Innovations in Islamic Education Management within the University Context: Addressing Challenges and Exploring Future Prospects

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Received: 11-06-2022 Revised: 30-06-2023 Accepted: 28-07-2023

### Keywords: Innovation, Islamic Education Management, Challenges, Prospects.

This research explores innovation in the management of Islamic education in higher education institutions, along with the associated challenges and prospects. Its objective is to comprehend the challenges of implementing innovation in Islamic education management and assess its prospects. The research methodology employed is a qualitative literature study. The researchers gathered and analyzed various literature sources to gain a more profound understanding. The research findings reveal challenges such as a lack of comprehension, resistance to change, resource limitations, and the conflict between tradition and modernity. Nonetheless, there exist opportunities for developing new adaptive and relevant approaches. Innovation in Islamic education management yields benefits in the form of enhanced learning quality, student skill development, operational efficiency, and increased reputation and competitiveness of higher education institutions. Collaboration and strong leadership serve as pivotal factors for successfully confronting challenges and expanding innovation prospects.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the world of higher education faces various challenges and opportunities in the era of evolving technological innovation. In this context, innovation in the management of Islamic education becomes highly important to address challenges and embrace prospects (Ansori, Rohmatulloh, Sudrajat, Am, & Utami, 2022; Arifin, Desrani, Ritonga, & Ibrahim, 2023; Banmairuroy, Kritjaroen, & Homsombat, 2022). This innovation involves the development and implementation of new methods, strategies, and technologies to manage Islamic education systems in higher education institutions (Damayanti, Sianturi, Damayanto, Bangkara, & Ristianti, 2023; Firdaus, Jamal, & Arifin, 2023). Islamic universities worldwide must continually adapt to the changing times and update their management approaches to align with contemporary demands. The key challenges they face include maintaining the integrity of Islamic values in the curriculum and learning processes, providing high-quality education, developing qualified Islamic leaders and scholars, and establishing inclusive and diverse educational environments (Ajeng Putri, Tedy Sutandy Komarudin, 2022).

In addressing these challenges, innovation in the management of Islamic education plays a crucial role. This innovation involves the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in administrative and learning management, the development of active, creative, and collaborative teaching methods, as well as the implementation of effective management strategies to achieve Islamic education goals (Lia Febria Lina, 2022). The implementation of ICT can broaden students’ access to educational resources, facilitate distance learning and flexible scheduling, and enable interaction between students and professors from different locations. In this regard, e-learning platforms, mobile applications, and social media can be utilized to support effective and inclusive learning processes (Muhammad Fauzi, 2023).

Furthermore, the development of active, creative, and collaborative teaching methods is also a significant innovation in the management of Islamic education in higher education institutions (Arista, Mariani, Sartika, Murni, & Harahap, 2023; Sutarno, 2023). Student-centered approaches that integrate technology, simulations, case studies, and collaborative projects can assist students in acquiring a deeper understanding and actively engaging in the learning process (Ningsih, Suryani, & Aulia, 2019). Effective management strategies are also necessary to achieve Islamic education goals in higher education institutions. Universities should establish clear strategic plans, efficiently manage resources, build strong partnerships with various stakeholders, and continuously evaluate and improve to enhance the quality of education (Komalasari & Yakubu, 2023; Sandria, Asy’ari, & Fatimah, 2022). Overall, innovation in the management of Islamic education in the world of higher education presents complex challenges but also promising prospects. Through the implementation of technology, the development of innovative teaching methods, and effective management strategies, Islamic education in higher education can flourish and overcome existing challenges. This innovation will enable universities to produce graduates and leaders capable of navigating the dynamics of the modern era with a deep understanding of Islamic values (Azkiyah, Kartiko, & Zuana, 2020; Fauzi & Kartiko, 2023; Sirojuddin, Amirullah, Rofiq, & Kartiko, 2022).

The crucial issue (phenomena) that needs to be highlighted and written about in this context is "Innovation in the Management of Islamic Education in Higher Education Institutions." The passage emphasizes the challenges and opportunities faced by Islamic education in higher education due to evolving technological innovation. It emphasizes the importance of innovative approaches in managing Islamic education to address these challenges and embrace prospects.

