Combatting Radicalism through Knowledge Management: A Phenomenological Study on Teachers at Raudlatul Athfal

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Abstract
This study investigates the utilization of knowledge management by Raudlatul Athfal (Islamic Kindergarten) teachers in combating radicalism, adopting a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological lens. It centers on the experiences of twelve certified teachers in Ikatan Guru Raudlatul Athfal (IGRA) from the Delanggu Sub-district, Klaten, Central Java, scrutinizing their strategies and perceptions through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The objective was to understand how teachers integrate anti-radicalism education within their pedagogical practices, emphasizing the importance of narratives, play, and interactive activities. The findings illuminate diverse interpretations of radicalism among teachers and underscore the effectiveness of collaborative efforts with parents and the community in accessing essential educational resources and further training. The study reveals a critical demand for enhancing teachers' knowledge management skills related to radicalism, advocating for targeted training programs that could significantly improve anti-radicalism education at the kindergarten level. Despite facing resource limitations, this research spotlights the potential impact of early childhood education in fostering a more tolerant and harmonious society. It suggests that upgrading educational resources, refining teacher training programs, and leveraging technology in anti-radicalism education are vital steps forward. The implications of this study are manifold, indicating the urgent need to strengthen early educators' capacity in knowledge management concerning radicalism. This supports the effective delivery of anti-radicalism education and contributes to the broader goal of nurturing a more inclusive and peaceful community. Future research should investigate the variations in teachers' perceptions of radicalism and assess the impact of knowledge management training in optimizing anti-radicalism educational strategies.

Introduction
The importance of knowledge management in education has emerged as a primary focus in many countries. In religious education (RE), the role of knowledge management is not limited to improving school performance but also to countering social phenomena (Cegarra-Sánchez & Cegarra-Navarro, 2017) such as radicalism. Schools' performance and teachers' capacity to capture, share, and utilize knowledge effectively is crucial to preparing an open-minded and tolerant young generation (Bustamante et al., 2018). A study by Wahyuddin (2020) shows a significant improvement in school performance in Indonesia through knowledge management. This underscores the importance of further research in this context for society and the discipline of education.

Knowledge management has become a key component in enhancing the quality of education. In China, Li and Saeheaw (2021) found that knowledge management improves the training of English Language teaching in high schools. A study Birasnav et al., 2021 highlights the implementation of safety-oriented knowledge management processes and acceptance of student diversity in American schools. This research shows how knowledge management can shape a more inclusive and safe educational approach (Hordijk & Baud, 2011). This is relevant
to the research objectives in the RE context to counter radicalism, demonstrating how knowledge management can be adapted in various educational contexts (Biasutti & EL-Deghaidy, 2012).

The use of technology in knowledge management within educational settings has shown significant outcomes, with improvements in teachers’ knowledge management in Indonesia through a multi-faceted approach utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This research emphasizes how technologies, like SEM, can assist in analyzing and enhancing knowledge management practices (Sudibjo et al., 2022). Meanwhile, in India, related research indicates that the implementation of knowledge management strategies has a significant impact on improving academic performance in public schools, suggesting that effective knowledge management can contribute to better academic achievements (Valacherry & Pakkeerappa, 2021). Both studies highlight that the integration of technology in knowledge management not only strengthens the knowledge management process itself but also supports improvements in academic performance, which in turn can be a crucial tool in addressing challenges such as radicalism at the basic education level.

Various studies emphasize that knowledge management is crucial in strategic decision-making within educational institutions. AlDhaen (2020) demonstrates the role of knowledge management in strategic decision-making in higher education institutions. The studies by Mochalina et al. (2020) and Hargitai et al. (2021) found that the knowledge management process through e-learning enhances learning skills in schools. This research asserts that knowledge management improves the administrative and academic aspects of schools and can influence significant decisions related to curriculum and pedagogy (Supermane, 2019). These aspects are highly relevant in countering radicalism through education, particularly in designing strategies for this purpose.

Knowledge management in schools has been a deeply researched topic in various countries. Cordeiro et al., (2022) found a significant influence of knowledge management on school organizational performance in Brazil. The research by Hou, Song, & Li (2020) also revealed the role of authentic leadership and ‘green’ knowledge management in higher education. These studies provide new insights into how knowledge management can be leveraged to enhance education, especially in countering radicalism at the grassroots level.

