GUIDELINES ISLAMIC CURRICULUM RENAISSANCE: WHEN NEW FAILS, TRADITION PREVAILS

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the comparative efficacy of traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula, focusing on knowledge acquisition, pedagogical practices, and character formation. Traditional curricula, exemplified by Dars-i Nizami and Hawza-based models, emphasise rigorous textual engagement, memorisation, dialectical reasoning, and mentorship, fostering deep epistemic understanding and integrated ethical-spiritual development. In contrast, contemporary curricula prioritise interdisciplinary learning, technological integration, and student-centred pedagogies, enhancing engagement and breadth of knowledge while presenting challenges in sustaining epistemic depth and moral formation. Employing a qualitative approach with observational, interview, and document analysis data, this study identifies the strengths and limitations of both models, highlighting the necessity for integrative curriculum design. Findings indicate that hybridised approaches, which combine traditional epistemic rigor with modern pedagogical innovation, offer the most promising pathway for cultivating graduates who are intellectually competent, ethically grounded, and socially adaptable. The study underscores that the future of Islamic education depends on a contextually sensitive and theory-informed synthesis of tradition and modernity, ensuring the continuity of moral, spiritual, and epistemic excellence while addressing contemporary educational demands.

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Curriculum Comparison, Traditional Pedagogy, Contemporary Pedagogy, Character Formation, Epistemic Development, Hybrid Curriculum.*

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of Islamic education curricula has been characterised by a complex interplay between tradition and modernity, reflecting broader societal transformations and the demands of contemporary knowledge economies (Sahin, 2018). Traditional Islamic education systems, such as the Dars-i Nizami and the Hawza, have historically served as the foundational frameworks for transmitting Islamic knowledge, emphasising rigorous engagement with classical texts, the development of ethical and spiritual virtues, and the cultivation of a cohesive scholarly community (Sahin, 2018). These curricula were meticulously designed to nurture not only intellectual acumen but also moral and spiritual formation, ensuring that students internalise both religious principles and communal responsibilities. The pedagogical approaches within these traditional systems were predominantly interactive and mentor-guided, promoting sustained dialogue between teacher and student, thereby reinforcing comprehension, critical reflection, and ethical conduct (Fawaid, 2016). Through this immersive educational environment, learners were systematically inculcated with deep-rooted knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, theology, philosophy, and ethics, establishing a continuum of scholarly excellence that spanned generations (Ahmad, 2009).

In recent decades, however, Islamic education has been subjected to a process of transformation driven by globalisation, technological advancement, and the exigencies of modern pedagogical theories (A. H. Abdullah et al., 2025). Contemporary curricula have sought to integrate traditional Islamic knowledge with disciplines such as mathematics, science, social studies, and information technology, aiming to produce graduates equipped with the competencies required to navigate complex, contemporary contexts (Yunita et al., 2025). While the integration of modern pedagogical strategies and digital learning tools promises enhanced engagement, accessibility, and critical thinking, these reforms also raise profound questions regarding their fidelity to the core objectives of Islamic education, particularly in terms of character formation and spiritual development (Azra, 2012). Critics argue that the adoption of Western-influenced methodologies and outcome-driven frameworks may inadvertently marginalise the ethical, spiritual, and community-oriented dimensions that have traditionally defined Islamic pedagogy (A. Abdullah, 2017).

Comparative analyses of traditional and modern curricula reveal both the strengths and limitations inherent in each approach. Traditional curricula are particularly effective in cultivating moral integrity, ethical reasoning, and sustained engagement with sacred texts, attributes that are reinforced through structured mentorship and a scholarly community that emphasises continuity and depth of knowledge (Hakim & Anggraini, 2023). In contrast, modern curricula excel in promoting interdisciplinary competence, technological literacy, and pedagogical flexibility, offering students exposure to a broader spectrum of knowledge and equipping them with skills relevant to contemporary societal and professional challenges (Grimus, 2020). Nevertheless, the central challenge for modern curricula remains the reconciliation of innovation with the preservation of Islamic epistemic integrity; failure to integrate traditional values may lead to graduates whose religious literacy is superficial, and whose ethical grounding is weakened (Mahmudulhassan & Abuzar, 2024).

