

## **Integrative-Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework: A Conceptual Model for Contemporary Curriculum Development**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study develops the Integrative-Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework (IHICF) as a conceptual model to address persistent fragmentation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and its limited alignment with contemporary educational demands. The separation between religious knowledge and modern scientific disciplines, along with instructional practices dominated by memorization, has reduced the relevance of PAI to twenty-first-century competencies such as digital literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and ethical reasoning. Using a qualitative library research approach, this study analyzes literature published between 2020 and 2025 through systematic selection, open coding, thematic synthesis, and conceptual triangulation. The analysis yields four pillars of the IHICF: internal integration across PAI subjects; external integration with modern sciences and social realities; holistic and adaptive learner development; and operational mechanisms involving curriculum planning, teacher capacity, and authentic assessment. The findings indicate that IHICF offers a coherent and applicable curriculum model that bridges Islamic values with contemporary learning needs. It provides structured pathways for thematic instruction, value-based projects, collaborative teaching, and meaningful digital integration. The framework contributes to PAI renewal by supporting learners' ethical grounding, intellectual competence, and social responsiveness.

**Keywords:** Islamic curriculum, integrative learning, holistic development, curriculum innovation, Islamic Religious Education.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in schools and madrassas faces increasingly complex structural challenges amid the development of modern society. One of the fundamental problems is the long-standing dichotomy between religious science and general science, which often separates the spiritual dimension from the social and scientific realities students face. PAI learning remains dominated by textual and memorization approaches, with minimal contextualization of contemporary issues. This condition often leads PAI to be perceived as less relevant to the needs of the 21st Century, including digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. (Isa Anshori et al., 2022; Aziz et al., 2025). As a result, PAI has not been optimal at fostering the ethical, intellectual, and social competencies students need to navigate the dynamics of modern society's development. (Wulandari, 2021; Basyari & Marwiji, 2025).

The next problem is the lack of a curriculum framework that effectively bridges Islamic values, modern science, and students' developmental needs. Various national policies have encouraged integration and a holistic approach, including differentiated learning, authentic assessment, and the strengthening of character student profiles. However, implementation at the school level remains hampered by limitations in curriculum design, lack of coordination among teachers, and the absence of an integrative and adaptive PAI curriculum model. (Nadhiroh & Anshori, 2023; Wati et al., 2025). This fragmentation limits the extent to which curriculum innovation can be implemented, thereby insufficiently driving the transformation of learning practices.

Several previous studies have made important contributions. Kailani Study (2021) Emphasizing the urgency of epistemological integration in the development of the PAI curriculum so as not to be trapped in a purely normative approach. Syachbana and Rahmah (2023) Offer a holistic, adaptive perspective that accommodates learners' diversity within inclusive learning. Taufiq et al (2025) developed the concept of the integration of science and Islam to overcome the dichotomy of knowledge, while Sismanto (2022) Highlighting the need for contextual curricula that are relevant to scientific, social, and cultural developments. On the implementation side, Gasmi et al (2025) and Nasution et al (2025) Shows that the success of an integrative curriculum is primarily determined by teacher collaboration, careful planning, and authentic assessment. However, these studies remain focused on specific elements and have not produced a comprehensive framework that integrates the holistic, adaptive, and operational aspects of implementation.

In light of these gaps, this article proposes an Integrative–Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework (IHICF) as a conceptual solution to address the needs of contemporary PAI curriculum development. IHICF is designed to integrate Islamic values with modern science, develop students holistically, and provide operational components that support the sustainable implementation of the curriculum. This model is expected to be a conceptual reference for schools, madrasas, and researchers in designing a PAI curriculum that is relevant, adaptive, and competency-oriented for the future.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive library research approach to formulate an Integrative-Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework (IHICF) based on the scientific literature from 2020 to 2025. Data were collected through a systematic selection of journal articles, books, and research reports that met criteria for thematic relevance, publication period, and academic credibility. All documents are analyzed using open coding to identify core issues, including curriculum integration, holistic education, adaptive curriculum, implementation, and authentic

assessment. The codes are then synthesized using thematic synthesis techniques to produce consistent conceptual patterns. Conceptual validity is maintained through triangulation of the literature by comparing findings across studies, assessing theoretical coherence, and evaluating the compatibility of synthesis results with implementation research. The final stage involves preparing an IHICF model system that explains the components, inter-pillar relationships, and operational implications within the context of the contemporary PAI curriculum.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Integrative–Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework (IHICF)**

The literature synthesis identified IHICF as a curriculum framework with four main pillars: internal integration of PAI, external integration, holistic development, and monotheism as an epistemological foundation.