Different approaches to knowledge management have been adopted in schools worldwide. Cheng (2019) showed the effectiveness of people-based knowledge management strategies in Hong Kong. In West Java, Sobandi et al., (2021) discovered the positive impact of the knowledge management process on teachers’ literacy skills. These findings emphasize the need to explore various knowledge management strategies to address radicalism issues, particularly in countering radicalism.

Knowledge management has been recognized as a crucial factor in improving educational performance. A study in South Africa by Romm & Nkambule, (2022) demonstrated the strengthening of ethical knowledge management in public schools. Research by Hernández García De Velazco et al., (2021) and Watthanakuljaroen (2023) on using Virtual Learning Communities emphasized the importance of knowledge management in addressing the educational challenges of the 21st century. This research lays the foundation for further exploration into how knowledge management can be utilized in early childhood education (RA) to counteract radicalism.

Numerous studies have explored the impact of knowledge management across various aspects of education. Watthanakuljaroen (2023) highlighted the influence of digital creativity and digital capabilities in knowledge management in Vietnamese secondary schools. Firdaus et al. (2022) demonstrated the effectiveness of gamification in knowledge management systems to enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. These findings provide valuable insights into the potential of knowledge management in RA, especially in addressing issues of radicalism. However, there are several limitations and controversies in previous knowledge management research. These studies often focus on the contexts of higher education and elementary schools,
with little attention to the RA level. Meanwhile, the Ma’arif Institute explicitly presents its research findings that RA is at risk of exposure to teachings of intolerance and radicalism. Such teachings are indicated to be acquired by students through their teachers. Teachers have been shown not to fulfill their role as good role models for their students. Teachers impart radical beliefs and thoughts to change a situation, such as about jihad through suicide bombing to fight infidels, prohibition of singing national songs, and refusal to salute the red and white flag (Bamualim et al., 2018). Moreover, the relationship between knowledge management and the prevention of radicalism has not been thoroughly explored. This research aims to bridge this gap by exploring how RA teachers can use knowledge management to counteract radicalism.

This research explores the use of knowledge management by RA teachers in countering radicalism. Its primary objective is to understand how knowledge capture, knowledge sharing, and knowledge use by RA teachers can contribute to countering radicalism. This study is expected to provide new insights and a significant contribution to the field of RA, particularly in developing practical knowledge management strategies and practices in this critical context.

**Methods**

This study adopts a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach to analyze the knowledge management strategies of RA (Islamic Kindergarten) teachers in countering radicalism. The focus is on the experiences of the subjects, in this case, 12 certified RA teachers in Delanggu Sub-district, Klaten, Central Java, from the IGRA organization. Research permission was obtained from the IGRA chairman of the Delanggu Sub-district to determine experienced informants, collect data, and follow the meeting processes organized by the IGRA organization. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, emphasizing the phenomenological approach to capture the perceptions and experiences of teachers (Creswell, 2009; Hasbiansyah, 2008). The interview was conducted for approximately 60 minutes and recorded to obtain comprehensive data. The researcher made observations by observing the informants’ schools and participating in the learning processes and IGRA meetings. Meanwhile, the researcher conducted documentation searches to obtain supporting data on the archives of training agenda implementations related to anti-radicalism education.

The validity of the data was ensured through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation (Moleong, 2007). During the stages of prolonged engagement and persistent observation, the researcher ensured the consistency between the observation data and the data obtained from the interview process. On the other hand, all interview data were also processed by transcribing them as is. Then, the researcher cross-checked with informants to ensure that the transcript results were consistent with what was conveyed during the interview (Sugiyono, 2008). Subsequently, the data analysis followed the steps outlined by Creswell, (2012), including describing the phenomenon, grouping statements into meaningful units, and constructing the meaning and essence of the subject’s experiences. These steps were taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the research, strengthening the understanding of how knowledge management can be a tool to counter radicalism in the RA environment.

