



ISSN 2964-3902 (Online)

SUJANA: Journal of Education and Learning Review

<https://journal.jfpublisher.com/index.php/sujana>

Vol. 5, Issue. 3, (2026)

doi.org/10.56943/sujana.v5i3.1020

Traditional Islamic Education and Global Challenges: A Qur'anic and Hadith-Based Normative Framework

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary global education increasingly prioritizes measurable competencies and academic performance, often at the expense of moral formation, values development, and social responsibility. This tendency has intensified concerns regarding the ethical and humanistic dimensions of education in an era shaped by rapid technological change and globalization. This study examines how traditional Islamic educational institutions, specifically kuttub, pesantren, and madrasah diniyah, respond to twenty-first-century educational challenges through the normative guidance of the Qur'an and Hadith. Employing a qualitative library research design, this study analyzed primary data consisting of selected Qur'anic verses and authenticated Hadith traditions alongside secondary data drawn from Scopus-indexed academic literature published between 2021 and 2026. Data were examined through thematic and normative-conceptual analysis, with source triangulation applied to verify the consistency of findings across textual, prophetic, and scholarly sources. The findings indicate that core Islamic values, including tawhid, akhlaq, justice, amanah, and social responsibility, derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, align substantively with global educational agendas concerned with character development and global citizenship. A three-layer conceptual model is proposed, integrating revelation as normative foundation, values-based education as pedagogical core, and principled engagement with modernity as adaptive strategy, governed by the principle of wasatiyyah. Traditional Islamic educational institutions demonstrate both adaptability and normative coherence, offering a sustainable and integrity-based model of values education for addressing contemporary global educational challenges.

Keywords: Akhlaq, Global Education, Qur'an and Hadith, Traditional Islamic Education, Values-Based Education

INTRODUCTION

The design and implementation of education in the twenty-first century have become increasingly complex in response to a range of intersecting global pressures (Rahimi & Oh, 2024). Rapid technological advancement, accelerating globalization, profound social transformation, and the growing demand for sustainable and equitable education have collectively reshaped the contemporary educational landscape (Jaya et al., 2023). International educational agendas, including those advanced by UNESCO and the OECD, have increasingly emphasized measurable competencies, performance-based accountability, and labor market readiness as the primary benchmarks of educational quality (Rua, 2023; Shafik, 2026). While these dimensions carry undeniable importance, an exclusive orientation toward quantifiable outcomes risks marginalizing the cultivation of values, identity formation, and moral integration within the educational process. This tension between technical efficiency and humanistic formation constitutes one of the most pressing conceptual challenges facing educational systems in the present era.

Within this context, Islamic education occupies a distinctive and strategically significant position. As Aryani et al. (2025) argue, Islamic education serves as a vital foundation for preserving moral identity and cultural integrity amid the accelerating forces of globalization, modernization, and digitalization. This observation reflects a broader recognition that education must not merely equip learners with intellectual and professional competencies but must also provide a robust foundation of values, ethical orientation, and social responsibility. Hossain (2024) argued that the failure to attend to these dimensions risks producing technically capable individuals who lack the moral and civic grounding necessary for responsible participation in an increasingly interconnected world.

The significance of this concern is most clearly observable in traditional Islamic educational institutions, particularly *kuttab*, *pondok pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), and *madrasah diniyah* (religious schools). Within these institutions, *adab* (ethical conduct) and *akhlaq* (moral character) are positioned as foundational rather than supplementary components of the learning process. This educational model is enacted through the exemplary conduct of educators and the sustained transmission of well-established ethical values across generations. Nurtawab and Wahyudi (2022) have demonstrated that, despite persistent structural and institutional pressures associated with formal recognition and legislative reform, Indonesian *pesantren* have maintained their capacity to reproduce core Islamic values while selectively engaging with contemporary demands. Fadli and Dwiningrum (2021) further document how *pesantren* have begun to invest in digital literacy and information technology as instruments for institutional advancement, without surrendering the Islamic values that constitute their foundational identity. Within the same institutional context, recent pedagogical studies have demonstrated

that *pesantren* are capable of incorporating globally oriented competencies, such as structured language programs and internationally relevant academic practices, without compromising their distinctive religious and cultural character (Kartika & Afndoliah, 2025). At the classroom level, this institutional commitment is reinforced through instructional strategies that position teachers as moral exemplars and treat character formation as the primary purpose of Islamic schooling, rather than as a secondary supplement to academic instruction (Al Jailani et al., 2025).

