

Muslim Education Review

Vol. 5 No. 1, 2026, 1-3

<https://doi.org/10.56529/mer.v5i1.594>

Preface

Nina Nurmila

Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Indonesia

Corresponding E-mail: nina.nurmila@uiii.ac.id

I write this Preface on the day of the celebration of the 5th Dies Natalies UIII. UIII was established on 29 June 2016 (10 years ago), but we started to operate in 2021 (5 years ago). In this edition, MER covers variety of topics from the role of university day-care, the use of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in studying Islam Wasathiyah, the role of *rumah tahfidz* in strengthening Islamic education, phubbing (using hand phone during face-to-face interaction), Islamic Higher Education governance transformation, and designing the measurement for systems thinking approach in Chemistry education.

As a postgraduate university, many of the students are married and have children. As a support system to that situation, UIII provides childcare, not only for student parents to allow them to study, but also for staff and lecturers to allow them to work. The article “Balancing Academic and Parental Responsibilities: Exploring the Role of University Day-Care Programs for Student Parents” written by Iin Afriyanti Umar, Irkham Zamzuri, Muhammad Fayyaz Mumtaz from Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia (UIII) gives you the picture of how student parents juggle their studies and parenting responsibilities. The strength of qualitative studies can be seen from having direct quotes of the research participants which allows readers to know in more details the challenges the student parents face and the role of the university day-care in supporting their studies.

As part of a community in a university whose mission is to promote moderate Islam (Islam Wasathiyah), a group of UIII students and their



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

lecturers have developed MOOCs, a digital learning which allows learners to study independently in their own time. The article “Digital Learning for Religious Moderation: Assessing the Impact of MOOCs on Understanding *Wasathiyah Islam*” by Muhamad Maulana, Fitri Amalia, Nafisah, Nabila Nindya Alifia Putri, Destina Wahyu Winarti shows that MOOCs can successfully improve students’ understanding of religious moderation in order to prevent students from being intolerant and extremist.

In addition, to respond to the current challenges of globalization era which increasingly erodes spiritual values, Mukhlis and Amelia Yetri from the State Islamic University Imam Bonjol Padang, in their article “The Strategic Role of *Rumah Tahfidz* in Strengthening Islamic Education in Sungai Penuh City: Addressing Contemporary Educational Challenges”, show that *rumah tahfidz* plays a strategic role in fostering young generations by strengthening Qur’anic memorization and the internalization of Islamic values.

We live in the era when almost everybody has mobile phone. They bring it almost anywhere including to the class and when they have face to face interaction. How do you feel as a lecturer when you give lecture but your students are physically there without paying attention to your lecture? The article by Bappah Lawan, Umaru Hyelhara Mshelia, and Musa Hauwa Babaji from Gombe State University, Nigeria, entitled: “Phone in Hand, Mind Elsewhere: Phubbing, Academic Engagement and Social Connectedness among Nigerian Undergraduates” shows that the higher the phubbing the lower level of involvement in academic activities and the weaker interpersonal connection. Therefore, before I give a lecture, I ask students to put their phone away and concentrate on making notes on my lecture. I even ask the students to close their laptop because there are many things the students can do in their laptop other than note taking.

Using qualitative comparative case study approach, Budi Waluyo in his article “Governance Transformation in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education: Autonomy, Institutional Reform and Global Competitiveness”

compare three universities which have different category in their university governance: semi-autonomous public university (BLU), legal-entity public university (PTN-BH), and Muhammadiyah-affiliated private university, in understanding global competitiveness, governance transformation, and institutional strategies in response to global competitiveness. The result shows that university autonomy can give more space for its reform but it does not guarantee in terms of improving research capacity, international visibility, or academic excellence; while semi-autonomous governance is strongly supervised by the state with limited flexibility; and legal-entity governance has more discretion but it should be fully responsible for its sustainability. Overall, the writer argues that governance transformation in Islamic higher education involves negotiated adaptation rather than convergence toward a single global model.

Last but not least, Asih Widi Wisudawati and Septy Nur Fadhilah from Chemistry Education Department UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in their article “Systems Thinking Approach in Chemistry Education: How to Design Its Measurement Test” reported the result of their pilot study in designing systems thinking measurement test. The result shows that the test design is good and the students’ answers follow the rubric, even though the test should be extended in the subsequent cycle of constructing measurement.

Happy readings!

Depok, 29 June 2026