

Transformation Of The Pesantren-Based Higher Education Curriculum: A 21st-Century Pedagogical Framework

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Abstract

Islamic education in the twenty-first century requires curriculum and pedagogical reform that responds to technological, intellectual, and socio-cultural change without weakening Islam's epistemological, ethical, and spiritual foundations. This study develops a holistic-integrative framework for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in pesantren-based higher education. Using a qualitative case-study approach, data were obtained through participant observation, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, analysis of academic documents, and relevant scholarly literature. The findings show that curriculum reform should move beyond knowledge transmission and doctrinal mastery toward five interconnected dimensions: knowing, doing, meaning, sensing, and being. These dimensions are operationalized through the integration of aqliyyah, qolbiyyah, and jismiyyah, supported by an Islamic worldview, interdisciplinary knowledge, scientific rationality, experiential learning, blended learning, and digital technology. The study argues that meaningful reform requires an integrated educational ecosystem linking curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, technology, and character formation. Its implementation depends on lecturer competence, digital infrastructure, institutional policy, and authentic assessment capable of evaluating knowledge, skills, values, spirituality, and character.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, curriculum reform, Islamic pedagogy, holistic-integrative education, pesantren-based higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty-first-century education faces major challenges arising from globalization, the development of digital technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and the increasing demand for soft skills. In the context of Islamic education, the principal issue is how to preserve authentic Islamic values while, at the same time, ensuring that Islamic education remains relevant to contemporary developments. This indicates that Islamic education has the task of integrating these two dimensions, because advances in science and technology without Islamic values may result in a loss of adab, in which science and technology cease to serve the public good in

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human life and instead bring destruction to humanity itself. Islamic ¹education, particularly in pesantren, therefore bears a major responsibility to integrate these two dimensions. In the era of globalization, pesantren education is required not only to cultivate Islamic values but also to develop science and technology so that pesantren graduates can compete at both national and international levels in the development of knowledge. Accordingly, ²educational methods in pesantren should not rely solely on classical teaching methods based on memorization and lectures, but must also be elaborated in accordance with twenty-first-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. ³Classical methods function as an effort to preserve tradition and noble values, while twenty-first-century learning methods serve as their development. Such integration is greatly needed by human civilization because noble values are gradually being eroded by secular ⁴globalization.

Sayyed Naquib al-Attas explains that modern Islamic education faces the challenge of balancing traditional values with educational innovation. However,⁵ this study remains limited in providing a concrete model capable of accommodating the practical integration of Islamic values and educational innovation. Therefore, more in-depth studies are still needed regarding strategies that can be applied to maintain the relevance of Islamic education without sacrificing its fundamental values. Azra (2021) emphasizes the importance of integrating technology into Islamic education in order to improve learning ⁶effectiveness. Nevertheless, this research has not discussed in detail how technology can be systematically implemented in the pesantren curriculum. Thus, a research gap remains regarding effective approaches to adapting technology within pesantren-based Islamic education systems. Furthermore, UNESCO highlights the shift from teacher-centered approaches toward student-centered learning, which emphasizes project-based learning, collaboration, and the use of digital technology. This principle is ⁷essentially consistent with Islamic concepts that emphasize active, reflective, and problem-solving-based learning processes (*tafaquh fi al-din*). However, the discussion remains general and has not specifically examined how this approach can be applied within an Islamic education system that has distinctive characteristics.

One of the main challenges of Islamic pedagogy in the digital era is ensuring that Islamic values remain at the core of education while the curriculum simultaneously adapts to developments in modern science and technology. A study by ⁸indicates that the Islamic Religious Education curriculum model in Indonesia tends to remain traditional and has not fully accommodated twenty-first-century learning needs. However, this research has not yet offered practical solutions regarding how pesantren can adopt innovative pedagogical approaches

¹ S. M. N. Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (ISTAC, 1993).

² Azyumardi Azra, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru*, (Logos, 1999).

³ Fadel Triling, "21st Century Skills: Learning for Life in Our Times," *Choice Reviews Online* 47, no. 10 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.47-5788>.

⁴ Amin Abdullah, *Islam Sebagai Ilmu: Epistemologi, Metodologi, Dan Etika* (LKiS, 2012).

⁵ Syed Naquib al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam* (ISTAC, 2019).

⁶ Azra, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru*, .

⁷ UNESCO, *Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*, (UNESCO Publishing, 2021).