The main points that make this topic crucial for writing and publication are:
Challenges in Islamic Education: The passage points out various challenges faced by Islamic education in higher education institutions, such as maintaining the integrity of Islamic values in the curriculum, providing high-quality education, developing qualified Islamic leaders and scholars, and establishing inclusive and diverse educational environments. Opportunities for Innovation: The text emphasizes the opportunities presented by technological innovation in addressing these challenges. By utilizing new methods, strategies, and technologies, universities can effectively manage Islamic education systems and stay relevant in contemporary times.

Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The implementation of ICT is highlighted as a crucial aspect of innovation in the management of Islamic education. This includes the use of technology for administrative and learning management, facilitating distance learning, and fostering interactions between students and professors from different locations.

Innovative Teaching Methods: The development of active, creative, and collaborative teaching methods is emphasized as an essential innovation in managing Islamic education in higher education. These student-centered approaches, coupled with technology integration, enhance learning outcomes and engagement.

Effective Management Strategies: The passage underscores the significance of effective management strategies in achieving Islamic education goals. This involves establishing clear strategic plans, efficient resource management, building strong partnerships, and continuous evaluation for enhancing education quality.

Complex Challenges and Promising Prospects: The topic presents a balance between the complexities of the challenges faced by Islamic education and the promising prospects offered by innovative management approaches. This makes it a compelling subject for further exploration and analysis.

Relevance for the Modern Era: The innovation in the management of Islamic education is crucial to producing graduates and leaders capable of navigating the dynamics of the modern era while upholding Islamic values. In general, the topic of "Innovation in the Management of Islamic Education in Higher Education Institutions" addresses crucial issues that are pertinent to the development and progress of Islamic education in the rapidly changing world of higher education. It explores the challenges and opportunities, as well as the role of technology and effective management strategies, making it relevant and essential for further discussion and dissemination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach using the method of literature review (Moleong, Lexy, 2007). Relevant literature regarding the topic of innovation in Islamic education management in higher education institutions is collected and analyzed through discussions. In this research method, the researcher gathers various types of literature such as journal articles, books, conference papers, and research reports that are related to the topic. These sources of literature are then critically analyzed to gain a more profound understanding of the challenges and prospects in the innovation of Islamic education management in higher education institutions.

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher considers the arguments, research methodologies, findings, and conclusions present in the collected literature. The objective is to identify patterns, findings, and concepts that emerge from the literature. This literature review method offers a comprehensive overview of the research topic and allows the researcher to integrate existing findings from relevant literature. Consequently, this research can provide a thorough understanding of innovation in Islamic education management in higher education institutions, as well as the challenges and prospects associated with the topic.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Utilization of Technology in Islamic Education

Technology has opened doors for more affordable and easily accessible Islamic education. One of the main benefits is easier access to various educational resources. Through digital devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones, students can access religious books, interpretations of the Qur'an, hadiths, and other Islamic literature (Olan, Idi, Zainuri, & Sandi, 2019). They can read, listen to, or even study the verses of the Holy Qur'an with various available translations. These resources can be accessed anytime and from anywhere, freeing students from the limitations of physical or geographic boundaries in obtaining information and understanding about Islam.

Additionally, there are various applications and software specifically developed for Islamic education. Digital Qur'an applications, for example, allow users to read, listen to, and study the verses of the Holy Qur'an with various interactive features. Some applications offer other Islamic learning resources such as online courses, video lectures, or interactive quizzes that assist students in learning engagingly and interactively. E-learning and online courses are also growing trends in Islamic education (Ayyusufi, Anshori, & Muthoifin, 2022; Rustiana & Ma’arif, 2022). E-learning platforms provide comprehensive Islamic courses covering various topics such as interpretation of the Qur'an, hadiths, Islamic history, and fiqh (Islamic law) (Laventia, 2021). Through e-learning, students can learn independently, at their own pace and time (Gumilar & Hermawan, 2021). They can access learning materials, follow learning modules, and take tests or exams online. Moreover, online discussion forums enable students to interact with instructors and fellow students, exchange thoughts, and discuss topics related to Islam.

