

The construction of Islamic education in the contemporary era: an analytical study related to the challenges of modernity of Islamic education

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Abstract

The current modernization has entered the industrial era 4.0 and 5.0. Various paradigms of progress in the fields of science and technology have entered Indonesia massively. Modernization also has a very large influence on the world. The modernization that is currently happening has a variety of impacts on people's lives. Changes in lifestyle, shifting paradigms of life, to socio-cultural influences from abroad, increasingly provide a complex picture of the development of modernization in Indonesia. The purpose of the study is to analyze the challenges of modern Islamic education in the contemporary era. The research method uses a qualitative approach, with the type of library research. The results of the study show that Islamic education must respond to the challenges of modernity that are currently developing by abandoning old scientific paradigms, which only give rise to the decline of Islamic education studies. Having an open attitude to the flow of modernization, conducting cross-reference studies, between scientific fields, will create a space for new formulations in understanding the revitalization of Islamic education. So that the current formulation of Islamic education is able to answer various kinds of problems and challenges that arise from the flow of modernization.

Keywords: Modernization; Integration; Revitalization.

Abstrak

Arus modernisasi telah memasuki era industri 4.0 dan 5.0. Berbagai macam paradigma kemajuan dalam bidang ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi, telah memasuki Indonesia dengan masif. Modernisasi juga memiliki pengaruh yang sangat besar terhadap dunia. Modernisasi yang terjadi saat ini membawa dampak beraneka ragam dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Perubahan gaya hidup, bergesernya paradigma kehidupan, hingga pengaruh sosio-budaya yang berasal dari luar negeri, semakin memberikan gambaran kompleks tentang perkembangan modernisasi di Indonesia. Tujuan penelitian yaitu menganalisis tantangan modernitas pendidikan Islam era kontemporer. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan jenis library research. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pendidikan Islam harus merespon tantangan modernitas yang berkembang saat ini dengan meninggalkan paradigma-paradigma keilmuan lama, yang hanya melahirkan kemunduran pengkajian pendidikan Islam. Memiliki sikap terbuka akan arus modernisasi, melakukan pengkajian-pengkajian cross references, antar bidang keilmuan, akan menciptakan ruang rumusan baru dalam memahami revitalisasi pendidikan Islam. Sehingga

Diserahkan: 07-06-2025 **Disetujui:** 28-06-2025. **Dipublikasikan:** 30-06-2025

Kutipan: Rohman, Moh. F., & Gafarurrozi, M. (2025). The construction of Islamic education in the contemporary era: an analytical study related to the challenges of modernity of Islamic education. Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 14(3), 228–240. <https://doi.org/10.32832/tadibuna.v14i3.18795>

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rumusan pendidikan Islam saat ini, mampu menjawab berbagai macam persoalan dan tantangan yang muncul dari arus modernisasi tersebut.

Kata kunci : Modernisasi; Integrasi; Revitalisasi.

I. Pendahuluan

Modernization is interpreted as a social change that occurs in traditional society, becoming a modern society. Max Weber asserted that modernization is “The 'spirit' of capitalism, which has developed in the Western world, is not just a rationalistic ethic of the pursuit of profit, but is the result of a specific combination of economic factors and cultural forces, including the Protestant ethic, which emphasized hard work, thrift, and the calling, thereby creating a conducive environment for the development of modern capitalism” (Weber, 2012). The essence of Weber's idea is a focus on rationalism, which then dominates society in thinking or acting. The strong meaning of rationalism, according to Weber, is one of the proofs of the modernization process.

According to Rostow, modernization is at least divided into several types of growth in an economic perspective, namely traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take-off, drive to maturity, high mass consumption (Rostow, 1971). These stages, in Rostow's understanding, are the stages that traditional societies go through towards modernity in the economic aspect. The changes in the economy and the paradigm of life owned by traditional society have created a new identity of society in the era of modern life that is more consumptive. Talcott Parson states that modernization is “The process of modernization involves the transformation of a society from a more traditional, static, and less differentiated structure to a more complex, dynamic, and differentiated one, in which the various subsystems become more specialized and integrated” (Parsons, 1949). Parsons emphasized the existence of structural modeling of society in the perspective of the functionalism of his ideas, which can map the structure of social change in society. Parsons' functionalism is interpreted as a system that has a continuity between one element and another. In this regard, Parsons asserts that changes in the context of social structure occur in the evolutionary, not revolutionary, realm (Prasetya et al., 2021). Thus, the changes that occur in society are changes designed by someone who acts as an agent of change.

