



Modernization of the Islamic Boarding School Curriculum at the Tahfidzul Qur'an Dormitory

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Artikel penelitian ini membahas tentang menganalisis implementasi kurikulum Pesantren di Asrama Tahfidzul Qur'an MAN Kota Surabaya yang memadukan nilai-nilai tradisi kepesantrenan dengan tuntutan modernisasi pendidikan. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada bagaimana kurikulum dirancang, diterapkan, serta dampaknya terhadap karakter dan kompetensi religius peserta didik. Adapun rumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini meliputi: bagaimana bentuk integrasi kurikulum pesantren berbasis tradisi dan modernisasi di Asrama Tahfidzul Qur'an MAN Kota Surabaya; bagaimana strategi pembelajaran pesantren diterapkan dalam sistem asrama; dan bagaimana pengaruh kurikulum tersebut dalam membentuk karakter religius dan kompetensi spiritual peserta didik. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif studi kasus dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum pesantren di Asrama Tahfidzul Qur'an MAN Kota Surabaya tidak hanya mempertahankan tradisi pesantren seperti sorogan, bandongan, dan pembiasaan ibadah, namun juga mengintegrasikan model pembelajaran modern berbasis teknologi, proyek, dan penguatan literasi moderasi beragama. Integrasi dua pendekatan tersebut terbukti mampu meningkatkan kedisiplinan, kecakapan ibadah, kemampuan literasi keagamaan, serta sikap toleransi peserta didik. Dengan demikian, kurikulum yang dikembangkan menjadi pola baru pendidikan Islam di sekolah negeri yang memiliki corak pesantren yang relevan dengan kebutuhan generasi modern tanpa meninggalkan akar tradisi keilmuan Islam.

Abstact

This research article discusses analyzing the implementation of the Islamic Boarding School curriculum at the Tahfidzul Qur'an Dormitory of MAN Surabaya City which combines the traditional values of the Islamic boarding school with the demands of educational modernization. The focus of the research is directed at how the curriculum is designed, implemented, and its impact on the religious character and competence of students. The formulation of the problem in this study includes: how to integrate the tradition-based pesantren curriculum and modernization in the Tahfidzul Qur'an Dormitory of MAN Surabaya City; how pesantren learning strategies are applied in the dormitory system; and how the influence of the curriculum in shaping the religious character and spiritual competence of students. The research uses a qualitative case study method with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that the pesantren curriculum at the Tahfidzul Qur'an Dormitory of MAN Surabaya City not only maintains pesantren traditions such as sorogan, bandongan, and worship habits, but also integrates modern technology-based learning models, projects, and strengthening religious moderation

literacy. The integration of these two approaches has been proven to be able to improve discipline, worship skills, religious literacy skills, and tolerance attitudes of students. Thus, the curriculum developed becomes a new pattern of Islamic education in public schools that has a pesantren style that is relevant to the needs of the modern generation without leaving the roots of Islamic scientific traditions.

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of 21st-century education has shifted the curriculum's orientation from merely transmitting knowledge to developing multidimensional competencies. The 21st-century skills framework developed by the Partnership for 21st-Century Skills emphasizes the integration of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills with technological literacy and character. (Ignjatović, 2020) This perspective was expanded by the OECD through Education 2030, which positions knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values as a single, transformative competency. Thus, 21st-century education theoretically demands the development and evaluation of holistic learning, encompassing cognitive, affective, and performative dimensions in an integrated manner (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2019).

In the context of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), curriculum modernization is often understood as the integration of general subjects, strengthening digital literacy, and adapting to national education standards. However, the fundamental issue lies not merely in the adoption of the curriculum structure, but rather in how these changes are interpreted, implemented, and experienced in everyday learning practices. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) have a distinctive pedagogical tradition that emphasizes the internalization of values, the formation of adab (ethical values), and the authoritative-ethical relationship between kyai (Islamic boarding school) and students (santri). When a global competency framework is adopted, critical questions arise: does this modernization truly result in the development of holistic competencies, or does it simply simplify educational success to formal cognitive indicators?

