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Tracing The Genealogy Of Indonesian Muslim Students' Religious Attitudes: What, Why, And What's Next

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ABSTRACT

In 2019, according to Pew Research Center, 83% Indonesian people believed that religion has played a significant role in the contemporary Indonesia. As the most Muslim majority country, Indonesia has lots of problems with religious intolerance. This research poster aims to provide data on Indonesian Muslim students' religious attitudes as well as the possible causes and the measures to tackle the problems. A desk research method was used to collect secondary data from previous studies. The findings show that most Indonesian Muslim students had intolerant behaviors which might be inherited from environments they had lived in. Several causes of the phenomenon were traced, starting from Islamic Education teachers and faculties, the national standards, to cyberspace environments. Some recommendations to revise the national standards, develop the teachers and faculties, and training students are presented. It is hoped that students as the country's future leaders have more open, moderate, and tolerant viewpoints.

Keywords: Indonesian Muslim students, Religious attitudes, Intolerance

INTRODUCTION

- As the most Muslim majority country, 83% Indonesian people believed that religion has played a significant role in today's Indonesia (Pew Research Center, 2019).
- The Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim, emphasized that intolerance is one of the biggest sins Indonesian education has committed (Tempo.co, 2020).
- It could be argued that most Indonesian Muslim students were influenced by their environments so that they had intolerant attitudes. The research questions are:

- What are Indonesian Muslim students' attitudes on religious matters? (The What)**
- What possibly influences them to have those behaviors? (The Why)**
- What needs to be done to tackle the problematic religious understandings the students have? (The What's Next)**

- Regarding the research method, I did a desk research by using secondary data from previous research.

- Some terms used in this poster:

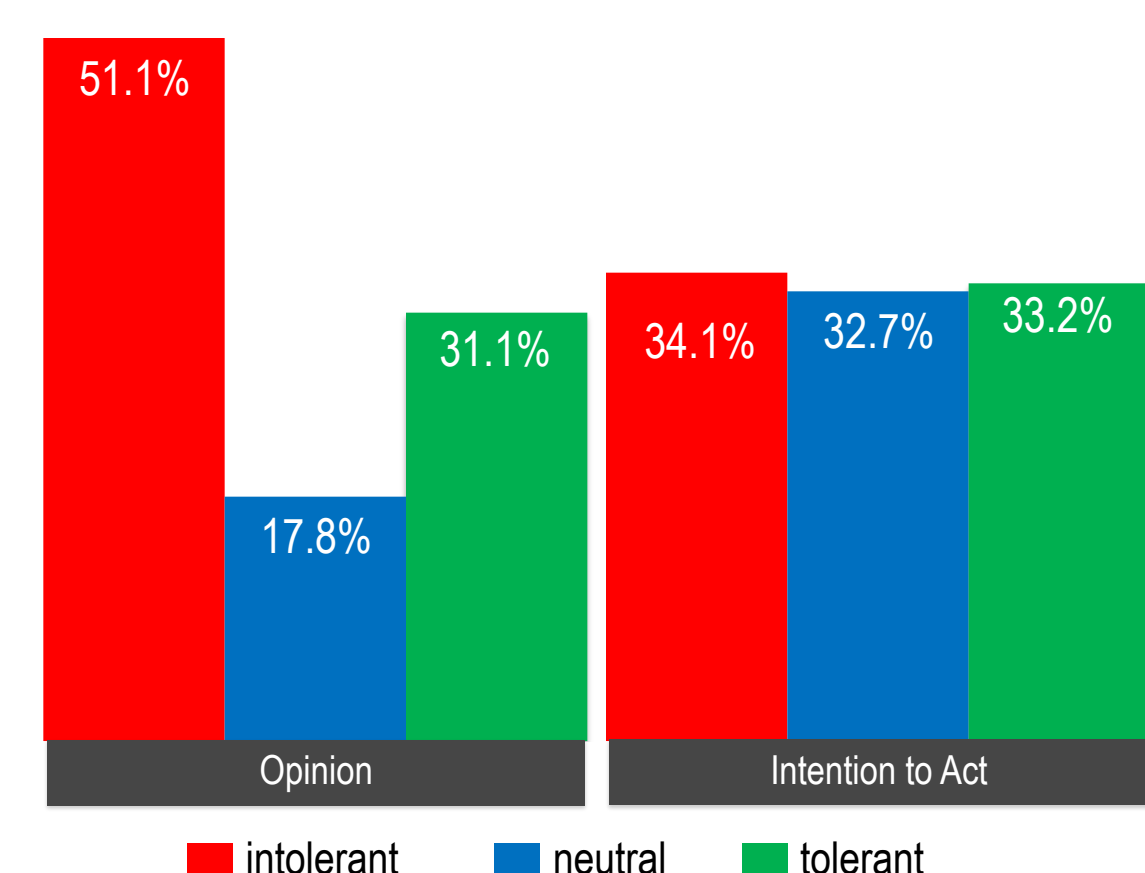
- Intolerant opinion:** Views of not being willing to accept different ideas or ways of behaving
- Intention to act:** Intention to do intolerant deeds
- Internal:** Intolerant opinions or intentions to act intolerant deeds to fellow Muslims
- External:** Intolerant opinions or intentions to act intolerant deeds to other believers (Jews, Christians, etc.)
- Conservative:** Resisting great or sudden changes