Several recent studies have further connected the character formation practices of Islamic educational institutions to the broader framework of Living Values Education (LVE). As Hidayatulloh et al. (2024) demonstrate, LVE offers a pedagogical approach that aligns closely with Islamic values and provides a relevant and systematic response to the moral and social challenges generated by rapid social change and globalization. Within this framework, values are understood not as abstract curriculum content but as principles to be internalized through daily practice, communal life, and deliberate habituation. This orientation resonates closely with the educational philosophy underlying traditional Islamic institutions, in which moral formation precedes and undergirds intellectual development. Rahman and Azzahra (2024) further affirm that the capacity of Islamic education to preserve cultural identity amid global modernity depends on precisely this emphasis on values internalization, which distinguishes Islamic educational practice from predominantly secular paradigms that treat moral education as a peripheral concern.

Notwithstanding these contributions, a careful review of the existing literature reveals several significant gaps that this article seeks to address. First, most prior studies examining the adaptability of traditional Islamic educational institutions have concentrated primarily on structural, curricular, or technological dimensions of modernization, giving comparatively limited attention to the normative epistemological foundations that underpin Islamic educational practice (Fadli & Dwiningrum, 2021; Nurtawab & Wahyudi, 2022). Second, while the relevance of Islamic values to contemporary educational challenges has been acknowledged in general terms, few studies have undertaken a systematic normative analysis grounded directly in the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith. Existing scholarship tends to invoke these sources as background references rather than as primary analytical objects. Third, studies that engage with values-based education in Islamic contexts have rarely situated their arguments within the broader discourse of global educational challenges, thereby limiting their capacity to contribute to international scholarly and policy debates (Hidayatulloh et al., 2024; Rahman & Azzahra, 2024).

These gaps are consequential. The Qur'an and Hadith articulate a comprehensive educational philosophy that explicitly addresses moral excellence, social responsibility, justice, and the formation of character as constitutive objectives of human development. Treating these sources as peripheral rather than central to the analysis of Islamic education represents a methodological limitation

that this study seeks to correct. Furthermore, as contemporary global educational discourse grapples with learning crises, declining social cohesion, and the erosion of ethical foundations within competency-based systems, the normative resources embedded within the Islamic tradition warrant more rigorous and systematic scholarly engagement.

This article therefore pursues three interrelated objectives. First, it examines how traditional Islamic educational institutions, namely *kuttab*, *pesantren*, and *madrasah diniyah*, respond to the educational challenges of the twenty-first century from the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith. Second, it identifies the normative values derived from Islamic revelation that are most directly relevant to contemporary global educational agendas, particularly those concerned with character development, global citizenship, and social responsibility. Third, it proposes a conceptual framework for values-based education that is both epistemologically grounded in Islamic revelation and capable of engaging constructively with contemporary demands for educational relevance and adaptability. By integrating normative Islamic sources with current educational concerns, this study contributes to ongoing scholarly discussions regarding the future of values-based education in an increasingly complex and interconnected global context..

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design using a library research (*kajian pustaka*) approach. This method is appropriate for studies that are primarily conceptual and normative in nature, as it allows for systematic engagement with existing scholarly literature, primary textual sources, and theoretical frameworks without requiring fieldwork or empirical data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The library research approach enabled the rigorous exploration of ideas, concepts, and patterns of thought embedded in Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary educational scholarship, while situating them within the normative foundations of the Qur'an and Hadith as the primary epistemological basis of the study.

Data sources were organized into two categories. Primary data consisted of Qur'anic verses and Hadiths directly related to the objectives, methods, and ethical dimensions of education, moral development (*akhlaq*), and social responsibility. The selection of specific Qur'anic verses followed three inclusion criteria: thematic relevance to educational values or human formation, explicit engagement with moral conduct or social ethics, and frequent citation in classical and contemporary Islamic educational scholarship. Hadiths were selected from recognized canonical collections, including *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, applying the same thematic criteria with additional attention to authenticity grading (*darjat al-hadith*). Secondary data consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and

other scholarly publications addressing traditional Islamic education, values-based education, and contemporary global educational challenges. Secondary sources were included on the basis of three criteria: publication within the period 2021 to 2026 to ensure currency, indexing in recognized academic databases to ensure scholarly credibility, and direct thematic relevance to the study's research questions.