McClelland, one of the modernist figures, argued that modernization is not only based on economic change and development. But there is also a basic need for modern society to have achievements. “the developing societies, and the people in them, must have the need for achievement, for without it, they cannot achieve the degree of economic progress which is characteristic of modern society” (McClelland, 1961; Gafarurrozi et al., 2024). According to Everett M. Rogers, as quoted by Djazifah (1991), modernization is the process of changing individuals from a traditional way of life to a more complex way of life, towards technological advancement and is a rapid change in way of life. Meanwhile,

Syed Hussein Alatas stated that modernization is a process by which modern scientific knowledge covering all aspects of human life is introduced at all levels, with the ultimate goal of achieving a better and more satisfying life (Djazifah, 1991).

Modernization in the reading of the field of education in general is related to the transformation of the educational paradigm that adjusts to the development of civilization and the advancement of science and technology (Daulay & Dalimunthe, 2022). The changes and influences caused by modernization conditions will not stop at one point, but will continue along with the changes made by the modernization actors. In the world of education, everyone involved in the world of education can become a performer or initiator of modernization.

Currently, the modernization flow has entered the industrial era 4.0 and 5.0. Various paradigms of progress in the field of science and technology have entered Indonesia massively. Modernization also has a huge influence on the world of education (Hasbullah, 2024). The use of advanced technology, up to artificial intelligence, is one of the products of the progress of modernization that has occurred recently.

The emergence of the classification of the next generations is one of the proofs of acceptance of the modernization flow that occurs in society. Cross-generational adjustments require different time responses. For generation X or Y, the response to the modernity of science and technology does not necessarily create an understanding and perception. Generation Y is known as the millennial generation, which is synonymous with the use of instant technology, such as email, Short Message Service (SMS), instant messaging, and social media such as facebook, and twitter. Generation Y is also the generation that grew up in the era of the booming internet (Putra, 2017). Generation Z has similarities with Generation Y, but Generation Z is able to apply all activities at once (multi-tasking) such as: running social media using a mobile phone, browsing using a PC, and listening to music using a headset. Whatever is done is mostly related to cyberspace. Generation Z is also identical in that since childhood they have been familiar with technology and are familiar with advanced gadgets that indirectly affect their personality (Putra, 2017).

The modernization that is happening today has a variety of impacts on people's lives. Lifestyle changes, shifts in life paradigms, and socio-cultural influences from abroad, increasingly provide a complex picture of the development of modernization in Indonesia. The positive impacts of modernization, such as ease of access to information, work flexibility, and high time flexibility, are increasingly creating new lifestyles for various groups. On the other hand, modernization also has a bad impact on society.

Quoting the opinion of Asnawati Matondang (2018) in her research, she emphasized that the negative impacts of modernization include the creation of gaps between communities, environmental pollution, high crime rates, and juvenile delinquency (Matondang, 2018). This is due to a lack of understanding of moral values, especially

religious norms. Of course, a weak understanding of religion will create a personal gap, and cause one to understand secularization.

However, what has become a novelty of research and has not been extensively studied comprehensively is how Islamic Religious Education can strategically form an adaptive but still authentic value construction in the midst of the challenges of the digital era and postmodern society. Contemporary challenges such as cyber moral issues, identity fragmentation, and loss of religious authority in the digital public space have not been answered by the Islamic Religious Education learning model which has tended to be textual and conservative. Therefore, it is necessary to build a new construction of Islamic Religious Education that is able to respond to the complexity of the modern era without losing the essence of Islamic values.

In contextual reading, Islamic Religious Education—according to the nomenclature of the subject—from the perspective of curriculum and teaching, has a great responsibility in overcoming the problems that arise from the modernization process in Indonesia. Increasing moral degradation, and lack of understanding of Islam, give birth to behaviors that are contrary to Islamic law. As a result, there is a deep concern, where something that is considered wrong and not right, tends to be normalized into a truth. Thus, it has the potential to change values, norms, ethics and aesthetics that have been understood collectively, and are based on systematic scientific understanding. Gradually, efforts are needed to bridge the problems of modernity, with Islamic Religious Education, so that the study can adapt to the needs and challenges of the increasingly dynamic times. Therefore, in this paper, the author will discuss the construction of Islamic education in the contemporary era, as an effort to deal with the problems of modernity that are currently occurring.