FINDINGS: THE GENEALOGY

1. Indonesian Muslim Students' Attitudes

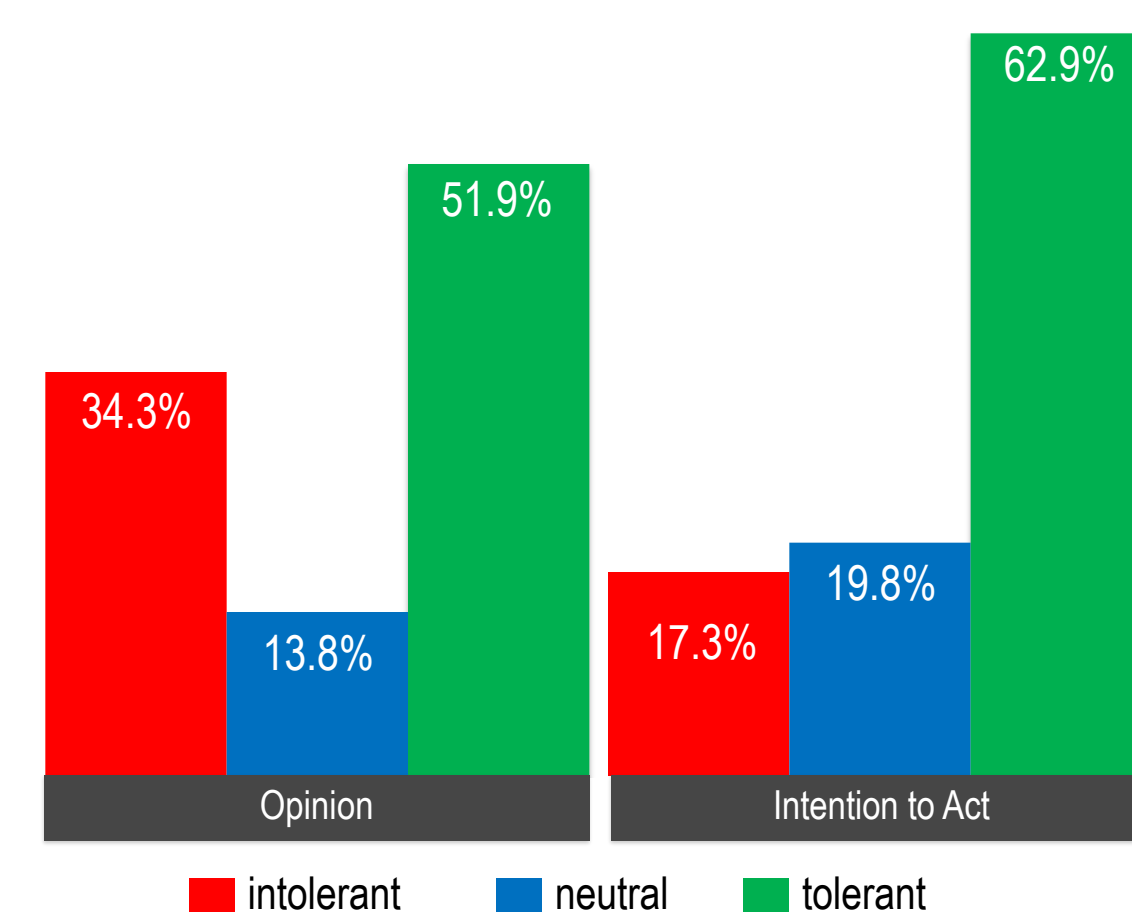
- Based on PPIM survey (2018), 1 out of 2 Muslim secondary school and university students tended to have intolerant views towards other fellow Muslims.
- More worryingly, 34.1% of them had intention to realize those views into real actions (PPIM, 2018).