The discourse surrounding Islamic curriculum reform is thus marked by tensions between epistemic fidelity and pedagogical innovation. The efficacy of traditional curricula in instilling enduring moral and spiritual values has been well documented, yet these curricula may lack responsiveness to contemporary societal needs, technological advancements, and interdisciplinary knowledge (Moslimany et al., 2024). Conversely, while modern curricula demonstrate adaptability and responsiveness to global educational standards, they are often critiqued for prioritising procedural competencies over holistic character formation, thereby undermining the foundational objectives of Islamic pedagogy (Abror & Rohmaniyah, 2023). These observations underscore the necessity of a critically evaluative approach that examines curriculum reform not merely in terms of content delivery but also with regard to its capacity to sustain ethical, spiritual, and epistemic coherence within Islamic educational contexts.

Given these dynamics, it becomes imperative to explore integrative models that synthesise the enduring strengths of traditional education with the innovative features of contemporary curricula. Such an approach advocates for an educational paradigm that maintains fidelity to classical Islamic epistemology and ethical formation while simultaneously fostering competencies required for active engagement in modern, technologically mediated societies (Mahmudulhassan et al., 2024). By aligning heritage-based pedagogical principles with modern instructional techniques, educators can cultivate graduates who are both deeply rooted in Islamic moral and spiritual values and sufficiently competent to navigate the challenges of contemporary professional, social, and technological landscapes ((Uyuni & Adnan, 2024). This dual emphasis on continuity and innovation represents a transformative potential within Islamic education, ensuring that curricula remain relevant, ethically grounded, and socially responsive.

In conclusion, the trajectory of Islamic educational reform illustrates the ongoing tension between tradition and innovation. Traditional curricula continue to provide a robust framework for ethical and spiritual development, whereas modern curricula offer tools for interdisciplinary engagement and technological competence (Shobirin et al., 2025). The integration of these paradigms, however, necessitates a careful, critical approach to curriculum design that honours the epistemic foundations of Islamic education while embracing pedagogical advancement. Such a synthesis ensures that Islamic education remains a transformative force, capable of cultivating scholars who are morally grounded, spiritually aware, and equipped to contribute meaningfully to contemporary society. Ultimately, the study of Islamic curricula through a comparative lens provides critical insights into the ways in which educational reform can be pursued without compromising the integrity of longstanding epistemic and ethical traditions.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative, comparative research design aimed at critically analysing the divergences between traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula. The qualitative approach is particularly suited to exploring the nuanced epistemic, pedagogical, and ethical dimensions of curricula that cannot be captured through purely quantitative measures (Creswell, 2013). By focusing on the lived experiences of educators and students, as well as curriculum documents, the study seeks to elucidate how each curricular model shapes knowledge acquisition, character development, and spiritual formation.

The research setting encompasses selected Islamic educational institutions that exemplify both traditional and modern curricular frameworks. Traditional curricula were examined through institutions following the Dars-i Nizami and Hawza models, whereas contemporary curricula were studied in Islamic schools integrating interdisciplinary subjects and technological pedagogies. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who possess comprehensive knowledge and direct experience with their respective curricula, including senior teachers, curriculum developers, and advanced students. This method ensures that data are drawn from individuals with substantive insight into the instructional processes and outcomes of each curriculum type (Goldman & Pellegrino, 2015).

Data collection involved multiple methods to enhance validity through triangulation. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with educators and students to capture perceptions, experiences, and reflections regarding curriculum content, teaching methodologies, and educational outcomes. Second, document analysis was performed on official curriculum outlines, lesson plans, and institutional policy statements to understand the structural, philosophical, and procedural features of each curriculum. Third, classroom observations were carried out to examine pedagogical practices, student engagement, and the integration of ethical and spiritual instruction in real-time learning contexts (Mundofi, 2025).

Data analysis followed a thematic approach, allowing patterns and discrepancies between traditional and contemporary curricula to emerge inductively. Transcribed interviews, observational notes, and document analyses were coded iteratively, with attention to both

manifest content and latent meanings. Themes were categorised under domains including pedagogical methodology, epistemic orientation, moral and spiritual development, and adaptability to contemporary societal demands. Constant comparative analysis enabled identification of convergences, divergences, and potential complementarities between curricula (Amri, 2013).

Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Institutional permissions were secured prior to access to curricular documents and classrooms. Furthermore, the analysis emphasised reflexivity, recognising the researcher's positionality and its potential influence on interpretation, particularly in balancing normative assessments of educational efficacy with descriptive fidelity to participant experiences (al-Manea, 1995). Through this methodology, the study aims to provide an empirically grounded and conceptually robust comparison of Islamic education curricula, elucidating the strengths, limitations, and potential integrations of traditional and contemporary educational paradigms.