II. Metode Penelitian

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review. The main focus of this study is to construct the concept of modernity in the context of Islamic education in the contemporary era. In this study, the researcher focuses on using basic analysis based on the theories of Abdolkarim Soroush (2000) *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam*. Oxford University Press, and M. Amin Abdullah (2012) *Islamic Studies in Higher Education; An Integrative Interconnective Approach*. Student Library. Primary data is derived from the works of these scholars, while secondary data is obtained through an understanding of various studies or journals related to the research focus. Research data was collected through documentation techniques, namely by gathering various information from written documents relevant to the research topic. In this process, the researcher conducted a series of activities including identifying and selecting primary and secondary sources, grouping data based on the theme of contemporary Islamic education and the challenges of modernity in Islamic education, and analysing the

content of the data. The data analysis technique used is content analysis, which is a method of analysis aimed at identifying, categorising, and interpreting the content of information in a text in accordance with the theme and focus of the research (Sugiyono, 2019).

III. Hasil dan Pembahasan

A. Modernization of Society in Critical Analysis

In the perspective of Islamic thinkers, and Muslim scholars, modernization is seen as a response of society to the patterns of change, development, and progress of the times. Concerns about the lagging behind Muslims in responding to the times are the main reason for the modernization movement to be carried out. The meaning of modernization is not to reinterpret the texts of the revelation of Allah swt. or the sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), but a transformation of the modernist paradigm of thinking as a response to the development of the civilization of the times and the world (R. Rahman, 2015). The modernization of Islamic education can be understood as a paradigm shift in thinking in the field of Islamic education, and the creation of an effort to improve the old education system into a new system, in order to improve the quality of Islamic education. The term modernization in Islamic education has the same meaning as renewal in Islamic education.

Talcott Parson states that modernization is "The process of modernization involves the transformation of a society from a more traditional, static, and less differentiated structure to a more complex, dynamic, and differentiated one, in which the various subsystems become more specialized and integrated" (Parsons, 1949). McClelland, one of the modernist figures, argued that modernization is not only based on economic change and development. But there is also a basic need for modern society to have achievements. "The developing societies, and the people in them, must have the need for achievement, for without it, they cannot achieve the degree of economic progress which is characteristic of modern society" (McClelland, 1961). In this case, the description of modern society is understood as a society that has undergone a transformation of the traditional paradigm of thinking, static, and lack of acceptance of differences, into an integrated and complex system. The main reference in modernization is the improvement of the global community's economy in response to the advancement of science and technology.

In sociological discourse, modernization is seen as a decadence to the religious diversity of modern society. The more advanced a society is, the more their commitment to religion decreases (Norris, P., & Inglehart, 2011). As explained by Nadhirsyah Hosen in her podcast with Habib Ja'far, modern societies, which have experienced progress, order of life, and high discipline, view religion only as a normativity, which is useful when one is experiencing complex life problems (Nulis, 2024). Nadirsyah Hosen in his statement also added that there is a general assumption that a person who comes to a place of

worship is always identical to the problem being faced. It is very interesting in reading the contextualism of modern Muslim society today, that modernization has a fairly complex risk to the quality and behavior of one's religion.

In the case of postponing piety, for example, modern society has a tendency to reduce the role of religion, and focus on world achievements. Max Webber in his book *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*, for example, asserts that:

"The spirit of capitalism is essentially an economic ethic, a set of values which regard profit as a legitimate end in itself, and the pursuit of wealth as the proper goal of life. In this spirit, individuals are not to regard the enjoyment of worldly pleasures as their chief aim, but rather the methodical pursuit of wealth and the rational organization of life" (Weber, 2012).

The existence of an attempt to postpone one's religious activities creates a paradigm of thinking in modern society that has a tendency towards secularism. Religion provides guidelines for a person to live his daily life, and how to walk and interact with the people around him. However, according to Nadirsyah Hosen, these things are no longer needed if the condition of the society is advanced, orderly, disciplined, and the issue of rights and obligations is no longer a problem that is still debated (Nulis, 2024).