Numerous studies have examined the modernization of Islamic boarding schools from the perspective of policy and institutional management. However, studies that delve into how curriculum modernization is implemented in practice, how teachers interpret these changes, and how students experience and internalize competencies claimed to be "21st-century skills" are still limited. This gap indicates that the issue of curriculum modernization is not simply a structural issue, but rather a complex and contextual socio-pedagogical phenomenon. Within this framework, a quantitative approach oriented solely toward measuring output risks diminishing the complexity of the educational experience in Islamic boarding schools. To deeply understand the dynamics of the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in learning practices, an approach capable of exploring the processes of meaning and social interactions that occur naturally is required. Therefore, this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study. Case studies were chosen because they allow for in-depth exploration of a specific Islamic

boarding school context as a complete unit of analysis, allowing for a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the dynamics of curriculum modernization implementation.

Through an exploration of learning practices, evaluation strategies, and teacher and student perceptions, this research aims to analyze how curriculum modernization is implemented and the extent to which it contributes to the holistic development of student competencies. This approach is expected to not only identify gaps between The study not only provides a normative framework for 21st-century skills and actual practices in Islamic boarding schools, but also formulates a more contextual understanding of evaluation models that align with the character of Islamic boarding school education. Thus, this study seeks to fill the gap in the literature on Islamic boarding school modernization by presenting an analysis that focuses on concrete practices and experiences, rather than solely on formal curriculum design. The expected contribution is not only at the conceptual level, but also in the formulation of more authentic pedagogical reflections based on the institutional realities of Islamic boarding schools.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Case studies were chosen because they allow for an in-depth exploration of the implementation of curriculum modernization within a single Islamic boarding school (pesantren) context, holistically and contextually. The focus of the research was not on measuring relationships between variables, but rather on understanding the meaning, practice patterns, and social dynamics that shape the holistic development of students' competencies. Using this method facilitated the researcher's ability to reduce extensive data into a thematically defined analysis. The location was chosen based on its proximity to the researcher's residence, facilitating the direct fieldwork process. This study selected female students, teachers or caretakers, and the principal as research subjects. Participants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in curriculum implementation. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Triangulation of data sources and collection techniques was used to enhance data credibility. Data analysis employed thematic analysis, reducing data and grouping data into specific themes.

Conceptually, the 21st-century competency framework developed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills through the formulation of the 4Cs (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication) and the strengthening of the dimensions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in Education 2030 by the OECD serves as a theoretical foundation in understanding the demands of curriculum transformation. However, in this study, the framework is not positioned as a normative standard that is tested quantitatively, but rather as a sensitizing framework that helps researchers identify competency orientations in learning practices and data obtained in the field.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of the MAN Kota Surabaya Dormitory

In this era of rapid change, many schools seek to develop the spiritual character of their students without abandoning their formal school identity, which also focuses on the government curriculum.

Therefore, formal schools like MAN Kota Surabaya have volunteered to develop the character of female students who maintain their spiritual character through the construction of the Tahfidzul Qur'an Dormitory at MAN Kota Surabaya. This innovation is crucial because humans need not only formal cognitive knowledge but also an understanding of religion that accompanies it. With innovations implemented by Islamic boarding schools through modernization of curriculum, facilities, and infrastructure, Islamic boarding schools can face the challenges of the contemporary era while remaining Islamic educational institutions.

MAN Kota Surabaya, also known for its dedicated girls' dormitory within the school with adequate facilities, still operates as a vital support facility for its flagship programs. Established on September 1, 1963, it was the Preparatory School for the Islamic Institute (SPAIN). It was located on Jalan Bendul Merisi Selatan and relocated to Rungkut, East Surabaya, in 2015. In addition to relocating land as a form of innovation in its facilities and infrastructure, SPAIN also underwent a name change over time, changing to MAN in 1978, specifically on March 16th, following the issuance of Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 17.

This goal led to the establishment of a dormitory building, which was constructed in 2019 with the assistance of the SBSN (Small State Budget) from the East Java Ministry of Religious Affairs. (East Java Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019) The construction of the dormitory building is one of the realizations of the development of MAN Kota Surabaya's facilities, supported by the SBSN project, as a form of government contribution to the smooth running of Indonesian education. The dormitory is equipped with special programs such as tahfidz (memorization of the Koran) and qira'ah (recitation of the Koran) to support the madrasah's vision. The dormitory's vision aligns with the school's vision of "Religious and Competent," which aims to create individuals with faith, noble character, and academic and non-academic achievements using Islamic methods. Supporting facilities at MAN Kota Surabaya are fully equipped to support smooth learning activities, including a mosque, library, health unit (UKS), cafeteria, hall, sports field, and modern classrooms. Therefore, the existence of this dormitory is an innovative development by MAN Kota Surabaya to deepen character and religious education, complementing other flagship programs already established in the previous madrasah curriculum.