Figure 1. Muslim Students' Attitudes to Fellow Muslims (Internal)



- 34.3% of the students had intolerant opinions to other religious believers.
- Furthermore, only 17.3% of them had intention to act intolerance deeds in the future.

Figure 2. Muslim Students' Attitudes to Other Believers (External)

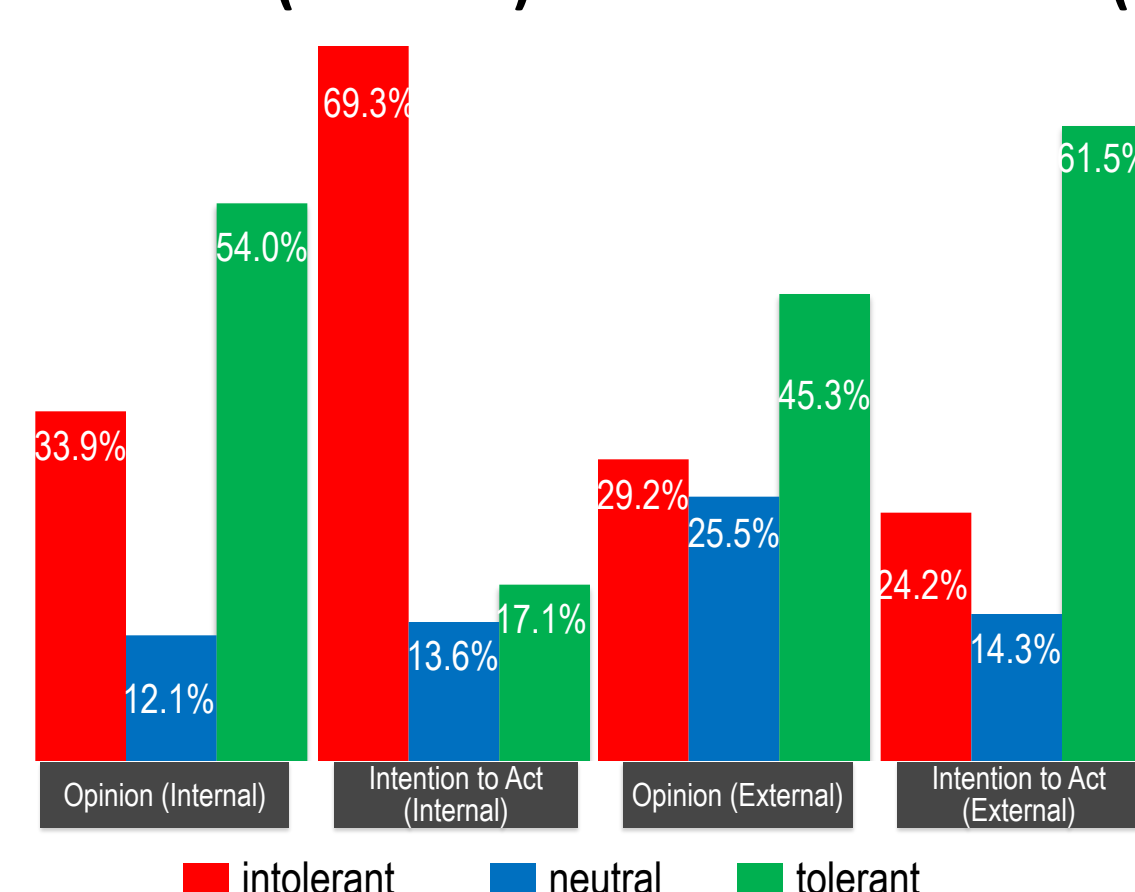


This data was collected from the survey that representatively was involved by Muslim students across Indonesia. So, where had they possibly had these intolerant attitudes?

2. Are Islamic Education Teachers and Faculties the Culprits?

- Around 30% school teachers and university faculties of Islamic Education subject had intolerant viewpoints to both fellow and other believers (PPIM, 2018).
- There were 7 out of 10 of them had intention to act intolerance to fellow Muslims and only 24.2% teachers and lecturers had the intention to act to other believers.

Figure 3. Islamic Education Teachers and Faculties' Attitudes to Fellow Muslims (Internal) and Other Believers (External)



3. But, What about the Standards of Islamic Education?

- If we see further the Ministerial Decree 211/2011 on National Standards for Islamic Education, the largest proportion of Islamic Education teachings is about worshipping God (51%), then morals (34%), and having faith (15%) (KSI, 2020).
- The morals that are emphasized are personal morals (81%), such as politeness and honesty, then social morals (6%) such as helping others, and finally civic morals (13%) such as tolerance (KSI, 2020). Meaning, the teaching of tolerance is very limited at classroom.

