



Exploring Graduate Students' Motivations and Institutional Challenge in Conducting Interdisciplinary Islamic Research at Higher Education

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Abstract

While offering the advantage of addressing complex problems, interdisciplinary researchers still face a range of significant challenges. This study investigates graduate students' motivations and challenges in conducting interdisciplinary Islamic research. This study employed a quantitative survey method using a Likert-scale questionnaire distributed to 106 purposively master's and doctoral students elected at Graduate School of UIN Jakarta, with data analyzed through descriptive statistics. The study found that the primary motivation for students to conduct interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies is the desire to solve complex societal problems, followed by the pursuit of practical solutions and self-development, while the motivation for obtaining funding or advancing academic careers rank lowest. Students face challenges, such as differences in scientific disciplines, limited methodological grasp, and knowledge gaps with lecturers and peers. This research contributes to enhance academic curricula and institutional support for fostering effective interdisciplinary research in Muslim-majority contexts.

Keywords: Higher Education; Interdisciplinary Research; Islamic Studies; Research Challenges; Research Motivation.

A. Introduction

In an era marked by complex global challenges and rapidly evolving knowledge systems, the boundaries between disciplines are no longer sufficient to address the pressing questions of our time. Yet, for scholars pursuing interdisciplinary Islamic research in higher education, the path is often shaped as much by institutional constraints as by intellectual ambition. Today's society issues include gender studies, environmental studies, and plurality studies (Mujtaba, 2015); Islamophobia, post-truth, identity era, and post-orientalism (Widiyanto, 2022). When these problems are used as the object of academic research, an interdisciplinary approach is needed to examine the problem from various relevant scientific points of view (Vantard et al., 2023). An interdisciplinary approach can holistically examine every phenomenon in people's lives and discover alternative solutions (Welch, 2017). Therefore, this approach benefits not only for the researcher but also society at large (Wafy, 2024). The reason for conducting interdisciplinary research is to address scientific questions and increasingly complex social and environmental issues (Vantard et al., 2023). The pursuit of interdisciplinary research is not merely an academic trend but a necessary response to the limitations of siloed knowledge in addressing the intricate realities of today's world. When scientific questions and socio-environmental challenges grow increasingly entangled, the refusal to cross disciplinary boundaries becomes an intellectual shortcoming and an ethical one.

Based on data gathered from the online publication repository of the Graduate School at UIN Jakarta (<https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/>), Figures 1 and 2 show a steady and diverse development of the trend about interdisciplinary Islamic Studies research in theses and dissertations. The number of interdisciplinary theses increased from 3 in 2022 to 5 in 2024 before slightly declining to 3 in 2025 (as of May), indicating a growing yet fluctuating interest. Dissertation output remains more consistent, averaging 4–5 studies annually, strongly emphasizing gender and justice issues. Fields such as Islamic law and fatwa studies produced a stable 6–11 works per year, with dissertations slightly outnumbering compared to theses and reflecting deeper legal analysis. Tafsir and Islamic thought remain dominant, contributing 7–13 studies annually, with classical and modern Islamic thought frequently explored. A notable spike occurred in education in 2023, with eight theses focusing on curriculum innovation, while dissertations remained steady at 5–7 per year, centered on integrated Islamic education. Political Islam and da'wah studies were consistent at 4–9 works per year, examining religion's role in contemporary politics. Other areas, such as

spirituality and science-related Qur'anic interpretation, remained minor yet stable, contributing to 1–3 studies annually. Research on zakat, social piety, radicalism, and religious-cultural interaction showed fluctuating but significant output, ranging from 4–8 studies per year. Overall, the data reflect an expanding commitment to interdisciplinary approaches within Islamic Studies at UIN Jakarta, particularly in areas tied to law, thought, education, and sociopolitical engagement. The following figures will show how the trends went.

