THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PREPARING A RESILIENT MUSLIM GENERATION IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL CHANGE

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Abstract:

The era of globalization, marked by massive social, cultural, and technological changes, demands that the younger generation—particularly Muslim youth—be well-prepared to face contemporary challenges without losing their religious identity. This article explores the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in shaping a resilient, well-characterized, and adaptive Muslim generation in the face of global change. The method employed is library research by analyzing various recent and relevant scholarly journals. The findings indicate that IRE plays a strategic role in character building, strengthening moral and spiritual resilience, and enhancing the competitiveness of Muslim youth through contextual curriculum approaches, innovative teaching methods, and synergy among schools, families, and communities. This study recommends strengthening Islamic values through curriculum reform, developing teacher professionalism, and utilizing digital technology in a moderate and purposeful manner.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Muslim Generation, Globalization*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a multidimensional process that connects individuals and societies around the world through complex social, economic, cultural, and technological networks. According to Skobelev and Borovik, the concept of Society 5.0—introduced by the Japanese government—refers not only to the manufacturing sector but also to solving social problems through the integration of physical and virtual spaces (Nasikin & Khojir, 2021). Its impact is highly significant on modern human lifestyles, value systems, and ways of thinking, including those of the young Muslim generation. Global change has brought about serious challenges in various aspects of life, ranging from identity crises and the spread of foreign values contrary to Islamic teachings to the erosion of moral and spiritual values due to the unstoppable flow of information (Cantri Maesak et al., 2024). Globalization has become an unavoidable reality for all communities worldwide. This phenomenon has a tremendous impact on various sectors of life, including education, culture, society, economy, and religion. In the context of globalization, societies are required to develop the ability to adapt to rapid and complex changes (Mulyadi et al., 2023).

Among the most affected by this global dynamic are young people. They live in an era of rapid information flows, cultural diversity, and shifting value systems. This is where the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) becomes

crucial in preparing Muslim youth who are spiritually, morally, and intellectually resilient (Naylatul Fadhilah et al., 2025).

Islamic Religious Education plays a highly strategic role in shaping resilient, morally upright, and adaptive Muslim youth amid the complexities of global change. Globalization has brought about new challenges such as value shifts, identity crises, moral degradation, and the dominance of foreign cultures that threaten the spiritual and moral integrity of the younger generation. In this context, IRE stands at the forefront in safeguarding and strengthening Islamic foundations while equipping students with universal Islamic values relevant to contemporary life (Aulia Herawati et al., 2025).

IRE does not merely serve as a vehicle for transmitting religious knowledge, but also functions as a medium for internalizing Islamic values that are moderate, tolerant, and adaptive. Islamic Religious Education is expected to shield students from various negative environmental influences while also serving as a social agent toward a more civilized society (Abdul Razak et al., 2019).

Moreover, IRE serves as a strategic instrument for character and personality development. It must be capable of responding to contemporary challenges while preserving the core of Islamic teachings. Amid the prevailing currents of secularism, liberalism, and individualism that often dominate global thinking, IRE must be more responsive and adaptive to maintain its relevance. The goal is for students not only to possess strong religious knowledge but also to become individuals of integrity, critical thinking, and strong social concern. In this regard, it is important to re-evaluate curriculum approaches, learning strategies, and the synergy among educational institutions, families, and communities in achieving the mission of IRE. Recent studies, such as those by Herdian et al., highlight the need to revitalize Islamic education to be more responsive to global issues such as radicalism, moral crises, and technological advancement (Herdian Kertayasa et al., 2024).

The aim of this article is to elaborate on the strategic role of IRE in shaping a resilient Muslim generation to face the global era, with a focus on curriculum reform, learning innovation, and the support of a conducive educational ecosystem. The current social reality reveals various problems among Muslim youth, including moral decadence, social deviance, and identity disorientation. These issues are exacerbated by the widespread presence of non-educational digital content, weak parental supervision, and limited spaces for religious value actualization in the surrounding environment.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method. Library research was chosen as it allows the author to explore and analyze scholarly literature relevant to the topic, "The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Preparing a Resilient Muslim Generation in the Era of Global Change." This technique is highly effective in identifying patterns, trends, and recent scholarly perspectives on similar issues.

