knowing the IIS Program curriculum, are helped by their ability to adapt. They are also aided by the IIS Program's academic environment. As a result, they can still complete their theses well.

## The Impact of I-Kon on Student Conditions

There are various conditions that help their theses meet the expectations of the IIS program. These conditions generally come from the students' ability to adapt (see also the findings of Rifameutia & Malay, 2023; Supriatna, 2023) and from the support of the Graduate School environment at UIN Jogja. The description below illustrates these two conditions. Most interview data show that initially, they did not understand the concept of science integration. The following four stories can illustrate this.

Ivan Naufal was among the students who initially did not understand the discourse of science integration. He shared that in the first semester, he was still confused about this discourse, asking, *"What is interdisciplinarity? What is integration-interconnection?"* Then, he independently read Amin Abdullah's book titled *Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary* (2021), first published in 2020. Upon seeing the spider web metaphor for I-Kon and the accompanying explanation in the book, he began to

understand the I-Kon idea. His understanding was further enriched through discussions with friends outside of class, including in KMP. He acknowledged that his understanding and deepening of this discourse developed over time. His statement is reflected in the results of his thesis, which was recommended by his supervisor to be read by other students.

Naufal's story is also echoed in the experience of Fatimah Raihana, each with their unique aspects. Although she received general courses related to the discourse of science integration in the first semester, which all IIS students experienced, Raihana admitted she was still confused when receiving these course materials. Despite being familiar with foreign literature, she still struggled to understand the discourse in this interdisciplinary study program. As previously mentioned, not all students are accustomed to reading interdisciplinary Islamic studies materials. Therefore, the issue is not merely a matter of language. Through her efforts to adapt, including joining KMP, Raihana eventually found clarity.

Raihana shared that it was in KMP where she gained enlightenment, particularly in working on her final assignment. Initially, while drafting her thesis proposal, she struggled to identify gaps in the previous literature. She was delayed for seven months in progressing with her final assignment, especially in finding novelty. This difficulty was resolved when she attended a KMP forum discussing the latest findings in contemporary Islamic studies. One of the speakers at the forum was her supervisor. Although she was just an audience member, Raihana had an extensive response to the presentation at the forum. Her supervisor, who was listening, expressed her surprise at the response. After the event, her supervisor contacted Raihana and suggested she change her thesis topic to the one discussed in the forum.

Raihana's thesis story also demonstrates how efforts from both sides can come together. From the campus side, the supervisor noticed that Raihana had a good understanding of a subject — which was not initially her thesis topic. From the student's side, Raihana showcased her ability to elaborate on her readings in front of her supervisor — albeit unintentionally. The supervisor's ability to recognize her potential, combined with Raihana's skill in elaborating her readings, resulted in a thesis that met the IIS Program's expectations. In fact, Raihana's final assignment became one of the best theses at the Graduate School of UIN Jogja.

Unlike Naufal and Raihana, another student admitted to understanding the discourse of science integration from the start. However, they all shared a commonality in gaining significant understanding and deepening of this discourse outside the classroom. This student was Sabrina Nisa. With an undergraduate background, she was accustomed to various contemporary Islamic studies materials. Nevertheless, she felt the need to adapt, realizing that her previous place of study had conflicting ideologies with her current place of study. Therefore, her difficulty lay more in broadening her perspective. At the beginning of her studies, Nisa admitted that she needed many discussions with those who had different viewpoints from hers.

