Preface

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Welcome to the third publication of MER. As a newly "born" international journal and not yet accredited, we try to attract papers to be published through Writing Competition and Annual Conference. Both of these activities are under the topic of the four concentrations in our study programs: 1) Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, 2) Educational Assessment and Evaluation, 3) Educational Policy, Management, and Leadership, and 4) Education and Society. Our first annual conference (organized on May 30-31, 2022) was under the topic of Education and Society: "Education in the Muslim societies: Addressing critical educational issues during the challenging time", while our second annual conference (organized on May 30-31, 2023) was under the topic of Education Policy, Management, and Leadership: "Educational policy and management in the Muslim societies: Addressing contemporary issues on administration in education to move forward". We plan to organize our third annual conference next year, on May 30-31, 2024, under the topic of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. In addition to the Writing Competition and Annual Conference, we also require all Scholars-in-Residence (SIR) recipients to write one article for MER. In this volume, we have two articles written by the first batch of the SIR program: Abd. Rachman Assegaf from the State Islamic University (UIN Sunan Ampel) Surabaya, and Ummi Kultsum, from the State Islamic University (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah) Jakarta.

The articles in the third volume cover various topics, but they all relate to the four concentrations. Like the first volume of this journal, the dominant topic of the articles in this third volume is Education and Society (four articles), and then followed by the topics of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (two articles) and Education Policy, Management, and Leadership (two articles). The first four articles under the topic of Education and Society are: (1) "The Objectification of the Covered: Understanding Muslim Female Students' Limited Engagement in Physical Activities"; (2) "Measuring the Development of Islamic Education in Indonesia"; (3) "Indonesian Muslim Students' Perception on the Concept of Peace, Characteristics of Peaceful People, and Non-Peaceful Experiences in *Madrasah Aliyah*"; (4)

"Critical Literature Review on Moral Education System in Indonesia: How Islamic Education and Pancasila Education Monopolize Morality in Schools". The next two articles under the topic of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning are: (5) "Perspectives of Parents in Jabodetabek on Indonesia's 2022 Limited Face-to-Face Learning Policy"; (6) "A Closer Outlook at the Curriculum Policy for Disability Students at Islamic Higher Education". The last two articles under the topic of Education Policy, Management, and Leadership are: (7) "Understanding Indonesian Indigenous Leadership in Higher Education: A Study of Islamic and Hindu-Based Universities"; (8) "Examining Effective Management and Leadership Strategies in Conflict Resolution: A Case Study of Conflict Management in Private Secondary Schools".

The first article by Zahara argues that patriarchal societies tend to control and oversexualize women's bodies and regard the female body as a sexual object which needs to be covered. Using a psychosocial feminist objectification theory, Zahara's article shows that female students who adopt veiling become the object of bullying by their male peers. As a result, these female students withdraw from physical activities at school, such as in Physical Education, art performance and sports. This research suggests having separate Physical Education for male and female students as a temporary solution to prevent objectification of the covered female bodies. In the second article, Wiratama and Safitri measure the development of Islamic Education by using Islamic Education Development Index (IEDI) in all provinces in Indonesia. The result shows that the scores of IEDI vary significantly with the highest score in Yogyakarta (55.00) and the lowest score in North Kalimantan (35.90). This means that the development of Islamic education is not evenly distributed. In addition, this research shows that IEDI affects gender equality. The better the quality of Islamic education (higher score of IEDI) the lower the level of gender inequality (the better score of Gender Development Index/GDI). This means that the good quality of Islamic education can minimize gender discrimination.

The research by Saripudin, Hamdan, and Asiah, in the third article, finds that the concept of peace includes self-acceptance, maintaining harmonious relationships with others, and experiencing tranquillity. The characteristics of peaceful people among others are the individuals who practise the art of patience and composure, self-acceptance and understanding, and the ability to control their emotions. Non-peaceful experiences can occur due to various factors such as favouritism and punitive actions towards students by teachers which lead to conflicts among students and instances of bullying, racism, and exclusion. This research suggests the need for further improvement in implementing a peaceful environment within schools, in which teachers play an important role by creating a welcoming and

inclusive environment for students, encouraging their active participation, and facilitating social engagement among students from diverse backgrounds to promote a peaceful school environment. Based on the existing literature on moral education in Indonesia, Husaeni, in the fourth article, critically argues that moral education in Indonesia has been monopolized by Islamic and Pancasila moral values, ignoring other diverse minority religious values and beliefs which can result in hostility to these later values and beliefs.

Indonesia, like many other countries, was hit very hard by COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2022. This changed the way students learn, which was previously face to face in the class, then they were studying online. When the spread of the virus seemed to be under control, in January 2022, Indonesian government issued the policy to allow the schools to have teaching and learning in the class again (offline), initially with limited frequency. In the fifth article, Sintapertiwi explores parents' perspectives in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi (Jabodetabek) in response to limited face-to-face learning policy. The finding shows that most parents agree with the policy due to the learning loss that their children experienced during the online teaching, the school adoption of the health protocol and the positive contribution of offline class on the students' mental health. In the fifth article, Assegaf analyses the curriculum policy for disabled students at two State Islamic Universities (UINs). The result shows that among the 29 Islamic Universities, only a very limited number of them have been inclusive or pay attention to the needs of disabled students. Two of them are the UINs under his research, with one of them being inclusive and another one is still underway to be inclusive. The two UINs have standardized curriculum policies and strategies which have been adopted into syllabi and subject materials. However, some disabled students faced barriers and difficulties in communication, social interaction, and using multimedia and accessing infrastructures. In addition, both UINs have provided facilities and support systems, hardware and software, but some of them have been ineffective and therefore they need to be upgraded.

The seventh article by Kultsum, Swastini, and Agung shows how leadership is influenced by religious belief and local culture. Their research on leadership in Islamic higher education in Tangerang, West Java, and Hindu-Based universities found that leaders' cultural and spiritual values are deeply embedded in their character. The last but not least, the article by Sintapertiwi, Ali, and Andika shows that conflict can occur in the school such as on matters related with new school principal appointment, principal or teacher who did not do their job well, and in dealing with teachers' resistance to the replacement of the new principal. Based on

their research in two private secondary schools, this article tells that the strategy used in the schools is mainly a win-lose approach, which does not give room for negotiation in resolving the conflict. These two schools see future conflicts as a form of competition with other schools, which indicates the importance of fair policies for all and the stakeholders' trust.