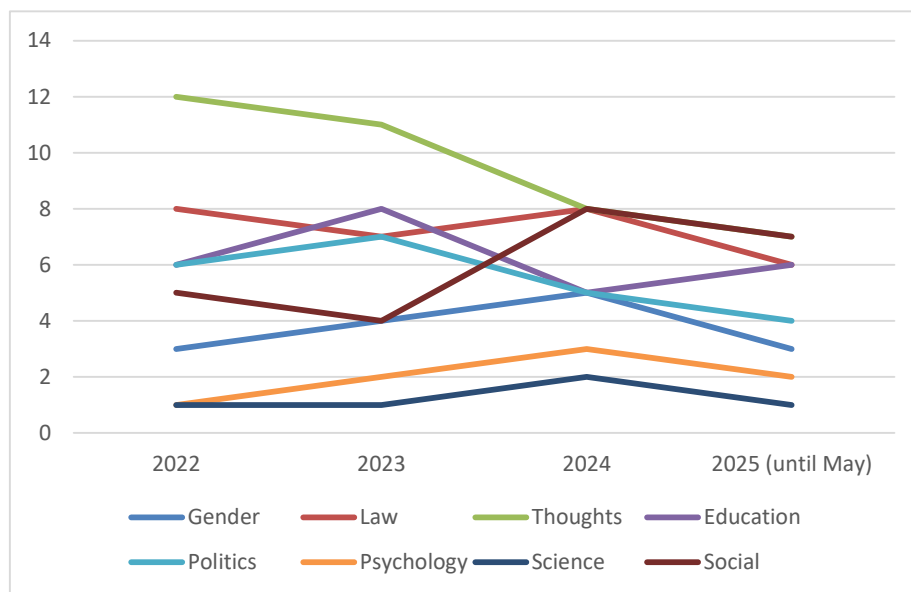


Figure 1. Trends in Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies Theses (Source: Researchers' Analyses from Repository of UIN Jakarta)

Presidential Regulation No. 8 of 2012 also has regulated the contribution of knowledge owned by Master's and Doctoral students. Master's Program students are expected to be able to "solve problems in science, technology, or art in their scientific fields through an inter or multidisciplinary approach." In contrast, for the Doctoral Program, the solution approach is required at the transdisciplinary level (Graduate School of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2021). This regulatory direction implies that interdisciplinarity is encouraged and institutionally embedded as part of the academic mandate. Thus, the interdisciplinary approach aims to solve problems that cannot be solved by one approach or scientific field alone. In the face of increasingly complex social problems, the interdisciplinary approach is not just a method but can be a strategy to answer society's challenges comprehensively. This demand should ideally serve as a motivation for students to solidify the objectives of their interdisciplinary

research. Therefore, the interdisciplinary approach, ideally positioned to address complex and multifaceted societal problems, frequently becomes a rhetorical ideal rather than an operational strategy in student research.

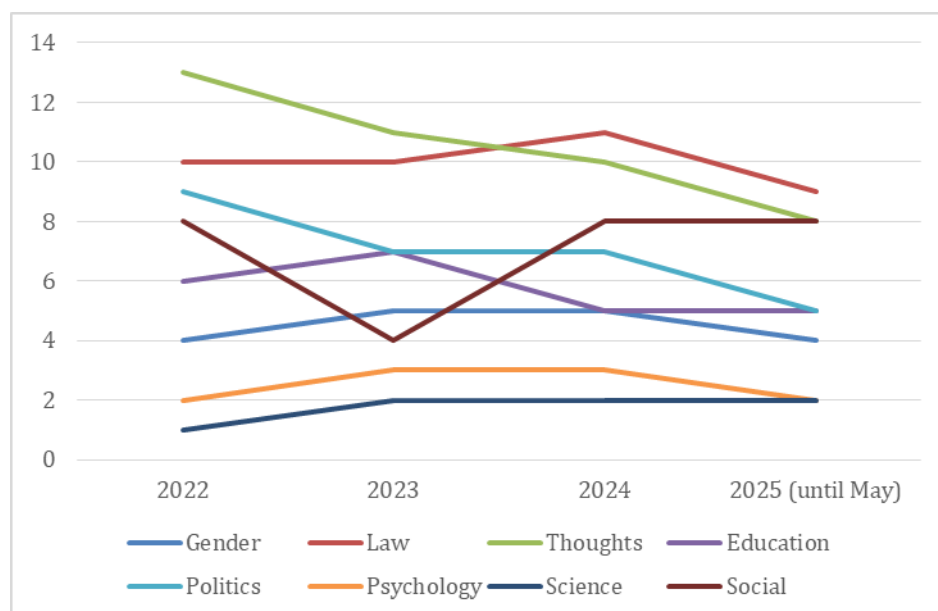


Figure 2. Trends in Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies Dissertation (Source: Researchers' Analyses from Repository of UIN Jakarta)

