



## **MODERNIZATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM: BALANCING TRADITION AND INNOVATION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

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### **Abstract:**

This research aims to analyze the efforts to modernize the Islamic education curriculum in the context of balancing the values of tradition and the demands of innovation. The research method in this study uses literature study. This research examines various literatures related to aspects of curriculum modernization, the importance of balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education, the challenges faced, and the strategies that can be applied. The results showed that the modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is a necessity in facing the dynamics of the times. However, in the process of modernization, it is important to stick to the fundamental values of Islam and accommodate the diversity of interpretations. This study concludes that the key to successful curriculum modernization lies in the ability to integrate traditional values with the latest innovations, so as to produce graduates who are not only religious, but also competent and relevant to the demands of the times.

**Keywords:** *Modernize, the Islamic education curriculum, tradition and innovation, The Future Generation.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since the 20th century until now, Islamic education in theoretical and conceptual frameworks can be said to have stagnated due to the strong influence of the traditional education system. In addition, Islamic education tends to be normative theological without considering the current context. This results in Islamic education often being slow in formulating itself to respond to changes and trends in society that exist now and in the future. Islamic education focuses more on the past than the future, or is less future-oriented. In addition, Islamic education often loses out to general education in various aspects (Ach.Sayyi, 2017).

Modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is an important strategic step to balance tradition and innovation, in order to prepare a competitive future generation that is in line with the times (Primayanti, 2015). In this case, Islamic education not only plays a role as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge, but must also be able to face the challenges of globalization and the increasingly rapid progress of science and technology (Rohman et al., 2024). Along with social changes

and the needs of a dynamic society, the Islamic education curriculum in Indonesia faces the challenge of adapting (Hakim, 2011). Azyumardi Azra, an important figure in Islamic education thought, emphasized that curriculum modernization is a must so that Islamic education does not get trapped in a traditional paradigm that tends to be rigid and irrelevant to the realities of today's life (Azra, 2015).

Balancing traditional Islamic values with the demands of the modern era is a complex but crucial challenge. Islamic education must be able to remain relevant amidst rapid social and technological change (Qadri et al., 2024). To achieve this, collaboration between scholars, educators, and the community is needed in creating a comprehensive and adaptive education system. One key aspect of this integration is balancing traditional Islamic values with today's needs and challenges. Islamic education needs to adapt to global issues such as climate change, gender equality, and poverty alleviation, without sacrificing the essence of its teachings. This requires a holistic and innovative approach in curriculum development and teaching methods. (Wulandari, 2024).

Several previous studies have discussed the Modernization of Islamic Education Curriculum: Balancing Tradition and Innovation for the Future Generation, (1). Research (Daulay & Dalimunthe, 2021) on the Modernization of Islamic Education in Indonesia (Comparison of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama). Muhammadiyah emphasizes steadfastness in Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith, while Nahdlatul Ulama is oriented towards the balance of religious knowledge and science with a moral-spiritual focus. (2). (Adzkiyaunuha, 2024) highlights the importance of Islamic education combining traditional elements with a modern approach, equipping students to face the modern world while maintaining Islamic values. (3). (Baidlawi, 2023) discusses the modernization of Islamic boarding school education. Islamic boarding schools, as independent institutions, aim to produce cadres of *tafaqquh fi al-din* with noble morals and expertise in accordance with socio-cultural developments. Modernization in various aspects of Islamic boarding schools is considered important to meet the demands of the times without ignoring Islamic identity..

From several studies above, it can be concluded that the modernization of Islamic education is an important effort to maintain the relevance of Islamic education in the modern era without ignoring traditional values. Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama provide examples of different approaches, where Muhammadiyah emphasizes more on strengthening teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith, while Nahdlatul Ulama emphasizes the balance between religious knowledge and science. This approach shows the importance of flexibility in implementing modernization, according to the needs of society. In addition, tradition and innovation in Islamic education must be combined to prepare students to face global challenges while maintaining Islamic identity. Islamic boarding schools, as traditional educational institutions, also need to make innovations in various aspects to produce graduates who are not only noble but also able to compete in a changing world. Therefore, the modernization of Islamic education is the key to building a future generation that is solid in Islamic values and superior in expertise.