RESULT

Pedagogical Practices and Knowledge Acquisition

The comparative analysis of traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula revealed pronounced differences in pedagogical practices, instructional methodologies, and knowledge acquisition outcomes. Traditional curricula, exemplified by Dars-i Nizami and Hawza-based systems, emphasise a rigorous, text-centred pedagogy (Ahmed, 2021). In these models, the teacher functions as both a mentor and a moral exemplar, guiding students through structured engagement with classical texts, including fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), usul al-fiqh (principles of jurisprudence), tafsir (Quranic exegesis), hadith studies, logic, and philosophy (Mappasessu & Akmal, 2025). The pedagogical approach relies heavily on iterative questioning, dialogue, and memorisation, allowing students to internalise not only factual knowledge but also interpretative and analytical skills. Observational data indicate that this methodology fosters high levels of textual literacy, critical reasoning, and the capacity for contextual interpretation, attributes essential for the development of Islamic scholarship (Adiyono et al., 2024).

The traditional classroom environment is inherently interactive and relational, characterised by a close teacher-student nexus in which learning is both cognitive and spiritual. Students are encouraged to reflect on the ethical and moral implications of textual content, bridging intellectual comprehension with personal conduct and character formation. This approach ensures a holistic understanding of knowledge, integrating epistemic rigor with moral and spiritual cultivation (Shin, 2002). Interviews with educators revealed that students under traditional curricula develop a profound sense of responsibility, ethical awareness, and discipline, which are reinforced through mentorship and evaluative practices that prioritise integrity and sincerity alongside academic achievement. Furthermore, the longitudinal study of alumni trajectories demonstrates that graduates of traditional programmes frequently assume roles as scholars, educators, and community leaders, indicating the long-term efficacy of traditional pedagogical approaches in knowledge retention and application (Achmad et al., 2024).

In contrast, contemporary Islamic curricula seek to integrate traditional Islamic content with modern disciplines such as natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, and technology-enhanced learning strategies (Hashi, 2024). These curricula adopt student-centred pedagogical models, including project-based learning, collaborative assignments, and digital instructional tools designed to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability. Observational findings suggest that students in modern curricula demonstrate higher engagement, increased participation, and greater familiarity with interdisciplinary knowledge than their counterparts in traditional programmes (Amirudin et al., 2025). Digital platforms, multimedia resources,

and interactive learning applications enable more dynamic classroom interactions, providing diverse modes of content delivery that cater to multiple learning styles.

Despite these advantages, the depth of knowledge acquisition in contemporary curricula presents notable limitations. While students often excel in procedural comprehension and application of knowledge in general contexts, their mastery of classical texts and capacity for deep hermeneutical reasoning appear comparatively weaker. Interviews with educators highlighted that students sometimes struggle to integrate ethical and spiritual insights with modern disciplinary knowledge, resulting in learning outcomes that are fragmented rather than holistic (Abdurrochim et al., 2024). Additionally, curriculum documents reveal a tension between breadth and depth, where the expansion of subject matter and inclusion of technological pedagogies inadvertently reduces the time and emphasis dedicated to traditional textual study.

Nevertheless, contemporary curricula display potential for adaptation when deliberately structured to incorporate traditional epistemic values. Classrooms that maintained a dual focus—retaining intensive textual study alongside interdisciplinary subjects—showed enhanced cognitive engagement and deeper comprehension of both religious and secular knowledge domains. Such integrative approaches suggest that modern Islamic education can achieve a synthesis that balances contemporary pedagogical innovation with the epistemic rigour characteristic of traditional curricula.

Overall, indicates that while traditional curricula excel in deep knowledge acquisition, interpretive skills, and moral cognition, contemporary curricula provide broader exposure and engagement but risk superficiality in the mastery of classical Islamic texts. The findings underscore the importance of curriculum design that harmonises traditional epistemic integrity with modern pedagogical innovations.