In fact, the debate over the response to modernization is still very diverse among scholars. The emergence of negative impacts, such as a decrease in the standardization of personal morals, a decrease in the ability to think critically due to the instant paradigm brought by technological sophistication, always creates endless worries. In the face of modernization, educational institutions are one of the most important things that must undergo improvement and transformation. Quoting the opinion of Mastuhu (2003) in his book, educational institutions are things that must be comprehensively fixed, as well as rearranging the thinking of the education system to be used as a commander in overseeing the response to the very rapid modernization of civilization (Mastuhu, 2003).

B. Efforts to Remain The Position of Religion and Religious Science

The old assumption that is still believed by the majority of people has led to discursive debates about the relationship between religion and science. Religion starts from the existence of doctrinal beliefs, while science departs from the existence of doubt, which then gives birth to a scientific and comprehensive research methodology to prove a truth (Waston, 2016). However, the independence from religion and science that is increasingly conspicuous results in science no longer humanizing humans. So that many products of science are far from human rights and the essence of humanity. Soroush emphasized that in the understanding of Islamic conservatives, there has not been a relevant and clear interpretive typology between religion as a belief and religion as a science.

“...the missing link in the endeavors of the revivalist and reformers of the past is the distinction between religion and religious knowledge. They failed to recognize religious knowledge as a variety of human knowledge. This neglect caused significant inconsistencies in their judgments and allowed the desired solution to slip through their fingers” (Soroush, 2000).

The limited understanding of the position of religion and religious science as a field of study is a complex problem in the current modernization flow. The inability of the public to understand the originality of religion as a doctrine of belief, and religious science in the realm of scientific studies, creates a gap in understanding that results in a lack of implementation of religious norms. In this case, the debate among contemporary Muslim scholars tries to take a role in mapping the problems that occur, through good revolutionary ideas.

Departing from the concern about these problems, Abdolkarim Soroush tried to come up with an idea about the relationship between religion and religious science. In an epistemological sense, Abdolkarim Soroush has touched on the authenticity and sustainability of religious arguments in the face of modern and traditional rationalism (Soroush, 2000). In addition, he also opposes traditional religious understandings that are indoctrinated in religious idealism, either in the form of clerical isolationism, or intellectual populism (Hamdie & Arief, 2022). Religion is not a set of beliefs and duties that God introduced to the Prophet and his followers. According to Soroush, the most fundamental mistake that occurs in the Islamic world is that Muslims are backward because they have neglected the role of reason in managing life, and the only way to prosper and save Islamic civilization is to inject independent reasons, unspecified reasons, not jurisprudential reasons.

Soroush asserts that only religion will not change while religious understanding, religious interpretation, and religious science will change with time. It is the nature of this "change" that is inevitable by the understanding and interpretation of religion that Soroush directs to prevent the birth of the claim of authority of truth among existing religious understandings and interpretations. Only religion has the authority of absolute truth, whereas the understanding and interpretation of religion does not have absolute and absolute truth (Badarussyamsi, 2016). This means that religious doctrine remains authoritative, while the variety of interpretations and understandings, which contribute to the use of human reason, are constantly evolving and changing in line with the progress and civilization of mankind.

Dialogue on religion and religious knowledge is an interpretation of religious doctrine in human change and civilization. The dialogue between religious scholars—be they *mufasssir* in the fields of jurisprudence, theology, or researchers in other fields—and the approaches used such as history, philosophy, science, or other humanities, are the

product of the study of religious knowledge, not the study of religion dogmatically (Setyawan, 2017).

Abdolkarim Soroush in interpreting religion and religious science uses the basis of hermeneutics of freedom in interpreting religious teachings and understanding religious knowledge. Freedom is the basis for finding the truth. People who fear freedom are those who love weak ideas, while lovers of truth love freedom very much. Freedom in this understanding is closely related to reason (Setyawan, 2017). Reason is a source of inspiration and a container in seeking truth. The use of reason as a critical medium in seeking truth will find a complicated space.

Soroush then provides a division of religion and religious understanding, through interpretation in the realm of epistemology, to affirm the position of religion as a source of reference for scientific interpretation, and religious science as the product of such interpretation. Religious texts are seen as having a strong authority in providing legal legitimacy to the problems of religious communities (Setyawan, 2017). Thus, the power of authority needs to be interpreted through a structuralist and systematic epistemological interpretation pattern.