Data analysis proceeded through two complementary methods. Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring values, pedagogical principles, and educational objectives across both the primary Islamic sources and the secondary scholarly literature. This process involved systematic reading, open coding of relevant passages, and the progressive grouping of codes into broader thematic categories. Normative-conceptual analysis was subsequently applied to examine the logical coherence of the identified values, to trace their derivation from Qur'anic and Prophetic sources, and to assess their applicability to contemporary global educational challenges. This dual analytical approach enabled the study to move between descriptive mapping of existing knowledge and normative evaluation of its relevance and implications.

To strengthen the validity and credibility of the findings, source triangulation was employed throughout the analytical process. Triangulation in this study involved the cross-referencing of three distinct source types, namely Qur'anic texts, Hadith traditions, and peer-reviewed academic scholarship, to verify the consistency and coherence of the normative claims advanced in the analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Where convergence was identified across all three source types, the corresponding finding was treated as analytically robust. Where divergence or tension was identified, the discrepancy was examined and addressed within the discussion. In addition, the logical consistency of the arguments was evaluated throughout the writing process to ensure that the conceptual framework proposed in this study maintains internal coherence and does not overextend the normative scope of the primary Islamic sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Global Challenges in Twenty-First-Century Education

Education in the twenty-first century operates within a context of accelerating complexity that demands structural, pedagogical, and ethical responses at multiple levels. Rapid technological advancement, digital disruption, and global economic instability have compelled educational systems to become more adaptive and innovative in ways that earlier educational frameworks did not anticipate (Moravec & Martínez-Bravo, 2023). According to the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (2020), persistent inequalities in access to quality education remain among the most critical unresolved challenges confronting national educational systems worldwide, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. These inequalities are reflected in unequal distribution of educational infrastructure, significant disparities in teacher quality and professional competence, and the

limited relevance of existing curricula to learners' actual developmental needs. Avvisati and Ilizaliturri (2023) similarly observes that educational outcomes in many countries remain stratified along socioeconomic lines, and that improvements in measurable academic performance have not consistently translated into equitable gains in social mobility or civic participation.

A second and equally pressing challenge concerns what UNESCO (2020) describes as a global learning crisis, characterized by persistently low levels of foundational literacy and numeracy despite decades of investment in formal schooling. This crisis extends well beyond the educational system itself and generates measurable consequences for democratic participation, economic productivity, and social cohesion. Thelma (2024) believed that the deficiencies in foundational competencies and social values contribute to increased poverty, widening inequality, and the erosion of the civic capacities necessary for meaningful participation in public life. Addressing this crisis requires reforms that extend beyond cognitive achievement to include the development of ethical responsibility, critical thinking, and social awareness as constitutive rather than supplementary dimensions of educational quality (Adnyana et al., 2025). This broader understanding aligns with the recommendations of the UNESCO Futures of Education report (2021), which calls for a renewed social contract for education that places human dignity, social justice, and ecological responsibility at the center of learning.

These global challenges are not merely technical problems amenable to curricular or technological solutions alone. They reflect a deeper structural tension within contemporary educational paradigms between the drive toward measurable performance and the cultivation of the moral, relational, and civic dimensions of human development. It is within this tension that the contributions of traditional Islamic education become analytically significant, not as a replacement for contemporary educational reform, but as a normative reference that foregrounds the dimensions most at risk of neglect within competency-based systems.

Traditional Islamic Education and Modernization

Islamic education, at its foundational level, represents a process of knowledge transmission and values internalization through which learners are guided toward the actualization of their innate human disposition (*fitrah*) (Wahyuningsih et al., 2025). Its primary aim is the holistic and integrated development of the human person across spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions. Consequently, Islamic education is not reducible to the transmission of religious knowledge but concerns the comprehensive formation of individuals characterized by sound moral conduct and virtuous character (*akhlak karimah*) (Khoiruddin, 2018). This understanding is consistent with the perspective of Azyumardi Azra, who argues that traditional Islamic educational institutions, particularly *pesantren*, occupy a strategic position as custodians of Islamic intellectual traditions. These institutions

preserve Islamic scholarship, integrate local cultural values with religious teachings, and sustain Muslim communal identity through an educational model grounded in three interconnected principles: *adab* (ethical conduct), character formation, and close pedagogical relationships between teachers and students (Lubis & Hanum OK, 2024).

