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The Transformation Of The Islamic Religious Education (Pai) Learning Paradigm In Addressing Global Trends In Future Education

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Abstract

Global educational transformation driven by the development of the future of learning, digitalization, artificial intelligence, and changing learner characteristics requires Islamic Religious Education (IRE) to reconstruct its learning paradigm. This challenge concerns not only the adoption of technology but also changes in learning objectives, learner positioning, teacher roles, competencies, character, and values within the educational process. This study aims to analyze emerging future-oriented educational paradigms and examine their implications for the transformation of Islamic Religious Education learning. The study employs a qualitative library research approach. Data were obtained from scholarly journal articles, conceptual literature, and relevant academic and educational policy documents addressing the future of learning, lifelong learning, personalized learning, competency-based learning, student agency, inclusive education, global citizenship education, twenty-first-century competencies, artificial intelligence, and Islamic education. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis and theoretical mapping to identify relationships, trends, and implications of these paradigms for Islamic Religious Education. The findings indicate that the transformation of Islamic Religious Education involves a shift from knowledge-transmission-oriented learning toward a learner-centered, competency-oriented, personalized, agency-based, and lifelong learning paradigm. This transformation also requires the integration of inclusive education, global citizenship awareness, twenty-first-century competencies, critical religious digital literacy, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence.

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However, these emerging educational paradigms cannot be adopted mechanically. Islamic Religious Education requires critical adaptation that preserves faith, morality, adab, moral responsibility, and spirituality as fundamental educational foundations. Therefore, the future of Islamic Religious Education can be developed through a synthesis of global relevance, pedagogical innovation, digital intelligence, and the substantive orientation of Islamic education.

Keywords: future of learning; Islamic Religious Education; lifelong learning; personalized learning; student agency; artificial intelligence; educational transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The changing landscape of global education over the past two decades indicates that education can no longer be understood merely as a process of transferring knowledge from educators to learners. Developments in digital technology, globalization, changing characteristics of learner generations, the dynamics of the world of work, and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) have driven fundamental changes in what should be learned, how learning takes place, and what competencies learners need to develop. Future education requires learners not only to possess knowledge but also to be able to think critically, adapt to change, collaborate, make responsible decisions, use technology appropriately, and engage in continuous learning when facing situations that are not always predictable. Within the framework of Future of Education and Skills 2030/2040, the OECD identifies student agency, well-being, and competencies encompassing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values as essential elements in preparing learners for the future (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2020).

These changes indicate a paradigm shift from content-transmission-oriented learning toward an approach that emphasizes learners' ability to apply knowledge in addressing real-world problems. Within the framework of the OECD Learning Compass 2030, learners are no longer positioned merely as recipients of instructions predetermined by teachers, but rather as individuals who need to develop the capacity to direct their own learning, set goals, engage in reflection, and act meaningfully and responsibly (OECD, 2019). The concept of student agency has become one of the defining characteristics of future education because learners are regarded as having the capacity and willingness to influence their own lives and the environments around them through goal setting, reflection, and responsible action. At the same time, co-agency emphasizes that educational processes take place through interactive and mutually supportive

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relationships among learners, teachers, parents, peers, and communities (OECD, 2019). Accordingly, learners are given greater opportunities to become active subjects in constructing knowledge and directing their learning processes, while teachers retain a strategic role as facilitators and guides of the educational process.

The OECD framework also identifies transformative competencies as an essential component of future education. Learners are expected to develop the ability to create new value, reconcile tensions and dilemmas, and take responsibility for their actions (OECD, 2019). These competencies demonstrate that future education is concerned not only with the mastery of knowledge and technical skills but also with learners' ability to apply knowledge responsibly when addressing complex issues. Therefore, the transformation of the learning paradigm needs to be directed toward developing learners who are capable of anticipating change, engaging in reflection, making decisions, and acting responsibly within continuously changing social contexts (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2020).