According to Grinley (2020), potential problems that interdisciplinary researchers sense include lack of funding, cooperation, time and differences in methodologies, and "turfism." Quan-Haase and McCay-Peet (2016) identify the motives for the emergence of an interdisciplinary approach in *Social Media Research*. Through group discussions, it is possible to get an overview of motivations, challenges, and policies that can potentially hinder field research activities. Menon et al. (2023) explains that increasingly complex global challenges require perspectives from multiple disciplines. This encourages academics to expand beyond their disciplinary expertise. In addition, faculty in interdisciplinary research environments are highly motivated to help students grow. However, academics face many obstacles, such as policy conflicts, lack of time, and lack of institutional support. Therefore, to produce quality interdisciplinary research, we need an academic ecosystem that supports the idea of not leaving research entirely to individual lecturers and students. These studies show that interdisciplinary approaches are used by academics and practitioners who are interested in finding solutions but are constrained by several barriers and challenges.

The subsequent studies have similarities in research objectives and the tendency to use a qualitative approach through interviews and discussions. Ashley et al. (2021) identify the challenges and motivations of the research members at the Interdisciplinary Agricultural Center; Oberbichler et al. (2022) Identify opportunities and challenges for scientists across disciplines between humanities studies, computer scientists, and librarian practitioners in the project *Digital Cultural Heritage*; Barley et al. (2022) examine the interests (motives) and challenges faced by 31 participants of the Bioinspired workshop (Biology and Engineering Integration Project); Vantard et al. (2023) conducts a quantitative survey of 970 respondents from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), France's largest multidisciplinary research institution, regarding the motivations and challenges of its researchers. The direction of previous research is likely motivated by the importance of paying attention to the interdisciplinary experience of researchers, practitioners, academics, and scientists to uphold the significance of the solutions produced for the benefit of personal careers and institutional vision.

The studies reviewed have largely explored the motivations and challenges of interdisciplinary research across various disciplines, with predominantly qualitative approaches. While these studies highlight the complexities researchers face in multidisciplinary contexts, there are still gaps in understanding these dynamics, particularly in Islamic studies. In addition, there has been little attention to student researchers' experiences of interdisciplinary methodologies, especially in the context of their final academic project. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating the motivations and challenges faced by graduate students conducting interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies. This research offers a distinctive academic contribution by presenting Islamic studies in a multidisciplinary approach, highlighting a rarely explored context, especially in solving diverse problems in Muslim-majority Indonesia. By emphasizing the direct experiences of master's and doctoral students of Islamic studies, this research provides a new and different focus from previous studies that stress research institutions or senior researchers. In addition, this study also examines how the curriculum and learning environment in higher education affect the development of interdisciplinary competencies among Islamic studies researchers. This could serve as a bridge between theory and its practical implications. Thus, this research not only enriches interdisciplinary theory but also provides applicative insights to enhance the role of the institutional framework in forming a supportive ecosystem for interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies.

B. Methods

This study used a quantitative method to capture respondents, collect data, and utilize survey instrumentation using numerically graded items. The Graduate School of Universitas Islam Negeri Jakarta (SPs UIN Jakarta), which organizes master's and doctoral programs in Islamic Studies, encourages students to develop interdisciplinary research in their fields of scientific concentration. This academic environment is relevant for researching the motivations and challenges of conducting multidisciplinary research in Islamic universities.

The population of this study was 145 students with a composition based on the Academic Information System (AIS) UIN Jakarta, are known to be Doctoral Students in Class of 2021 (80 people) and master's Students in Class of 2022 (65 people), who ideally in 2024 are or have completed thesis and dissertation research. Since the total population size was identified (Mukti, 2025), the Slovin Formula determined the number of samples. With a margin of error of 5% for social research, a sample of 106 respondents was obtained as the minimum number of samples. However, the researcher experienced obstacles for student respondents according to the set batch, so the restrictions on the year of the batch were changed to the categories: 2022, 2021, 2018-2020 (at least Preliminary Exam), and 2018-2020 (graduated). This category was determined on the assumption that the respondent student already completed his interdisciplinary research so that his experience could be measured.