The process of adaptation and modernization within traditional Islamic education must be understood against this normative background. Nurtawab and Wahyudi (2022), in their study of Indonesian *pesantren* following the enactment of the Pesantren Legislation of 2019, demonstrate that institutional formalization does not necessarily undermine the values-based identity of traditional Islamic schools, provided that core pedagogical principles are preserved. Their findings indicate that *pesantren* have navigated legislative and structural changes by selectively incorporating formal educational standards while maintaining their foundational emphasis on moral formation and teacher-student relationships. This finding extends rather than contradicts the argument advanced by Fadli and Dwiningrum (2021), who document digital literacy initiatives within *pesantren* as an adaptive strategy that enhances institutional relevance without displacing Islamic values. Taken together, these studies support the view that modernization within traditional Islamic education is best characterized as selective and principled adaptation rather than uncritical assimilation of external educational models.

It is important, however, to acknowledge that this process of adaptation is neither uniform nor without tension. Not all traditional Islamic educational institutions possess the resources, leadership capacity, or institutional infrastructure necessary to manage modernization effectively. Kartika and Afndoliah (2025) document that even in well-resourced *pesantren* that successfully integrate contemporary academic programs, significant challenges remain in sustaining alignment between global competency development and the preservation of Islamic identity, particularly when external pressures from formal accreditation systems and labor market expectations intensify. Al Jailani et al. (2025) similarly note that character formation in Islamic schools is frequently constrained by socioeconomic marginalization, limited institutional resources, and the difficulty of sustaining consistent behavioral transformation among learners exposed to competing moral frameworks outside the school environment. These findings introduce a necessary critical dimension that prevents an uncritically optimistic reading of traditional Islamic education's adaptability.

Furthermore, the knowledge-values relationship within Islamic education carries epistemological implications that distinguish it from secular educational models. Within the Islamic educational tradition, knowledge is understood through the interconnected relationships between human beings and God (*habl min Allah*), fellow human beings (*habl min al-nas*), and the natural environment (*habl min al-alam*) (Zulkifli et al., 2021). These relational dimensions ensure that knowledge acquisition is embedded within an ethical orientation rather than pursued as a value-

neutral enterprise. The modernization of Islamic education should therefore not be understood as the secularization of its epistemological foundations but as the contextual application of enduring Islamic values within changing social and technological realities (Lubis & Ok, 2024).

Qur'anic and Hadith-Based Values in Islamic Education

The Qur'an and Hadith constitute the primary normative foundations that shape the orientation, objectives, and practices of Islamic education. They function not only as theological references but as pedagogical sources that directly guide the educational process, particularly in the formation of human character (Haetami et al., 2025; Syaifudin et al., 2025). From this perspective, Islamic education is not merely a means of achieving cognitive or academic success but a process of personal development directed toward the attainment of *akhlaq karimah* and spiritual proximity to Allah SWT (Septianti et al., 2021). Serious engagement with these sources reveals a systematic educational philosophy with direct relevance to contemporary global educational concerns.

Among the most significant Qur'anic foundations of Islamic educational values is Surah Al-Hujurat (49:11-13), which articulates a comprehensive social ethics grounded in human dignity, mutual respect, and the prohibition of ridicule, suspicion, and the exposure of others' faults. These verses establish an educational framework oriented not merely toward individual moral development but toward the cultivation of civic virtues and social responsibility within a diverse human community. The educational implications of this passage are substantial: learners are expected to develop the capacity for critical self-reflection, to resist social prejudice, and to engage with others across differences with justice and compassion. Surah Luqman (31:13-19) complements this social ethics with a model of family-based moral formation in which *tawhid*, gratitude, humility, and restraint in social conduct are transmitted through deliberate and sustained guidance. Together, these passages establish that Islamic education conceptualizes moral formation as a process that begins within intimate relational contexts and progressively extends toward broader social responsibilities.

The Hadith tradition provides equally substantive pedagogical guidance that deserves direct analytical attention. The Prophet Muhammad SAW stated, as recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Hadith No. 6018): "The best among you are those with the best character (*akhlaq*)." This Hadith establishes moral excellence as the supreme criterion of human distinction, explicitly displacing wealth, lineage, and intellectual achievement as the primary measures of human worth. Its educational implication is direct: the central purpose of education is not the production of academically capable individuals but the formation of persons of moral integrity. A second foundational Hadith, recorded in *Sunan Ibn Majah* (Hadith No. 224), states: "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim." This tradition establishes intellectual development as a religious duty, embedding knowledge

acquisition within a framework of moral and spiritual accountability. The combination of these two traditions articulates the Islamic educational ideal precisely: knowledge-seeking is obligatory, but the formation of character constitutes the ultimate measure of educational success. This normative framework resonates directly with contemporary global calls for a shift from purely cognitive outcomes toward the development of ethical agency and social responsibility (UNESCO, 2021).