The use of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) is also becoming popular in Islamic education (Rosa, Sunardi, & Setiawan, 2019). By using VR headsets, students can virtually "visit" sacred places of Islam such as the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca or the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. They can participate in simulations depicting important historical events in Islam, such as the journey of the Prophet Muhammad or the Battle of Badr. This helps students visualize and understand the historical and cultural context of Islam better, providing a profound and interactive learning experience (Farida, Ma’arif, & Kartiko, 2021).

Furthermore, social media and online communities also play a significant role in Islamic education (Zazin & Zaim, 2020). Through social media platforms like Facebook groups, YouTube channels, or instant messaging applications, students can interact with instructors and fellow students from around the world. They can share understandings, exchange information, and gain new insights into Islam. Social media also provides opportunities to discuss religious issues (Shofiyyah & Paturohman, 2022), answer questions, and promote interfaith dialogue. However, it is important to remember that the use of technology in Islamic education must align with religious values and principles (Shofiyyah, 2022). It is crucial to ensure that the content accessed and disseminated through technology is by the correct teachings of Islam and can be held accountable. Continuous evaluation and monitoring are also necessary to ensure that technology is utilized appropriately and in line with the goals of Islamic education.

Skill-Based Curriculum

A skill-based curriculum in higher education is an approach designed to provide students with practical and professional skills needed in the real world (Liana, 2020). This approach recognizes the importance of developing additional skills alongside academic knowledge to prepare students for the evolving demands of the workforce. One significant aspect of the skill-based
curriculum is the emphasis on the development of skills that are relevant to the job market. Universities strive to ensure that their graduates possess skills desired by employers and can quickly adapt to changes in the work environment. These skills include effective communication, problem-solving, teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking. Within this curriculum, these skills are learned and applied in real-world contexts.

A skill-based curriculum also aims to integrate theory and practice (Arik Nur Maudina, 2020). Students are not only provided with theoretical knowledge in the classroom but also given opportunities to apply that knowledge in practical situations. This can be achieved through internships, collaborative projects, or simulations where students can observe how theory is applied in real-life scenarios. Through these practical experiences, students can develop a deeper understanding and acquire relevant skills for the workforce.

A skill-based curriculum promotes active and collaborative learning (Purwati & Erawati, 2021). Students are encouraged to actively engage in the learning process through discussions, group projects, or case studies. In such an environment, students can actively participate in their learning, share ideas, learn from their peers' experiences, and collaborate to find solutions to complex problems. This helps students develop communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, which are highly valued in the job market (Sodikin, Imaduddin, Abidin, & Sirojuddin, 2022).

The development of interdisciplinary skills is also a focus of the skill-based curriculum (Muttaqiin, 2023). Students are given opportunities to learn from various disciplines and integrate knowledge and skills from different fields. This approach helps students become more flexible and adaptable in facing complex and multidimensional challenges in the real world. They can combine knowledge and skills from different fields to solve problems and tackle complex challenges. Assessment in the skill-based curriculum is based on students' performance in applying the skills they have learned. In addition to written exams, students are also assessed through practical tasks, presentations, projects, or portfolios of work. This assessment approach allows students to demonstrate their abilities authentically and provides more comprehensive feedback for their skill development. Overall, the skill-based curriculum in higher education aims to prepare students for success in the workforce by developing practical and relevant professional skills. Through this approach, students can become more prepared and competitive graduates in an increasingly complex and ever-changing job market.

**Distance Learning in the Context of Islamic Education**

Distance learning in the context of Islamic education in higher education is an approach that utilizes information and communication technology (ICT) to deliver Islamic education to students who are unable to physically attend campus (Desti Dwi Fitri, 2023). This approach aims to provide broader access to individuals seeking Islamic education, regardless of geographical constraints or time limitations. One of the key benefits of distance learning is increased accessibility. Through the use of technology such as the Internet, individuals residing in remote areas or lacking easy access to traditional Islamic educational institutions can access education. They can attend lectures, access learning materials, and interact with professors and fellow students without being physically present on campus. This provides them with an opportunity to acquire Islamic education without having to leave their residential location. Distance learning also offers flexibility in terms of time for students (Desti Dwi Fitri, 2023). They can arrange their study schedules according to their convenience. This allows students who have jobs or family responsibilities to continue their education without compromising their other commitments. With
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recorded lectures and accessible learning materials, students have the freedom to learn at their own pace. They can determine the most effective study time for themselves, whether it's in the morning, afternoon, or evening.