C. Challenges of Implementing Contemporary Islamic Education

Islamic education in the current era of modernization faces complex challenges. Departing from the explanation at the beginning of this paper, the deconstruction of the understanding and application of religion, the decline in the moral standards of society, and the creation of postponing piety, are problems that must be solved in formulating the vision, mission, goals, and achievements of Islamic Education, especially in Indonesia.

There are two significant axes of difference, which occur in the field of Islamic education in Indonesia, for example in the case of discontinuity between the study of religion held by religious authorities, such as kyai, ulama, ustadz, and others, and the study of the scientific field held by the group of scientists. On the other hand, scholars are not interested in studying nature and human life objectively (Masyitoh, 2020). The pattern of modernity must create a space for open, cross-disciplinary, and cross-reference discussions in order to formulate a new formula as a strategy to deal with problems that arise due to the current of modernization.

On the other hand, the understanding of scientific dichotomy has always been a debate among academics. The very rapid pattern of changing times and civilizations demands a transformation of the paradigm of relevant religious studies, so that Islamic studies can adapt to the development and change of world science (Abdullah, 2012). Muslims must provide a quick response, overcome various kinds of modernization problems with responsiveness and straightforwardness. So that there is no gap in interpretation that results in a decrease in the standard of living of the community's religion, such as cases of normalization of errors, or others.

Thus, in contemporary reading, the author refers to the theory initiated by M. Amin Abdullah, a great Indonesian philosopher who has formulated the concept of integration, and interconnection across disciplines, to open up new discourses in formulating responses to the modernization of societal civilization. Islamic education scholars must have an open attitude to the opportunity for cross-disciplinary studies. Abandoning the pattern of monodisciplinary understanding, which risks creating academic egoism, and blind fanaticism towards new breakthroughs in the study of Islamic education.



Figure 1. Integration-Interconnection Spider Web Scheme

In the spider web scheme developed by Prof. Amin Abdullah above, it is known that the main source of the concept of integration and interconnection is the Quran and Sunnah. Then it has an elaboration of the texts contained in the main source, into various kinds of science that still exist and are studied by people in the world today. The elaboration has a pattern of linkages between one scientific group and another. Therefore, there is no contradiction if each scientific authority is able to understand the concept of integration well.

The line that is broken in the scheme also confirms that there is a principle of mutual openness between one scientific group and another (Atika Yulanda, 2019) Openness related to scientific studies, methodologies, and epistemology. Thus, it can create a scientific development that is integrative and interconnective, while still paying attention to the Quran and Sunnah as the main source of reference for science. On the other hand, if there is a conflict between scientific disciplines, then an alternative solution that can be taken is to return the basis of thought and understanding to the Quran and Sunnah. So that the understanding and development of science remains in harmony with the guidelines of Islamic dogmatism that is believed.

In this sense, Islamic education must pay attention to scientific disciplines from other fields that can be adopted to develop the study of Islamic education. The concept of integration-interconnection can be the basic foundation for Islamic education in responding to the modernization of civilization. Because, there are so many complex

problems that can be solved in only one discipline—scientific mono discipline—alone. So that the study of Islamic education can develop openly, by conducting dialogues with other scientific disciplines.

Referring to Fazlur Rahman's model of Islamic education reform, the author tries to contextualize Islamic education strategies in the face of the modernization of civilization, by revitalizing or revitalizing elements of Islamic education.

1. Revitalization of Islamic Education Goals

According to Fazlur Rahman, the education strategy in the Islamic world today is not really directed towards positive goals, but rather tends to be defensive. That is to save the minds of Muslims from pollution or damage caused by the impact of Western ideas that come through various disciplines, especially ideas that will blow up the standards of Islamic morality (F. Rahman, 1984). As a result, there are those who reject everything that is Western in nature, and some even forbid the takeover of knowledge and technology. So that if this condition continues, it will be able to cause Muslims not to rise from the setback in the field of education.

There are several things that can be done to revitalize the goals of Islamic education, so that the direction of the goals of Islamic education is more modern and ready to face the increasingly rapid changing currents of the times. First, revitalizing the purpose of education by adopting modern educational goals that are oriented towards adjusting to the development of the times, while still referring to the authority of the Quran and Hadith as strengthening the legitimacy of Islamic education. These adjustments can create discussion spaces, to create a new breakthrough in the field of Islamic education studies.