A further Hadith of significant pedagogical relevance is the statement attributed to the Prophet SAW in *Musnad Ahmad* (Hadith No. 8952): “I was sent only to perfect noble character (*makarim al-akhlaq*).” This declaration defines the Prophetic mission in explicitly educational and moral terms, positioning the Prophet SAW as the first and most complete educator in Islamic civilization. The Hadith grounds Islamic educational practice in a model of exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*) in which the teacher's personal moral character is not merely supplementary to but constitutive of the educational process. This principle directly informs the *pesantren* tradition, in which the *kiai* serves as a living model of the values being transmitted, and the teacher-student relationship is understood as a moral and spiritual bond rather than a purely instructional transaction (Lubis & Hanum OK, 2024). Herlambang et al. (2024) argue that the Prophetic model of education, precisely because it integrates moral exemplification with intellectual transmission, offers a pedagogical paradigm that addresses the limitations of educational systems in which knowledge and values are treated as separate domains.

Within traditional Islamic educational institutions, these Qur'anic and Hadith-derived values are not merely taught as abstract content but are actively embodied through institutional practice. In *pesantren*, *kuttab*, and *madrrasah diniyah*, moral education and civic responsibility are transmitted through daily communal life, educator exemplification, and structured habituation. This approach aligns with Hidayatulloh et al. (2024) findings that values internalization is most effective when values are experienced through practice and relationship rather than delivered through didactic instruction alone, thereby confirming that the pedagogical methods of traditional Islamic institutions are not merely historically inherited customs but empirically grounded educational practices.

The Global Relevance of Qur'anic and Hadith-Based Values in Contemporary Education

The values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith carry a relevance that extends beyond Muslim educational communities and contributes to the broader international discourse on educational purpose, human development, and social cohesion. The UNESCO Futures of Education report (2021) explicitly calls for educational systems to develop learners who possess the capacity for ethical judgment, collaborative action, and commitment to social justice. These aspirations

correspond closely with the Islamic educational principles of *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, justice (*al-adl*), *amanah*, and collective responsibility, which position moral formation as foundational rather than supplementary to the educational enterprise.

This correspondence is further substantiated by the capacity of Qur'anic and Hadith-based values to address the social consequences of modernization. Issues such as social fragmentation, ethical uncertainty, declining interpersonal trust, and the weakening of communal bonds have emerged as significant concerns across contemporary societies (Djidin, 2024). The Qur'anic emphasis on justice, the Hadith-based insistence on moral excellence, and the Islamic educational tradition's sustained attention to social responsibility collectively provide a normative framework that is both principled and practically oriented. Rahman and Azzahra (2024) observe that Islamic education's capacity to preserve cultural identity amid global modernity derives precisely from this normative groundedness, which enables Muslim educational communities to engage selectively with global trends without surrendering their moral and spiritual orientation.

A critical qualification is necessary at this point. The values articulated in the Qur'an and Hadith are embedded within a specific theological and cultural tradition, and their application within broader global educational discourse requires careful contextual sensitivity. The argument for their global relevance does not imply that Islamic educational values are identical to or interchangeable with those of other traditions. Rather, it suggests that the Islamic tradition's insistence on the inseparability of knowledge and moral formation, its model of the teacher as a moral exemplar, and its emphasis on social responsibility as a constitutive dimension of learning offer perspectives that enrich global educational discourse precisely because they challenge secular assumptions that frequently underlie dominant educational paradigms. The relationship between Islamic and global educational values is therefore one of productive dialogue rather than straightforward alignment.

Values-Based Education

Values-based education refers to an educational approach in which moral, ethical, and humanistic values constitute the foundation of the entire learning process (Huang et al., 2024). Education is understood not merely as the acquisition of knowledge and technical skills but as a process of shaping learners' character, civic identity, and personal integrity. The emergence of values-based education as a recognized framework in international educational discourse reflects a growing acknowledgment of the limitations of purely cognitive and competency-oriented approaches, which have frequently produced technically capable individuals who nonetheless lack the ethical awareness and social commitment necessary for responsible citizenship (UNESCO, 2021).