The data collection technique in this study consisted of surveys to obtain comprehensive data. The survey was conducted using a questionnaire on a Likert scale of 1–4, where one indicated "strongly disagree," 2 "disagree," 3 "agree," and 4 "strongly agree." The questionnaire was used because it identifies the level of motivation and various challenges, such as methodology, collaboration, and scientific understanding, that students often faced. The questionnaire was distributed online via Microsoft Forms with a link shared in the relevant WhatsApp group, where the researcher was a member. The survey instruments were enclosed, and the variable indicators of motivation and challenges of interdisciplinary research were adapted from previous studies. The data analysis in this study was carried out with a descriptive statistical approach to the survey data, which was presented narratively and included three main parts: the demographic conditions of the respondents, a description of the motivations and challenges faced, and alternative solutions based on the survey findings.

C. Results and Discussion

a. Demographic Description of the Respondents

Respondent demographics include respondent profiles, which include gender, incoming force, and education level. The number of respondents involved in the survey was 116. After checking the completeness of the filling, seven entries from the respondents were removed because they were incomplete, so 109 respondents were obtained. The data regarding the respondents' profiles is illustrated and described as follows.

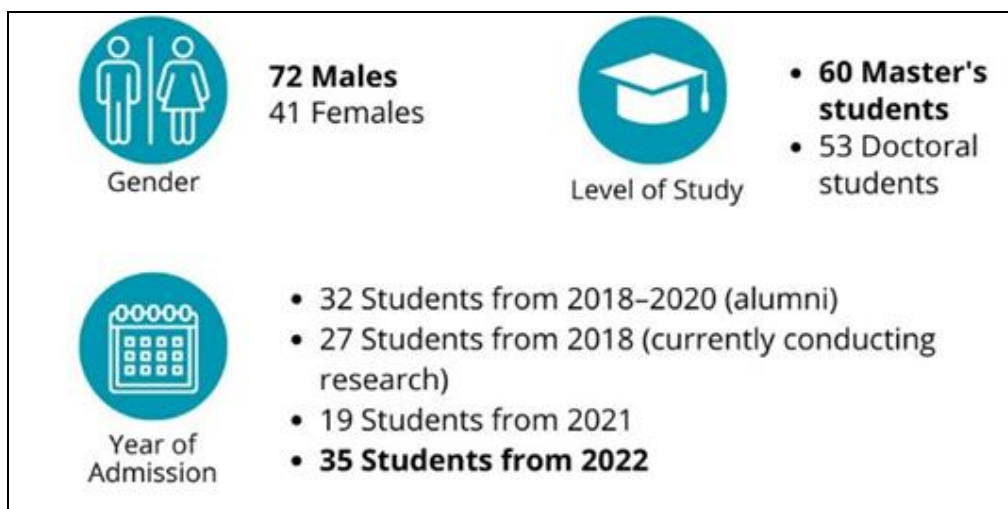


Figure 3. Respondents by Gender, Study Level, and Cohort

Based on Figure 3, from the total number of students 109, it is known that male students, 64%, dominate the respondents, while female respondents meet the figure of 36%. Based on the level of education that is being taken or has been taken, respondents with master's status are more than students or graduates of doctoral programs, 53% and 47%, respectively. The data also shows variations in the distribution of class years, namely 31% of alumni (2018-2020) as the most respondents and 3% more from the Class of 2022. For the Class of 2021, it met the figure of 23%, while the least respondents are respondents in 2018-2020 (still research), 18%.



Figure 4. Respondents Based on Tuition Financing and Academic Status

The next profiles from 109 respondents include the components of the financing system, academic background before studying at the Graduate School of UIN Jakarta, and enrollment status. For tuition fees, Figure 4 shows that 68% of respondents pay for tuition independently. Meanwhile, the respondents who study with full or partial scholarships are 26% and 6%. Then, evaluating their college status, 51% choose to work while studying (both ways). This category is the largest presentation because it is almost twice from fully enrolled students (26%). Student respondents with study assignments generally have permanent jobs, such as civil servants, but temporarily stop for full study assignments, 11%, which is 1% higher than respondents who study while working side jobs. For respondents who decide to study even though they have retired from their jobs, they meet the figure of 2%.