⁸ Rasyid Alwani and Tasman Hamami, "Model Organisasi Dan Desain Kurikulum PAI Di Indonesia," *EDUKATIF: JURNAL ILMU PENDIDIKAN* 5, no. 5 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v5i5.5343>.

without losing their essence. Furthermore, research by ⁹ highlights the challenges posed by pesantren organizational culture in facing the digital era, including limited adaptation to modern learning approaches. This research has not explicitly presented a digital pedagogy model suitable for pesantren-based higher education. An imbalanced secondary education output makes it difficult for santri to integrate religious insight and rational skills ¹⁰simultaneously.

Meanwhile, Hidayat & Yusuf (2022) affirm that pedagogical transformation through the integration of technology and innovative learning methods in pesantren can improve students' critical-thinking skills and independence. However, this study has not explicitly explained the most effective learning model for implementation in pesantren-based higher education. Imbalanced secondary education outcomes make it difficult for santri to integrate these two dimensions. On the one hand, santri may possess broad knowledge of religious sciences but remain weak in rational thinking. On the other hand, they may possess rational and logical thinking skills but have limited religious insight. This imbalance causes integrative reasoning in classroom learning processes to remain ¹¹uneven.

As the oldest Islamic educational institution, the pesantren has considerable potential to become a center for the development of modern Islamic intellectualism without losing its traditional essence. Therefore, reform of Islamic pedagogy based on blended learning, problem-based learning, and digital literacy has become an urgent need in pesantren-based higher education. Pesantren must develop strategies for integrating classical and modern methods. Both must be implemented in a balanced manner so that modernization does not eliminate the noble values of Islam. Nevertheless, a research gap remains regarding how these approaches can be implemented comprehensively in the context of Islamic ¹²education.

Unlike previous studies that remain conceptual or have not systematically integrated various innovative approaches, this study offers an Islamic pedagogical model specifically designed for pesantren-based higher education. The model integrates Islamic principles with digital-based learning methods, problem-based learning, and digital literacy, which have not been extensively explored in previous studies. Thus, this study not only addresses a theoretical gap but also provides practical solutions for Islamic educational institutions in responding to twenty-first-century ¹³challenges.

This study is grounded in the need to reformulate Islamic Religious Education in pesantren-based higher education so that it is oriented not only toward the cognitive mastery of religious knowledge but also toward the integrated development of students' spiritual, emotional, social, and physical dimensions. Accordingly, this study focuses on (1) reformulating the PAI curriculum through a holistic approach; (2) developing PAI learning

⁹ Lu'at Happyana et al., "Integration of Tradition and Technology: Digitalization Strategies in Islamic Education at Pesantren in Banyuwangi, Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 6, no. 1 (2025): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v6i1.446>.

¹⁰ Nur Hasan et al., "Pemberdayaan Santri Melalui Pembelajaran Enjoyable Learning Dalam Membentuk Generasi Seimbang Dan Spiritualitas Inteletualitas Di Pondok Pesantren," *Jurnal Pembelajaran Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (JP2M)* 1, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.33474/jp2m.v1i2.6582>.

¹¹ Marheny Lukitasari et al., "Blended-Problem-Based Learning: How Its Impact on Students' Critical Thinking Skills?," *JPBI (Jurnal Pendidikan Biologi Indonesia)* 5, no. 3 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.22219/jpbi.v5i3.10048>.

¹² Hamzah et al., "Effectiveness of Blended Learning Model Based on Problem-Based Learning in Islamic Studies Course," *International Journal of Instruction* 15, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2022.15242a>.

¹³ Rifda Haniefa et al., *INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL LITERACY AND PROBLEM BASED LEARNING (PBL) MODEL TO IMPROVE ARABIC LEARNING OUTCOMES*, 7, no. 1 (2024): 29–40.

methods based on the integration of ‘aqliyyah, qalbiyyah, and jismiyyah as an approach that synergizes intellectual intelligence, the formation of the heart and spirituality, and the development of physical and practical dimensions; and (3) implementing Islamic pedagogy in pesantren-based higher education to establish a learning process oriented toward the formation of knowledgeable, civilized, and character-driven individuals who are able to actualize Islamic values in academic and social life. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify an integrative model of curriculum, learning methods, and Islamic pedagogy that is relevant to the transformation of PAI in pesantren-based higher education.