Second, abandoning the dichotomous-monodisciplinary scientific paradigm, which is currently outdated. Because the current study in the contemporary era is active-open. Thus, the meaning of the study of the goals of Islamic education must also adopt this development pattern. Opening spaces for dialogue with various sciences, conducting interpretation formulations with various cross-disciplinary scientific figures to obtain new concepts and formulations in formulating the goals of Islamic education.

Third, conduct a comprehensive historical and systematic study of Islamic education on the development of Islamic disciplines such as theology, ethics, hadith, social sciences, and philosophy by adhering to the Qur'an as an assessor. Muslims can be open to western scientific disciplines, by not being blind fanatics to Eastern scientific understanding. These two main concepts, when able to be comprehensively summarized, give birth to a profound scholarly epistemology.

2. Strengthening Educators' Human Resources Through the Application of Cross Reference Learning

Learning is the most important thing in the education system. The teacher, as the main figure in the process, holds full control over the course of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. So, teachers can also improvise various kinds of learning in the classroom. In addition, teachers must also have an open attitude. Using cross-scientific learning references, it is common to use the cross references method, because this method, in addition to providing new understanding to students, can also provide other points of view to teachers if there are learning problems or materials that need explanation. Abandoning monodisciplinary understanding, and blind fanaticism towards science in its field.

An educator must also be accustomed to Activating educators to produce Islamic works creatively and with a purpose. In addition to writing works on history, philosophy, and art, he must also concentrate it back on Islamic thought. Therefore, educators must be serious in conducting research and trying to publish these works (Tanjung, H. B., & Saadiyah, 2021).

3. Improving the Quality of Students Through Understanding Spirituality and Social Norms

The unsuccessful way out of this dichotomy has resulted in the low intellectual quality of students and the emergence of broken personalities. This condition can ultimately cause double morality from Muslims. For example, a Muslim who is righteous and obedient in worship, at the same time can become an extortionist, corruptor, or commit other despicable acts. In addition, there are also the phenomena of postponing piety, where the simple concept is to carry out the behavior of delaying faith. Postponing worship, postponing activities related to religious activities.

Even more worrying, the dichotomy of the education system results in the non-birth of students who have a deep spiritual and intellectual commitment to Islam from Islamic educational institutions (Tanjung, H. B., & Saadiyah, 2021). In the sense that the values of Islamic teachings formed in students have not been formed and applied in the students. So that things often happen that are deviant to their students. There are several solutions that can be offered to overcome the problems of the current condition of students. First, conduct a comprehensive introduction related to the sources of Islamic jurisprudence, both the Quran and Hadith comprehensively. Introduce the study of history, dogmatic, interpretation or other scientific fields related to the legitimacy of the Quran and Hadith. Thus, students will be more familiar with the two sources of Islamic law, and at least get used to interacting with them.

Second, providing material on Islamic disciplines historically, critically and holistically. The disciplines of Islamic sciences include: theology, ethical law, social

sciences and philosophy. Opening opportunities for cross-reference, and multidisciplinary studies from an early age. So that it is able to open new gaps of understanding, and provide teaching of critical thinking construction, and at the same time provide understanding to students, how to behave to be a good religious person.

IV. Conclusion

Modernization is not always understood in the frame of a negative perspective only. Rather, the understanding of modernization must refer to an open-thinking paradigm, which is able to adopt and accept the existence of new scientific fields that develop. The monodisciplinary paradigm in the field of Islamic education only gives birth to the regression of Muslims in responding to modernization. Therefore, conducting studies between sciences, creating spaces for dialogue between disciplines, and being open to the potential for interpretation from other sciences, can form the contextualism of Islamic education in the current modern era. Thus, the purpose of Islamic education can accommodate the needs of society to respond to the progress and development of modern times. The main contribution of this research lies in strengthening the paradigm of Islamic education that is dialogical and solutive to the changing times. However, the limitations of this study lie in the lack of empirical data and the focus of analysis that is still normative-conceptual. The implications of these findings encourage the need to develop more relevant and adaptive PAI curricula and learning strategies. Therefore, further research is recommended to empirically examine and develop an integrative curriculum design based on technology and transformative Islamic values.

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