**Result**

3.1. Enhancing Teachers’ Understanding of Radicalism

Teachers at Islamic Kindergartens (RA) play a pivotal role in shaping children’s initial understanding of radicalism. They introduce concepts of tolerance and nationalism at an early age. Teachers’ understanding of radicalism varies depending on their background and experience. The primary challenge is the lack of adequate resources and training. This situation creates a gap in teachers’ knowledge regarding anti-radicalism education.

“One’s understanding of radicalism, from what I know, is that it is a doctrine or teaching of hardline or left-wing,” said a teacher. “It means a belief system that contradicts the true teachings of monotheism, a religion that promotes love for one another. So, it is like there is a
deviation from all that." This perception illustrates that teachers have a basic understanding of radicalism. It highlights the importance of further education and discussion on this topic.

Teachers’ comprehension of radicalism is crucial for developing appropriate teaching methods. They must present anti-radicalism material in a way that is understandable to RA children. These methods include storytelling, games, and interactive activities. The goal is to instill positive values and tolerance. Teachers also influence how anti-radicalism messages are conveyed to children.

Islamic Kindergarten teachers need to be equipped with relevant educational resources. This includes access to books, stories, and audiovisual materials suitable for young children. A common challenge is the shortage of relevant educational materials. Proper materials can assist teachers in implementing anti-radicalism learning. These materials should be easily accessible and appealing to children. Interaction between teachers, parents, and the community is crucial. Teachers must be effective in communicating and providing guidance to parents. The objective is to support this learning at home. This collaboration ensures the consistency of the anti-radicalism message. Such communication helps reinforce learning at school and home.

3.2. Strengthening Teacher Interactions with Communities and Parents in Anti-Radicalism Education.

RA (Religious Affairs) teachers are crucial in addressing radical issues with parents and the community. They leverage parent meetings and school events as platforms for information sharing. In these meetings, teachers elucidate the importance of anti-radicalism education for children. They emphasize how tolerance and patriotism can be taught at home. This collaboration is vital to ensure a consistent message at school and home.

"For the vision and mission of the organization that mentions attitudes that deny radicalism or anti-radicalism education, in my opinion, its vision and mission are to foster a sense of love for one another and anti-radicalism in society," said a teacher. "This is achieved through the learning process by providing socialization and understanding that the surrounding community can easily grasp. Especially in RA education, using child-friendly language that is easy to understand." This highlights the importance of communicating anti-radicalism values in a language that both children and parents can comprehend.

Teachers also strive to build communication bridges with parents regarding the impact of radicalism. They offer practical examples and strategies on how parents can support this learning at home. Activities such as reading stories or role-playing can be utilized to teach these values. In this manner, teachers and parents collaborate to shape the children’s understanding. This collaboration enhances the effectiveness of the anti-radicalism message. Furthermore, teachers endeavor to involve the community in school activities that promote the theme of anti-radicalism. This includes inviting guest speakers and organizing special events. These activities are designed to reinforce the message of tolerance and respect for differences. Teachers use these opportunities to educate children, parents, and other community members. This fosters a collective awareness of the importance of anti-radicalism education.

"I have never participated in any training or education related to attitudes or education against radicalism," a teacher revealed. "However, the subject was once touched upon when we had a parenting speaker at our institution, Mrs. Mila Ashofa from UIN Raden Mas Said. We once addressed the theme of dealing with children and digital play, where the importance of parental guidance in the globalization era was discussed to counter radical ideologies." This indicates the need for further training for teachers in effectively handling the issue of radicalism.

The methods of anti-radicalism teaching applied by RA (Early Childhood Education) teachers are very diverse. They utilize stories, games, and interactive activities to teach these concepts to children. This approach is designed to engage the children’s interest and facilitate their understanding of radical issues. Teachers integrate anti-radicalism values into the daily curriculum. The goal is to establish a fundamental understanding of the importance of tolerance and patriotism.
Collaboration and discussion among teachers also play a crucial role in sharing knowledge and strategies. Teachers frequently exchange ideas and experiences on how to teach anti-radicalism concepts. They also provide each other with support and advice to overcome challenges in teaching this topic. These discussions help create a more cohesive and practical approach. Thus, through this cooperation, RA teachers can enhance the quality of their anti-radicalism education.