Conceptually, values-based education aligns closely with the objectives of Islamic education. Core principles such as *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, justice, *amanah*, and

social responsibility constitute the normative foundations of educational aims, content, and methods within the Islamic tradition. Derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, these values are not supplementary curriculum components but the very core of the educational process. Consequently, Islamic education seeks to develop individuals who embody a balanced integration of spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions, reflecting the classical ideal of *insan kamil*. This ideal has direct parallels in contemporary global educational frameworks, including the OECD Learning Compass 2030, which positions student agency, values, and responsible action as central to twenty-first-century education.

Historical and contemporary examples of values-based educational practice are most clearly evident in *kuttab* and *pesantren*. Within these institutions, *adab* is regarded not merely as a behavioral norm but as a prerequisite to knowledge, in accordance with the classical formulation attributed to Imam Malik: "Learn *adab* before you learn knowledge." Educators serve as moral exemplars whose personal conduct reinforces the values transmitted in instruction, enacting the Prophetic model of *uswah hasanah*. The continuous cultivation of values through daily practice and communal life enables learners to internalize ethical principles through lived experience. Al Jailani et al. (2025) confirm that this model of character formation, when supported by adequate institutional resources and sustained family collaboration, produces observable improvements in learners' moral awareness, though they note that socioeconomic pressures and competing cultural influences can limit the consistency of behavioral transformation. This empirical qualification is analytically important because it guards against an idealized reading of traditional Islamic educational practice and draws attention to the structural conditions that determine whether values-based education achieves its stated objectives in practice.

At the global level, the increasing prevalence of moral uncertainty, social inequality, and the erosion of communal solidarity has intensified the practical urgency of values-based education. These concerns correspond directly with the principles embedded in Islamic educational thought, particularly those related to social justice, collective responsibility, and the relational dimensions of human development. The Islamic educational tradition's foundational insistence that knowledge without moral formation is incomplete therefore offers not only a coherent internal educational framework but also a potential conceptual contribution to international discussions regarding the development of more equitable, humane, and morally grounded educational systems.

Integrating Revelation and Modernity

The integration of revelation and modernity constitutes a central issue in contemporary Islamic educational discourse. Islamic education is fundamentally grounded in the Qur'an and Hadith, which serve as the primary sources of educational values, norms, and objectives. Contemporary societies are simultaneously shaped by rapid advances in science and technology, the expansion

of digital communication, and ongoing social transformation. These developments present challenges that educational institutions cannot responsibly ignore. The central question for Islamic education is therefore not whether to engage with modernity but how to do so in a manner that preserves the normative integrity of Islamic revelation while remaining genuinely responsive to contemporary educational demands.

From the perspective of Islamic educational thought, revelation functions as a normative and ethical foundation that guides the aims, direction, and moral boundaries of educational practice. The Qur'an and Hadith do not oppose social change, scientific inquiry, or technological development. They provide principles that ensure such developments remain aligned with the values of *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, justice, and social responsibility. In this sense, modernization is interpreted not as secularization but as a dynamic context in which Islamic educational values must be continuously applied and re-articulated. This position is consistent with the classical Islamic concept of *ijtihad*, understood here as pedagogical reasoning that responds to new circumstances while remaining anchored in the ethical and spiritual foundations of the tradition. Nurtawab and Wahyudi (2022) provide empirical support for this position, demonstrating that Indonesian *pesantren* have engaged in precisely this form of adaptive reasoning in navigating legislative and social pressures, selectively incorporating formal educational standards without abandoning their foundational values.

It is necessary, however, to engage honestly with the tensions this integration involves. The adoption of digital technologies, competency-based curricula, and externally defined performance standards introduces pressures that do not always align naturally with the moral and relational priorities of traditional Islamic education. Institutions that lack adequate resources, strong leadership, or supportive policy environments may find that modernization gradually erodes rather than strengthens their values-based identity, particularly when external accountability frameworks reward measurable academic outcomes at the expense of character formation (Bosio, 2023). This tension is not resolved by asserting the compatibility of revelation and modernity in the abstract. It requires concrete institutional strategies, including the deliberate design of curricula that embed Islamic values within modern subject matter, the sustained professional development of teachers as moral exemplars, and the cultivation of school cultures that reinforce values through communal practice.