Although students are not physically present on campus, distance learning still enables interaction and collaborative learning. Through online communication tools such as discussion forums, study groups, or collaborative learning platforms, students can engage with professors and fellow students. They can discuss, exchange ideas, and deepen their understanding of Islam. In this environment, active and collaborative learning can occur even though students are geographically dispersed. It also helps build a diverse virtual learning community (Unik Hanifah Salsabila, Lintang Ahmad Mustika, Sherin Dwi Utami, Muhammad Nurul Ikhsan, 2023).

The use of supportive technology is key in distance learning. Electronic learning platforms, video conferences, and interactive learning materials are utilized to deliver educational content. Students can access learning materials, complete assignments, and communicate with professors and fellow students through these technologies. The use of multimedia, including audio and video, also enriches students' learning experiences and helps them better understand religious concepts. Challenges in distance learning include a lack of direct interaction with professors and fellow students, limited direct monitoring of students' progress, and the need for high self-discipline from students to manage time and study independently (Sari, 2020). However, with the development of effective instructional models, adequate technical support, and increased interaction through online platforms, these challenges can be overcome. Overall, distance learning in the context of Islamic education in higher education provides broader accessibility, and flexibility in terms of time, interaction, and collaborative learning, and relies on supportive technology to deliver educational content. Despite the challenges, this approach can be an effective alternative for disseminating Islamic education in various regions.

The use of Big Data and Analytics in Islamic education management

The use of Big Data and analytics in the management of Islamic education in higher education involves the utilization of technology and data analysis methods to collect, store, manage, analyze, and leverage data in the context of Islamic education. In practice, data is collected from various sources, including academic information systems, online learning platforms, student surveys, and others, to provide deeper insights to decision-makers in managing Islamic education in higher education institutions.

The process begins with data collection and storage. In the management of Islamic education, data is collected from various sources that encompass student personal information, academic information, attendance data, and evaluation results (Abusin, J., Aliani, S.O., & Rofiq, 2021). Big Data technology is used to efficiently collect and store this data. Strong database management systems and reliable infrastructure are required to ensure data integrity and security. Once the data is collected, the next step is to analyze it. Analytical methods are employed to identify patterns, trends, and insights contained within the data. By utilizing data analysis algorithms and techniques such as predictive analysis, descriptive analysis, and visual analysis, educational institutions can gain a deeper understanding of student performance, attendance patterns, academic trends, and other factors that influence Islamic education.

The use of Big Data and analytics also enables prediction and modeling (Demasari, Ariyanti, Muhanar, & Ilman, 2023). By analyzing historical data, educational institutions can develop predictive models to estimate student performance, graduation rates, or individual
learning needs. This information can be used to identify factors that contribute to student success and take necessary steps to enhance educational outcomes. One significant benefit of using Big Data and analytics in the management of Islamic education in higher education is the ability to personalize learning. By understanding students' needs, interests, and learning styles through data analysis, educational institutions can provide individually tailored learning experiences. This may include recommendations for learning materials, teaching methods, and curriculum adjustments to better meet students' needs. The use of Big Data and analytics also contribute to informed decision-making. Through data analysis, the management of Islamic education in higher education can make evidence-based decisions and have a more comprehensive understanding of factors that influence Islamic education. Analyzed data provides profound insights into program effectiveness, teaching strategies, or educational policies. Thus, decision-making can be more informed and precise.

Overall, the use of Big Data and analytics in the management of Islamic education in higher education allows educational institutions to effectively leverage data to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of education. By carefully analyzing data, educational institutions can identify issues, take appropriate actions, and optimize the educational experience for students. It is important to consider data privacy and security aspects and ensure that data usage is done in good faith and by the ethics of using personal information (Sirojuddin, Ashlahuddin, & Aprilianto, 2022).