3.3. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Against Radicalism in Early Childhood Education

Integrating anti-radicalism knowledge into the early childhood education (RA) curriculum presents a significant challenge. Teachers are tasked with conveying these complex concepts to young children. They must create engaging yet educational material appropriate for the children's level of understanding. This involves the integration of anti-radicalism values into daily activities. The primary goal is to make this learning relevant and comprehensible to children.

"A rRAssity for RA teachers to demonstrate an attitude of counteracting radicalism in learning is first to equip ourselves to broaden our horizons," said a teacher. "Seeking information sources, finding how we can teach our teaching stages to RA children in facing/countering radicalism." This highlights the need for better resources and teacher training. Thus, they can be more effective in conveying the concept of anti-radicalism to children.

Teachers' responses to contextual incidents in the classroom are crucial in anti-radicalism learning. They often use actual events as learning opportunities. Through discussions and interactive activities, children are encouraged to understand the negative impact of radicalism. This approach helps children develop critical thinking. Furthermore, children learn how to respond to challenging situations positively and constructively.

Technology plays a crucial role in delivering anti-radicalism education. Teachers use digital media such as videos, apps, and websites to support learning. This digital material is appealing to children and makes the concepts more understandable. Technology also allows teachers to present more interactive and engaging material. This technology must be tailored to suit the age and understanding of children in early childhood education.

"The primary sources I utilize to acquire knowledge about anti-radicalism attitudes are usually found on the internet," revealed a teacher. "This can be done by selecting animated stories for children that promote tolerance towards other religions and mutual love, as we are all creations of God." This indicates how the Internet serves as a crucial resource for teachers. They use the internet to search for materials that will assist them in conveying the anti-radicalism message.

In addition to technology, supplementary resources, and references are vital in anti-radicalism education. These include books, articles, and other printed materials. Teachers use these resources to deepen their understanding. They also serve as a foundation for developing teaching materials. These sources provide a broader context and background on radicalism.

Collaboration between teachers and other educational institutions is essential to enrich learning. Teachers can enhance their teaching methods by exchanging ideas and best practices. They also gain new perspectives on how to address challenges in teaching anti-radicalism. This network supports and reinforces a shared commitment to anti-radicalism education. Such collaboration ensures that children rRAive a comprehensive and practical education against radicalism.

Discussion

This research investigates three critical aspects of kindergarten teachers' knowledge management to counter radicalism: knowledge capture, knowledge sharing, and knowledge use. Previous studies have demonstrated that knowledge management impacts school performance (Wahyuddin, 2020) and organizational performance in educational settings (Cordeiro et al., 2022). In the kindergarten context, it is crucial to understand how teachers...
identify, share, and use knowledge to counter radicalism (Kohengkul et al., 2009), especially given the significance of early learning periods in shaping children's worldviews (Farida & Friani, 2018).

The findings indicate that kindergarten teachers play a vital role in forming children’s initial understanding of radicalism by introducing concepts of tolerance and nationalism, as found in the research by Istiyani & Wibowo (2020). However, teachers’ understanding of radicalism varies wildly, depending on their backgrounds and experiences, often hampered by a lack of adequate resources and training. Interestingly, teachers also play a crucial role in interacting with parents and communities (Bobongie-Harris, 2023) within anti-radicalism education, using various platforms to share information (Bustamante et al., 2018).

These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of knowledge management in education (Sobandi et al., 2021). However, this research also highlights significant differences. For example, Cheng (2019) found that human-based knowledge management strategies were more effective than technology-based ones. In contrast, this study suggests combining both can be effective in kindergartens. These results also underscore the importance of interaction between teachers, parents, and communities, reflecting findings by Romm and Nkambule (2022) on the community’s role in education.

This research offers new perspectives that challenge some aspects of previous studies. For instance, the study by Cordeiro et al., (2022) emphasized the significant influence of knowledge management on organizational performance in primary schools in Brazil. However, this study finds that in the kindergarten environment, its influence is more related to shaping attitudes and understandings about radicalism. Furthermore, these findings diverge from those of Cheng (2019), who stated that human-based knowledge management strategies were more effective than technology-based ones, while this research finds a balance between the two in the kindergarten context.