#### **1. Internal Integration of the PAI Group**

The results of coding various studies indicate a consistent pattern: one of the main problems in the Islamic Religious Education curriculum is intradisciplinary fragmentation. Subjects within the PAI family, such as the Qur'an, Hadith, Moral Faith, Fiqh, Islamic Cultural History, and Arabic, have often been taught as separate units without a thematic framework that unifies their meaning. As a result, students have only a partial understanding of religion. Fiqh is studied without regard to its moral context; morality is not associated with history; and the study of the Qur'an and Hadith is independent of practical application in everyday life. (Isa Anshori et al., 2022).

Thematic synthesis suggests that internal integration is necessary to establish continuity between all PAI content. An integrative approach enables teachers to design learning around central themes such as social responsibility, the sanctity of worship, character and morality, or the development of Islamic civilization. In this way, learners gain a more complete understanding of the relationship between texts, values, and social practices.

For example, when the theme is honesty, the teacher can relate the postulates of the Qur'an and Hadith, discuss their relevance to the obligatory nature of the Prophet in the Moral Creed, explain their implications for muamalah transactions in Fiqh, and present concrete examples from Islamic history. This integrated approach helps students understand that Islamic teachings do not stand alone but are interconnected within a single value system.

The literature also confirms that internal integration can enhance the coherence of meaning and facilitate students' understanding. The integrated PAI curriculum can eliminate subject barriers that hinder students from seeing the relationship among knowledge, values, and life practices. Therefore, the first pillar of IHICF positions internal integration as the basis

of the curriculum, ensuring that the objectives, content, methods, and evaluation of PAI are aligned and mutually reinforcing.

## 2. External Integration with Modern Science

The analysis shows that integrating Islamic values with modern science is a pressing need for the contemporary PAI curriculum. The fragmentation between religious science and general science has made it difficult for students to see the relevance of Islamic teachings to the scientific, technological, social, and cultural realities they face. Therefore, the literature emphasizes the need for an integrative approach that connects religious texts with empirical phenomena, so that PAI can serve as an ethical foundation for reading and navigating the changing times. (Tatang Hidayat et al., 2020).

Thematic synthesis shows that external integration cannot be understood simply as the addition of scientific material to PAI lessons, but as a process of building a conceptual connection between revelation and reality. This integration can be realized through thematic learning, problem-solving-based projects, contextual studies, and dialogue between religious perspectives and scientific knowledge. Thus, students not only know the teachings of Islam but also interpret technological developments, environmental issues, social dynamics, and the challenges of the digital era through an ethical and spiritual framework of Islamic values.

A concrete example of implementing external integration is to connect the theme of environmental protection with Qur'anic verses on the mandate and prohibition of destroying the earth, and to combine this with scientific literacy on climate change. This approach helps students understand that Islamic teachings are not merely abstract norms but principles relevant to contemporary scientific and social issues. In this way, they learned to judge modern phenomena not only from a rational perspective but also from moral and spiritual values.

External integration is also essential for building a holistic twenty-first-century competence. Learning that links PAI to science, technology, and digital culture allows students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and information literacy without losing their value orientation. Therefore, the second pillar of IHICF positions external integration as a structural element of the curriculum, ensuring continuity between religious teachings and the development of modern science.

## 3. Holistic and Adaptive Student Development

The holistic development of students is a primary need in the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. The holistic approach is understood as an effort to develop all dimensions of students in a balanced manner, namely spiritual, cognitive, affective, social, and psychomotor. However, thematic synthesis indicates that a holistic approach alone is insufficient if it lacks adaptive properties. Each student has a distinct background, ability,

learning rhythm, and social context; therefore, the curriculum must be designed to accommodate this diversity.

The literature confirms that adaptivity is an important marker of the contemporary curriculum. Adaptivity is evident in learning practices that employ instructional differentiation, namely, adjusting methods, materials, and difficulty levels to meet students' needs. In addition, the use of scaffolding, such as the provision of gradual guidance, concrete examples, and systematic feedback, helps learners achieve higher levels of competence without losing the direction of learning. Strategies such as collaborative learning, problem-solving, and value-based discussions also support social and emotional development, which are part of a holistic approach. (Prayitno & Sukiman, 2025).

In the context of PAI, a holistic and adaptive approach emphasizes not only mastery of postulates or memorization but also the internalization of values, the development of attitudes, the cultivation of character, and the application of religious teachings in real life. The integration of this approach also enables students to develop twenty-first-century skills, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, within the framework of Islamic values. Thus, the third pillar of IHICF strengthens students' position as learning subjects that require comprehensive attention and pedagogical adjustments to optimize their development.