This transformation of the educational paradigm is taking place alongside the development of the concepts of lifelong learning, personalized learning, and competency-based learning. Lifelong learning broadens the meaning of education beyond age boundaries, classrooms, educational levels, and school institutions. A systematic review by Thwe and Kálmán demonstrates that the literature on lifelong learning has developed in relation to lifelong learning competencies and the connections among formal, non-formal, and informal learning (Thwe & Kálmán, 2024). This development indicates that the ability to engage in continuous learning has become an essential competency in a society experiencing rapid technological and social changes. At the same time, personalized learning has emerged as a response to the reality that learners have different abilities, interests, experiences, needs, and learning paces. Meanwhile, competency-based learning shifts the focus from how much content has been delivered to the extent to which learners have genuinely mastered knowledge and skills. Evans, Landl, and Thompson demonstrate that competency-based education has implications for what is learned, when learning takes place, where learning occurs, how learning is implemented, and how learners demonstrate their mastery of knowledge and skills (Evans et al., 2021).

METHODS

This study employs library research with a qualitative approach. This method was selected because the research focuses on conceptual analysis and critical synthesis concerning the

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transformation of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning paradigm in response to global trends in future education. The study is not intended to measure the effectiveness of a particular learning model in a specific setting but rather to identify the development of ideas, theories, research findings, and policy discourses related to changes in the learning paradigm and their implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI).

The research data sources consist of scholarly literature and academic documents relevant to the research focus. The primary literature comprises national and international journal articles, particularly recent publications, while conceptual and policy sources in the form of official documents from international institutions are used to strengthen the analysis of the direction of global educational development. The literature reviewed covers themes such as future of learning, lifelong learning, personalized learning, competency-based learning, student agency, inclusive learning, global citizenship education, 21st-century competencies, artificial intelligence in education, changes in learner characteristics, and the development of Islamic education. OECD and UNESCO documents serve as primary sources for understanding conceptual developments and educational policies concerning future education, particularly in relation to competencies, student agency, the transformation of teachers' roles, and the utilization of technology and artificial intelligence in education (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2025; Miao & Holmes, 2023).

The literature search was conducted using several keywords tailored to the research focus, namely future of learning, lifelong learning, personalized learning, competency-based education, student agency, inclusive education, global citizenship education, 21st-century skills, artificial intelligence in education, Islamic religious education, Islamic education, and PAI. The identified literature was subsequently selected based on four main considerations: relevance to the research focus, source quality and credibility, publication recency, and contribution to the theoretical arguments of the study. Publications from the past five years were prioritized to represent the latest developments in academic discourse, while older conceptual works were retained when they held fundamental significance in explaining particular concepts or theories.

Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis and theoretical mapping. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns of ideas and major themes emerging from the literature, while theoretical mapping was used to map relationships among concepts, arguments, findings, and research trends in previous studies. The analytical process involved several stages. First, the literature was identified and selected based on its relevance to

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the research focus. Second, the literature was classified into several major themes, including future of learning, lifelong learning, personalized learning, competency-based learning, student agency, 21st-century competencies, inclusive learning, global citizenship, and artificial intelligence. Third, each theme was comparatively examined to identify similarities, differences, conceptual relationships, developments in scholarly arguments, and research gaps in previous studies. Fourth, the mapping results were critically synthesized to formulate the relationship between developments in the global educational paradigm and the orientation of Islamic education.

The analysis was conducted integratively so that the discussion would not be limited to describing each concept separately. Future of learning was positioned as the overarching framework for educational transformation; lifelong learning and personalized learning were analyzed as shifts in the orientation of the learning process; competency-based learning and student agency were understood as changes in the orientation of learning outcomes and the positioning of learners; inclusive learning and global citizenship were situated within the broader social dimensions of education; while artificial intelligence was analyzed as a technological factor that simultaneously entails pedagogical, epistemological, and ethical implications. This mapping approach enabled the study to examine the interconnections among various trends in future education and their implications for the reconstruction of PAI learning.

The subsequent stage involved the critical contextualization of the principles and objectives of Islamic education. At this stage, concepts associated with future education were not assumed to be directly transferable to PAI learning but were instead analyzed in terms of their compatibility with the fundamental orientation of Islamic education. This process considered the objective of developing learners who possess knowledge, competencies, agency, faith (iman), moral character (akhlak), proper conduct (adab), moral responsibility, and spiritual awareness. Accordingly, the transformation of PAI is understood as a process of selection, adaptation, and reconstruction in response to developments in global education rather than as a mechanical adoption of educational paradigms emerging outside the context of Islamic education.