Nisa's journey in completing her final assignment was also interesting. Initially, she was confused about her final assignment topic. After getting involved with KMP, she was chosen to be a moderator for one of the forums. As a moderator, Nisa felt comfortable with the lecturer who was the speaker at the KMP forum. After the KMP forum, Nisa contacted the lecturer for thesis proposal consultation. Besides feeling comfortable, Nisa had the right to consult with him because this lecturer was also her academic advisor (an academic advisor [*dosen pembimbing akademik* or DPA] guides a group of students in their overall academic process, while an academic supervisor specifically assists students in writing their final assignment.) Long story short, after this academic advisor also became her academic supervisor, Nisa recounted that she frequently consulted her thesis

drafts, almost every week, she said. Sometimes, when consulting, Nisa did not bring anything because she experienced writer's block. Often, her thesis draft received many comments, *"I got a lot of comments ... 'Here, Nisa, this isn't very good, this isn't very good, this isn't very good.' Basically, change it to this, change it to that. And I followed it, because his suggestions were really good."* Due to her efforts, Nisa's thesis became a model for other students, both in terms of structure and substance. Nisa acknowledged that her supervisor greatly assisted her in writing her thesis.

The three student stories above illustrate their ability to adapt in the IIS Program. Particularly from Raihana and Nisa, their stories show that there is an integration between the formal curriculum (guidance from lecturers), the informal curriculum (KMP), and the hidden curriculum (internal motivation of the students). This curriculum integration helps them complete their theses well.

Similar to Ivan Naufal's story above, another student also benefited from his independent reading efforts. This student was Rama S. Dwi. If Naufal's effort involved independent reading and discussions with friends in KMP to understand the science integration discourse, Dwi did not do the same. He discussed the discourse outside the UIN Jogja environment to understand it. However, for his thesis, Dwi was greatly aided by corrections from the examiners during his final assignment defense. He admitted that his supervisor did not provide much help. Although he was not helped by the informal curriculum (because he was not involved in KMP nor participated in its activities), Dwi acknowledged that he was indirectly helped by the formal curriculum (during his thesis defense). Furthermore, when Dwi made efforts to understand science integration through discussions outside UIN Jogja, this also constituted an internalization of the I-Kon vision (i.e., internalization of the hidden curriculum). Due to his efforts, Dwi's final assignment also met the IIS Program's expectations.

In contrast to the four stories above, the overall research data indicates that some students still did not fully grasp the discourse of science integration, including I-Kon, even by the time they completed their theses. From the literature, observation, and interview data, the researcher found that various conditions lead to students not understanding this discourse, as depicted in the above description. The following elaboration explores this further, including a discussion of the trends in student theses based on an analysis of 334 final assignments in IIS.

## Typologies of Student Theses Based on I-Kon Frameworks

The exploration of the two discussions above aligns with the findings from the review of student final assignments as products of the I-Kon idea. The previous discussion has shown how the I-Kon idea is implemented, the efforts of students to understand it, and the interrelation between these factors that forms academic support in institutionalizing the discourse of science integration at UIN Jogja. The following description of IIS thesis trends highlights the products of the I-Kon idea from student final assignments, which also reflect the diversity of student understanding and practice of the I-Kon idea. After reviewing 334 theses, the achievements and challenges of the I-Kon idea are reflected in the following three typologies.

*First*, 'Linear-Concentration,' which refers to theses that conduct interdisciplinary studies but remain linear with their concentration. Theses in this category study subjects in accordance with their concentration. However, their analysis slightly touches on aspects of the I-Kon idea, using religion (Islam) as the formal object and science as the material object; or vice versa, using science as the formal object and religion (Islam) as the material object. Examples of such theses are commonly found in the review of 334 theses.

The researcher's attention to this typology is also for evaluation purposes. Theses in this typology haven't yet met the aspects of I-Kon, in other words, they do not meet the expectations of the IIS Program. Students in this typology face many challenges. The main issue is educational inequality, making it difficult for them to adapt to the academic environment of UIN Jogja. This issue can be addressed if the IIS program creates a curriculum matriculation. Evidence of matriculation is reflected in students whose theses meet the expectations of IIS, possessing the ability to conduct self-matriculation. This issue relates to foreign language proficiency and familiarity with interdisciplinary studies materials (see also Abdullah, 2017, 2020; Harun et al., 2020; Mas'ud et al., 2019; Muhalim, 2023; Widodo et al., 2019). All these issues can be addressed by incorporating direct matriculation into the formal and informal curriculum (see also Mas'ud et al., 2019), as some students have done independently. The results of this independent matriculation are visible in the following two typologies.