#### 4. Operationalization: Planning, Teacher Capacity, and Authentic Assessment

The success of an integrative and holistic curriculum depends heavily on the operational mechanisms that support its implementation. Many studies have emphasized that effective curriculum design will not have a significant impact if it is not supported by systematic planning, adequate teacher capacity, and assessment tools aligned with the learning characteristics of PAI. Careful curriculum planning is necessary to ensure that objectives, materials, methods, and evaluations truly reflect integrative and holistic principles. This includes the preparation of measurable learning objectives, the selection of integrative themes, the design of value-based projects, and the provision of contextual learning resources.

Teacher capacity is the second decisive component. The literature indicates that teachers are required not only to understand the content of PAI but also to master collaborative learning strategies, contextual approaches, and the integration of Islamic values with modern science. Empirical studies show that collaborative learning between PAI teachers and teachers of other subjects can strengthen the connection between religious concepts and empirical reality, thereby facilitating students' understanding of the meaning of Islamic teachings in the context of daily life. (Gasmi et al., 2025). Therefore, teacher professional development and continuous training are an important part of the operationalization of IHICF.

The third component is authentic assessment. Assessments that measure only memorization or cognitive aspects are insufficient to evaluate holistic learning. Authentic assessments are needed to evaluate students' ability to apply grades, solve problems, collaborate, and demonstrate behaviors and attitudes consistent with Islamic teachings. Research indicates that portfolios, observation of worship practices, reflection journals, and project-based assessments can provide a more comprehensive picture of student development. By using authentic assessments, teachers can obtain more accurate information about students' spiritual, moral, and social development. (Prayitno & Sukiman, 2025).

The fourth pillar of IHICF integrates these operational aspects into a single, complementary system. Careful planning, professional teacher capacity, and authentic assessments constitute an implementation cycle that enables the curriculum to operate sustainably and with real impact. Thus, IHICF is not only a theoretical model but also a framework that can be applied practically in schools and madrasas.

### **Practical Implementation of IHICF**

The implementation of IHICF requires operational steps that bridge integrative and holistic concepts with classroom learning practices. Implementation does not stop at the formulation of curriculum documents; it must be realized through the design of learning activities that are relevant to students' needs and the dynamics of the school context. One of the main recommendations is to develop thematic learning units that integrate PAI with one or more core disciplines. The thematic approach enables students to see the relationship between Islamic values and scientific knowledge, thereby making the meaning of learning more contextual rather than fragmented. For example, the theme of environmental concern can combine the Qur'anic verses about trust with the scientific concept of climate change.

The second recommendation is to implement value-based socio-religious projects. Projects such as community service, digital ethics campaigns, or environmental conservation activities can help students apply religious teachings through concrete actions. The literature on implementation indicates that social value projects provide opportunities for learners to develop empathy, responsibility, and concern for others, which are central to holistic Islamic education. Team teaching between PAI teachers and general teachers is recommended as follows. This collaboration is necessary to ensure consistent internal and external integration of the curriculum. Recent studies have shown that the involvement of two teachers in designing and implementing learning enables the value and scientific perspectives to complement each other. In this way, students gain a comprehensive understanding of an issue, drawing on modern science and the Islamic ethical framework.

Technology integration is also recommended in the implementation of IHICF. The use of digital media, interactive learning platforms, and verified online resources can enrich the learning process without losing value orientation. (Hasmiza, 2025). Technology is used not only as an aid but also as a means to connect students with the context of modern life from an Islamic perspective. This practice fosters digital literacy and the ability to evaluate information in accordance with moral principles.

Authentic assessments are integral to implementation. Portfolio-based assessments, grade rubrics, observation of worship practices, and written reflections provide a more comprehensive picture of student development. This assessment approach aligns with the curriculum's holistic character by assessing attitudes, skills, and critical thinking, in addition to cognitive achievements.

The literature also confirms that these implementation practices will be effective only if supported by teacher training, academic supervision, and consistent school policies. Without such support, curriculum integration risks remaining a concept on paper, with no real change in daily learning. Therefore, the implementation of IHICF must be planned as a gradual process that includes strengthening teacher competence, providing learning resources, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

### **IHICF's Contribution and Novelty**

The study results show that IHICF provides a more comprehensive conceptual contribution than the PAI curriculum approaches developed during the 2020–2025 period. Most previous studies have focused on just one dimension. Some studies emphasize the integration between religious science and general science without providing a clear implementative direction. Others focus on adaptability and inclusivity through curriculum design that is responsive to students' needs, but do not examine the curriculum's epistemological integration in depth. There is also research that highlights implementation challenges, such as teacher capacity and curriculum management, but does not link them to a wholesome conceptual design. (Nasution et al., 2025).