The quality of the review was maintained through the selection of sources based on academic credibility and substantive relevance. Journal articles were prioritized from publications with clearly identifiable bibliographic information and DOI numbers, nationally accredited journals, relevant international journals, and official documents issued by institutions with recognized authority in the field of education. Older sources were retained when they served as

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fundamental references for particular concepts, while recent sources were utilized to demonstrate developments in contemporary research and academic discourse. This strategy enabled the study to maintain a balance between theoretical foundations and the latest developments in knowledge.

Based on this process, the study produces a conceptual synthesis concerning the transformation of the PAI learning paradigm in response to future education. This synthesis seeks to integrate various demands of the future of learning (including lifelong learning, personalization, competencies, student agency, inclusivity, global awareness, and the utilization of artificial intelligence) with the values, character, ethics, and spirituality inherent in Islamic education. Thus, the research methodology is employed not merely to map global educational trends but also to identify opportunities for paradigmatic reconstruction that enable PAI to remain relevant to changing times without losing its normative and axiological foundations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Transformation of the PAI Learning Paradigm from the Perspective of Future of Learning

The results of the literature mapping indicate that future of learning represents a fundamental shift in the way education understands the objectives, processes, and actors involved in learning. Education is no longer directed solely toward the mastery of a predetermined body of knowledge but also toward learners' ability to utilize knowledge, develop skills, make decisions, adapt, and address complex problems. The OECD framework, through the Learning Compass 2030, illustrates this shift by emphasizing student agency, co-agency, well-being, and the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. These findings indicate that future education is undergoing a transition from a paradigm oriented toward the reproduction of knowledge to one that is more adaptive and transformative. Learners are no longer merely prepared to enter an already established world but are developed to face and contribute to social change. In this context, learning must produce not only learners who know something but also individuals who are capable of using knowledge reflectively and responsibly.

This paradigm shift has direct implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI). PAI learning that is excessively oriented toward content transmission risks reducing religious knowledge to conceptual mastery, memorization, or the ability to answer evaluative questions. In fact, the objectives of religious education encompass broader dimensions, namely the

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development of learners' understanding, attitudes, behavior, moral character, and moral responsibility. Therefore, transforming PAI learning does not mean reducing the importance of religious content but rather changing the relationship between subject matter, learners, teachers, and the realities of everyday life. PAI content needs to be positioned as a foundation for developing competencies and character. Knowledge of the Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic creed (aqidah), moral conduct (akhlak), Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), and Islamic history should not remain merely objects of memorization but should instead be used to help learners understand problems, engage in reflection, make decisions, and actualize religious values in their lives. This transformation also changes the position of teachers. Teachers do not lose their scholarly and pedagogical authority; rather, their functions evolve from merely delivering information into designing learning experiences, facilitating, guiding, and supporting learners' development. This transformation has become increasingly important as digital technological developments have expanded the range of information sources accessible to learners.

Learners can obtain information through search engines, social media, learning platforms, videos, and various artificial intelligence-based applications. Consequently, teachers are no longer the sole source of information. However, this condition further reinforces the importance of teachers as individuals who help learners assess the credibility of information, understand contexts, compare sources, and connect knowledge with values and responsibilities. In PAI, this need carries even greater significance because religious information contains normative dimensions. Learners may encounter various religious perspectives in digital spaces that differ in terms of authority, context, and scholarly quality. Therefore, future PAI learning needs to integrate religious literacy with digital literacy. Learners need to be guided not merely to know religious answers but also to understand their sources, verification methods, contexts, and underlying arguments. Accordingly, future of learning in the context of PAI can be understood as a shift from knowledge transmission toward knowledge formation and ethical application. Religious knowledge remains the foundation, but its effectiveness is also determined by learners' ability to understand, evaluate, reflect upon, and apply such knowledge responsibly.

