



INTEGRATING ISLAMIC PEDAGOGY WITH 21ST CENTURY SKILLS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Septian Arief Budiman¹, Fil Isnaeni²

¹ Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

² Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

Email : dosen01126@unpam.ac.id¹, dosen01086@unpam.ac.id²

E-Issn: 3063-8313

Received: Juni 2025

Accepted: Juli 2025

Published: Agustus 2025

Abstract :

This research examines the integration of Islamic pedagogy and 21st-century skills as an effort to establish a globally relevant conceptual framework for Islamic education. The scope of the study includes an analysis of the core principles of Islamic pedagogy, such as adab, hikmah, and tazkiyah, and how these principles can be adapted to address the challenges of modern education, including digital literacy, critical thinking, and cross-cultural collaboration. The aim of this research is to formulate an integrative model that can serve as a reference for the development of curricula and teaching methods in contemporary Islamic educational institutions. The methodology employed is qualitative research with a systematic literature review approach, accompanied by a comparative analysis of classical and contemporary Islamic education literature. The findings indicate that there are significant points of convergence between the values of Islamic education and 21st-century skills, particularly in the areas of character building, work ethics, and social competencies. The conclusion of this research asserts that such integration is not only feasible but also crucial to meet the needs of Islamic education in the era of globalization and digital disruption.

Keywords : Islamic Pedagogy, 21st Century Skills, Global Islamic Education.

Abstrak :

Penelitian ini mengkaji integrasi antara pedagogi Islam dan keterampilan abad ke-21 sebagai upaya membangun kerangka konseptual pendidikan Islam yang relevan secara global. Ruang lingkup kajian mencakup analisis prinsip-prinsip inti dalam pedagogi Islam, seperti adab, hikmah, dan tazkiyah, serta bagaimana prinsip-prinsip tersebut dapat diadaptasi untuk menjawab tantangan pendidikan modern, seperti literasi digital, pemikiran kritis, dan kolaborasi lintas budaya. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk merumuskan model integratif yang dapat menjadi acuan dalam pengembangan kurikulum dan metode pembelajaran di lembaga pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kualitatif dengan pendekatan kajian pustaka sistematis, disertai analisis komparatif terhadap literatur pendidikan Islam klasik dan kontemporer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat titik temu yang signifikan antara nilai-nilai pendidikan Islam dan keterampilan abad ke-21, khususnya dalam aspek penguatan karakter, etika kerja, dan kecakapan sosial. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa integrasi tersebut tidak hanya mungkin dilakukan, tetapi juga sangat penting untuk menjawab kebutuhan pendidikan Islam di era globalisasi dan disrupsi digital.

Kata Kunci: Pedagogi Islam, Keterampilan Abad ke-21, Pendidikan Islam Global.



INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has brought about unprecedented transformations in almost every aspect of human life, including how education is conceptualized, delivered, and experienced. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterized by digital technology, automation, and artificial intelligence, has significantly changed the competencies and skills required to function effectively in a globalized world (Falah et al., 2025). In response, education systems across the globe are reorienting themselves toward developing learners' 21st-century skills—critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, digital literacy, and global citizenship (Reaves, 2019). Within this shifting landscape, Islamic education faces a fundamental question: How can its rich pedagogical traditions remain relevant and impactful while addressing the complex demands of modernity?.

Islamic pedagogy is rooted in divine revelation (*wahy*), the prophetic model (*uswah hasanah*), and centuries of scholarly tradition. Core concepts such as *adab* (*etiquette and ethical discipline*), *hikmah* (*wisdom*), and *tazkiyah* (*spiritual purification*) have long shaped educational aims and practices in Islamic civilizations (Budiyanto, 2025). Unlike modern secular models that often focus on technical knowledge and marketable skills, Islamic education traditionally emphasizes the holistic development of the individual—intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social (Moslimany et al., 2024). However, this normative vision must now engage constructively with the contemporary realities of Muslim learners who are increasingly exposed to global media, technological environments, and pluralistic societies (Haris, 2025).