The main contribution of this study is to provide an Islamic pedagogical model that is contextualized to the challenges of the digital era and the soft-skill demands of the twenty-first century. Through this model, pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions are expected to develop more relevant and effective learning strategies for equipping Muslim generations with global competencies without losing the roots of authentic Islamic values. In addition, this model can serve as a reference for Islamic education policies that are more adaptive to changing times, thereby producing graduates who are not only highly competitive but also possess strong spiritual foundation.¹⁴

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach to explore various forms of data naturally, without intervention by the researcher. To obtain in-depth data, the research design used is a case study. The case-study design is employed as an effort to identify the interconnected system that constitutes a case. The case¹⁵ examined in this study is a model of Islamic education curriculum in pesantren-based higher education. The research site is Al-Yasini Institute of Islamic Religion, which is located within a pesantren environment. The theoretical framework includes case *study research* for in-depth analysis in a specific context, *Naturalistic Inquiry*¹⁶ for understanding phenomena holistically, and *Thematic Analysis*¹⁷ for identifying patterns of curriculum transformation. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, and analysis of relevant academic documents as needed.

Research validity is ensured through data triangulation and *member checking*, while research quality is maintained through *trustworthiness criteria*:¹⁸ credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The results of this study are expected to provide an innovative Islamic education curriculum model that remains rooted in pesantren values and to serve as a reference for developing Islamic education policies that are more adaptive to twenty-first-century challenges.

¹⁴ Alifia Oktahariana et al., *DIGITAL LITERACY IN PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING FOR ISLAMIC Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember*, Indonesia, 2024, 222–35.

¹⁵ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, in *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol. 53, no. 5 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1177/109634809702100108>.

¹⁶ Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, “GUIDELINES AND CHECKLIST FOR CONSTRUCTIVIST (a . k . a . FOURTH GENERATION) EVALUATION,” *Evaluation*, no. November (2001).

¹⁷ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology, Qualitative Research in Psychology,” *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling* 3, no. 2 (2008).

¹⁸ Guba and Lincoln, “GUIDELINES AND CHECKLIST FOR CONSTRUCTIVIST (a . k . a . FOURTH GENERATION) EVALUATION.”

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reformulation of the PAI Curriculum through a Holistic Approach

In the context of modern Islamic education, the structure of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum must adopt innovative approaches capable of accommodating developments in knowledge as well as learners' needs in the digital era. Ideally, the PAI curriculum should be designed holistically by integrating intellectual, spiritual, and physical dimensions that reflect a balance among knowledge (knowing), action (doing), meaning-making (meaning), spiritual awareness (sensing), and existence¹⁹(being). This approach is consistent with the philosophy of Islamic education, which emphasizes a harmonious *relationship* among *reason* (aqliyyah), the *heart* (qolbiyyah), and the physical dimension (jismiyyah), as theorized by classical Muslim scholars and Islamic intellectuals more broadly. Recent research findings indicate that Islamic Religious Education has undergone a transformation from fragmented patterns toward an integrated epistemological synthesis. This indicates that the Islamic Religious Education curriculum has combined contemporary pedagogical approaches, digital literacy, and spiritual values. Religious knowledge is formed not only through cognitive interaction but also through deep reflection that integrates the epistemological dimensions of bayani, burhani, and irfani.²⁰ The implication is that Islamic Religious Education produces a more holistic, contextual, and meaningful understanding.

In his work *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, *Al-Ghazali* emphasizes that education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but also the purification of the soul and the formation of moral character, highlighting the importance of integrating rationality and spirituality²¹ in the pursuit of human perfection. This thought provides a foundation for developing a PAI curriculum that does not merely prioritize traditional aspects such as memorization and classical methods in learning; Islamic Religious Education must also present logical rationality in the learning process so that Islamic teachings can demonstrate their modern dimension within a framework of thought. An understanding of text and context must become a fundamental capacity of teachers so that PAI learning is not understood merely as doctrine that constrains learners' lives. Through synergy between text and context, Islamic teachings can engage and enter into dialogue with human life so that their beneficial values are realized in actual life. Beyond understanding moral and ethical values in everyday life and applying them in practice, Islamic Religious Education must also demonstrate logical rationality so that all Islamic teachings contain meanings that can serve as guidance for human life. Through this approach, learners are expected to become individuals of noble character who are able to confront various challenges in life wisely and with inner tranquility. Thus, Islamic Religious Education functions not only as a means of increasing religious knowledge but also as a medium for building strong character and enabling individuals

¹⁹ Zainal Abidin Sodikin, and Akhmad Sirojuddin, *Islamic Religious Education Model with Knowing-Doing-Meaning- Sensing-Being Approach to Realize Knowledge Integration*, 14 (2022): 6039–50, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i4.2549>.