Furthermore, identifying the respondents' study backgrounds needs to be confirmed because it influences students' completion of their research. The following figure shows the time taken by the students whose previous field of study is Islamic studies (76%) and not Islamic studies (24%) to complete interdisciplinary research.

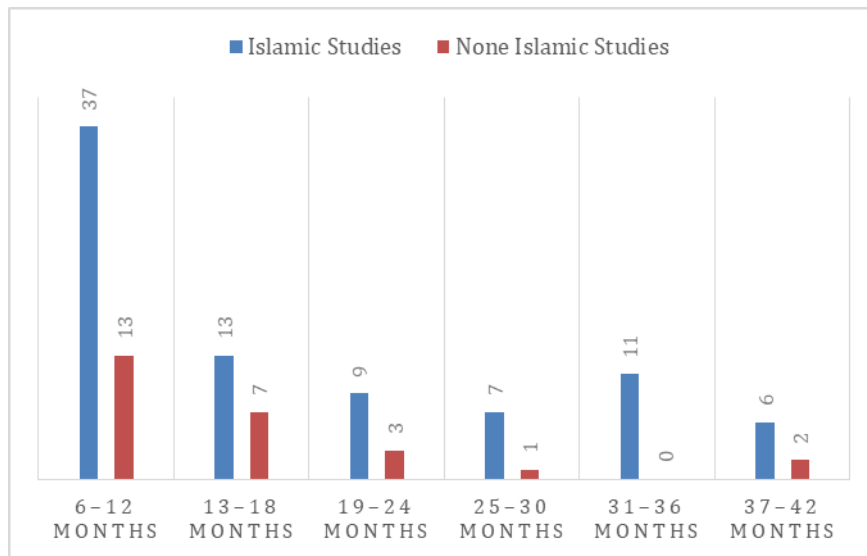


Figure 5. Comparison of the Duration of Completion of Interdisciplinary Research

Figure 5 illustrates how respondents with a background in Islamic Studies dominate each interval of duration required in completing the research. Thirty-seven respondents with a background in Islamic studies are able to complete their research within 1 year, while non-Islamic studies, 13 respondents are able to complete their research at the same interval. For the 13–18-month category, 13 Islamic studies students gain 6 points ahead of non-Islamic studies. In the interval of 25-30 month, only one non-Islamic Studies student completes the study, and even for 31-36 months, none of the 116 non-Islamic studies student completes their research. In percentage, 46% of respondents complete their interdisciplinary research in 6-12 months. For 13-18 months, it met the figure of 18%, followed by 19-24, 25-30, and 31-36 with 11%, 10% and 7% respectively. As for the 36-month >, it is 7%.



Figure 6. Surveyed Interdisciplinary Topics of Islamic Studies

The illustration presented in Figure 6 proves that 109 respondents have a greater tendency to combine the topic of Islam with Law in their interdisciplinary study with a total frequency of the word "Social and Humanities" 25 times. The next most popular topic is "Education" 16 times, followed by "Economics, Finance, and Literature-Culture" 11 and 10 times. As for Islam itself, it is the main subject that is unified or integrated. For example, students with a background in Islamic studies (Tafsir) integrate it with Classical Literature. On the other hand, students who do not come from Islamic studies, such as environmental science, integrate with Islamic studies. Therefore, the word "Islam or Islamic subject" will appear the most from the results of Word cloud-based word processing (<https://www.wordclouds.com/>).

b. Analysis of student motivations in carrying out interdisciplinary research.