*Second*, 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration,' which refers to theses that conduct multidisciplinary studies using two or more disciplines to examine something, and tend to be uncommon within their concentration. After reviewing 334 student final assignments, the following four theses can serve as examples reflecting this typology. First, the theses of Sarah Busyra (2021) and Muhammad Novan Leany (2022), both from the Islamic Education Psychology Concentration. Busyra's (2021) thesis is titled "Annyeonghaseo Ayyuhannaas! *Appropriation and Adaptation of Hallyu in the Internalization of Religious Values among the Xkwavers Community in Yogyakarta.*" Using BJ Fogg's behavior model and Abraham Maslow's humanistic psychology approach, she examines how the Xkwavers community's Xschool classes affect the shift in behaviors and thoughts among Korean culture enthusiasts. Meanwhile, Leany's (2022) thesis is titled "Integration of Altruism and Happiness in Rural Communities in Contemporary Social Education Aspirations: A Phenomenological and Life Story Study of Four Activists of the Sejangkauantangan Chapter Kukar Community." Leany attempts to explore the phenomenon of integrating altruism and happiness values in rural communities with the presence of the vegetable-sharing culture of the Sejangkauantangan community, which aims to offer a pattern of educational renewal.

Busyra and Leany's theses demonstrate multidisciplinary studies to examine a phenomenon. Research in the field of (Islamic) educational psychology tends to study phenomena related to teaching, training, and learning in formal or institutional education (see Siregar, 2020), while Busyra and Leany successfully show different perspectives in this field. By using other disciplines such as social, political, and cultural fields, they show that the field of (Islamic) educational psychology can view contemporary learning patterns through communities. Busyra shows how a (*dakwah*) community can change the thoughts and behaviors of Muslim teenagers who love Korean culture. Through teaching critical thinking, Muslim teenagers can control their fanaticism towards a particular culture. Meanwhile, Leany's findings show the integration of altruism with happiness and cultural or socio-cultural approaches. Through the vegetable-sharing community process, Leany shows that there is a pattern of observational social education relevant to contemporary times.

In line with Busyra and Leany, the 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration' typology is also represented in M. Lytto Syahrums Arminsa's (2022) thesis from the Nusantara Islam Concentration. His thesis, "*The Construction of Islamic State Ideology in the Film 'Jejak Khilafah di Nusantara': A Critical Discourse Analysis by Teun A. Van Dijk*," applies Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis to deconstruct the construction of Islamic state ideology in the film 'Jejak Khilafah di Nusantara' (JKDN). Arminsa's findings indicate that certain segments of the JKDN film illustrate the construction of the Islamic state during the Islamic kingdoms of Nusantara. Therefore, the film can be identified as an instance of

transnationalism in the history of Nusantara Islam. While Busyra, Leany, and Arminsa engage in multidisciplinary research within their concentration, the theses in the subsequent typology traverse their concentration areas.

As with Busyra and Leany, this 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration' typology is also reflected in M. Lytto Syahrums Arminsa's (2022) thesis from the Nusantara Islam Concentration. His thesis is titled "*The Formation of Islamic State Ideology in the Film 'Jejak Khilafah di Nusantara': A Critical Discourse Analysis Employing Teun A. Van Dijk's Theory.*" Using Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis, Arminsa attempts to unravel the construction of Islamic state ideology in the film 'Jejak Khilafah di Nusantara' (JKDN). His findings show that certain parts of the JKDN film explain the construction of the Islamic state during the Islamic kingdoms of Nusantara. This means the film can be called transnationalism in the history of Nusantara Islam. While Busyra, Leany, and Arminsa conduct multidisciplinary studies but remain linear with their concentration, the theses in the following typology actually cross their concentration.