The statement does not specifically refer to any specific theories supporting the use of Big Data and analytics in the management of Islamic education in higher education. However, there are several relevant perspectives and theoretical approaches to understanding and supporting the use of Big Data and analytics in the context of education in general. One relevant perspective is the constructivist approach to education, which emphasizes the importance of understanding students as active learners who construct their knowledge through interaction with the environment and experiences (Suparlan, 2019). In the context of using Big Data and analytics, this approach supports personalized learning, where data is collected and analyzed to better understand students' needs, interests, and learning styles.

Social learning theory is also relevant, emphasizing the importance of social interaction and collaboration in learning. In the context of using Big Data and analytics, this approach can support the use of data to facilitate collaborative learning and interaction among students and promote deeper understanding through data analysis involving a social framework (Herly Janet Lesilolo, 2019). Additionally, approaches based on knowledge management principles and evidence-based decision-making are also relevant. These involve using data and analytics to inform more effective decision-making and actions in educational management. These principles are rooted in the fields of management, scientific knowledge, and evidence-based management practices.

However, it is important to note that the use of Big Data and analytics in Islamic education in higher education is still in its developmental stages, and specific theories and approaches supporting it may continue to evolve along with advancements and research in this field. Therefore, the approaches used may vary depending on the context of educational institutions and the objectives of data usage.
Development of Digital Skills for Teaching Staff and Students

The development of digital skills focuses on enhancing individuals' understanding, knowledge, and abilities to effectively use digital technology in an educational context. For teaching staff, the development of digital skills allows them to integrate technology into the learning process and deliver instructional material in more engaging and interactive ways. Meanwhile, for students, the development of digital skills helps them access information, communicate, collaborate, and participate in the learning process. The process of developing digital skills begins with digital awareness and literacy (Hasanah & Sukri, 2023). This involves understanding basic concepts of digital technology, such as using hardware devices (such as computers, tablets, or smartphones) and software (applications and programs), as well as understanding online navigation, digital security, and digital ethics. Digital awareness and literacy also involve the ability to identify and evaluate information found online, as well as understanding privacy and security in technology usage. Furthermore, the development of digital skills involves using relevant digital tools and applications in an educational context. Teaching staff and students need to learn how to use online learning platforms, digital collaboration tools, productivity software, research, and data processing applications, as well as social media and other digital communication platforms. Training and guidance in using these tools help to teach staff and students to optimize the potential of digital technology in their academic activities.

Another important aspect of developing digital skills is the integration of technology into learning (Kamsina, 2020). Teaching staff need to be able to design and deliver instructional materials that utilize technology, such as multimedia presentations, instructional videos, online learning platforms, and interactive tools. They also need to understand pedagogical strategies supported by digital technology, such as project-based, collaborative, and self-directed learning. The integration of technology in learning enables more interactive, relevant learning experiences that enhance student engagement (Komariah, Ruhiat, Saputra, & Bakar, 2023).

Digital skills also involve creativity and innovation in technology usage. Teaching staff and students are encouraged to create compelling and meaningful digital content, such as videos, blogs, podcasts, or other digital learning resources. Digital creativity and innovation enrich the learning experience and provide opportunities to share knowledge in new and engaging ways. Another important aspect in the development of digital skills is digital security and ethics. Teaching staff and students need to understand the importance of maintaining privacy, protecting personal data, and using digital technology ethically. They also need to learn digital security practices, such as protection against malware, network security practices, and safeguarding personal information.