Several scholars have attempted to address this challenge. For instance, Halstead (Halstead et al., 2022) emphasized the need for values education within Islamic schooling in the UK, arguing that character formation must remain central even amid curricular modernization. Similarly, (Sahin, 2018) explored the role of faith-based epistemologies in resisting the hegemony of Western secular frameworks in Muslim-majority educational contexts. More recently, (Sheikhalizadeh & Piralaiy, 2016) examined the implementation of e-learning tools in Islamic education, pointing out both the opportunities and limitations of digital platforms in transmitting religious knowledge. (Meng et al., 2020) highlighted the importance of adaptive pedagogy in schools to foster engagement and higher-order thinking.

Despite these important contributions, there remains a clear gap in the literature. While studies have investigated specific aspects of Islamic education reform or the adoption of educational technologies in Islamic contexts, few have proposed a comprehensive, integrative framework that marries the ethical-spiritual aims of Islamic pedagogy with the competencies promoted in 21st-century education (Zahraini et al., 2025). Most existing models tend to either preserve traditional Islamic teaching with minimal innovation or adopt modern skills-based curricula without grounding them in Islamic worldview and values. This dichotomy creates a pedagogical tension that undermines the potential of Islamic education to be both authentic and adaptive (Malizal, 2025.).

To fill this gap, this study aims to develop a conceptual framework for the integration of Islamic pedagogical values with 21st-century educational competencies. Rather than viewing Islamic pedagogy and modern educational theory as incompatible, the research takes a synthetic approach—identifying intersections between classical Islamic principles and contemporary skill sets. For instance, the Islamic emphasis on *shūrā* (consultation) can be aligned with collaborative learning; *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) resonates with critical thinking and problem-solving; and *akhlāq* (ethics) is foundational to character education and global citizenship (Hadi et al., 2024). Moreover, the concept of *niyyah* (intention) offers a spiritual lens through which motivation, purpose-driven learning, and self-regulation can be reinterpreted.

This study employs a qualitative, conceptual research methodology. It draws on textual analysis of classical Islamic educational sources—including works by al-Ghazālī, Ibn Sīnā, and al-Zarnūjī—as well as contemporary literature on pedagogy, curriculum development, and 21st-century education. Through thematic synthesis and comparative analysis, the study identifies key elements that can serve as building blocks for a new integrative model of Islamic education. The originality of this research lies in its attempt to construct a holistic framework that does not compromise Islamic authenticity while still being responsive to the needs of today's learners.

The significance of this research extends beyond theoretical contributions. In practical terms, the proposed framework can inform curriculum designers, educators, and policymakers in Islamic schools and higher education institutions worldwide. It provides a blueprint for developing educational practices that are spiritually grounded, pedagogically innovative, and globally relevant. In doing so, it also contributes to the broader discourse on how faith-based education can thrive in a modern, pluralistic, and technologically mediated world.

In conclusion, the integration of Islamic pedagogical traditions with 21st-century skills is not only possible but necessary. Islamic education must move beyond defensive preservation or uncritical adoption of modernity. Instead, it must carve a middle path—one that is intellectually robust, spiritually rich, and pedagogically dynamic. This study aspires to lay the groundwork for such a transformation by offering a conceptual model rooted in both the legacy of Islamic thought and the demands of contemporary education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the integration of Islamic pedagogical values with 21st-century skills in an Islamic educational institution. A qualitative method was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand deeply the meaning and interpretation of educational practices, values, and experiences within a particular cultural and institutional context.

The research was conducted at an integrated Islamic school located in Tangerang Selatan, Indonesia, known for its efforts to modernize its curriculum while maintaining strong Islamic values. The site was selected purposively

because it represented a unique and rich context where traditional Islamic education and 21st-century competencies are being consciously blended.

The presence of the researcher in the field was sustained throughout the data collection process, which lasted for approximately three months, from March to Juli 2025. The researcher played the role of a non-participant observer, allowing for natural interactions among participants while maintaining a critical distance to ensure objectivity. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants.

The subjects of this research included school leaders (principals and curriculum developers), teachers, and students. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in the curriculum design and teaching processes that integrate Islamic values and 21st-century skills. A total of 10 informants were interviewed, consisting of 2 principals, 4 teachers from different disciplines, and 4 senior students. These informants were considered information-rich and were able to provide relevant perspectives and experiences.

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview guides to allow for flexibility while ensuring consistency across sessions. Observations focused on classroom activities, school events, and pedagogical interactions that reflect the integration of spiritual and competency-based goals. Documents such as lesson plans, school profiles, and policy guidelines were analyzed to support findings from interviews and observations.