Figure 4. Kinds of Religious Contents

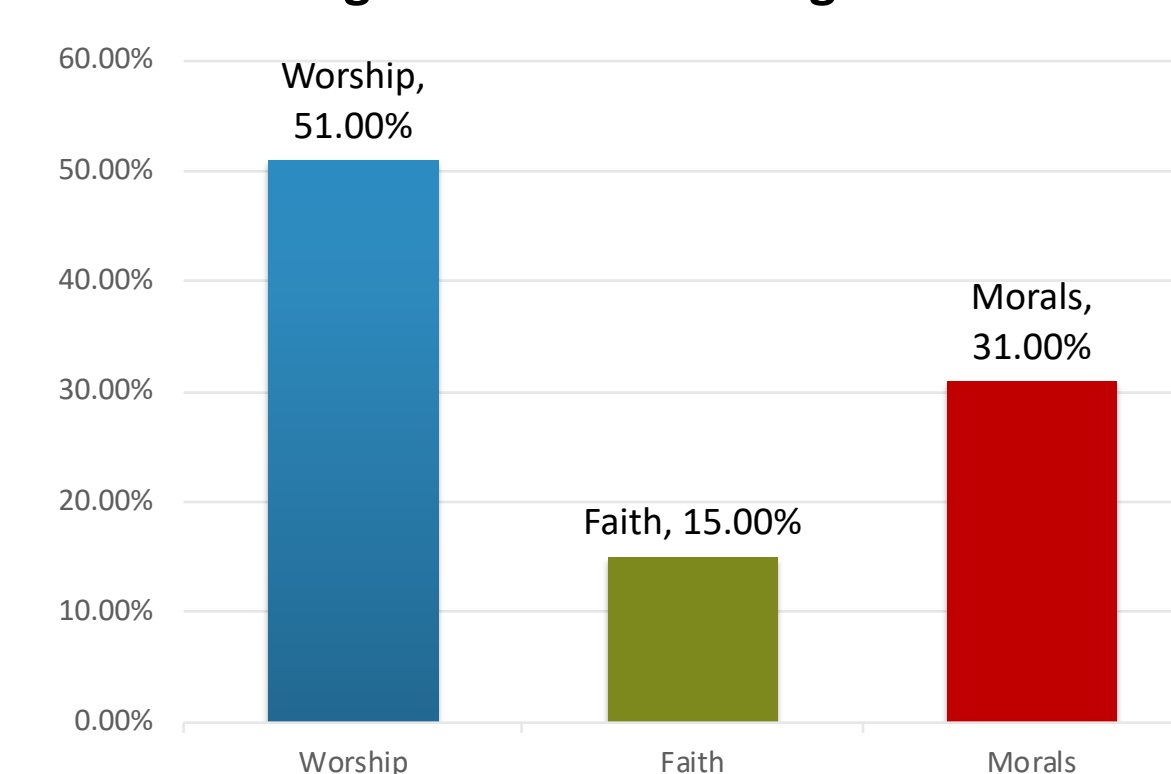