The principle of *wasatiyyah* (moderation and balance) provides the normative framework for navigating these tensions. *Wasatiyyah* guards against two opposing failures: excessive conservatism that rejects engagement with contemporary developments and thereby diminishes the social relevance of Islamic education, and uncritical modernization that adopts external educational models without adequate moral discernment. Through *wasatiyyah*, tradition and innovation are positioned as complementary rather than competing orientations, enabling Islamic educational

institutions to remain both faithful to their normative foundations and genuinely responsive to the educational needs of contemporary learners. This principle ultimately defines the distinctive contribution of Islamic education to global educational discourse: fidelity to revealed values and engagement with modern realities are not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing, provided that the process of modernization is guided by clear moral principles and sustained institutional commitment.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model proposed in this study integrates three analytically distinct but functionally interdependent layers, each of which addresses a specific dimension of the relationship between Islamic educational values and contemporary global educational challenges. The proposed conceptual model integrates three analytically distinct but functionally interdependent layers, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

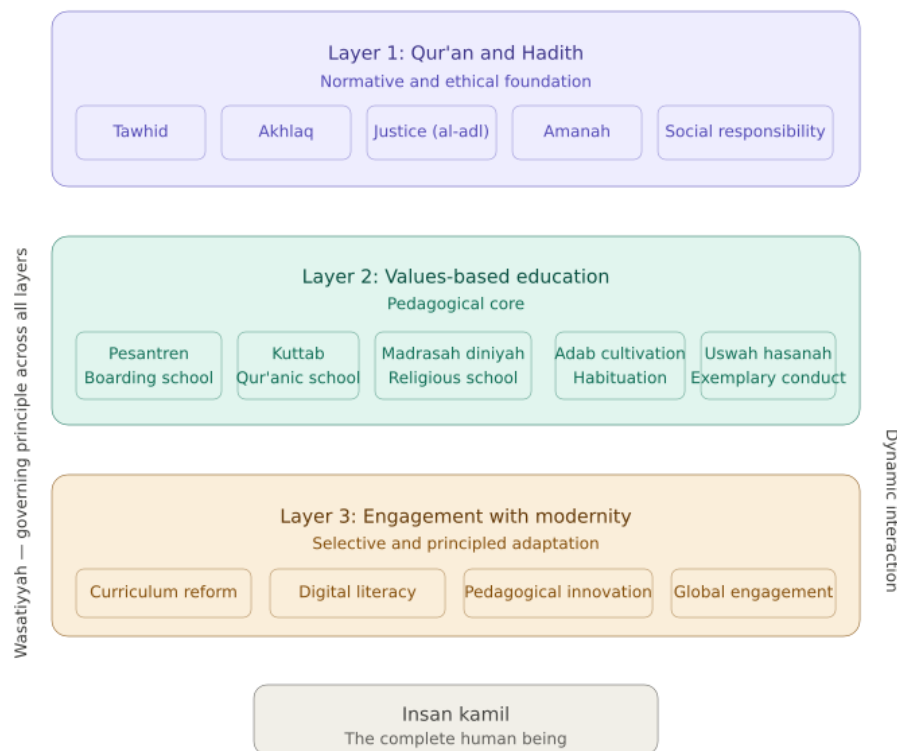


Figure 1 Conceptual Model of Traditional Islamic Education Integrating Revelation and Modernity

The first layer positions the Qur'an and Hadith as the normative and ethical foundation of the entire educational framework. As demonstrated in the preceding discussion, these sources articulate a comprehensive educational philosophy in which *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, justice, *amanah*, and social responsibility function as guiding principles shaping educational aims and practices. This layer establishes the

epistemological orientation of the model: knowledge is not value-neutral but derives its meaning and direction from its relationship to divine guidance and human moral accountability. The Hadith of the Prophet SAW regarding the perfection of noble character (*makarim al-akhlak*) and the religious obligation of knowledge-seeking collectively define the normative standard against which educational practice is evaluated within this framework.

The second layer constitutes the pedagogical core of the model: values-based education as enacted within traditional Islamic educational institutions. Through the cultivation of *adab*, character formation, exemplary conduct by educators, and the sustained practice of moral values through communal life, the ethical principles derived from revelation are translated into lived educational experience. The *pesantren*, *kuttab*, and *madrasah diniyah* serve as the institutional vehicles through which this translation occurs, demonstrating that values-based education is not merely a theoretical aspiration but a practically realized tradition with identifiable pedagogical methods and institutional structures. The empirical evidence reviewed in this study confirms that this model produces genuine outcomes in terms of moral awareness and character development, while acknowledging that its effectiveness is conditioned by institutional capacity, teacher quality, family involvement, and the broader social environment (Al Jailani et al., 2025).