Meanwhile, the novelty in this study lies in the effort to create a harmonious balance between the traditions of Islamic education and modern innovation, with a comprehensive and adaptive approach, so that it can provide a positive contribution to the development of Islamic education in the future. The goal of modernizing the Islamic education curriculum is to create a holistic education system, where spiritual,

moral, and intellectual aspects can develop in a balanced manner. This includes the reformulation of educational objectives, curriculum restructuring, and the development of more interactive and participatory learning methods. Thus, the curriculum must be designed to encourage students to think critically and creatively, and be able to adapt to changes in the social and technological environment.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The method used in this study is qualitative using a library research approach, namely an investigation whose object of study utilizes library data in the form of books as its data source. This research was conducted by reading, reviewing, and analyzing various existing literature. Data sources consist of two, namely primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources in this study are journals and articles on Modernization of Islamic Education Curriculum: Balancing Tradition and Innovation for Future Generations, while secondary sources come from books, journal articles, research results related to the research topic (Zed, 2014).

Data was collected using documentation techniques, meaning collecting data from all reading sources that are sources of research data. Then organized based on problem categories, then analyzed to be interpreted into research findings. Drawing conclusions can be done when some of the data collected has met the validity of the data. For data validity, the content check point technique is used (Sugiyono, 2021).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Aspects of Modernization of Islamic Education Curriculum**

Modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is an effort to adapt the religious learning system to the development of the times, without neglecting the fundamental values of Islam. The main objective of this modernization is to produce graduates who not only master religious knowledge, but also have competencies that are relevant to the demands of the world of work and are able to adapt to social change. Modernization of education is one approach to a long-term solution to various problems of the Muslim community today and in the future. Therefore, modernization of education is important in giving birth to a modern Islamic civilization (Baidlawi, 2023).

The main aspects of curriculum modernization are: 1) integration of religious knowledge and general knowledge, which can be used with a holistic approach that combines religious learning with general knowledge such as science, technology, social, and humanities (Nuriyati & Chanifudin, 2020). 2) use of technology, which includes technology-based learning using devices and applications to enrich the teaching and learning process, and digital learning media which includes videos, animations, simulations, and educational games that can make learning more interesting and interactive (Telussa et al., 2023). 3) relevance to the social context, in which in this context students are able to understand contemporary issues, such as discussing political and economic issues that are relevant to students' lives. In addition, forming character, which can instill Islamic moral and ethical values that are relevant to modern life (Haidar et al., 2023).

Modernization of Islamic education curriculum is an important step to ensure that religious education is not only relevant but also able to answer the challenges of globalization and the development of science. By integrating religious knowledge with general knowledge and implementing innovative teaching methodologies, it is hoped

that Islamic education can produce a generation that is not only faithful but also knowledgeable and ready to face the challenges of the times (Ach.Sayyi, 2017).

Key aspects of curriculum modernization include the integration of religious and general knowledge. This holistic approach allows the integration of religious learning with other disciplines such as science, technology, social sciences, and humanities, so that students can see the relevance of Islamic teachings in the context of everyday life. In addition, the use of technology in the teaching and learning process is very important. Technology-based learning that utilizes modern devices and applications, as well as digital media such as video, animation, simulation, and educational games, can increase student engagement and make the learning experience more interesting and interactive.

The relevance of the curriculum to the social context is also no less important. Students need to understand contemporary issues such as politics and economics that relate to their lives, so that they can develop a broader understanding of the world around them. In addition, fostering awareness of pluralism is essential so that students can appreciate the diversity of religions, cultures, and views that exist in society. Character building is also a priority in the modernization of this curriculum, by instilling Islamic moral and ethical values that are relevant to the challenges of modern life.

### **The Importance of Balancing Tradition and Innovation in Islamic Education**

Balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education is a significant challenge in this modern era. The tradition of Islamic education, which has been going on for centuries, provides a strong foundation for religious identity and values. However, with the rapid development of technology and social change, innovation in teaching methods and curriculum has become very important to ensure the relevance of Islamic education (Winarno & Sukari, 2024).