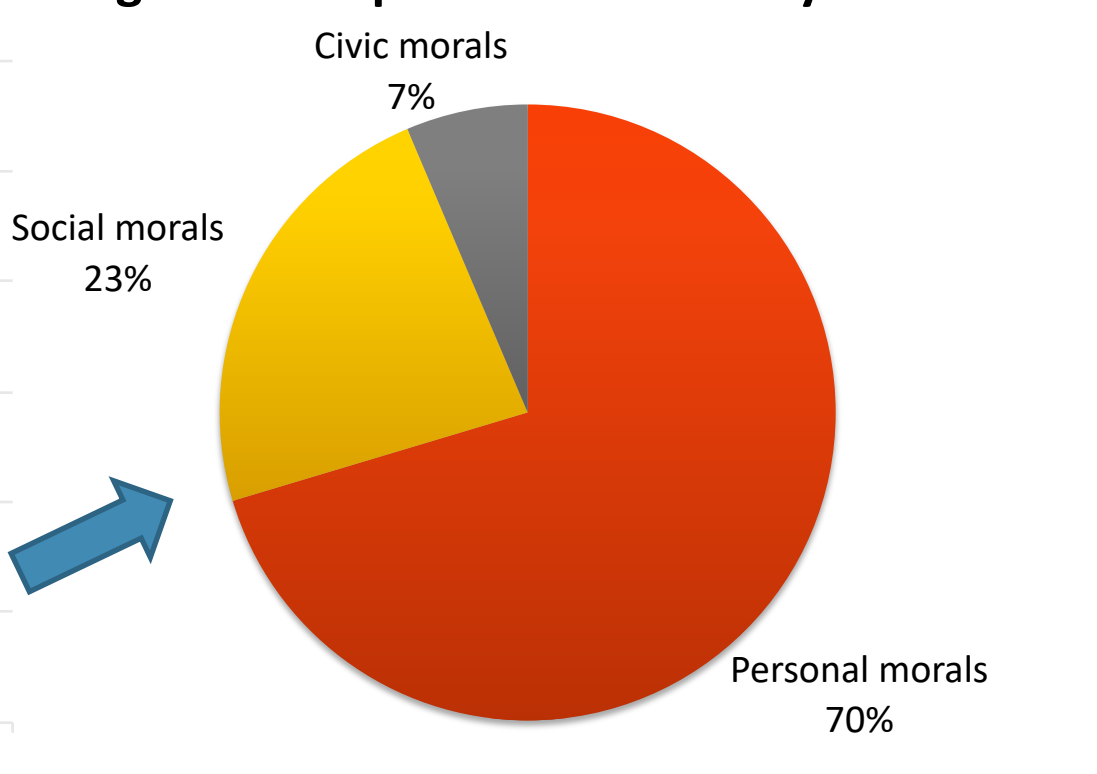