Analysis of Lifelong Learning and the Reconstruction of PAI Learning Orientation

The findings from the review of lifelong learning literature indicate that education is increasingly understood as a process that continues throughout an individual's life. Thwe and Kálmán (2024) demonstrate that lifelong learning is associated with the development of

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competencies for continuous learning and the interconnectedness of formal, non-formal, and informal education. These findings shift the understanding of education, which was previously inclined to be identified with schools and specific educational levels. Schools and madrasahs are no longer regarded as the sole spaces for learning but rather as components of a broader learning ecosystem that extends throughout life. In the context of PAI, this transformation has significant implications. If the success of religious education is measured solely through examination scores or curriculum completion, the educational process tends to end when learners complete their formal education. Conversely, if PAI is directed toward developing lifelong learners, educational success must also encompass learners' ability to continuously seek knowledge, critically examine religious sources, engage in reflection, and develop religious practices sustainably. Therefore, PAI needs to cultivate a learning disposition, namely an inclination toward continuous learning and self-improvement. Learners should not merely be equipped with religious subject matter but also with the ability to identify sources of knowledge, evaluate information, ask questions, engage in discussions, reflect, and connect religious teachings with changing life circumstances.

This paradigm simultaneously broadens the PAI learning ecosystem. Families, mosques, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), social organizations, communities, digital media, and the wider social environment can all serve as learning spaces. Formal education becomes one of the foundations that prepares learners to continue their learning processes independently. However, the openness of learning resources also raises epistemological concerns. Not all religious information available in digital spaces possesses the same level of quality and authority. Therefore, lifelong learning in PAI cannot be interpreted as unrestricted freedom to accept all information but rather as the ability to learn independently while maintaining a critical perspective. In this context, the role of PAI teachers undergoes a transformation. Teachers no longer merely explain what learners should know but also guide them in understanding how knowledge is acquired, verified, interpreted, and justified. Thus, lifelong learning encourages a shift in the orientation of PAI from education as completion toward education as continuous formation.

Analysis of Personalized Learning and Differentiated Instruction in PAI

The subsequent mapping results indicate that personalized learning provides an important foundation for developing learning processes that are more responsive to learner diversity. Tetzlaff, Schmiedek, and Brod (2021) explain that personalized education seeks to adapt

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learning processes to the individual characteristics of learners. In PAI learning, this paradigm is particularly important because learners possess different prior abilities, religious experiences, interests, motivations, needs, and learning paces. Providing entirely uniform content, methods, pacing, activities, and assessments does not necessarily produce equally meaningful learning experiences for all learners. Therefore, personalized learning represents a shift from uniformity toward differentiation. Teachers need to recognize learners' characteristics and provide appropriate pedagogical support. For example, learners who experience difficulties in reading religious texts require different learning strategies from those who already possess advanced literacy skills. Similarly, learners with religious education backgrounds acquired through their families or pesantren may have different learning needs from those whose religious experiences are relatively limited. Nevertheless, personalization does not mean eliminating educational standards and objectives. What is personalized is the pedagogical pathway, while educational objectives remain clearly defined. In the context of PAI, these objectives are associated with developing individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, morally upright, well-mannered, and responsible. Accordingly, a distinction must be made between the personalization of objectives and the personalization of processes. Educational objectives remain grounded in the value framework of Islamic education, whereas methods, media, activities, pacing, and forms of support may be adjusted to learners' needs.

Developments in digital technology further expand the possibilities for personalization. Learning platforms can assist teachers in providing supplementary materials, differentiated exercises, feedback, and learning resources according to individual needs. Artificial intelligence also enables the development of adaptive learning. Nevertheless, technology cannot replace teachers' pedagogical decisions because personalization still requires an understanding of learners' development, social contexts, emotional needs, and educational objectives. Accordingly, personalized learning in PAI is more appropriately understood as value-based pedagogical differentiation. Learning experiences can be adjusted to individual needs, but the educational orientation must remain rooted in the intellectual, moral, and spiritual objectives of Islamic education.