In this case, there are several important points in balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education, namely Tradition in Islamic Education The tradition of Islamic education in Indonesia includes various methods and practices that have been proven effective in teaching religious values. Some key elements of this tradition include: Teaching the Qur'an and Hadith: Classical methods such as memorizing the Qur'an and learning the hadith through halaqah (circle discussions) are an integral part of Islamic education. This helps students build a deep understanding of religious teachings. Character Education: The tradition of Islamic education does not only focus on academic aspects, but also on the formation of good character, noble morals, and strong spirituality (Lukens-Bull, 1970). Cultural Preservation: Islamic education plays a role in maintaining local cultural values that are in line with Islamic teachings, creating harmony between the religious and cultural identities of the community (Harmathilda et al., 2024).

In addition, Innovation in Islamic Education Innovation in Islamic education aims to update and develop teaching methods to be more relevant to the needs of the modern era. Some aspects of innovation include: Use of Technology: Integration of technology in learning, such as the use of e-learning applications and multimedia, allows students to learn in a more interactive and engaging way. It also helps reach a wider range of students. Contextual Learning Method: The contextual learning approach links teaching materials to real situations faced by students, so that they can

see the relevance of religious teachings in everyday life. Hybrid Curriculum: Combining traditional elements with modern approaches, such as project-based learning, where students are involved in real projects that apply PAI (Islamic Religious Education) concepts in a social context (Juhji et al., 2021).

On the other hand, an important point in balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education is the Balance between Tradition and Innovation Maintaining a balance between tradition and innovation is essential to achieving optimal educational outcomes. Some principles for achieving this balance include: Integration: Combining traditional methods with modern approaches without sacrificing the core values of Islamic teachings. For example, teaching memorization of the Qur'an while utilizing technology to support understanding. Adaptation: Adjusting teaching methods to the characteristics of today's students, including the use of digital tools for more dynamic interactions (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Relevance: Ensuring that teaching materials remain relevant to the context of students' daily lives, as well as linking religious teachings to contemporary issues (Wulandari, 2024).

Implications for Educators and Educational Institutions The importance of balancing tradition and innovation has significant implications for educators and Islamic educational institutions: Teacher Training: Educators need to be trained to utilize technology and integrate traditional teaching methods into their curriculum. Infrastructure Investment: Educational institutions must invest in technological infrastructure to support the implementation of hybrid teaching models. Education Policy: Policy reforms that support the integration of technology in religious education are needed to ensure that educational institutions can adapt to changing times (Fikri, 2024).

Balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education is essential to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of religious education in the modern era. Traditions such as teaching the Qur'an and Hadith have proven effective in teaching religious values and shaping students' characters. However, innovation is needed to update teaching methods to suit the needs of today's students, such as the use of e-learning applications and digital media that make learning more interactive. A contextual approach that links teaching materials to real situations also helps students understand the relevance of religious teachings. This balance involves integrating traditional and modern methods without sacrificing core Islamic values. Educators need to be trained to utilize technology, and investment in infrastructure and education policy reform is needed. Thus, a balance between tradition and innovation can strengthen Islamic education and produce a generation that is ready to face global challenges.

### **Challenges Faced, And Strategies That Can Be Implemented.**

Challenges Faced are 1) Limited Resources: Many Islamic educational institutions experience a shortage of qualified and professional educators, as well as adequate facilities to support the modern learning process (Vives et al., 2015). 2) Rigid Learning Orientation: The learning approach that is still cognitive and less interactive makes students not actively involved in the learning process, thus reducing the effectiveness of learning (Azra, 2013). 3) Negative Perception of Madrasahs: There is still a negative stigma from the community towards Madrasahs as educational institutions that are considered inferior compared to public schools, which can affect students' interest in studying at these institutions. 4) Moral and Ethical Crisis: Moral and ethical challenges among students are a serious problem, where religious education

is often not enough to form good character. 5) Dichotomy of Knowledge: There is a separation between religious knowledge and general knowledge in the Islamic education curriculum, which hinders the integration of knowledge and the development of students' skills (Kulsum, n.d.).