²⁰ Ahmad Syaifulloh and Siti Nurlaeli Rohmah, *MODEL HOLISTIK PENGEMBANGAN KOMPETENSI DOSEN PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM: INTEGRASI PEDAGOGI , TEKNOLOGI , DAN KECERDASAN SPIRITUAL*, 2024.

²¹ Sayyed Husen Nasr, "The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 4 (2005), <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020743805212229>.

to become positive agents of change in society.

In Al-Farabi's view, the sources of knowledge are divided into four main categories: revealed knowledge, obtained through sacred scripture and the teachings of the prophets; rational knowledge, obtained through logical thought and philosophy; empirical knowledge, obtained through experience and observation; and intuitive knowledge, obtained through²² purification of the soul and spiritual experience. Integrating these four sources of knowledge into the PAI curriculum is essential to ensure that learners not only understand Islam textually but are also able to apply it in modern life through approaches grounded in critical thinking and experience. By integrating these four sources of knowledge, learners will gain a holistic and profound understanding of Islam. They will not only understand religious teachings theoretically but also be able to apply them in everyday life in ways that are relevant to contemporary contexts. Thus, a PAI curriculum that combines revealed, rational, empirical, and intuitive knowledge will help foster a Muslim generation that is intelligent, critical, and characterized by noble morals.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the theory of aqliyyah, qolbiyyah, and jismiyyah provides a foundation for developing a comprehensive Islamic-based curriculum. The aqliyyah dimension emphasizes the importance of logical, critical, and analytical thinking in understanding Islamic teachings. In this context, the PAI curriculum should be designed to cultivate critical-thinking capacity through the study of the Qur'an, hadith, Islamic philosophy, and the integration of science and religion. This is consistent with the concept of ta'dib in the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, which emphasizes that education should produce individuals who possess adab²³ and a profound understanding of the realities of life. Therefore, a comprehensive PAI curriculum should include not only academic aspects but also individual character and spirituality. In this way, students will be able to develop their spiritual intelligence through a deep understanding of Islamic teachings. Consequently, they will be able to become individuals of noble character who can find solutions when confronting various challenges in everyday life.

The qolbiyyah dimension focuses on learners' spiritual and emotional aspects, involving the cultivation of moral values, akhlak, and close relationships with Allah and with fellow human beings. In developing the PAI curriculum, a Sufi approach *emphasizing* tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) can be integrated to cultivate profound values of piety. This Sufi approach provides space for learners to understand and experience a deeper spiritual relationship with Allah, thereby strengthening their moral awareness. Through this approach, learners are expected to become individuals who not only possess sound religious knowledge but also demonstrate strong character and profound piety.²⁴ Integrating tazkiyatun nafs into the PAI curriculum is an important step in forming a generation with high moral awareness and close relationships with Allah and fellow human beings.

The jismiyyah dimension emphasizes the importance of religious practice and physical aspects in education, such as the proper performance of worship, health, and practical skills in

²² Achmad Khudori Soleh, *Integrasi Agama Dan Filsafat Pemikiran Epistemologi Al-Farabi* (2010).

²³ Komaruddin Sassi, "TA'DIB AS A CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION PURIFICATION: STUDY ON THE THOUGHTS OF SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.19109/jmis.v2i1.2541>.

²⁴ Laode Muhammad Alfateh Arifin et al., "The Concept of Soul Education With 'Tazkiyatun Nafs' According Imam Al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah," *At-Ta'dib* 17, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.21111/at-tadib.v17i1.7893>.

everyday life. Islamic education not only develops the mind and heart but also prepares learners to live with healthy bodies and adequate skills. This is relevant to the concept of *jihād al-naḥs*, which emphasizes the struggle to develop the self holistically.²⁵ Through the *jismiyyah* approach, learners are taught to maintain bodily health as a trust from Allah. In addition, they are taught practical skills useful in everyday life, such as cooking, caring for plants, and other activities. Thus, Islamic education encompasses not only spiritual and intellectual aspects but also physical and practical dimensions in order to prepare a balanced generation of noble character.