The development of digital skills for teaching staff and students in higher education can be achieved through various methods such as training, workshops, online courses, self-learning resources, and collaboration between educational institutions and the technology industry. This process is an ongoing effort that adapts to the ever-changing digital technology landscape. By strengthening digital skills, teaching staff and students will be better prepared to face challenges and leverage opportunities offered by the digital world in an educational context. The development of digital skills for teaching staff and students in higher education is supported by various relevant theories in the fields of education and technology. One of these is constructivism theory, which emphasizes that individuals construct knowledge through active interaction with the environment and experiences. In the context of developing digital skills, this theory implies that individuals can build digital knowledge and skills through interaction with technology and the digital environment.
Social learning theory is also relevant as it emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. In the development of digital skills, this approach emphasizes collaborative learning, where teaching staff and students learn through interaction with others and collectively utilize digital resources. Additionally, social constructivism theory combines elements of constructivism and social learning. This approach emphasizes that digital learning occurs through social interaction and supportive social contexts, where individuals interact with others and the environment to construct digital knowledge and skills.

Knowledge management theory is also relevant as it emphasizes the importance of managing, utilizing, and exchanging knowledge within organizations (Maryati, Wasliman, Mudrikah, 2021). In the context of developing digital skills, this theory highlights the importance of building and utilizing digital knowledge as a valuable resource in the educational environment. Lastly, technology acceptance and adoption theory helps understand the factors influencing individuals' acceptance and use of technology. In the development of digital skills, this theory assists in understanding the factors influencing teaching staff and students in accepting and using digital technology in an educational context.

The development of digital skills in higher education utilizes the understanding and principles of these theories to design appropriate learning strategies. By understanding these theories, educational institutions can develop effective approaches to enhance the digital skills of teaching staff and students, enabling them to face challenges and leverage opportunities offered by digital technology in an educational context.

Community Engagement in Islamic Education Management

Community involvement in Islamic education management in higher education has significant implications for enhancing the quality and relevance of education to meet societal needs. Here is a more detailed explanation of the importance of community engagement and some examples:

Setting educational goals and vision: Involving the community in the process of formulating goals and vision for Islamic education in higher education is crucial (Muhammad Anggung Manumanoso Prasetyo, Muhammad Ilham, 2022). This can be achieved through dialogues, discussions, and consultations with religious leaders, education practitioners, and other community members. The community can provide valuable input to ensure that the educational goals align with the needs and values of society. For example, universities can hold consultation forums with religious leaders to discuss relevant Islamic education goals that address social developments and the spiritual needs of the community.

Designing relevant curriculum: Community engagement in curriculum design ensures that educational programs cover aspects relevant to the real world (Wright, Ritter, & Gonzales, 2022). Universities can involve education practitioners and experts from related industries to provide insights into the skills and knowledge required by graduates to face job challenges. For instance, in the development of an Islamic-based information technology program, universities can engage IT industry practitioners who adhere to Islamic values to help design a curriculum that integrates technical expertise with Islamic principles (Rozi, Pujiono, & Maskud, 2023).

Monitoring and evaluating educational programs: Involving the community in monitoring and evaluating educational programs is crucial for improving program quality (Hidayah, 2022). The community can provide feedback on program effectiveness, student satisfaction, and the relevance of the learning materials. By involving parents, alumni, and the general public, universities can
identify program strengths and weaknesses and make necessary improvements. For example, universities can involve alumni in evaluation activities and provide them with opportunities to provide input on the relevance of the study programs to the workplace and industry developments.

**Support in infrastructure development:** Community involvement can also play a role in supporting the development of educational facilities and infrastructure (Riinawati, 2022). Communities can contribute financially, and provide human resources, or physical resources to build and upgrade educational facilities. For example, an Islamic university can involve a supervisory board composed of community representatives who play a role in fundraising and supporting the development of educational facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, or classrooms (Saputro & Darim, 2022).

**Community engagement in service programs:** Community involvement in community service programs is a tangible form of a community-based approach (Goff & Sadowski, 2023). Universities can collaborate with communities to implement service programs aimed at empowering the community, improving social well-being, and supporting inclusive education. For example, an Islamic university can involve students and teaching staff in service activities such as skills training for the local community, women's empowerment programs, or educational assistance for underprivileged children (Ahid & Chamid, 2021; Lubis, Fatmawati, Pratiwi, Sabtohadi, & Damayanto, 2022).

Overall, community involvement in Islamic education management in higher education plays a vital role in enhancing the relevance, quality, and positive impact of education. Through close collaboration between universities and communities, an empowering educational environment can be created, producing qualified graduates who can contribute positively to society.