Table 1. Average Motivational Presentations by Type

Types of Motivation	Question (Q)	Score-max	Total	%
Solve Complex Problems	Q1	436	385	88%
	Q2	436	387	89%
	Q3	436	387	89%
	Mean			89%
Produce Relevant and Useful Outcomes	Q1	436	376	86%
	Q2	436	377	86%
	Q3	436	377	86%
	Mean			86%
Opportunistic motives	Q1	436	303	69%
	Q2	436	341	78%
	Q3	436	303	69%
	Mean			72%
Intrinsic Motives	Q1	436	363	83%
	Q2	436	373	86%
	Q3	436	377	86%
	Mean			85%
		5232	4349	

Types of Motivation	Question (Q)	Score-max	Total	%
Average total				83%

Based on Table 5, the highest motivation for students to conduct interdisciplinary research on Islamic studies is the motive to solve complex problems, 89%. In second place with a percentage of 86%, SPs UIN Jakarta students conduct interdisciplinary research with the aim to produce best practices to deal with problems in the field. For motives based on the desire for self-development (intrinsic) meet the figure of 85%. Furthermore, students who make interdisciplinary research an opportunity to obtain grants or academic career development occupy the lowest position at 72%. These findings indicate that respondents have an ideal motive for conducting interdisciplinary research. This is because they seek to provide solutions by combining Islamic science and other subjects that are relevant to the complexity of today's problems.

Shrimpton and Astbury (2011) emphasize that an interdisciplinary researcher's ideal motivation is to solve complex problems and produce relevant and useful research outputs in solving these problems. Nowadays, humanitarian problems vary from economic disparities and poverty (Stokols, 2018) to environmental problems (Danilov et al., 2022), digitalization and digital security (Dominici, 2022). This approach creates knowledge, skills, and values students or researchers need to face an increasingly diverse and connected world (Wafy, 2024). These three major issues are also confirmed by the United Nations (2024) and Asia Foundations (2016), which publish several problems in the economic, social, and technological spheres. In addition, the two organization also put forward their handling strategies based on consultation, coaching and research involving practitioners to knowledge from various sciences. In line with this solution, SPs UIN Jakarta students use an approach to Islamic studies that is integrated with education, economy, environment and even health in order to solve problems in Indonesia. This is seen in the diversity of interdisciplinary topics studied during thesis and dissertation research.

The existence of a motive to solve increasingly complex problems is a favorable condition for both the individual student and the UIN Jakarta institution. As individuals, the confidence and attitude of "open-minded" students become more formed as the interdisciplinary research process progresses. On motivation, the "desire to solve

complex problems", a motivational indicator of the belief that complex problems cannot be solved by just one discipline, can increase student involvement as researchers, the significance of the output and dissemination of research results and their impact on the target community (Mahringer et al., 2023). Therefore, interdisciplinary research opens students' mindsets that other scientific subjects have the potential to strengthen their scientific contributions. Mirmohammadi et al. (2024) emphasize that interdisciplinary research produces innovative breakthroughs by combining insights from various fields, such as bioinformatics, that can solve health problems in mapping brain nerves or analyzing genetic data.

Graduate students also believe interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies has a wider impact on their research outputs for society. Therefore, they are encouraged to combine Islamic studies with other subjects. This perception aligns with Misra's statement (2024) that this approach allows for a more thorough and holistic understanding of a problem and can result in more innovative and effective solutions. This is also reflected in the expectation that master's and doctoral graduates in Indonesia have the skills to solve problems in science, technology, and/or art based on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. With the existence of the UIN Jakarta SPs curriculum regarding the integration of Islamic science according to research problems, the ideal expectations of Presidential Regulation No. 8 of 2012 (on Graduate Knowledge Contribution) and lecture conditions are in line. Coupled with students' strong motivation to contribute to complex problems, it further shows the idealism of the institution's vision and higher education.

Moreover, graduate students with high intrinsic motivation show that when they decide on an interdisciplinary approach, there is a strong internal push in which research scheme can add new knowledge and skills (Le et al., 2024). Although this motivation is driven by a desire to contribute to society, internal personal factors are more dominant (Tamášová et al., 2024). Especially when referring to the status of students who have almost all worked, the tendency of interdisciplinary research goals for the development of their respective professionalism is inevitable. Some of these benefits can include greater opportunities for research funding and academic career development. In terms of careers, development can be in the form of increasing the number and quality of publications (Bruzzese et al., 2020), building interpersonal relationships, accountability as a professional and leadership (Johnston et al., 2024). Thus, this internal motivation arises due to the desire to develop professionalism and expand the network across disciplines.