The structure of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum, grounded in a balance among the *aqliyyah*, *qolbiyyah*, and *jismiyyah* dimensions, is designed to develop learners who possess a comprehensive and applicable understanding of Islam in life. This curriculum emphasizes not only the mastery of knowledge but also the cultivation of spiritual values and practical skills that support the holistic development of learners' personalities and competencies. Through this comprehensive approach, graduates are expected to achieve a balance among intellectual intelligence, emotional sensitivity, and practical skills in practicing Islamic teachings.

In the *aqliyyah* dimension, learning focuses on deepening understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith through *tafsir* and *takhrij* methods so that learners can understand Islamic teachings profoundly and contextually. In addition, the study of Islamic philosophy combined with the integration of scientific knowledge provides broad insight into the relationship between religion and science. The use of digital technology in learning, such as e-learning and artificial intelligence (AI)-based applications, is also an important component in enriching the learning experience. Furthermore, strengthening religious literacy through contextual and critical approaches aims to form learners who are capable of analytical thinking and who are aware of the challenges and dynamics of Islam in modern life.

Meanwhile, in the *qolbiyyah* dimension, the curriculum emphasizes the formation of strong Islamic character and morality. Character-development programs are conducted through a Sufi approach aimed at purifying the heart and building a noble Islamic personality. Experiential learning through social and *da'wah* activities constitutes an effective method for directly instilling Islamic values in real life. In addition, spiritual mentoring through *halaqah* and the study of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) is used as a strategy to guide learners toward strong spiritual depth. Through this approach, learners not only understand Islam theoretically but are also able to internalize Islamic values across various fields of modern knowledge so that knowledge can provide benefits for human life.

In the *jismiyyah* dimension, the PAI curriculum emphasizes the implementation of Islamic teachings through physical exercise, artistic activities, and skill development. The PAI curriculum is not merely a body of doctrine to be accepted; it also contains practical aspects of worship, such as technical guidance in performing prayer, fasting, *zakat*, and *hajj*, aimed at ensuring that learners are able to perform acts of worship properly and correctly. In addition, Sunnah-based Islamic health education is introduced to cultivate a healthy lifestyle consistent with Islamic teachings. The curriculum also includes entrepreneurship-skills training based on Islamic economics so that learners are equipped to face future economic challenges. Sports and martial arts programs from an Islamic perspective are also provided to build discipline, physical resilience, and emotional balance. To enhance *santri* creativity, the Islamic education curriculum

²⁵ Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumuddin* (Darul Ilmiah, n.d.).

must also develop practical skills. Calligraphy is one extracurricular activity widely developed in Islamic education. Therefore, skill development should also become part of the PAI curriculum so that learners' Islamic creativity can develop effectively.

With a curriculum structure grounded in a balance among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, learners are expected to develop into individuals with broad Islamic insight, noble character, and practical skills that are beneficial in life. This approach is oriented not only toward academic achievement but also toward character formation and integral life skills. Thus, graduates of this curriculum are expected to become agents of change who contribute to building a better society in accordance with Islamic values. The PAI curriculum can serve as an effective instrument for forming insan kamil through the synergy of these *three* dimensions. Human beings will achieve a balance among knowledge, action, and character. This integrative approach also supports the concept of transformative education, which is oriented not only toward academic achievement but also toward forming individuals who find meaning in life and are able to face contemporary challenges with firm Islamic principles.

PAI Learning Methods through the Aqliyyah, Qolbiyyah, and Jismiyyah Approach

In terms of learning methods, the *strategies of student-centered learning, critical thinking-based learning, and technology-enhanced learning* are highly relevant approaches for improving the effectiveness of *PAI learning*. Student-centered learning emphasizes learners' active role in constructing their own understanding through discussions, research-based projects, and experiential learning. Kolb emphasizes that effective learning occurs when learners experience, reflect on, and apply the concepts learned in real situations.²⁶ Technology-based learning also provides students with opportunities to access information rapidly and more efficiently while enabling them to learn independently. By combining critical and technological approaches in PAI learning, teachers can create a dynamic and interactive learning environment that stimulates students' interest and motivation to learn. Accordingly, PAI learning can become more engaging and effective in improving understanding and the application of religious values in everyday²⁷ life.