**Critical and Contextual Thinking in Islamic Education**

Critical and Contextual Thinking in Islamic Education in the world of higher education is important in developing a deep understanding of religion and facing the challenges and evolving changes of the times (Wahid & Hamami, 2021). Critical thinking focuses on students' ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information objectively, while contextual thinking emphasizes the importance of understanding and connecting Islamic teachings with their social, cultural, and environmental contexts (Syah, Rama, & Razak, 2023). Here is a more detailed explanation of critical and contextual thinking in Islamic education in the world of higher education:

Critical thinking involves students' ability to actively question, examine, and understand various aspects of Islamic teachings using critical and analytical reasoning. This includes the ability of students to analyze religious texts, question existing interpretations, and seek deeper understanding. Critical thinking also involves students' ability to question beliefs and religious practices that are irrational or contradict universal principles of justice, equality, and compassion (Nilna Azizatus Shofiyyah, Tedy Sutandy Komarudin, 2023). For example, in the study of the Qur’an, students can question the historical context, theology, and interpretation to understand the messages of the Qur’an more comprehensively and critically.

Contextual thinking involves understanding Islamic teachings by considering specific social, cultural, and environmental contexts. This means that students should be able to connect Islamic teachings with the realities of daily life, social challenges, and contemporary issues they face. Contextual thinking requires students to explore the relevance and applicability of Islamic teachings in various life situations, including politics, economics, science, technology, and social...
issues. For example, in the study of Islamic ethics, students can learn how Islamic values can be applied in modern contexts such as business ethics, human rights, environmental sustainability, and technological advancements. By applying critical and contextual thinking, Islamic education in higher education can go beyond mechanical and traditional understanding. Students will be trained to think independently, appreciate the complexity of religious understanding, and be able to confront various contemporary issues with maturity and wisdom. Critical and contextual thinking also helps students see the relationship between Islamic teachings and social and cultural developments, enabling them to become agents of positive change in society (Faidah & Maarif, 2022; Ok, Al-Farabi, & Firmansyah, 2022).

In the context of higher education, a learning approach that promotes critical and contextual thinking involves methods such as classroom discussions, case studies, literature analysis, independent research, and collaboration with the community (Biwer, Egbrink, Aalten, & de Bruin, 2020). Additionally, faculty and instructors play a crucial role in guiding students to develop critical and contextual thinking through challenging assignments, reflective teaching, and facilitating open discussions. Thus, critical and contextual thinking in Islamic education in the world of higher education serves as a strong foundation for deepening students' religious understanding, equipping them with the necessary thinking tools to face the challenges of the times, and encouraging positive contributions to society.

Development of Research and Innovation in Islamic Education Management

The development of research and innovation in Islamic education management in higher education is of great importance in enhancing the quality of education and addressing existing challenges. Through research, universities can conduct in-depth studies on various aspects of Islamic education, including educational theories and practices, teaching methods, curriculum, human resource development, and program evaluation. As a result, universities can gain a better understanding of Islamic education and identify weaknesses and challenges. Furthermore, research aids in the development of more effective and contextually relevant methods of teaching and learning in the realm of Islamic education. Universities can conduct research to identify innovative approaches, relevant technologies, and outcome-oriented learning strategies. For instance, the use of information and communication technology can be developed and adopted to improve accessibility, interactivity, and the effectiveness of the learning process.

The development of research and innovation also provides opportunities for faculty members and researchers to engage in studies related to Islamic education (Lutfi Firdausi, Achmad Patoni, 2023). By supporting research activities, universities create a stimulating environment and provide adequate facilities for faculty members and researchers to generate new ideas, employ innovative research methods, and publish their findings. Additionally, collaboration with external entities such as research institutions, industries, and government agencies is an integral part of research and innovation development. Such collaboration enables the exchange of knowledge, resources, and experiences in the field of Islamic education. Through collaboration, universities can undertake joint research projects, implement technological innovations, and strengthen relationships with industries.