The third layer addresses engagement with modernity through selective and principled adaptation guided by *wasatiyyah*. Curriculum development, reflective pedagogical methods, digital literacy integration, and engagement with international educational standards are understood as legitimate instruments for enhancing the social relevance of Islamic education, provided they remain subordinate to the normative priorities established in the first layer. This selectivity distinguishes the proposed model from both uncritical traditionalism and uncritical modernization, offering a dynamic framework in which continuity and change are held in productive tension.

The integration of these three layers connects the findings of this study to the broader body of literature reviewed in the Introduction. The model supports and extends the arguments advanced by Hidayatulloh et al. (2024) regarding the compatibility of Living Values Education with Islamic educational practice, by grounding that compatibility in specific Qur'anic and Hadith sources rather than in general assertions about Islamic values. It extends the findings of Nurtawab and Wahyudi (2022) by moving beyond the structural and institutional dimensions of *pesantren* modernization to articulate the epistemological principles that should guide such modernization. It responds to the concerns raised by Rahman and Azzahra (2024) regarding the preservation of Islamic identity amid global modernity by demonstrating that identity preservation and educational adaptability are achieved through the same normative framework rather than through competing strategies. Finally, the model's emphasis on teacher moral exemplification, communal values practice, and the inseparability of knowledge and character

formation offers a contribution grounded in a non-Western intellectual tradition to the UNESCO and OECD agendas for human-centered and values-based education, thereby enriching rather than simply affirming the existing global discourse.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Qur'an and Hadith articulate a comprehensive and internally coherent educational philosophy that remains substantively relevant to the challenges confronting global education in the twenty-first century. The normative values of *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, justice, *amanah*, and social responsibility, as derived from specific Qur'anic passages and Prophetic traditions, align closely with contemporary international educational agendas that call for a renewed emphasis on character formation, ethical agency, and human-centered learning. Traditional Islamic educational institutions, namely *pesantren*, *kuttab*, and *madrasah diniyah*, embody this philosophy through pedagogical practices grounded in *adab*, exemplary teacher conduct, and the sustained habituation of moral values through communal life. The conceptual model proposed in this study, integrating revelation as normative foundation, values-based education as pedagogical core, and principled engagement with modernity as adaptive strategy, offers a theoretically grounded framework for understanding how Islamic education negotiates continuity and change without sacrificing its distinctive identity. This contribution extends existing scholarship by moving beyond structural and institutional analyses of Islamic educational modernization toward an explicitly normative and epistemological account rooted in primary Islamic sources, thereby addressing a gap identified in the literature on values-based education in Muslim contexts.

The practical implications of these findings are significant for educational policymakers, institutional leaders, and curriculum developers working within or alongside Islamic educational systems. The study suggests that effective modernization of traditional Islamic educational institutions requires deliberate institutional strategies, including the integration of Islamic values within reformed curricula, sustained professional development of teachers as moral exemplars, and the cultivation of school cultures that reinforce values through communal practice rather than formal instruction alone. At the broader policy level, the study recommends that national education frameworks in Muslim-majority countries recognize the complementarity between Islamic values-based education and global educational quality standards, rather than treating them as competing orientations. For international educational organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD, the study highlights the analytical value of engaging non-Western educational traditions as substantive contributions to the global discourse on human-centered and sustainable education, rather than as regional case studies peripheral to universal frameworks.

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. As a library research study employing normative-conceptual analysis, the findings are not derived from empirical fieldwork and therefore cannot account for the full diversity of institutional practices, contextual variations, or lived experiences within traditional Islamic educational settings across different national and cultural environments. The proposed conceptual model represents an analytical framework rather than an empirically validated instrument, and its practical applicability in specific institutional contexts requires further investigation. Future research should therefore pursue empirical studies, including ethnographic, case study, and comparative approaches, that examine how the normative principles identified in this study are enacted, negotiated, and contested in actual *pesantren*, *kuttab*, and *madrasah diniyah* settings. Comparative studies examining similar dynamics in other Muslim-majority countries beyond Indonesia would further strengthen the generalizability of the framework. Additionally, future work examining how specific Hadith traditions are interpreted and applied within contemporary Islamic educational practice across different jurisprudential schools would deepen the normative analysis initiated in this study.

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