In contrast to monodisciplinary research, interdisciplinary researchers benefit more in building networks between professions and institutions. In practice, students who study Islam and the Environment (Climate Change) need fatwa experts (Islam) as research participants and environmental experts. The demand to expand this communication will automatically develop more solid knowledge from two experts in different fields. Due to the important role of collaboration between researchers (academics) and non-academic actors (practitioners), it can further strengthen the positive relationship between interdisciplinary research and social visibility (D'Este & Robinson-García, 2023). In addition, the intersection between the opinions of several experts trains students' critical thinking skills when synthesizing data into significant research outputs (Specht & Crowston, 2022). Although it seems troublesome, Nissani (2019) and Dalton et al. (2022) instead call it "*flexibility or freedom*", which may not be felt by monodisciplinary researchers.

Another intrinsic motive is the ease of obtaining research funding, the lowest motivation among the three other motives. Challenges in interdisciplinary research funding have attracted attention in academic literature, which shows a discrepancy between the official push to support this research and the realities on the ground. Mirmohammadi et al. (2024) state that interdisciplinary projects that demonstrate broader social impact have a greater chance of funding. However, these findings are contrary to the results of the study. Therefore, although interdisciplinary research is very popular among academics, such as in the UK, this type of research often faces major barriers to funding (Sun et al., 2021). In addition, Bothwell (2020) underscores that despite the strong push for interdisciplinary research, the reality is that interdisciplinary researchers still face greater difficulties in funding, implementation, review, and publication compared to research that is more focused on a single discipline.

The results show that funding motivation is not the main factor that encourages students to engage in interdisciplinary research, but students are more likely to choose more focused and measurable research in terms of funding and academic support. When students feel that the challenges in obtaining funding are considerable enough, they may prefer to avoid interdisciplinary projects and opt for a more conventional path, even though they know the potential for greater social and academic impact of interdisciplinary research. This situation shows that the decision to choose interdisciplinary research is not solely confident for getting the funding opportunities.

c. Analysis of Student Challenges in Carrying Out Interdisciplinary Research



Figure 7. Challenges of Interdisciplinary Research Students

Figure 7 illustrates the challenges of respondents of S2 and S3 SPs students of UIN Jakarta in completing interdisciplinary research on Islamic studies. Overall, almost every challenge category in the questionnaire has been confirmed to be approved by respondents. Respondents chose the most "agree" answer on "differences in how to analyze research results between disciplines", 57.4% of 109 students, followed by 10.4% of "strongly agree" answers. The second most "agree" answer with the same score, 45.2%, is for "difficult to understand the approach and/or concept of the integrated discipline" and "the difference in the meaning of words/terms between fields of science makes it difficult to build understanding". The challenge in the form of "difficulty in understanding the use of research methods in interdisciplinary research," with response "agree" meets the percentage 42.6%. For "strongly agree" answer, the remaining confirmed statements are below 10%.

The challenge with the most "disagree" responses "difficulty justifying the urgency of interdisciplinary research results" remains at 50.4%. The challenge of "difficulty explaining the interdisciplinarity of research to supervisors/promoters" obtains a score of 45.7%, about 9% more than the "agree" answer. This challenge receives the most solid percentage of "strongly disagree" answers, around 9%, while the others are less than 8%.

1) Disciplinary Differences

Challenges that can be grouped into this category include difficulty understanding the integrated disciplines' approaches and/or concepts and the

difference in the meaning of words/terms between science fields, making it difficult to build understanding. Daniel et al. (2022) agree that interdisciplinary researchers are often constrained by terminology, methodology, and epistemological distinctions that can lead to misunderstandings. The concept of science and knowledge in science has different and unique characteristics so that it cannot be understood instantly by ordinary researchers, especially for SPs UIN Jakarta students who previously did not study Islam or research sources in the field of Islam. The opposite condition can occur in scholars in the field of Islam who integrate non-Islamic subjects and cannot directly understand the theoretical structure and its application.