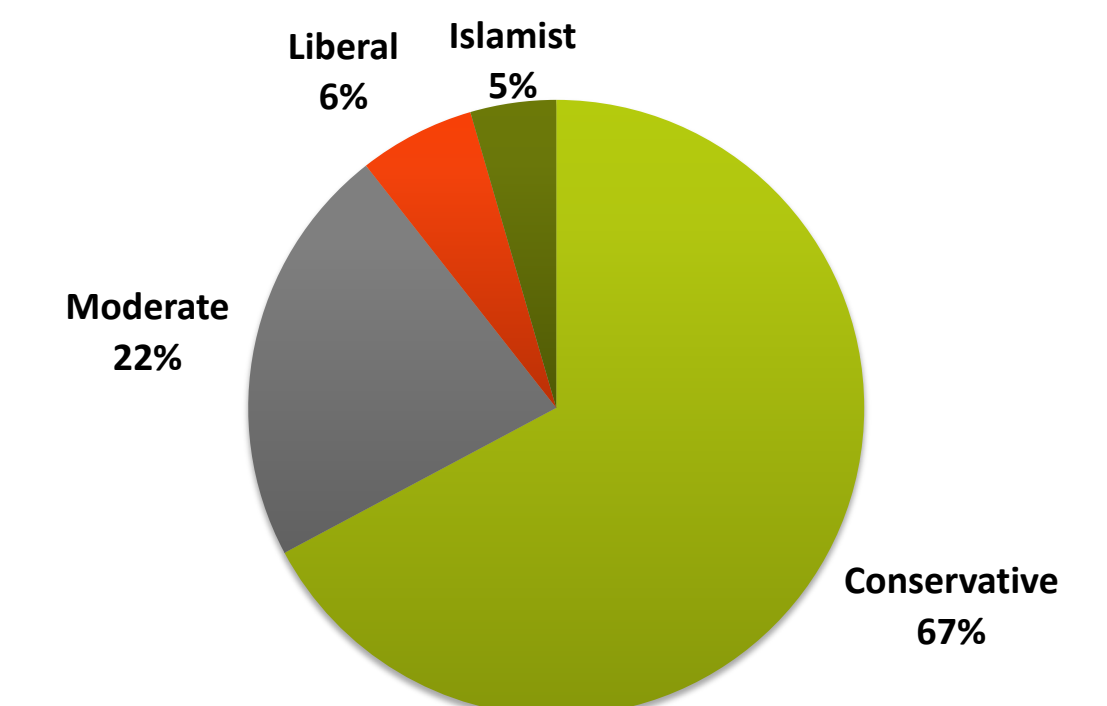
Figure 5. Proportion of Morality Substances



4. Most Tweets on Twitter are Conservative!

- Not only in formal educational settings, the cyberspace environment is not that friendly to nurture moderate and tolerant religious learnings. MERIT's big data study (2020) showed that conservatism dominates the conversation on Twitter (67.2%), followed by the moderate (22.2%), the liberal (6.1%), and the Islamist (4.5%).

Figure 6. Types of Religious Contents on Twitter



5. Sites the Students Frequently Visited

- Finally, CISForm study (2018) indicated that the conservative-Islamist sites such as Era Muslim, Hidayatullah, and VoA-Islam attracted 40% secondary students and 46% university students in 2018.