The study by Hou, Song, & Li (2020), which revealed the relationship between authentic leadership, green knowledge management, and trust in higher education, also contrasts with these findings that indicate the need for a more pragmatic and resource-based approach in Early Childhood Education (RA). Additionally, this research presents new insights that add an essential dimension to the literature on knowledge management in early childhood education, differing from the focus on higher education and secondary school, which is more common in the existing literature.

The results of this study are also in line with some findings from previous research. For instance, the research by Sobandi et al., (2021), which found that the knowledge management process and knowledge sharing positively impact teachers' literacy skills, aligns with the findings of this study on the importance of knowledge sharing in the context of RA. The study by Romm & Nkambule (2022) on the role of Ubuntu principles in strengthening ethical knowledge management in South African public schools found similar aspects, namely the importance of collaboration with the community in anti-radicalism education (Alam, 2020; Mukhlis et al., 2022), which is also reflected in this research.

Similarly, Watthanakuljaroen's (2023) findings on using virtual learning communities to manage local wisdom knowledge that enhances 21st-century teaching and learning support the idea that technology and community collaboration are essential components in modern RA. Furthermore, the work of (Firdaus et al., 2022) on gamification in the Knowledge Management System that enhances motivation and learning outcomes during the Covid-19 pandemic reaffirms these findings on the benefits of integrating technology and interactive resources in anti-radicalism education. In conclusion, this research enriches our understanding of knowledge management in RA by providing new insights that are complementary and sometimes contrasting with previous research.

The findings of this study also emphasize the importance of education and training for RA teachers in addressing radicalism (Smeer & Rosyidah, 2021; Widyastuti, 2021). Proper training will enable teachers to deliver age-appropriate anti-radicalism material engagingly, in line with
the findings of Watthanakuljaroen (2023). Practical education in this context includes the introduction of basic concepts about radicalism and engaging and interactive teaching strategies, which are crucial for maintaining the attention and interest of young children (Schachter et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the findings of this study underscore the need for relevant and easily accessible educational resources for kindergarten teachers. This includes books, stories, and audiovisual materials, as Firdaus et al., (2022) and Li & Saeheaw, (2021) highlighted. Appropriate materials can aid teachers in implementing anti-radicalism learning more effectively, making it easier for them to present complex information in a more engaging and understandable format for children. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community is another crucial aspect of these findings (Sholeh & Muzakki, 2023; Ulum, 2023; Verdy et al., 2023). As demonstrated in the study by Birasnav et al., (2021), school policies and community involvement significantly influence the learning environment. This collaboration not only strengthens the anti-radicalism message in schools but also ensures that this message is reinforced and supported at home, creating consistency and having a more significant impact on children.

The implications of these findings are extensive and significant. This research indicates an urgent need to enhance RA teachers' training in knowledge management related to radicalism, aligning with the research of Valacherry & Pakkeerappa (2021), which emphasized the role of knowledge management in academic performance. Furthermore, increased collaboration among teachers and with the broader community, as shown by AlDhaen (2020) and Gupta et al., (2022), can provide more robust support for anti-radicalism education at the kindergarten level, which is a critical step in forming a more tolerant and harmonious society.

**Conclusion**

This study reveals the importance of the role of kindergarten teachers through knowledge management in combating radicalism, focusing on introducing the concepts of tolerance and nationalism at an early age. The main findings highlight variations in teachers' understanding of radicalism, the importance of relevant and easily accessible learning materials, and the effectiveness of interactions between teachers, parents, and the community in strengthening the anti-radicalism message. Despite challenges such as limited resources, this research emphasizes the urgency of strengthening teachers' training in knowledge management about radicalism to support effective anti-radicalism education at the kindergarten level. This conclusion underlines the importance of improving educational resources and training for teachers and using technology in anti-radicalism education as critical steps toward forming a more tolerant and harmonious society. Further research is needed to investigate variations in teachers' understanding of radicalism, emphasizing the factors influencing their perceptions of this issue. More specific research regarding teachers' training in knowledge management about radicalism is also necessary, focusing on accessibility, targeted curricula, and the utilization of technology in the learning process.

**Declarations**

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