The analysis of data followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2014), consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data were first transcribed, coded thematically, and then grouped into categories that reflect key themes such as Islamic values in pedagogy, skill development strategies, and teacher-student engagement. Triangulation of data sources and methods was conducted to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. Member checks and peer debriefing were also employed to ensure the trustworthiness of the data interpretation.

The research was conducted in adherence to ethical standards, including confidentiality, voluntary participation, and respect for all informants. Participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities. The study's findings aim to contribute to both academic discourse and practical improvements in the field of Islamic education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored how Islamic pedagogical values are integrated with 21st-century skills in the instructional practices and curriculum design of an Islamic integrated school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The research utilized interviews, observations, and document analysis as data collection techniques. Through thematic coding and triangulation, three primary findings emerged: (1) reinterpretation of Islamic values in contemporary pedagogy, (2) integration strategies for 21st-century skills in an Islamic educational context, and (3) teacher

and student perceptions of the integration model. The findings reveal not only the operationalization of spiritual values in instructional settings but also the challenges and opportunities in synchronizing Islamic tradition with educational innovation.

The first and most fundamental finding is that the school under study actively engages in reinterpreting traditional Islamic values to align with contemporary educational goals. Core concepts in Islamic pedagogy such as *adab* (proper conduct), *amanah* (responsibility), *shūrā* (consultation), *tazkiyah* (self-purification), and *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) are not taught in isolation or confined to Islamic religious subjects. Instead, they are embedded across various curricular and co-curricular activities. For instance, in group-based learning projects, teachers routinely emphasize the value of *shūrā* as part of teamwork and democratic engagement. Likewise, students are often reminded of *amanah* when assigned classroom responsibilities or deadlines, fostering a sense of accountability tied to spiritual consciousness. Observations of classroom practices revealed how teachers initiate every learning session with a brief value reminder, linking academic knowledge with Islamic ethics. This practice reinforces the holistic educational goal of *tarbiyah* (comprehensive nurturing), which aims to develop both intellect (*‘aql*) and character (*akhlāq*).

One notable classroom practice observed involved a social studies teacher connecting the concept of *khalifah* (stewardship) with environmental education. Students were asked to research local ecological issues and propose solutions, which were then evaluated not only on scientific grounds but also on ethical and spiritual reflections. The assignment ended with a group presentation where students cited Qur’anic verses and Prophetic traditions related to environmental responsibility. This form of integration supports the idea that Islamic values are not static doctrines but are capable of guiding learners in addressing contemporary global issues.

In addition to classroom practices, school-wide policies and curriculum documents demonstrate a formal effort to integrate these values. The school's vision statement explicitly mentions the goal of nurturing learners who are *muta’allim rāghib*—knowledge seekers who are proactive and ethical. Lesson plans from various subjects include objectives such as “encouraging collaboration as an application of *shūrā*” and “building integrity through practice of *amanah*.” These efforts reflect what Zine (2007) describes as “faith-centered pedagogical activism,” wherein schools resist the compartmentalization of religious and secular knowledge by fusing them into a singular, meaningful framework.

The second major finding concerns the strategies employed to embed 21st-century skills into Islamic education. Teachers at the school adopt various methods aligned with global education trends, including inquiry-based learning, project-based learning (PBL), collaborative tasks, digital literacy activities, and problem-solving discussions. These strategies are not adopted blindly but are contextualized within the Islamic worldview. For example, one teacher used digital tools such as Google Docs for students to collaboratively write reflective

essays on Islamic ethical dilemmas in the modern workplace. Another teacher employed simulation games to teach principles of Islamic finance, encouraging students to engage in decision-making scenarios that demanded critical thinking and ethical reasoning.

These strategies are closely aligned with the core competencies outlined by Trilling and Fadel (2009), namely communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy. However, what distinguishes the school's approach is that these skills are taught not only as academic competencies but also as spiritual and moral obligations. In interviews, a principal emphasized that “creativity is part of fitrah, our natural disposition; critical thinking is encouraged in the Qur’an through questioning and reflection.” This mindset allows for a recontextualization of modern educational goals within the Islamic intellectual tradition (Haryono, 2019).