Brother F revealed in an interview that his reason for establishing a dormitory within a public school was to create a religious environment that is equal and up-to-date without abandoning faith. (Fatorrahman, 2025) For him, this environment will ultimately enhance the abilities of selected female students who remain in the dormitory and learn various skills and social skills within the dormitory environment. By using a modernized Islamic boarding school curriculum, he wants to focus on instilling real Quranic character in the female students. Therefore, this dormitory, based on memorization (tahfidz), was also established as a facility to support his goal of creating a modern generation grounded in the Quran and Sunnah while still possessing skills ready to be introduced to society.

As the principal, Brother F emphasized that he chose the Islamic boarding school curriculum within the dormitory so that the female students can continue to gain the meaning gained through discipline,

independence, and time management skills that can be applied in their daily lives. Furthermore, without diminishing his sense of responsibility, he assigned a caretaker who was also the dormitory head to directly oversee all activities within the dormitory. This was done so that the female students could feel comfortable interacting with others of their gender without compromising their respect as the *musrifah* (leader) who guided them within the dormitory. This perspective became a contextual factor in creating a *pesantren* culture within the dormitory environment by utilizing the *kyai's* authority in developing the formal curriculum structure and assessing the readiness of the caretakers who would continue the organizational structure within the dormitory.

Modernization of the Islamic Boarding School Curriculum in Dormitories

Current developments have not led to the decline of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) as Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. Their existence since the 17th century has given them a unique appeal to Indonesian Muslims. However, it cannot be denied that Islamic boarding schools are constantly innovating, given the modernization that occurs alongside technological advancements in today's society. These innovations in Islamic boarding schools today emerge from various aspects of their development in managing education in a more modern way. Administration, learning models, and even curricula are adapted to modern culture without abandoning Islamic boarding school traditions. This model does not replace traditional Islamic education, but rather coexists with it, resulting in three types of Islamic educational institutions: *pesantren*, *madrasah*, and Islamic schools (Hasan, 2016).

Pesantren, as traditional educational institutions and playing a vital role in the continuity of Indonesian education, have undergone numerous variations in their curriculum innovation and modernization. The current curriculum for Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia is regulated by Law Number 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic Boarding Schools and implemented through various regulations of the Minister of Religious Affairs (PMA) and Ministerial Decrees (KMA). The Ministry of Religious Affairs does not impose a single, uniform curriculum for all Islamic boarding schools, but rather provides a regulatory framework that allows Islamic boarding schools to develop their own curriculum according to their unique characteristics, traditions, and needs, while still meeting certain standards. In short, the Ministry of Religious Affairs regulates the general framework and quality standards, while the implementation and details of the curriculum are left to the internal policies of each Islamic boarding school, often resulting in a unique curriculum model (Buchori, 2021).

Meanwhile, Islamic Religious Education currently has a curriculum based on the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes flexible and contextual learning and integrates knowledge, skills, and character. The actual Islamic Religious Education curriculum in Islamic boarding schools is currently very dynamic, diverse, and continues to undergo modernization to adapt to current demands. This is also the case for the dormitory established in 2019 at MAN Kota Surabaya. The dormitory, which serves as a non-formal educational space, is integral to the classroom learning system. It is here that religious education is not only taught cognitively but also internalized through daily life. Therefore, the modernization of the Islamic boarding school curriculum in this dormitory does not operate as a linear transformation

mechanism that progressively and systematically directs the traditional curriculum toward a modern one. Rather, it occurs as a dynamic process of negotiating meaning in daily learning practices.

Normatively, the research findings explain that the Islamic boarding school curriculum document in this dormitory has adopted several elements of modernization through the integration of digital literacy, active learning approaches, and an emphasis on critical and collaborative thinking competencies, in line with the 21st-century skills framework. However, field data demonstrates that this adoption does not automatically translate into substantive changes in pedagogical practices. Classroom observations indicate that learning materials include indicators of critical thinking and problem-solving competencies. However, in practice, learning is still dominated by a one-way transmission of knowledge. Thematic analysis also found that resistance is not always explicit but emerges in the form of conceptual reinterpretation. For example, the concept of "critical thinking" is not interpreted as the freedom to question the authority of a text, but rather as the ability to understand arguments more systematically and argumentatively within the framework of a school of thought. This is where modernization operates as a process of constructing shared meaning (meaning-making), not as a transfer of complete concepts from outside.