The data sources for this research were obtained from national and international scholarly journals published between 2022 and 2025, particularly those indexed in databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, OSF, Zenodo, and accredited university journals. The criteria for selecting the literature were based on the relevance to Islamic religious education, youth character resilience, as well as the context of globalization and digital-age challenges. The author used keywords such as "Islamic Religious Education," "Muslim Generation,"

"Character," "Globalization," and "Digital Literacy" in the reference search process.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved grouping the findings according to major themes relevant to the study's focus. Several key themes identified include: (1) the IRE curriculum in the context of globalization, (2) value- and technology-based learning innovations, (3) the development of students' character and spirituality, and (4) collaboration among families, schools, and communities in Islamic character education.

Data validation was conducted by reviewing and comparing various sources to ensure the relevance, timeliness, and accuracy of the information. Through this method, the author was able to formulate a comprehensive synthesis of strategies and contributions of Islamic Religious Education in addressing global challenges in a systematic and well-argued manner.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are based on an analysis of dozens of scholarly journal articles addressing strategic issues related to Islamic Religious Education and the challenges of globalization. At least four main findings were identified as key indicators of IRE's contribution to preparing a resilient Muslim generation.

An Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Responsive to Globalization

The current Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum is no longer sufficient if it only focuses on ritual aspects of religion. It requires a broader scope that includes global issues such as pluralism, multiculturalism, climate change, media literacy, and critical thinking (Kabir et al., 2024). A study by Jamil shows that an adaptive IRE curriculum, one that is open to global realities, can cultivate students' awareness of their roles as global citizens without losing their Islamic identity. Most of the reviewed articles suggest that a value-based approach grounded in universal Islamic principles should be integrated into the IRE syllabus. For instance, values such as justice, compassion, and social responsibility can be applied in the context of environmental issues or social inequality (Jamil, 2020).

Although globalization and its impact on religious understanding have been widely discussed, studies specifically addressing how IRE can serve as a strategy to build a moderate religious understanding remain limited. Most research focuses on identifying the problems of religious identity without offering comprehensive solutions in the form of educational strategies. Thus, further research is needed to find approaches that balance the preservation of a strong religious identity with openness to external influences in the context of globalization.

The IRE curriculum today must go beyond a cognitive orientation and include affective and psychomotor domains as well. It is essential to integrate global issues such as pluralism, digitalization, and multiculturalism into the IRE framework. Along with broader curricular reforms, educators must also adjust their instructional approaches to align with new educational standards (Purnomo & Mukhlisin, 2024).

Innovative Learning Strategies in Islamic Religious Education

In the context of learning, it has been found that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers are gradually shifting from conventional lecture-based

models to more interactive, reflective, and technology-based approaches. The use of digital media such as educational videos, Learning Management Systems (LMS), and social media integration has become a strategic means to reach Generation Z and Alpha (Sauri et al., 2022). Research by Khoirunnisa et al. confirms that the digitalization of IRE learning offers opportunities to bring students closer to religious values through media that are familiar in their daily lives. Teachers have also begun to implement contextual methods such as case studies, value discussions, simulations, and the integration of socially-based projects grounded in Islamic teachings (Khoirunnisa et al., 2025). This approach not only fosters conceptual understanding but also cultivates social and spiritual sensitivity. IRE learning in the global era demands that teachers transform from mere instructors into facilitators and spiritual mentors. A moderate digital approach can serve as a solution to counter online extremism and religious disinformation (Santi, 2025).