From an Islamic perspective, this learning method is also consistent with Al-Farabi's theory, which emphasizes the importance of integrating revealed, rational, empirical, and intuitive knowledge in the learning process. For example, in understanding Islamic teachings concerning ethics and morality, learners can be *encouraged to* explore fundamental concepts in the Qur'an (revealed *knowledge*), discuss them through logical and critical *approaches* (rational *knowledge*), observe their application in social life (empirical *knowledge*), and reflect on their deeper meanings in their spiritual lives (intuitive *knowledge*). Thus, this holistic learning approach can help learners gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings. In

²⁶ Mick Healey and Alan Jenkins, "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Its Application in Geography in Higher Education," *Journal of Geography* 99, no. 5 (2000), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221340008978967>.

²⁷ Muhammad Muzaidin et al., *The Role of Technology in Islamic Education to Improve Students' Cognition at Madrasah Tsanawiyah*, 4, no. 2 (2025): 834–46.

addition, this method can help them develop critical, analytical, and reflective thinking skills in understanding and applying religious teachings in everyday life. Therefore, Islamic education integrated with other disciplines can provide significant benefits for learners' personal and spiritual development.

In addition, a critical *thinking-based learning* approach can be developed by integrating the concept of aqliyyah in the rational understanding of Islamic teachings, qolbiyyah in reflection on moral and spiritual values, and jismiyyah in the practical implementation of Islamic teachings through worship activities and social service. In this way, learners not only understand Islam theoretically but can also apply it more meaningfully in everyday life.

Meanwhile, *technology-enhanced learning* emphasizes the use of digital technology in learning, such as learning *management systems (LMS)*, interactive applications, and digital media to increase learner engagement and learning effectiveness. A study conducted by Alwi and Fauzan (2022) found that integrating technology into PAI learning can increase learners' motivation and conceptual understanding, particularly for materials requiring visualization, such as Islamic history and Qur'anic sciences.

Evaluation of learning in PAI also needs to consider an assessment model capable of measuring all aspects of human behavior in life. Such evaluation should not only be based comprehensively on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies as developed by but should²⁸ **also** consider other dimensions in accordance with the theory developed by Sodikin, which states that learning emphasizes not only knowledge (knowing) but also practice (doing), *rational* meaning-making (meaning), *inner* feeling (sensing), and the *formation* of these dimensions as personal identity in life (being). Therefore, PAI learning e²⁹valuation cannot be measured solely through the theory developed by Bunyamin S. Bloom, which elaborates these three domains, but must be developed more comprehensively on the basis of Sodikin's theory. Through this comprehensive evaluation model, education does not merely assess a person through numerical scores but must also provide descriptions of the five dimensions above. In this way, the development of human potentials such as the heart, intellect, and body can be analyzed. This differs from modern approaches that emphasize knowledge alone and are therefore unable to evaluate the deepest dimension within the human person, namely the heart.

At the practical level, an aqliyyah-based *evaluation* model can be applied through written examinations, text analysis, and academic studies that test learners' rational understanding of Islamic teachings. Qolbiyyah-based *evaluation* can be conducted through assessments of attitudes and learners' spiritual reflection, for example by asking them to write about personal experiences in applying Islamic

²⁸ Bunyamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*. (David McKay Company., n.d.).

²⁹ Sodikin, and Sirojuddin, *Islamic Religious Education Model with Knowing-Doing-Meaning- Sensing-Being Approach to Realize Knowledge Integration*.

teachings in everyday life. Meanwhile, *jismiyyah-based* evaluation can take the form of assessing worship practices, da'wah skills, and participation in social activities grounded in Islamic values. Technology can also be utilized in PAI learning evaluation, for example through *the use of learning* analytics in an LMS that provides data on learners' learning patterns, enabling teachers to carry out more targeted interventions. In addition, artificial *intelligence (AI)-based* applications can be used to assess learners' understanding through adaptive quizzes adjusted to their level of comprehension. An empirical study³⁰ by found that the use of competency-based assessment rubrics in PAI learning improves learners' understanding of the material while simultaneously developing character that is more reflective and applicable in everyday life.

Thus, reform of the curriculum structure, learning methods, and evaluation in PAI is essential to create an Islamic education system that is not only relevant to contemporary challenges but also remains firmly grounded in Islamic principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin. The integration of *Al-Farabi's* theory of the sources of knowledge with the *aqliyyah*, *qolbiyyah*, and *jismiyyah approaches*, together with the use of digital technology, will make a major contribution to improving the quality of Islamic education. Therefore, the development of an innovative PAI curriculum needs to continue through collaboration among academics, educational practitioners, and policymakers in order to form learners who are knowledgeable, of noble character, and capable of confronting contemporary challenges.