Modernization of the Islamic Boarding School curriculum in dormitories is carried out by integrating formal classroom education activities with character and spiritual development programs within the dormitory environment. This takes the following forms:

1. Integration of the dormitory curriculum and the national curriculum, where Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material taught in school is deepened through dormitory activities such as Quran memorization, book study, halaqah (study groups), and muhadharah (speech practice). In this way, the values of faith, morals, and worship are not only learned but also practiced in everyday contexts.
2. Utilizing digital technology, modern dormitories are now beginning to utilize digital media for religious activities such as online studies, Islamic preaching videos, and Islamic digital literacy. Students are encouraged to utilize technology productively and in an Islamic manner. These activities can stimulate critical thinking among female students, enhancing their ability to analyze content and digital literacy in accordance with the 21st-century skills framework.
3. Developing soft skills and life skills through muhadharah (religious study), muhadatsah (Arabic/English conversation), and social activities, students are trained in communication, leadership, time management, and collaboration. This is a form of modernization that balances spiritual intelligence and modern life skills.
4. Mentoring and role-modeling approaches are usually carried out by musyrafah (religious advisors), who act as role models in instilling values and etiquette through personal guidance and daily example. This activity internalizes the importance of a holistic perspective without abandoning our traditions and religion.
5. Selecting yellow books specifically designed to teach female students the etiquette of memorizing the Quran. The book is a manifestation of the character formation of female students and serves as a source of religious knowledge derived from previous scholars. The presence of the yellow

book can complement the Qur'an and Hadith by teaching the values of life, norms, and etiquette of memorizing the Qur'an. Its implementation at MAN Kota Surabaya uses the *Muyassaroh* method, with this method, female students are able to read the yellow book in 15 days. This learning is expected to be able to create resilient individuals with a strong foundation of morality. (NR, 2025)

In the *tahfidz* (Qur'anic memorization) program, the dormitory supervisors implement their own distinctive approaches to support female students (*santriwati*) in memorizing the Qur'an. Given that the students come from diverse educational backgrounds and most of them already possess foundational reading methods, the *pesantren* does not mandate a single standardized recitation method. According to NR, the head of the dormitory since 2023, "The recitation method is not compulsory because many students already have prior foundations. As this is the highest level here, it is more flexible in terms of reading methods; however, evaluation is still conducted for all students who already possess foundational competencies" (NR, 2025).

Through these processes of modernization, the dormitory functions as a laboratory for the implementation of Islamic values, reinforcing the vision of holistic Islamic education—namely, the balance between faith (*iman*), knowledge (*'ilm*), and practice (*'amal*). Modernization within the dormitory context also strengthens the role of the *pesantren* environment as a character-education setting that extends beyond the classroom and permeates all aspects of students' daily lives. Thus, curriculum modernization in the dormitory represents a concrete manifestation of integrative Islamic education, connecting theory and practice, religious knowledge and social behavior, as well as spiritual dimensions and twenty-first-century competencies. Students are shaped not only to become individually pious (*shalihah*) but also productive, adaptive, and capable of serving as agents of change within modern society.

From a theoretical perspective, the 21st-century skills framework proposed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills emphasizes the integration of higher-order cognitive abilities, such as critical thinking, which are cultivated through problem-solving discussions in the dormitory. Social competencies—collaboration and communication—are developed through interactions with peers, senior students, and dormitory supervisors, while creativity is fostered within an integrated learning process. Meanwhile, the OECD Education 2030 framework asserts that competence cannot be reduced to knowledge alone but must encompass attitudes and values that enable individuals to act responsibly in complex social contexts. Based on the research findings and data obtained, these competencies are constructed through the students' knowledge and practical engagement, which are directly shaped by their daily interactions within the dormitory environment. Both frameworks assume that competence is multidimensional and developed through meaningful learning experiences.

Within the *pesantren* dormitory culture, education emphasizes the internalization of values, ethical conduct (*adab*), and spiritual depth as the core of character formation. In this sense, the affective and performative dimensions are not novel elements within the *pesantren* tradition. Based on this consideration, this study positions curriculum modernization not as a deterministic variable, but as a context of change

mediated by pedagogical implementation. In other words, curriculum transformation becomes meaningful only insofar as it is translated into teaching strategies, forms of assessment, patterns of classroom interaction, and the design of learning activities. Herein lies the central argument of this study: holistic competence is not formed at the level of curriculum documents, but within pedagogical praxis (Ibad, 2025).