Character Formation and Spiritual Development

The development of character and spirituality emerged as a central differentiator between traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula. In traditional systems, such as Dars-i Nizami and Hawza-based programmes, ethical cultivation and spiritual formation are systematically embedded within the pedagogical structure. Teachers act as both intellectual guides and moral exemplars, modelling ethical behaviour and spiritual discipline while overseeing students' academic and personal development (Gherasim, 2024). Observations and interviews with educators revealed that moral and spiritual objectives are inseparable from cognitive instruction; the learning environment actively reinforces patience, humility, integrity, and communal responsibility. Students engage in reflective practices, ethical reasoning exercises, and memorisation of foundational texts, facilitating the internalisation of values alongside knowledge acquisition. Alumni testimonies further indicate that graduates of traditional programmes consistently demonstrate enduring commitment to ethical conduct, religious observance, and social contribution, reflecting the long-term efficacy of such educational models in character formation (Abror & Rohmaniyah, 2023).

Conversely, contemporary Islamic curricula, despite promoting intellectual engagement and interdisciplinary competence, displayed variability in outcomes related to character and spiritual development. Integration of modern subjects, technological tools, and outcome-oriented pedagogies occasionally dilutes the emphasis on sustained ethical and spiritual cultivation. Interviews with teachers revealed concerns that students may acquire cognitive and technical skills without fully internalising the moral and spiritual dimensions that are traditionally emphasised. Classroom observations corroborated this, showing that while students demonstrate enthusiasm and engagement with interactive learning methods, moments of reflective spiritual practice are often limited or treated as supplementary rather than integral components of the curriculum (Ag & Pd.I, 2020).

Nevertheless, contemporary curricula that intentionally integrate values-based education alongside technological and interdisciplinary instruction show promising results. For example, structured programmes that embed Quranic ethics, prophetic teachings, and reflective exercises within modern learning schedules produced students capable of applying ethical reasoning in complex, real-world scenarios (du Plooy et al., 2024). These findings suggest that the challenges associated with character formation in modern curricula are not inherent but rather contingent upon curriculum design and pedagogical prioritisation. Integrative approaches that balance traditional moral and spiritual emphases with contemporary educational strategies can mitigate the risk of ethical superficiality and foster well-rounded graduates.

In summary, demonstrates that traditional curricula maintain a clear advantage in the consistent cultivation of moral character and spiritual depth, while contemporary curricula provide broader intellectual exposure but require deliberate design to achieve comparable outcomes in ethical and spiritual development. The findings emphasise the necessity of curricular synthesis, in which the ethical and spiritual strengths of traditional systems are preserved and adapted within modern pedagogical frameworks to prepare students for both intellectual and moral challenges of contemporary society.

DISCUSSION
Integrating Knowledge, Pedagogy, and Character in Islamic Education
The comparative analysis of traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula highlights enduring tensions between epistemic fidelity, pedagogical innovation, and character formation. The results from this study underscore that while traditional curricula, such as Dars-i Nizami and Hawza-based programmes, provide a coherent framework for deep knowledge acquisition and moral-spiritual development, contemporary curricula often prioritise breadth, technological engagement, and interdisciplinary exposure at the expense of holistic formation (Badawi, 2016). The implications of these findings warrant a critical reflection on how Islamic educational institutions can reconcile these divergences, ensuring that the benefits of modernisation do not erode the epistemic and ethical integrity that characterises classical Islamic pedagogy (Arif et al., 2024).

Traditional curricula offer a rigorous epistemic orientation that integrates memorisation, textual exegesis, and dialectical reasoning with continuous mentorship. Students in these settings demonstrate not only mastery of classical Islamic knowledge but also the ability to apply ethical reasoning within a moral framework embedded in religious epistemology. The repeated engagement with primary texts fosters hermeneutical skills, enabling students to navigate complex legal, theological, and philosophical questions. Such epistemic depth, however, has been criticised for its limited responsiveness to contemporary knowledge demands, particularly in domains such as modern science, information technology, and social innovation (Agung & Rumtini, 2010). This limitation underscores the argument that while traditional curricula excel in cultivating scholarly rigor and ethical integrity, they may insufficiently prepare students for navigating the rapidly evolving socio-technological landscape of the twenty-first century.

Conversely, contemporary curricula prioritise student-centred pedagogies, interdisciplinary learning, and digital literacy, responding to global educational standards and labour market expectations. These approaches foster engagement, critical thinking, and adaptability, which are indispensable for modern professional and civic contexts. Observational and interview data suggest that students in contemporary programmes demonstrate a greater facility with collaborative learning, project-based problem solving, and application of knowledge to real-world scenarios. Nevertheless, this emphasis on procedural competency frequently leads to a reduction in time and focus devoted to classical textual engagement, potentially weakening the epistemic foundation that is central to Islamic scholarship (Bosra, 2022). Furthermore, ethical and spiritual development, while incorporated

as supplementary modules, often lacks the systemic integration observed in traditional programmes, risking the emergence of graduates with technical knowledge but limited capacity for holistic moral reasoning.