*Third*, 'Multidisciplinary Cross-Concentration,' which refers to theses that conduct multidisciplinary studies while crossing their concentrations. One of the best examples of this category is the thesis by Iqomah Richtig (2021) titled "Saranghae Fillah! *Hijrah Fandom in the Landscape of Islamic Dakwah Among Indonesian Youth.*" She is from the Middle Eastern Studies Concentration (abbreviated as MES), which examines young Muslims interested in Korean pop culture (*Hallyu*) and their efforts to remain devout without abandoning their interests. These young people are active consumers, where the pop culture becomes a means for their dakwah. Iqomah Richtig shared that initially, she was hesitant to conduct this study, but her supervisor convinced her to continue. Her hesitation was due to the research in MES concentration related to political, geographical, economic, and cultural studies in the Middle East (see Kramer, 2023), whereas Richtig's study was challenging to connect with all these aspects. Besides the support from her supervisor, Richtig's study was also considered to have interesting findings in the interdisciplinary Islamic studies field, which aligns with the "big house" of her concentration, namely the Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (IIS) Program. Due to her serious research efforts, Richtig's final assignment was considered one of the best theses in IIS.

The three typologies above illustrate the skills of students (reflected in the 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration' and 'Multidisciplinary Cross-Concentration' typologies) and their limitations (reflected in the 'Linear-Concentration' typology) in completing their final assignments. This analysis of skills and limitations serves as an evaluation of the I-Kon idea's knowledge products in IIS. The findings of this study can also serve as evaluation material for the IIS Program.

## Conclusion

This research has thoroughly examined the process of institutionalizing the discourse of science integration at the Graduate School of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN Jogja) through the Integration-Interconnection (I-Kon) idea. The findings highlight the crucial role of formal, informal, and hidden curricula in creating an academic environment that supports science integration. Three main typologies in thesis writing were found: 'Linear-Concentration', 'Multidisciplinary Linear-Concentration', and 'Multidisciplinary Cross-Concentration'. These typologies reflect the students' understanding and application of the I-Kon idea, with the latter two showing deeper and more diverse efforts at science integration compared to the 'Linear-Concentration' typology. The research concludes that the success of I-Kon implementation heavily depends on students' adaptability and the support provided by the academic environment. This support comes from the formal

curriculum as well as the informal and hidden curricula that bring the discourse of science integration to life in students' daily activities.

Despite its comprehensive approach, this research has limitations. First, it is limited to one institution, the Graduate School of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, so the findings may not fully represent other institutions. Second, the number of respondents in interviews and observations may not provide a complete picture of all students in the program. Third, the research duration from September 2020 to June 2024 may not capture the long-term dynamics of I-Kon implementation. Fourth, the qualitative methodology with a case study approach, while providing in-depth understanding, may not yield widely generalizable results.

Nevertheless, the findings open avenues for further research. Future studies could explore the implementation of science integration in other programs or institutions to test the model's flexibility and adaptability. Different perspectives could also be employed, such as lecturers and study programs or university leaders. Longitudinal studies following student development over time could provide deeper insights into the dynamics of adaptation and academic support. Comparative research across various institutions could offer a broader understanding of the factors contributing to the success or challenges of this discourse.

The implications of this study are significant for both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretically, the findings show that the epistemological openness of I-Kon allows it to evolve continuously. Its ability to embrace other ideas enables I-Kon to bridge the gap in the discourse of science and religion integration. This openness allows lecturers and students with diverse knowledge backgrounds to creatively understand and practice I-Kon. The interdisciplinary foundation of the IIS program further strengthens the idea's transformative potential. Practically, these findings can inform the evaluation and development of science integration discourse in the IIS Program and guide policymaking within the Islamic Higher Education environment (PTKI). The publication of The Guidelines aims to facilitate mutual learning among PTKIs, and these findings can contribute to that goal.

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