Holistic competence in this study is conceptualized through three interrelated dimensions. The cognitive dimension includes analytical ability, reflection, and problem-solving skills. The affective dimension encompasses value internalization, collaborative attitudes, and character formation. The psychomotor or performative dimension refers to the ability to actualize knowledge in concrete action. These dimensions are not positioned as separate categories but as intertwined constructs within the learning experiences of the students. Nevertheless, pedagogical practices do not occur in a neutral space. They are shaped by the socio-cultural context of the pesantren, including the authority relations between kiai and teachers, the tradition of classical text instruction (*kitab*), the formal curriculum structure, and the collective life within the dormitory (Anisaturrizqi et al., 2025). These factors may function as reinforcing elements for competency integration, yet they may also limit dialogical space and the development of critical thinking. Therefore, this study regards context as a constitutive element rather than merely a background variable.

Accordingly, the conceptual framework of this study emphasizes the following relationships: curriculum modernization creates conditions for change; learning practices serve as arenas for meaning construction; holistic competence emerges through the dynamic interaction between teachers and students; and the entire process is shaped by the structural and cultural dimensions of the pesantren. These relationships are not understood as linear cause-and-effect mechanisms, but as dynamic, contextual, and constructive processes. This argument simultaneously affirms the constructivist stance of the study: competence is not viewed as an objective entity assumed to emerge automatically following curriculum reform, but as a socially constructed outcome formed through experience, interpretation, and everyday practice. Through this approach, the study seeks to shift the discourse from the question, “Has modernization succeeded?” toward a more fundamental inquiry: “How is the meaning of holistic competence constructed, negotiated, and realized within pesantren educational practices, particularly in the dormitory context?”

Challenges of Modernizing the Islamic Boarding School Curriculum in Dormitories

Research results indicate that curriculum modernization in Islamic boarding schools does not operate as a linear transformation mechanism, but rather as a process of negotiating meaning within learning practices. Although the 21st-century skills framework of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the transformative competency orientation in Education 2030 by the OECD emphasize the integration of cognitive, social, and value dimensions, their implementation in Islamic boarding schools demonstrates a more complex and contextual pattern. Cognitively, dialogical and open practices are beginning to emerge as strategies to encourage critical thinking. However, this development is not entirely separate from traditional authority structures. Critical thinking develops within certain boundaries, remaining within a

framework of respect for scientific authority and sanad (traditional sources). This indicates that 21st-century competencies are not adopted blindly but are reconstructed in accordance with Islamic boarding school culture.

In the affective dimension, research actually shows strong continuity with Islamic boarding school traditions. The internalization of values, etiquette, and discipline is not a direct result of modernization but has been the foundation of Islamic boarding school pedagogy from the beginning. Curriculum modernization in this context serves more as conceptual legitimation than as substantive transformation. Meanwhile, in the psychomotor or performative dimension, there are indications of a shift toward practice- and project-based learning. However, this change is often not accompanied by a transformation of the evaluation system. Thus, there is a lack of synchronicity between learning strategies and assessment mechanisms. These findings suggest that curriculum modernization in Islamic boarding schools tends to result in a form of pedagogical hybridization, a blend of tradition and innovation, rather than a total transformation. This hybridization is not a failure, but rather an adaptive strategy that allows Islamic boarding schools to maintain their identity while responding.

Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that curriculum modernization cannot be understood through a linear-modernist paradigm that assumes that the adoption of modern elements will automatically result in pedagogical transformation. These findings also affirm the constructivist position in this research; the reality of the curriculum does not exist as an objective entity that needs to be implemented, but is constructed through interactions, interpretations, and power relations within the Islamic boarding school community. Thus, modernization is not a straight line to "progress," but rather a dialogical process that brings together continuity and change within a single space of educational practice.

The findings of this study indicate that the modernization of Islamic boarding school curriculum cannot be understood as a linear transformation process from traditional to modern, but rather as a field of negotiation fraught with structural tensions. The main challenge identified is not simply a technical issue of implementation, but rather lies in the asymmetry between the adoption of modern pedagogical instruments and the stability of the Islamic boarding school's epistemological structure. While learning tools have integrated 21st-century competency indicators, such as critical thinking and collaboration, authority relations and knowledge distribution patterns in the classroom remain relatively unchanged. This suggests that methodological change does not automatically result in epistemic transformation. In other words, modernization at the procedural level is not identical to modernization, which is often assumed to be linearly progressive, and confirms that the context in which this boarding school occurs is a pedagogical transformation constrained by entrenched authority configurations.