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Analysis of Competency-Based Learning and the Reconstruction of the Meaning of PAI Learning Success

The transformation of the learning paradigm is also reflected in the development of competency-based learning. Evans, Landl, and Thompson (2021) demonstrate that competency-based education brings changes to what is learned, when learning takes place, how learning is conducted, and how learners demonstrate their mastery of knowledge and skills. In PAI, this paradigm requires a reconstruction of the meaning of learning outcomes. Learners who can memorize definitions of akhlak do not necessarily possess moral competencies. Learners who can explain the concept of tolerance are not necessarily capable of practicing it when confronted with differences. Likewise, the ability to identify the regulations governing religious practices does not always demonstrate an understanding of their meaning or the ability to implement them correctly. Based on this analysis, PAI competencies encompass at least four dimensions. First, knowledge, referring to the mastery of religious knowledge and concepts. Second, skills, referring to the ability to use knowledge for reading, reasoning, communicating, solving problems, and making decisions. Third, attitudes and values, referring to the attitudes and values that shape behavioral orientations. Fourth, ethical application, referring to the ability to apply religious knowledge and values in real-life situations. This framework demonstrates that PAI competencies cannot be reduced to cognitive competencies. Religious education possesses a distinctive characteristic in that it connects knowledge with personality development. Therefore, the orientation of learning needs to shift from the question, "How much content has been mastered?" toward "What competencies have been developed, and how are these competencies applied?"

This transformation also has implications for assessment. PAI assessment needs to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their ability to apply values, solve problems, engage in reflection, participate in discussions, produce creative works, and demonstrate changes in attitudes. Accordingly, assessment should not merely measure the reproduction of knowledge but also evaluate the ability to actualize knowledge and values. At this point, competency-based learning can strengthen the substantive character of PAI. Religious knowledge does not remain mere information but develops into competencies that are manifested in action.

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Analysis of Student Agency and the Transformation of Learners' Positions in PAI

Student agency represents one of the important consequences of the transformation of the learning paradigm. When education is directed toward lifelong learning, personalization, and competencies, learners can no longer be adequately positioned as passive recipients. Within the OECD framework, student agency is associated with learners' ability to establish goals, engage in reflection, and act responsibly toward their lives and surrounding environments. In PAI learning, student agency can be realized by providing learners with opportunities to ask questions, explore sources, participate in discussions, develop projects, solve problems, and reflect on their learning experiences. Learners thus participate in constructing their own learning experiences. However, student agency in PAI needs to be situated within a framework of moral responsibility. Agency is not synonymous with unlimited freedom. Learners should indeed be given opportunities to make decisions, but such decisions must take into account values, consequences, responsibilities, and the interests of others. Based on these considerations, this study develops the concept of ethical student agency. This concept refers to learners' ability to take initiative, make decisions, and direct their learning processes while considering moral values and social responsibility.

The implications of this concept for teachers' roles are particularly significant. Strengthening learners' agency does not mean eliminating the role of teachers. On the contrary, the greater the opportunities provided for learner agency, the more important teachers' abilities become in providing direction, offering feedback, establishing boundaries, and helping learners engage in reflection. Accordingly, pedagogical relationships can shift from authority over students toward authority with students. Teachers retain their scholarly and pedagogical authority, but this authority is exercised to foster learners' independence rather than create dependency. Thus, student agency provides a foundation for developing learners as moral and intellectual subjects. Learners do not merely participate in learning activities but also learn to understand reasons, verify information, consider consequences, and make responsible decisions.

Analysis and Synthesis of the Learner-Centered Paradigm in PAI Learning

The mapping of the five main concepts reveals their complementary relationships. Future of learning provides the context for global change; lifelong learning extends learning beyond institutional and temporal boundaries; personalized learning responds to individual diversity; competency-based learning transforms the orientation of learning outcomes; while student agency changes the position of learners within the educational process. Conceptually, these

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relationships produce five major shifts in PAI learning: from transmission to transformation, from uniformity to differentiation, from content completion to competency mastery, from dependency to agency, and from learning limited to schools toward lifelong learning. However, implementing this paradigm does not mean positioning learners as the absolute center of education. In Islamic education, the learner-centered orientation remains situated within a framework of values, objectives, and moral responsibilities. Therefore, learner-centered PAI is more appropriately understood as an approach that places learners' development at the center of pedagogical attention without abandoning intellectual, moral, and spiritual orientations. The results of this synthesis indicate that future PAI requires a paradigm that is learner-centered, competency-oriented, personalized, agency-based, and lifelong, while remaining value-centered. In other words, learners become the primary subjects of the pedagogical process, while the direction of education remains oriented toward developing individuals who are knowledgeable, faithful, morally upright, well-mannered, and responsible.