Figure 7. Secondary School Students

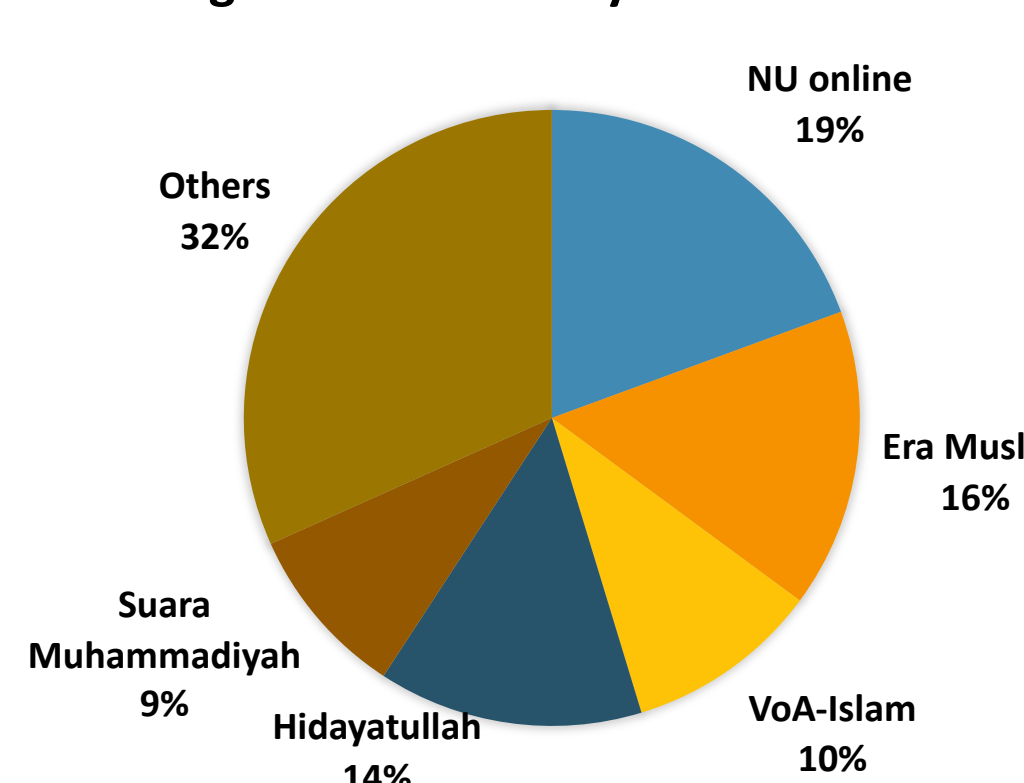
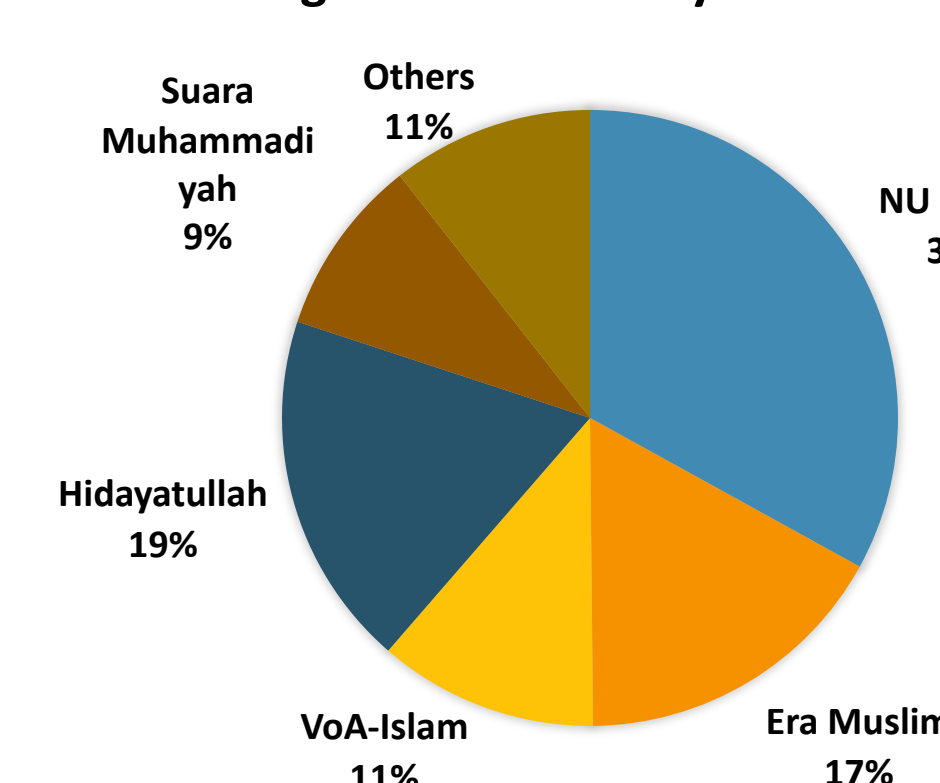