The identified challenge is that the reinterpretation of 21st-century skills within the normative framework of Islamic boarding schools demonstrates a more complex dynamic. The concept of critical thinking, for example, is not interpreted as epistemic freedom to question the authority of texts, but rather

as the ability to strengthen arguments within the boundaries of the traditions of the madhhab (school of thought). Analytically, this phenomenon can be interpreted in two ways: as a contextual innovation or as a reproduction of old structures with new terminology. The challenge that arises here is the risk of reducing the substance of global competence to merely enriching internal reform rather than epistemic rupture. This means that Islamic boarding schools are not abandoning their epistemic frameworks, but adapting global elements to the extent that they are compatible with their value structures. This finding emphasizes that the transfer of global competence frameworks is never neutral; it always undergoes localization and reinterpretation influenced by the socio-epistemic structures of the receiving community.

On the other hand, this study also found implicit concerns about the potential erosion of institutional identity if pedagogical change is implemented too progressively. This is where modernization confronts a fundamental paradox: social relevance demands innovation, while internal legitimacy demands the stability of tradition. This cultural challenge results in a hybrid form of pedagogy where technology is used but power relations remain hierarchical, discussions are facilitated but conclusions remain controlled. This hybridity is not simply a pragmatic compromise, but rather an institutional strategy to maintain identity continuity while responding to external demands. (Komariah et al., 2025) However, without structural reflection on the position of authority in the learning process, modernization risks becoming limited to the symbolism of innovation: progressive in documents, conservative in practice.

The theoretical implication of this finding is the need to reconstruct how we understand the modernization of Islamic education. Modernization cannot be reduced to indicators of curriculum adoption or technology integration; it must be analyzed at the level of epistemology and social relations within the classroom. This study expands the discourse by demonstrating that pedagogical transformation in Islamic boarding schools is negotiative, contextual, and hybrid. Hybridity is not a sign of modernization failure, but rather a distinctive form of transformation that occurs when global frameworks meet strong local epistemic traditions. Thus, the success of modernization cannot be measured by the degree of similarity to global models, but by the ability to construct a reflective synthesis that remains epistemically coherent (Nauval et al., 2026).

Practically, the implications of this research demand a shift in the focus of reform from administrative change to structural reflection. The identified challenges indicate that strengthening 21st-century competencies requires a re-examination of the position of authority within Islamic boarding school pedagogy. Without such reflective efforts, modernization will remain at the level of superficial methodological adaptation. Islamic boarding schools need to create a space for internal pedagogical dialogue to discuss the limits, possibilities, and epistemic consequences of adopted innovations. In this way, modernization becomes not merely a response to external pressures but a conscious process managed reflectively.

Ultimately, this study confirms that the modernization of Islamic boarding school curriculum is a

dialectical arena between global competency frameworks, local epistemic traditions, and institutional authority structures. The challenges that arise are not simply obstacles to implementation, but rather indicators of the confluence of two distinct educational logics. Understanding modernization as a process of negotiating meaning allows for a more accurate analysis of the dynamics of contemporary Islamic education transformation, not as a straight line toward a global model, but as a dialogical process that shapes new, distinctive and contextual pedagogical configurations. Thus, modernization in the context of Islamic boarding schools in this case is more akin to internal reform that seeks to maintain the continuity of institutional identity while simultaneously responding to external pressures.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the modernization of Islamic boarding school curriculum does not occur as a linear transformation process that automatically shifts traditional patterns toward modern pedagogical models. Instead, modernization operates as a negotiation of meaning that occurs in the interaction between the epistemic traditions of Islamic boarding schools, the demands of 21st-century competencies, and concrete pedagogical practices in the classroom. The transformations that occur tend to be selective, contextual, and hybrid. This study shows that the success of Islamic boarding school curriculum modernization cannot be measured by the degree of similarity to global models, but by the institution's ability to build a reflective synthesis between pedagogical innovation and the epistemic coherence of tradition. Modernization in this context is not a straight line toward homogenization, but rather a dialectical process that forms a new pedagogical configuration that is unique, contextual, and sustainable.

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