Implementation of Islamic Pedagogy in Pesantren-Base Higher Education

The implementation of a twenty-first-century Islamic pedagogical model in pesantren-based higher education marks a transformation in Islamic education that accommodates contemporary developments. This model integrates Islamic values with modern technology-based learning methods and a holistic approach. Alongside the development of the digital era, Islamic education no longer focuses solely on the textual transmission of religious knowledge but also develops twenty-first-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

In several pesantren-based higher education institutions, blended learning approaches have been implemented in Islamic Religious Education. This model combines face-to-face learning with digital technology, enabling students to access learning resources flexibly. Jean Piaget's theory of constructivism underpins this approach, in which students construct their own knowledge based on experience and interaction with the digital learning environment.³¹ Studies published in Scopus-indexed journals indicate that blended learning approaches can improve the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education in pesantren-based higher education. The³² integration of

³⁰ Rogers Kaliisa et al., "Have Learning Analytics Dashboards Lived Up to the Hype? A Systematic Review of Impact on Students' Achievement, Motivation, Participation and Attitude," *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3636555.3636884>.

³¹ John Piaget, *The Psychology of the Child* (Basic Books, 1972).

³² Duong Huu Tong et al., "The Effectiveness of Blended Learning on Students' Academic Achievement, Self-Study Skills and Learning Attitudes: A Quasi-Experiment Study in Teaching the Conventions for

technology in pesantren-based learning increases student engagement and the effectiveness of understanding³³ religious concepts. In this context, George Siemens' theory of connectivism is relevant because it emphasizes the importance of networks in³⁴ learning. With access to diverse digital resources, students can develop a broader and deeper understanding of Islamic studies.

Several Islamic educational institutions currently implement integration-interconnection models in their curricula, drawing on Imam Suprayogo's concept of the 'tree of knowledge' (Suprayogo, 2010). This model connects religious and general sciences and avoids the dichotomy of knowledge that has long posed a challenge in Islamic education. From the perspective of John Dewey's theory of holistic education, this approach is relevant because it combines intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects in the learning³⁵ process. The model is also connected to the concept of integrative education in Islam based on Al-Farabi's thought. It is effective in developing a balanced multidisciplinary understanding of worldly and religious knowledge. This indicates that the integration of knowledge in Islamic education is not merely a discourse but also has practical implications for learning.

In addition, learning strategies in pesantren-based higher education also reflect the principles of andragogy introduced by Malcolm Knowles. Students³⁶ are regarded as self-directed learners who possess prior experience and are capable of directing their own learning. This approach is highly important in the context of pesantren education, where students are encouraged to learn actively through discussion, research, and critical reflection. Several studies explain that the andragogical approach in Islamic education is effective in improving students' critical and analytical thinking skills. The implementation³⁷ of this method is also consistent with David Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of direct experience in the learning³⁸ process.

The use of technology in Islamic education enables broader and more flexible learning. Students can access learning resources from various digital platforms, participate in academic discussions online, and interact with the global scholarly community. Thus, the twenty-first-century Islamic pedagogical model not only enriches

Coordinates in the Plane,” *Heliyon* (England) 8, no. 12 (2022): e12657, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e12657>.

³³ Nadiyah afafah Hamid and M. Yunus Abu Bakar, “Transformation of Educational Technology: Impact on Pesantren Education (Case Study at Bustanul Ulum 03 Jember Islamic Boarding School),” *Tadrib: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 11, no. 1 (2025): 115–30, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jx87mc33>.

³⁴ G. Siemens, “Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age,” *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning* 2, no. 1 (2005).

³⁵ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (Macmillan, 1916).

³⁶ Mukhammad Abdullah et al., “Reorientation of the Andragogy Concept and Its Relevance to Higher Education in Indonesia for Answering the Global Era of Information: Critical Review of Malcolm Knowles Perspective,” 2021, <https://doi.org/10.4108/cai.27-10-2020.2304160>.

³⁷ David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson, “Cooperative Learning: Successful Integration of Theory, Research, and Practice,” *The Annual Report of Educational Psychology in Japan* 47, no. 0 (2008), https://doi.org/10.5926/arepj1962.47.0_4.