Figure 8. University Students

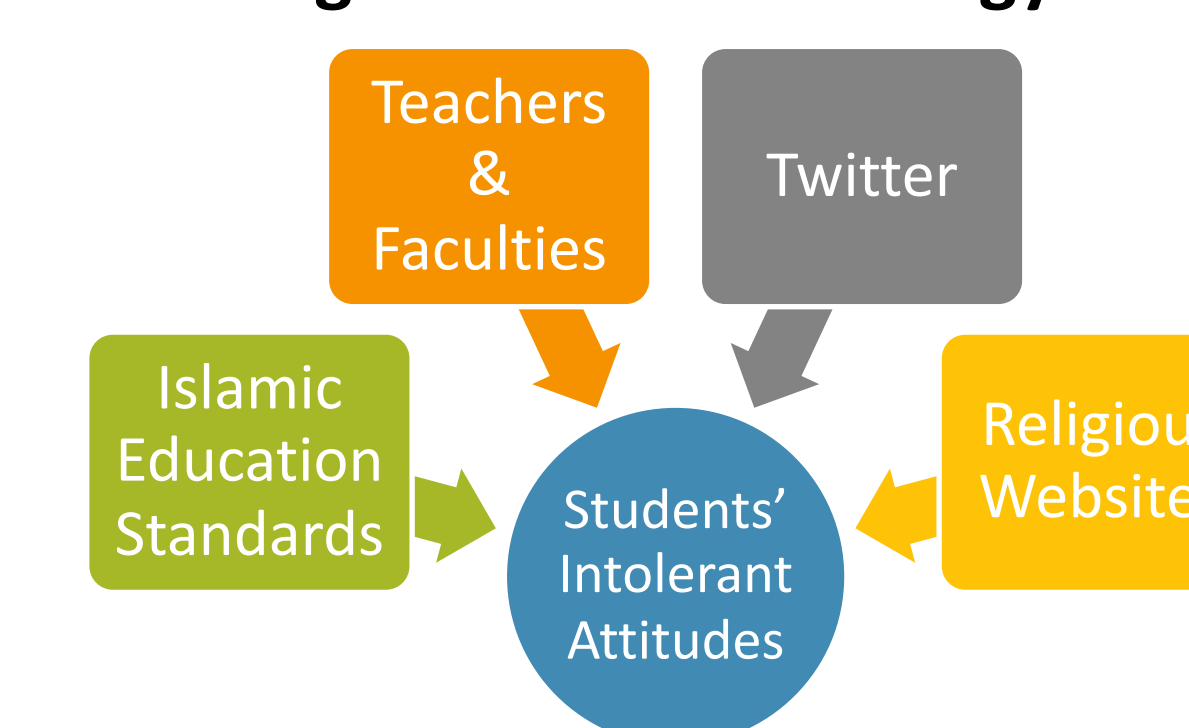


All the data has shown that the environment around students has conservative traits and less tolerance substances for them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, I argue that the student environments including Islamic Education teachers and faculties, standards, Twitter cyberspace, and religious websites had given birth to the students' intolerant behaviors. The genealogy of how the students' attitudes were constructed is as follows:

Figure 9. The Genealogy



To solve this problem I would like to propose some recommendations for policymakers:

- revising Islamic Education national standards by inserting more social and civic morals,
- involving Islamic Education teachers and faculties in regular capacity buildings on tolerance and other civic attitudes, and
- training students about critical digital literacy to shield them from unwanted contents of social media and conservative-religious websites.

With these measures, it is hoped that students as Indonesian future leaders have more open, moderate, and tolerant perspectives.

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