Modernization of the Islamic education curriculum faces various important challenges that hinder the learning process and impact the quality of education. Limited resources, such as lack of qualified teachers and adequate facilities, reduce the effectiveness of teaching. In addition, learning methods that are still cognitive and less interactive make students not actively involved, thus reducing their motivation. The negative stigma towards madrasahs as educational institutions that are considered inferior to public schools also affects students' interest in studying at madrasahs.

In addition, the moral and ethical crisis among students shows that religious education is often not enough to form good character. Finally, the separation between religious knowledge and general knowledge in the curriculum hinders the integration of knowledge and the development of students' skills. To overcome these challenges, a comprehensive and collaborative approach is needed from all related parties, including improving the quality of human resources, implementing innovative learning methods, improving the image of madrasahs, emphasizing character development, and integrating religious knowledge and general knowledge in the curriculum.

Strategies that can be implemented are Transformation of Teaching Methodology that adopts a contextual and thematic approach in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI) to link material to real situations experienced by students. For example, using project-based learning methods to provide a more meaningful learning experience (Kartika et al., 2024). In addition, Technology Integration that utilizes technology in the learning process, such as the use of e-learning applications, digital media, and other interactive tools to increase student engagement and make learning more interesting (Juhji et al., 2021). On the other hand, Curriculum Reformulation that develops a more holistic curriculum by integrating religious knowledge and general knowledge. This includes eliminating the dichotomy between the two fields so that students can understand the relevance of Islamic teachings in the context of modern life (Kulsum, n.d.)

There are other strategies that can also be implemented including Improving the Quality of Educators who conduct training and professional development for educators so that they can apply modern and effective teaching methods in the classroom. Building a New Islamic Education Paradigm which re-examines the Islamic education paradigm to ensure that it is in accordance with the values of the Qur'an and Sunnah and is able to answer the challenges of the times. Increasing Student Social Awareness which teaches students about contemporary issues, pluralism, and cultural diversity so that they can appreciate differences and contribute positively to society. As well as Continuous Evaluation which periodically evaluates the curriculum and teaching methods to ensure that they remain relevant to the times and the needs of students (Saputra et al., 2022).

In the modernization of Islamic education, several crucial strategies can be applied to improve the effectiveness of learning. First, changing the teaching methodology with a contextual and thematic approach, such as project-based learning, can link the material to students' real experiences. Second, utilizing technology through e-learning applications and digital media makes learning more interesting. Third, overhauling the curriculum to integrate religious knowledge and general knowledge

helps students understand the relevance of Islamic teachings in the context of modern life. Improving the quality of educators through training is also important to implement effective teaching methods.

In addition, building a new educational paradigm that is in accordance with the values of the Qur'an and is able to answer the challenges of the times, as well as increasing students' social awareness of pluralism and diversity, is very necessary. Periodic evaluation of the curriculum ensures that education remains relevant. With this strategy, Islamic education can produce a generation that understands Islamic teachings and is ready to make a positive contribution to the global community. By facing these challenges through the right strategies, the modernization of the Islamic education curriculum can run well, producing a future generation that is not only faithful but also intelligent, creative, and ready to face global dynamics.

## CONCLUSION

Modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is a must to answer the challenges of the times while maintaining the noble values of Islamic teachings. By carrying out reforms in various fields, it is hoped that Islamic education can produce future generations who are not only faithful but also intelligent, creative, and ready to contribute positively to the global community. Balancing tradition and innovation in Islamic education highlights the importance of the role of the curriculum in preparing the younger generation to face the challenges of an ever-changing era. In this context, modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is not only aimed at improving the quality of education, but also to ensure that traditional values are maintained when integrated with modern innovations. It is a must to ensure that the education curriculum is not only relevant to the needs of the times but is also able to produce individuals who are spiritually and intellectually qualified. Thus, modernization of the Islamic education curriculum is expected to be able to answer the challenges of the times while maintaining the noble values of Islamic teachings.

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