The thematic synthesis indicates that the fragmentation of focus in previous studies has resulted in the absence of a PAI curriculum model that integrates values, adopts a holistic approach, demonstrates adaptability, and employs structured operational mechanisms. IHICF addresses this gap by articulating four interrelated pillars: internal integration of the PAI family; external integration with modern science; holistic and adaptive student development; and curriculum operationalization, which includes planning, teacher capacity, and authentic assessment. These four pillars do not stand alone but are mutually reinforcing, resulting in a coherent curriculum system.

The novelty of IHICF lies in its ability to combine epistemological, pedagogical, and practical aspects in a single model framework. IHICF not only articulates the idea of integration but also explains how it is practiced through the design of learning themes, value projects, teacher collaboration, and authentic assessment instruments. On the other hand, IHICF integrates holistic and adaptive principles, enabling the curriculum to respond to students' diverse needs without compromising its orientation toward Islamic values. These advantages make IHICF compatible with twenty-first-century demands that emphasize digital literacy, creativity, critical thinking, and contextual learning.

With its comprehensive scope, IHICF makes a new contribution to the development of the Islamic curriculum by presenting a model that is not only theoretically robust but also operationalized in the classroom. This framework bridges Islamic principles and the demands of modernity, thereby providing a suitable basis for reforming the PAI curriculum in schools and madrasas during the 2020–2025 period.

### **IHICF Implementation Strategy**

The implementation strategy is a practical step that connects the conceptual framework of IHICF with learning practices in schools and madrasas. Lie and colleagues show that thematic-integrative learning can help students internalize Islamic values contextually and holistically and support cross-subject integration to build students' character in a wholesome and relevant way to real-life contexts. (Nurmasihin et al., 2025).

First, integrative thematic learning based on Islamic values is needed to bridge religious content with social reality. Thematic-integrative studies show that this approach not only unifies the subject matter but also supports the development of learners' spiritual and social character, as the chosen themes are closely aligned with their experiences and inherent Islamic values. (Nurmasihin et al., 2025). Integrative thematic learning is implemented at various levels of education as an effective strategy for creating meaningful and relevant learning experiences. (Amanah & Asrofi, 2023).

Second, socio-religious projects that connect science and Qur'anic values are a form of Project-Based Learning that is increasingly recognized in Islamic education. The study on the integration of Project-Based Learning in the context of PAI demonstrates its effectiveness in increasing learners' engagement, critical thinking competencies, and independent character, which aligns with the principles of IHICF by linking Islamic values to real-life contexts.

Third, the integration of value-based digital technology is an important strategy in the digital era. Research on the use of technology in PAI learning reports that technology integration can enrich the learning experience, facilitate access to contextual materials, and support active learning, thereby keeping learning relevant in the era of Industry 4.0 (Hakim et al., 2023).

Technology is not just an instrument but a medium that brings the context of modern life into Islamic learning.

Fourth, authentic assessments that assess religious thinking skills, attitudes, and practices are more reflective of IHICF's learning outcomes than traditional tests. Although the literature on authentic assessment in PAI remains limited, evidence indicates that the use of assessments aligned with the context and objectives of modern curricula can strengthen holistic and reflective learning practices.

The collaboration of PAI teachers and general subject teachers in learning planning is a strong implementable strategy to support internal and external integration. This synergy enables cross-disciplinary involvement in designing integrated learning units, making them more contextual and relevant to students' needs.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study formulated the *Integrative-Holistic Islamic Curriculum Framework (IHICF)* as a model of the PAI curriculum that addresses the needs of contemporary Islamic education. The literature synthesis confirms that the four main pillars of IHICF are complementary: internal integration of the PAI cluster, external integration with modern science, holistic and adaptive student development, and operationalization of the curriculum through planning, teacher capacity, and authentic assessment. The four pillars build a coherent and relevant curriculum structure to the demands of the twenty-first Century.

IHICF addresses intradisciplinary fragmentation, strengthens the relevance of Islamic teachings to the development of science and technology, and facilitates differentiated learning according to students' needs. This approach ensures that PAI learning not only emphasizes cognitive aspects but also develops spirituality, character, digital literacy, and critical thinking skills. This model is applicable through implementable strategies such as thematic-integrative learning, social-religious projects, integration of digital technologies, cross-disciplinary teacher collaboration, and authentic assessment.

With a comprehensive and scalable structure, IHICF makes a real contribution to the development of the PAI curriculum. This framework is not only conceptually robust but also applicable in schools and madrassas to produce Islamic learning that is contextual, relevant, and oriented toward students' overall development.

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