Character Building and Mental Resilience, IRE plays a crucial role in shaping the character of young generations by instilling fundamental values such as honesty, patience, sincerity, and responsibility. Research by Aduragba and Cristea indicates that the consistent reinforcement of religious values strengthens an individual's mental resilience (Aduragba et al., 2023). Globalization significantly impacts shifts in mindset, lifestyles, and value systems, including those of Muslim youth. The rapid and unfiltered flow of information may cause identity confusion if not balanced with strong value-based education. IRE functions both as a filter and a moral guide to equip learners with an Islamic perspective for understanding, filtering, and responding to global dynamics. In this context, IRE is not merely the transmission of religious knowledge but a transformation of character. A humanistic and contextual IRE curriculum can connect Islamic values with contemporary issues, creating generations who are both religiously conscious and globally responsible.

Curriculum Renewal, the IRE curriculum must be continually revitalized to avoid becoming ritualistic routine. Integrating global themes such as social justice, human rights, environmental sustainability, and digital literacy into the IRE curriculum is imperative. Students need to understand that Islamic teachings regulate not only worship but also offer universal solutions to humanitarian issues. For example, climate change can be linked to the Islamic value of stewardship (amanah) toward the earth, while global peace can be associated with the Islamic concept of ukhuwah insaniyah (human brotherhood). This approach shapes students into individuals who think globally while rooted in local and spiritual values.

Transforming Teaching Methods. One-way lecture methods are now considered less effective for reaching digital-native generations accustomed to visual and interactive learning experiences. Therefore, IRE teachers must adopt innovative approaches such as flipped classrooms, project-based learning, and interactive discussions that encourage active student participation. Utilizing digital technology is also a necessity. Social media, Islamic podcasts, dakwah vlogs, and interactive learning applications can enrich the IRE learning experience. However, the use of technology must be accompanied by strengthening digital literacy so that students not only become consumers of information but also producers of positive content that represents Islamic values.

Strengthening Character through Islamic Values Education. Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, tolerance, and compassion form the foundational pillars of resilient character. IRE learning should aim at

developing noble character through the internalization and habituation of these values in daily life. Internalization is achieved through deliberate value inculcation in learning activities, while habituation is fostered by engaging students in real practices such as regular charity programs, spiritual mentoring, and social services. Moreover, teacher exemplarity and a conducive school environment critically influence the effectiveness of Islamic character education.

The Role of IRE Teachers, IRE teachers are not merely content deliverers but moral mentors and spiritual guides. Hence, the quality of IRE teachers is key to successful value education. They must possess pedagogical, personal, social, professional, and now digital competencies. Teacher capacity building can be enhanced through training, workshops, scientific forums, and collaboration with other teaching communities. Teachers must also be adaptive to technological and social developments to provide relevant and contextual guidance to students.

Strengthening Character and Moral Resilience

The third finding indicates that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a significant role in strengthening the character and moral resilience of the younger generation. Research by Muis et al. confirms that students who receive intensive Islamic religious education exhibit higher resistance to negative influences from social media, free association, and existential crises. Values such as patience, gratitude, trustworthiness, and honesty are integrated into learning to build strong spiritual and mental personalities (Muis et al., 2024). Many articles also note that the emotional involvement of teachers in guiding students significantly impacts the successful internalization of Islamic values.

Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in preparing a resilient Muslim generation amid global challenges. The integration of global issues into the curriculum makes IRE more relevant and contextual, while active and digital learning strategies help create a dynamic learning environment. The transformation of teachers' roles into spiritual mentors and value guides is significant in shaping students' character and mental resilience. Additionally, supportive home and community environments that practically implement Islamic values further strengthen the success of IRE learning in schools. Thus, the synergy between curriculum, teachers, students, families, and communities is the key to shaping a Muslim generation that is morally upright, open-minded, and ready to face global challenges.

On the other hand, the success of IRE also heavily depends on educational institutions' ability to adapt to social changes and information technology developments. IRE teachers are required to improve their pedagogical and digital competencies to develop innovative, enjoyable, yet educationally valuable methods. The use of digital media in religious learning needs to be wisely developed so that it is not only informative but also transformative in shaping noble character and spiritual depth in students.

Islamic Religious Education also contributes to building students' mental resilience so they are not easily influenced by social pressure, misinformation, and the consumptive and instant lifestyle prevalent in the digital era. Through a holistic and integrative approach, IRE can strengthen self-awareness, religious values, and the spirit to become independent, ethical, and responsible individuals in personal, social, and national life.