The study's findings suggest that the dichotomy between traditional and contemporary curricula need not be absolute. Hybridised models, which integrate the epistemic rigor and moral formation of classical education with the flexibility, interdisciplinarity, and technological engagement of modern curricula, represent a promising avenue for (Fikri et al., 2025). For instance, the deliberate inclusion of reflective exercises, ethics-oriented modules, and mentorship structures within modern curricula can compensate for the observed deficiencies in character and spiritual formation. Similarly, incorporating contemporary pedagogical techniques, digital resources, and interdisciplinary subjects within traditional programmes can enhance student engagement, relevance, and adaptability without undermining ethical and epistemic integrity.

One critical insight emerging from the comparative analysis is the role of intentionality in curriculum design. In traditional settings, ethical and spiritual cultivation is embedded within the instructional philosophy, ensuring that character development is inseparable from cognitive instruction. Contemporary curricula, by contrast, frequently operationalise values education as discrete units, which, although beneficial, may not exert the same formative impact if disconnected from the broader epistemic and pedagogical framework. This underscores the need for an integrated curriculum model that positions ethical, spiritual, and epistemic objectives as co-dependent rather than ancillary (Leiden, 2006).

Moreover, the study emphasises the significance of teacher capability and institutional culture in mediating curricular outcomes. Educators serve as the principal conduit through which ethical and epistemic values are transmitted, whether in traditional or modern settings. In traditional curricula, the mentorship model facilitates close monitoring of student development, providing continuous feedback and moral guidance. In modern curricula, the effectiveness of pedagogical innovations depends on teachers' ability to integrate digital, interdisciplinary, and collaborative tools with ethical and spiritual guidance. Without adequate training and institutional support, the potential benefits of contemporary curricular strategies may be undermined, leading to superficial engagement with both content and moral formation (Darina et al., 2025).

The findings also illuminate the tension between curriculum breadth and depth. While contemporary curricula provide access to a wider range of knowledge domains, the expanded scope may dilute focus on core Islamic texts and epistemic traditions. Traditional curricula, in contrast, prioritise depth over breadth, producing scholars with profound expertise but limited exposure to modern knowledge domains. This juxtaposition highlights the importance of curricular balance, whereby the inclusion of contemporary subjects should not compromise the continuity of classical knowledge transmission (Adiyono et al., 2024). Successful integration requires careful sequencing, thematic alignment, and cross-disciplinary linkage that preserve ethical and epistemic coherence while enhancing relevance and applicability. Finally, the study reinforces that Islamic education's ultimate objective transcends knowledge acquisition alone, encompassing the formation of morally grounded, spiritually aware, and socially responsible individuals (Hakim & Anggraini, 2023). The evidence suggests that traditional curricula remain unparalleled in achieving these outcomes consistently. However, the necessity of contemporary competencies—digital literacy, interdisciplinary understanding, and adaptability—cannot be overlooked in preparing students for modern contexts. Therefore, curriculum reform should pursue a synergistic model, in which the strengths of both traditional and contemporary paradigms are harnessed to cultivate graduates who are simultaneously epistemically competent, ethically grounded, and socially agile.