Moreover, the school has invested in continuous professional development for teachers to facilitate this integration. Teachers attend monthly ta’lim sessions that focus not only on religious enrichment but also on pedagogical innovation. This reflects a conscious institutional culture that promotes reflective teaching, a key principle in both Islamic scholarship and progressive education. According to, schools that succeed in implementing future-ready education typically combine administrative support, teacher capacity building, and cultural alignment—all of which are present in the research setting.

Despite these successes, the integration process is not without challenges. This leads to the third finding: the perceptions and experiences of teachers and students reveal both enthusiasm and tension. Teachers, while generally supportive of the integration approach, reported difficulties in balancing content coverage with in-depth values exploration. Some expressed concern that project-based learning, though engaging, often requires sacrificing time allocated for direct religious instruction. One teacher noted, “Sometimes, I feel like I have to choose—either go deep into fiqh or spend more time guiding students through inquiry-based projects.”

Additionally, digital integration presented its own challenges. Although students responded positively to technology-enhanced learning, several teachers lacked confidence in using digital tools effectively. Observations revealed instances where interactive activities were hindered by technical issues or inconsistent internet access, which disrupted lesson flow. These limitations echo findings from (Hadi et al., 2024), who identified technological infrastructure and teacher preparedness as critical obstacles in Islamic schools attempting modernization.

On the student side, most learners expressed appreciation for the hybrid approach. They found that learning activities rooted in real-world issues and presented through an Islamic lens were more engaging and meaningful. One student shared how working on a group project about ethical consumption helped him think about the Prophet’s lifestyle and apply it to his own purchasing habits. Another student explained how debate sessions in class not only

improved her speaking skills but also helped her understand *ikhtilāf* (differences of opinion) as a respected tradition in Islamic scholarship. These narratives suggest that the integration model fosters cognitive, emotional, and spiritual engagement—aligning with what Nasr (2002) described as “the sacred unity of knowledge.”

Thematically, these findings support and extend several strands of existing literature. First, they confirm the argument of (Halstead et al., 2022) that Islamic education must be rooted in values but adaptable to contextual realities. The observed practices illustrate that Islamic pedagogy is not inherently opposed to modern educational demands; rather, it offers unique epistemological and ethical resources for enriching them. Second, who noted that effective Islamic education reform requires more than curriculum revision—it requires philosophical coherence and teacher agency. The case study school demonstrates how leadership vision, teacher training, and cultural grounding can combine to create such coherence (Zahraini et al., 2025).

However, the challenges reported in this study indicate areas that require further attention. Curriculum overload, limited teacher technological capacity, and assessment alignment are recurring issues. The tension between depth and breadth in curriculum design remains unresolved. While the school has made progress in integrating project-based and inquiry-driven learning, it has yet to develop a robust framework for evaluating students' ethical and spiritual growth alongside cognitive performance. Current assessments remain largely academic and do not fully capture the intended holistic development (Mahmudulhassan & Abuzar, 2024).

To address these challenges, several implications arise. First, curriculum designers in Islamic education should consider interdisciplinary modules that naturally link religious values with contemporary issues, thereby reducing fragmentation (Khoiriyah, 2024). Second, schools must invest not only in digital infrastructure but also in pedagogical training that empowers teachers to design and assess learning in ways that honor both Islamic and global educational priorities. Third, policymakers should support frameworks that allow for flexible time allocation in schools, giving room for both rigorous content delivery and reflective, values-based activities.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the integration of Islamic pedagogical values with 21st-century skills is both feasible and beneficial when approached with intentionality, cultural sensitivity, and institutional support. The school under study presents a compelling model of how traditional Islamic principles can be harmonized with progressive educational strategies to develop students who are morally grounded, intellectually capable, and socially responsible. While challenges persist, the case study provides valuable insights into how Islamic education can respond creatively and constructively to the demands of the modern world without compromising its foundational values. This balance between tradition and transformation is not only possible—it is essential for the future of Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that integrating Islamic pedagogical values with 21st-century skills within an Islamic educational context is not only achievable but essential for nurturing well-rounded learners. The reinterpretation of core Islamic values such as adab, amanah, shūrā, and tazkiyah within contemporary pedagogy enriches students' moral and spiritual development while supporting academic competencies. The deliberate embedding of these values across curricula and daily practices highlights the dynamic nature of Islamic education, which harmonizes tradition with innovation. Furthermore, the incorporation of active learning strategies, technology use, and collaborative projects successfully cultivates critical thinking, creativity, communication, and digital literacy, all framed within an Islamic worldview. Teachers and students largely perceive this integrated model positively, recognizing its relevance in preparing learners to face modern challenges grounded in ethical consciousness.