³⁸ David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Prentice Hall, 1984).

classroom learning processes but also opens access to broader and more diverse educational resources. In implementing the twenty-first-century Islamic pedagogical model, several strategic steps must be undertaken. First, a curriculum based on the integration of religious and general sciences must be developed. This curriculum should be designed by considering a balance among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Second, interactive learning methods, such as project-based learning and case studies, should be developed to improve students' critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Third, the capacity of³⁹ lecturers and educational personnel to utilize technology in learning must be strengthened. Training and workshops related to educational technology should be conducted regularly so that educators are able to adapt modern learning methods without eliminating the essence of Islamic education. Fourth, supporting infrastructure should be provided, including digital laboratories, online libraries, and integrated online learning platforms. Fifth, a more comprehensive evaluation system should be implemented. Assessment should not be based solely on written examination results but also on portfolios, projects, and student participation in social activities grounded in Islamic values. Evaluation oriented toward character development and twenty-first-century skills will ensure that graduates possess more holistic competencies.

Nevertheless, the implementation of this model also faces various challenges, particularly regarding the readiness of educators and the availability of infrastructure. Not all lecturers possess adequate skills to integrate technology into learning. In this context,⁴⁰ Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory can be used to analyze how educational innovations are accepted and adopted by Islamic educational institutions. Systematic efforts are needed to build a culture of innovation among lecturers and students so that this model can be implemented effectively. From a policy perspective, pesantren-based higher education institutions need to formulate policies that support the implementation of this pedagogical model. In the context of institutional theory, educational institutions must be capable of managing change effectively, including curriculum policy, human-resource management, and the development of digital⁴¹ infrastructure.

Through careful planning, the twenty-first-century Islamic pedagogical model can have significant implications for improving the quality of Islamic education in the era of globalization. Through the integration of noble Islamic values supported by rational and logical argumentative strength, Islamic education can become a reference point for global society. With appropriate strategies and recommendations, the twenty-first-century Islamic pedagogical model can provide a strong foundation for pesantren-

³⁹ Allan Collins et al., "Cognitive Apprenticeship: Teaching the Crafts of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Knowing, Learning, and Instruction: Essays in Honor of Robert Glaser," *Knowing, Learning, and Instruction: Essays in Honor of Robert Glaser* 18 (1989).

⁴⁰ Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th Ed.), [B] New York: Free Press, in *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th Ed.). [B] New York: Free Press (2003).

⁴¹ Bernard P. Maloy, "Managing for the Future: The 1990s and Beyond," *Journal of Sport Management* 7, no. 1 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.7.1.78>.

based higher education institutions to produce graduates who are highly competitive, globally minded, and firmly committed to noble Islamic values. In addition, the implementation of this pedagogical model must involve the active participation of various stakeholders, including government, academics, and society. Collaboration among educational institutions, industry, and religious institutions will strengthen an Islamic educational ecosystem that is more adaptive to changing times. Thus, the transformation of Islamic education in the digital era can proceed sustainably and provide broad benefits to the Muslim community.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the reformulation of the curriculum and pedagogy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the twenty-first century needs to be directed toward a holistic-integrative paradigm that integrates intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, and social dimensions within a unified educational process. The findings affirm that the orientation of PAI can no longer rely solely on knowledge transfer and mastery of religious doctrine but must move toward forming learners who are capable of *knowing, doing, meaning, sensing, and being* through the synergy of the *aqliyyah, qolbiyyah, and jismiyyah* dimensions. This framework broadens the meaning of religious competence from mere cognitive mastery toward critical-thinking ability, value internalization, spiritual reflection, practice, and the formation of an authentic Islamic identity. In the context of pesantren-based higher education, this transformation produces a pedagogical model that brings together an Islamic *worldview*, integration-interconnection of knowledge, scientific rationality, and technological innovation without eliminating the dimensions of adab, spirituality, and the moral orientation of Islamic education. Thus, the main contribution of this study lies in affirming that the reformulation of PAI should not be understood merely as a change in course structure or the adoption of technology, but rather as a reconstruction of the educational ecosystem that unifies curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, technology, and character formation within a comprehensive Islamic educational framework. The implementation of this model, however, requires lecturer competence, digital infrastructure, institutional policy, and an authentic assessment system capable of simultaneously measuring the development of knowledge, skills, values, spirituality, and character.

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