Table 1: *Table of Discussion*

Area of Discussion	Empirical Finding	Theoretical Integration	Analytical Interpretation	Scholarly / Practical Implications
Curriculum Identity	The pesantren maintains turāth-based curriculum with adab as a prerequisite to knowledge	Bourdieu's notion of habitus, Assmann's cultural memory, and classical Islamic epistemic lineage	Curriculum identity emerges not merely from subject-matter content but from genealogical transmission and sacred ethos	Reform is not a replacement of tradition but a restoration of epistemic continuity grounded in maqāṣid
Pedagogical Authority	Epistemic legitimacy is vested in the spiritual authority of the kyai	Zagzebski's theory of epistemic authority and pre-modern spiritual trusteeship	Teacher authority is relational and covenantal rather than bureaucratic	Teacher formation becomes the axis of curriculum quality rather than technological delivery
Cultural Resilience	Pesantren adapts without assimilation or rupture from its intellectual roots	Cultural resilience frameworks and soft hybridisation	Adaptation occurs at the level of method, not metaphysics	Islamic curriculum reform must be tradition-anchored but context-sensitive
Maqāṣid Shift	Curriculum prioritises inner formation rather than skill acquisition	Maqāṣid doctrine (ḥifẓ al-dīn and ḥifẓ al-nafs) as ontological priorities	Learning purpose is moral-ontological, not material-performative	Quality indicators shift from output-efficiency to inner preservation and moral endurance
Curriculum Legitimacy	Legitimacy derives from the continuity of sanad (intellectual lineage)	Chain-of-transmission theory and epistemic legitimacy in classical Islam	Curriculum becomes a living civilisation rather than an administrative instrument	Strengthens authenticity claims against secular pedagogical frameworks
Knowledge Production	Education is framed as inheritance of a worldvie	Al-Attas' concept of adab and Islamisation of worldview	Pesantren is a site of cosmological guardianship	Educational excellence is cosmological, not merely cognitive

	w, not data transmission			
Post-secular Reversal	Tradition prevails when modernity fails to address moral collapse	Casanova's post-secularism and Taylor's re-enchantment thesis	The return of sacred knowledge is corrective rather than nostalgic	Tradition becomes a future-oriented epistemic alternative
Learning Purpose	Education aims at tazkiyah (soul refinement) and ethical maturity	Ethics-as-pedagogy in classical Islamic formation	The learner is cultivated as a moral agent, not a market unit	Reconstructs human subjectivity as value-bearing rather than utility-driven
Technology & Risk	Digital instruments assist but cannot replace spiritual cultivation	Theories of technological mediation	Technology without ontology leads to disembodied learning	Reform must adopt technology as servant, not sovereign
Resilience to Collapse	Pesantren remains socially and cognitively anti-fragile	Taleb's anti-fragility model in institutional form	Tradition does not merely "survive"; it stabilises chaos	A Model is exportable as a philosophy of curriculum resilience

In conclusion, the discussion demonstrates that contemporary Islamic curricula, while addressing modern educational demands, often fall short of the comprehensive character and spiritual formation ensured by traditional curricula. By adopting integrative approaches that embed ethical, spiritual, and epistemic dimensions within modern pedagogical frameworks, Islamic education can achieve a renaissance that reconciles tradition with innovation, producing scholars capable of navigating complex socio-cultural and professional landscapes without compromising moral and epistemic. The study thus calls for a deliberate, theory-informed, and contextually sensitive approach to curriculum design that foregrounds the continuity of Islamic epistemic and ethical principles while embracing the advantages of modernisation.

CONCLUSION

This study has critically examined the comparative strengths and limitations of traditional and contemporary Islamic education curricula, highlighting the enduring relevance of classical pedagogical approaches alongside the necessity of modern innovations. Traditional curricula, exemplified by the Dars-i Nizami and Hawza-based models, consistently demonstrate superior efficacy in fostering deep knowledge acquisition, interpretive skills, ethical reasoning, and spiritual formation. These programmes cultivate students who are not only intellectually proficient but also morally grounded and socially responsible, reflecting the holistic objectives of Islamic education.

Conversely, contemporary curricula, while expanding disciplinary breadth, promoting technological literacy, and enhancing student engagement, frequently face challenges in sustaining the depth of knowledge, epistemic coherence, and integrated ethical-spiritual development characteristic of traditional programmes. Observations indicate that without deliberate curricular design and pedagogical intentionality, modern Islamic education risks producing graduates who are technically competent but insufficiently grounded in classical knowledge and moral formation.

The findings underscore the critical need for a hybridised and integrative curriculum model that combines the epistemic rigor, ethical depth, and mentorship-driven pedagogy of traditional curricula with the adaptive, interdisciplinary, and technological innovations of contemporary approaches. Such a synthesis enables the cultivation of graduates capable of navigating complex social, professional, and intellectual landscapes without compromising moral and spiritual integrity.

Ultimately, this research highlights that the future of Islamic education lies not in a simplistic adoption of modernization or exclusive adherence to tradition, but in a reflective, contextually sensitive, and theory-informed approach that preserves the enduring strengths of classical pedagogy while embracing the tools and competencies required for contemporary relevance. By achieving this balance, Islamic education can ensure both the continuity of its epistemic and ethical legacy and the preparation of learners to meet the multifaceted challenges of the twenty-first century.

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