Analysis of Inclusive Learning and the Reconstruction of Equitable PAI

The transformation of the future educational paradigm also demands more inclusive learning. Inclusion is not merely concerned with accepting learners with special needs into educational institutions but also with the ability of educational systems to eliminate various barriers that prevent learners from obtaining equitable learning opportunities. In the context of PAI, this demand has implications for curricula, methods, media, assessment, teacher competencies, and the culture of educational institutions. Nurdin et al. (2024) demonstrate that the development of PAI curricula in inclusive schools or madrasahs has been directed toward adapting learning to the characteristics of learners with special needs through content simplification, individualized approaches, varied methods, the use of visual media, and assessment techniques based on learners' basic abilities. However, the study also identifies several obstacles, including teachers' limited knowledge in identifying learners' needs and the limited availability of learning resources and media.

These findings demonstrate that inclusion cannot be sufficiently understood as a policy of accepting learners. Learners must receive learning experiences that enable them to develop according to their respective capacities. Therefore, PAI learning needs to move from equal treatment toward equitable learning opportunities. Equal treatment does not always produce fairness because learners have different needs. Pedagogical equity may require differentiated

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support so that every learner has a reasonable opportunity to achieve learning objectives. Inclusion also needs to be understood more broadly. Beyond issues of disability, PAI learning must address diversity in academic abilities, social conditions, cultures, religious experiences, languages, and learner characteristics. Sarbini et al. (2025) demonstrate that inclusive values in PAI can be developed through justice, equality, religious moderation, multiculturalism, and humanism. Based on these findings, PAI inclusivity can be developed through three dimensions. First, inclusive curriculum, referring to a curriculum that is accessible to learners with diverse characteristics. Second, inclusive pedagogy, referring to learning strategies that provide opportunities for participation for all learners. Third, inclusive assessment, referring to assessment that provides various ways for learners to demonstrate their competencies. The implication is that the professionalism of PAI teachers can no longer be based solely on mastery of religious subject matter. Teachers also need the ability to understand learner diversity and adapt their instructional strategies accordingly. Teacher professionalism thus evolves from subject-matter expertise toward an integration of subject-matter expertise and learner expertise.

Analysis of Global Citizenship and the Expansion of Islamic Education's Orientation

Globalization and the development of digital technology have expanded learners' social environments. They interact with diverse cultures, societies, information, and issues that transcend local boundaries. This condition requires education to develop the ability to coexist within increasingly interconnected societies. In this context, global citizenship education is relevant to PAI. Islamic education does not need to position Islamic identity in opposition to global openness. On the contrary, Islamic identity can serve as an ethical foundation for building constructive interactions with societies from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Saada (2023) demonstrates that Islamic global citizenship education can be developed through moral, socio-political, and reflective dimensions. This perspective encompasses tolerance, justice, respect for diversity, reflection on religious knowledge, and rejection of prejudice and extremism. These findings provide a foundation for broadening the orientation of PAI. Religious education does not merely function to establish the internal identity of a community but also prepares learners to address issues that extend beyond community boundaries. Climate change, poverty, social inequality, conflict, migration, peace, technological development, and human rights are issues that require the ability to think across boundaries. Within this framework, global citizenship in PAI can be developed through four dimensions. First, religious identity, referring to

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the ability to understand Islamic identity reflectively. Second, global awareness, referring to awareness of global issues and diversity. Third, dialogical competence, referring to the ability to communicate and collaborate with people from different backgrounds. Fourth, ethical responsibility, referring to the ability to translate religious values into constructive social actions. Thus, PAI can develop learners who possess a strong Islamic identity while also having the ability to live in pluralistic and global societies.

Analysis of 21st-Century Competencies: Integrating Knowledge, Skills, and Character

Twenty-first-century competencies constitute one of the essential elements of future education. Technological developments and changing social environments require critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, digital literacy, adaptability, and social skills. In PAI, these competencies should not be regarded as elements external to religious education. Rather, PAI subject matter can serve as a medium for developing these competencies. For example, social fiqh learning can be directed toward analyzing issues related to economics and social justice. Akhlak learning can be connected with social media ethics. Learning the Qur'an and Hadith can be directed toward analyzing contemporary issues, while Islamic history can be used to develop historical and critical thinking skills. This approach transforms the position of PAI subject matter. Content no longer serves merely as the ultimate objective of learning but also functions as a medium for developing competencies. Learners can study religious knowledge while simultaneously developing their abilities to think, communicate, collaborate, solve problems, and engage in reflection.