The challenge of discipline distinction significantly affects the effectiveness of interdisciplinary research completion. SPs UIN Jakarta students with a background of Islamic studies have been proven to complete their studies faster than non-Islamic students. Therefore, researchers need metacognition to understand discipline formation (Boon & Van Baalen, 2018). With a solid understanding of integrated disciplines, cross-disciplinary collaboration can be completed effectively to solve complex problems (Shanableh et al., 2022). In addition, the curriculum and academic environment are recommended to facilitate student interaction with other multi-disciplines (Mathur et al., 2019). Thus, the role of SPs UIN Jakarta in ensuring that students understand the integrated scientific structure is urgent.

2) Methodology Understandings

The methodological challenges are deliberately discussed separately to provide specifications of the challenges interdisciplinary research students face. There are three types of challenges in this category: differences in how to analyze research results between scientific fields, difficulty in understanding the use of research methods in interdisciplinary research, and difficulty in justifying the urgency of interdisciplinary research results. Analyzing data is the most challenging process in interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies. The complexity of data processing and analysis is due to the multidimensional study problem, so the data analysis process does not rely on only one subject. Therefore, attention to the constraints of technology use is important to pay attention because it is an important factor in the completion of interdisciplinary research (Mahoney, 2019).

Regarding the justification of the urgency of interdisciplinary research in Islamic studies, it is not a significant obstacle for S2 and S3 students collectively. This situation is supported by the high motivation of students to solve complex problems today. This is because interdisciplinary studies aim to solve complex problems effectively and innovatively (Buchberger, 2024; Gaydeczka, 2023; Mirmohammadi et al., 2024).

3) Collaborative Practicalities

This challenge is more practical because it relates to students' interaction with supervisors or promoters. At SPs UIN Jakarta until 2024, S2/S3 students will be accompanied by lecturers who are experts in the field of Islamic studies and other integrated sciences. The difference between student understanding, first supervisor, and second supervisor can be an unavoidable challenge. This form of interaction includes communication between students and supervisors or through research drafts submitted Online and Offline. In addition, collaboration must be built between students and promoters to facilitate conveying ideas and understanding related to ongoing research (Roper, 2021). The exchange of knowledge is also very important when guiding and examining. As part of the guidance group, students must balance their understanding of Islamic subjects and integrated subjects (Li & Yu, 2024).

D. Conclusion

The tendency of the motivation of Graduate School Students of UIN Jakarta towards their decision to conduct interdisciplinary research shows that they are more motivated to solve complex problems and produce the best practices. Most students choose interdisciplinary research because they believe this approach could provide more holistic solutions to complex social, economic, and environmental problems. Intrinsic motivation is also strong, where students are interested in developing new knowledge and skills through research involving various disciplines. Although motivations related to funding and academic career development are lower, their decision to conduct interdisciplinary research is driven by an awareness of the potential for greater social and academic impact. Thus, student motivation tends to be more idealistic and oriented towards solving problems through cross-disciplinary collaboration. The challenges that hinder graduate students from conducting interdisciplinary research include disciplinary differences which cause difficulties in

understanding concepts, approaches, and terminology between disciplines, followed by understanding difficulty analyzing multidimensional data and applying the accurate research methods. Collaboration between students and supervisors, where differences in understanding might also slow down the research process.

This study still requires methodological improvement, particularly through the inclusion of qualitative approaches such as case studies in future research. While it offers valuable insights into graduate students' perceptions and intrinsic motivations, it remains limited by its focus on perception-based measurements. Despite their idealistic intentions, students are often constrained by curriculum requirements, which may influence their research choices. Moreover, this study examines interdisciplinary Islamic studies conducted by individual researchers, typically from a single academic background who might decide to pursue interdisciplinary research only upon entering graduate school. Future research would benefit from investigating collaborative interdisciplinary projects that involve researchers with expertise in Islamic studies working alongside scholars from other disciplinary fields, or vice versa. Such research collaborations could provide a deeper and more authentic representation of interdisciplinary research practices and their real-world applications.

Although this research remains limitations, theoretically, this research adds to the scientific treasure of interdisciplinary approaches by presenting Islamic studies, complementing previous research emphasizing pure science or social sciences. In addition, this research expands and strengthens the study of student research motivation, especially in an Islamic university environment. Practically, this research could be an input for Islamic higher education institutions to design interdisciplinary-based research development for students and as a guide for graduate students to determine the direction and theme of research for the final project.

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