Overall, Islamic Religious Education must continue to undergo sustainable renewal to remain relevant and capable of responding to contemporary challenges. Strengthening the curriculum, innovating learning

strategies, improving teacher quality, and fostering synergy with families and communities are the main prerequisites for shaping a spiritually and intellectually resilient Muslim generation. Such a generation will be able to maintain Islamic identity while making a real contribution to building a more peaceful, just, and dignified global civilization.

The discussion of these findings underscores the importance of Islamic Religious Education in preparing a resilient Muslim generation to face global challenges. The context of globalization, encompassing various dimensions of modern life—including social, economic, cultural, and technological aspects—has caused value shifts and identity crises among youth. Here, IRE serves as a strategic instrument to build the spiritual, moral, and social resilience of the younger generation.

The Synergistic Role of Educational Institutions, Families, and Communities

Effective Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is not solely determined by schools as formal institutions but is also strongly influenced by the roles of families and communities. A study by Mualif et al. demonstrates that close collaboration among teachers, parents, and local community leaders strengthens a value ecosystem that supports character building. Community-based religious activities, Islamic parenting, and parental involvement in the IRE learning process are effective strategies to extend the influence of religious education beyond the classroom (Mualif et al., 2024). Through this synergy, students receive direct role models in their daily lives.

The Synergistic Role of Family and Community, IRE cannot function effectively without the support of a conducive social environment (Alvia Zackia Syabrina et al., 2025). The family's role is crucial in reinforcing religious practices at home. Islamic Religious Education can instill moral and ethical values in the younger generation, deepen effective teaching methods in modern religious education, highlight challenges and obstacles in implementing IRE amidst globalization influences, and provide strategic guidance to enhance the effectiveness of character building (Alvia Zackia Syabrina et al., 2025).

The collaboration of the Tri-Center Education system (school, family, and community) must be revitalized to strengthen value education. Schools cannot work alone in shaping students' character. Families, as the first 'madrasah,' and communities, as social environments, have collective responsibility in the educational process. IRE will be more effective if parents actively participate in the education process, for example, through Islamic parenting programs, family study forums, and involvement in school activities. Communities can also contribute through youth mosque programs, religious literacy movements, and the development of Islamic communities.

Challenges and Solutions for Strengthening IRE, Although the role of IRE is highly significant, its implementation faces several challenges, including: an outdated or non-contextual curriculum, uneven teacher competencies, lack of relevant and engaging teaching materials, and limited synergy among education stakeholders. Proposed solutions include revitalizing the curriculum based on values and contemporary issues, enhancing teacher training based on TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), providing interactive and inspiring learning media, and establishing a value-based educational ecosystem through multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Implications of IRE in National Character Building, IRE is not only

relevant for shaping pious individuals but also for developing civilized and responsible citizens. Inclusive and moderate religious education contributes to the realization of a tolerant, peaceful, and just society. In the long term, IRE can support the development of a nationally competitive character based on spirituality and human ethics. A strong Islamic education will produce generations that are intellectually intelligent as well as spiritually and socially wise. This is the resilient Muslim generation expected to become agents of change in an increasingly complex and competitive global society.

CONCLUSION

Through a curriculum that is responsive to contemporary developments, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is able to contribute to shaping students' personalities in a balanced manner—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. IRE does not merely focus on mastery of religious content but also internalizes values such as tolerance, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and openness toward diversity. Consequently, students are formed into insan kamil—complete human beings—who are not only ritualistically devout but also capable of becoming positive social change agents within a heterogeneous global society.

The study's findings indicate that the transformation of IRE encompasses several key aspects. First, curriculum renewal that integrates global issues such as pluralism, digitalization, environmental sustainability, and religious moderation. Second, the implementation of active, contextual, and technology-based learning strategies to engage digital native generations. Third, strengthening the role of teachers as role models and facilitators of Islamic values rather than mere conveyors of material. Fourth, collaboration among schools, families, and communities in building an educational ecosystem that supports the development of students' character and spirituality.

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