The development of research and innovation also has an impact on the development of curricula that are relevant to the demands and needs of Islamic education. By conducting research on the latest developments in education and understanding the needs of students, universities can integrate religious values, skill competencies, and labor market requirements into the curriculum.
A relevant curriculum ensures that graduates from Islamic universities possess knowledge and skills that are aligned with the demands of the time and can contribute to society. To sum up, the development of research and innovation in Islamic education management in higher education brings about positive outcomes by enhancing the quality of education, generating fresh ideas, and providing optimal solutions to educational challenges. Research and innovation provide a strong scientific foundation, foster critical thinking, and generate new ideas that can enhance the overall quality of Islamic education.

Table 1. Innovations in Islamic Education Management

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<th>No</th>
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<td>Utilization of Technology in Islamic Education</td>
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<td>- Access to various educational resources through digital devices</td>
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<td>- Social media and online communities for interaction</td>
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<td>- Active and collaborative learning approaches</td>
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<td>Distance Learning in Islamic Education</td>
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<td>- Increased accessibility and flexibility with online education</td>
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<td>- Virtual interaction and collaborative learning</td>
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<td>- Utilization of supportive technology for remote learning</td>
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<td>Use of Big Data and Analytics</td>
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<td>- Data collection and analysis for informed decision-making</td>
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<td>- Predictive modeling and personalized learning</td>
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<td>- Ethical considerations in handling data</td>
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<td>Development of Digital Skills</td>
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<td>- Digital awareness and literacy for effective technology use</td>
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<td>- Integration of technology in teaching and learning</td>
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<td>- Encouraging creativity and innovation in technology use</td>
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<td>- Emphasizing digital security and ethics in technology usage</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Community Engagement in Islamic Education Management</td>
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<td>- Involving the community in educational goal setting</td>
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<td>- Designing relevant curriculum with community input</td>
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<td>- Community participation in program monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>- Community support in infrastructure development</td>
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<td>- Collaborative community service programs to benefit society</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Critical and Contextual Thinking in Islamic Education</td>
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<td>- Encouraging critical analysis and understanding of Islamic teachings</td>
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<td>- Relating Islamic teachings to social and cultural contexts</td>
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<td>- Identifying innovative teaching methods and technologies</td>
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CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is to contribute a new perspective, concepts, variables, and methods, which are obtained through the utilization of qualitative methods and a literature study approach. The research on innovation in Islamic education management within higher education institutions highlights the challenges and opportunities faced by Islamic universities. Some key challenges include a lack of understanding and awareness regarding the importance of innovation, resistance to change, and resource limitations. These obstacles can hinder the successful implementation of innovative practices. On the other hand, there are promising prospects for the future of Islamic education management. Islamic universities have the opportunity to develop new, adaptive, and contextually relevant approaches that cater to the needs of the contemporary era. Embracing innovation can lead to transformative changes, ensuring that Islamic education remains dynamic and responsive to the demands of a rapidly evolving global landscape.

The benefits of innovation in Islamic education management are significant and extend to multiple stakeholders. By adopting innovative practices, universities can enhance the quality of learning experiences for students, improve critical thinking skills, and better prepare students for the job market. Furthermore, innovative education management can increase the operational efficiency of universities, optimizing resource allocation and improving institutional performance. It also enhances the competitiveness of Islamic higher education institutions on a global scale, attracting international students and researchers and fostering cross-cultural exchanges.

To fully realize the potential of innovation, collaboration among universities, communities, and other stakeholders is crucial. Engaging with the wider community helps identify real-world needs and design programs that align with societal and cultural contexts. Strategic partnerships with industries and employers ensure that the education provided is relevant to the job market. Strong and visionary leadership is central to driving innovation in Islamic education management. Leaders with a long-term vision and a commitment to change inspire faculty and staff to embrace new ideas and practices, fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration. To conclude, the research emphasizes the transformative power of innovation in Islamic education management, making a lasting impact on students, institutions, and society as a whole. By recognizing the challenges, capitalizing on the opportunities, and adopting innovative practices, Islamic universities can play a pivotal role in shaping a dynamic and progressive future for education in the context of Islam.

REFERENCES


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