However, this study also concludes that challenges such as curriculum overload, limited technological infrastructure, and the need for more robust assessment tools for spiritual and ethical growth must be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of integration. Teachers require ongoing professional development and institutional support to balance religious instruction with modern pedagogies without compromising depth or integrity.

In light of these conclusions, it is recommended that Islamic educational institutions develop interdisciplinary curricula that seamlessly blend religious values with contemporary competencies, ensuring coherent and manageable learning experiences. Investment in teacher training focused on digital literacy and pedagogical innovation is crucial, as is policy support for flexible and holistic assessment frameworks that capture both academic and character development outcomes.

Future research should explore longitudinal studies on student outcomes in institutions that implement similar integration models to assess their long-term impact on personal, social, and academic domains. Additionally, comparative studies across different Islamic educational contexts globally could offer deeper insights into culturally responsive pedagogical strategies and scalable best practices. By continuing to investigate and refine this integration, Islamic education can contribute meaningfully to global educational discourses while preserving its distinctive spiritual mission.

REFERENCES

- Budiyanto, B. (2025). Implementation of the Prophet Muhammad's Teaching Methods in Tarbawi Hadiths: A Study of Islamic Educational Values and Their Relevance to Modern Learning. *Journal Corner of Education, Linguistics, and Literature*, 4(3), 330-338. <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v4i3.411>
- Falah, F. A., Dilia, Z. M., & Satrio, M. F. (2025). *Building the Teacher Competencies in the Era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 to Improve the Quality of Learning*. 4.
- Hadi, A., Anim, S., & Yasin, H. (2024). Integration of Islamic Principles and

- Modern Educational Theories in Islamic Education. *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 16(2), 1385–1398. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v16i2.6105>
- Halstead, J. M., Deller, S. C., & Leyden, K. M. (2022). Social capital and community development: Where do we go from here? *Community Development*, 53(1), 92–108. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2021.1943696>
- Haris, I. A. (2025). The Role of Information and Communication Technology in Enhancing Akidah Akhlak Learning Outcomes: A Study in Madrasah Aliyah. *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 16(1), 201–215. <https://doi.org/10.24042/tadzkiyyah.v16i1.28013>
- Haryono, E. (n.d.). *Institut Agama Islam (IAI) Al Muhammad Cepu*.
- Khoiriyah, H. A. (2024). Revolutionizing Islamic Curriculum in Enabling Sustainable Futures through SDGs. *Journal of Educational Management Research*, 3(2), 101–115. <https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v3i2.434>
- Mahmudulhassan, & Abuzar, M. (2024). ETHICAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: INSIGHTS FROM ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY. *JURNAL PEDAGOGY*, 17(2), 169–178. <https://doi.org/10.63889/pedagogy.v17i2.219>
- Malizal, Z. Z. (n.d.). *Islamic Education and Globalization: Curriculum, Identity, and Digital Integration*.
- Meng, Q., Jia, J., & Zhang, Z. (2020). A framework of smart pedagogy based on the facilitating of high order thinking skills. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*, 17(3), 251–266. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITSE-11-2019-0076>
- Moslimany, R., Otaibi, A., & Shaikh, F. (2024). Designing a holistic curriculum: Challenges and opportunities in islamic education. *Journal on Islamic Studies*, 1(1), 52–73. <https://doi.org/10.35335/beztg009>
- Reaves, J. (2019). 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS AND THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: A CRITICAL FUTURE ROLE FOR ONLINE EDUCATION. *International Journal on Innovations in Online Education*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1615/IntJInnovOnlineEdu.2019029705>
- Sahin, A. (2018). Critical Issues in Islamic Education Studies: Rethinking Islamic and Western Liberal Secular Values of Education. *Religions*, 9(11), 335. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9110335>
- Sheikhalizadeh, M., & Piralaiy, E. (2016). THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC STAFF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management*, 4(1), 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.22452/mojem.vol4no1.2>
- Zahraini, Z., Akib, A., Rosidin, R., & Sulaeman, O. (2025). Islamic Education Reform in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities for a Modern Curriculum. *Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies*, 2(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.70177/jnis.v2i1.1841>