Muvid et al. (2026), through a systematic literature review, demonstrate that studies concerning the transformation of PAI learning through 21st-century skills still tend to discuss pedagogical innovation, digital technology, and character education separately. These findings indicate the need for an integrative approach that brings these three elements together in PAI learning. Based on these findings, 21st-century competencies in PAI can be conceptualized as 21st-century Islamic competencies, namely thinking and action-oriented abilities that integrate Islamic knowledge, 21st-century skills, digital literacy, social abilities, character, and moral responsibility. Thus, the orientation of education should not stop at developing learners who are merely smart but should also aim to develop learners who are wise. Intelligence provides the ability to solve problems, whereas wisdom provides direction regarding how such abilities should be used responsibly.

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Analysis of Artificial Intelligence and the Epistemological Challenges of PAI Learning

Artificial intelligence has become one of the most significant factors driving contemporary educational change. Generative technologies enable learners and teachers to produce texts, summarize information, translate languages, develop ideas, and create learning materials rapidly. UNESCO emphasizes that the use of generative AI in education needs to be situated within a human-centered approach that takes into account issues of privacy, security, equity, inclusion, cultural and linguistic diversity, and pedagogical validation (Miao & Holmes, 2023). In the context of PAI, these issues have more complex dimensions because AI can also influence how learners acquire and validate religious knowledge. Learners can use AI to obtain information about the Qur'an, Hadith, fiqh, aqidah, Islamic history, and contemporary religious issues. However, information generated by AI does not automatically possess scholarly or religious authority. Therefore, the use of AI in PAI requires critical religious digital literacy. Learners need to develop the ability to understand AI's limitations, examine information sources, distinguish information from interpretation and opinion, verify religious evidence and references, understand the context of religious opinions, and use AI honestly and responsibly. In this context, AI is more appropriately positioned as a learning assistant rather than a replacement for religious teachers. Teachers continue to play an essential role in establishing pedagogical relationships, understanding learners' character development, providing role models, making moral judgments, and understanding learners' socio-religious contexts. This issue demonstrates that access to information is not synonymous with mastery of knowledge. AI can provide information rapidly, but education still requires individuals who are capable of assessing the validity, meaning, context, and moral implications of such information. Accordingly, the challenge of AI for PAI concerns not merely how to use technology but also how to maintain the quality of knowledge, pedagogical authority, academic integrity, and moral responsibility within an increasingly technology-mediated learning environment.

Analysis of Changes in Learner Characteristics in the Digital Era

Technological developments and changing social environments have also transformed the characteristics of learners' learning experiences. Rapid access to information, instant communication, social media, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence technologies provide both opportunities and challenges for learner development. On the one hand, learners have greater opportunities to acquire knowledge from a wider range of sources. They can participate

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in online learning, access international resources, collaborate with various parties, and produce creative works with the assistance of technology. On the other hand, information abundance can create problems, including difficulties in determining source credibility, distractions, dependence on instant answers, and a tendency to prioritize quick results over the thinking process. In the context of PAI, these issues demand the strengthening of contextual character education. The value of honesty can be applied through academic integrity when using AI; amanah can be associated with responsible social media use; tabayyun can be implemented through digital information verification; while adab can be manifested through communication in virtual spaces.

Based on this analysis, PAI requires the development of digital Islamic character education, namely Islamic character education that translates religious values into the context of digital life. This concept demonstrates that character education cannot be adequately delivered through advice or normative subject matter alone but must be incorporated into learners' actual experiences. The implications for PAI teachers are substantial. Teachers need to understand learners' digital environments so that character education remains connected to the realities of their lives. In this context, PAI teachers can serve as digital moral educators, namely educators who guide learners in using technology based on moral considerations, adab, responsibility, and Islamic values.

Analysis of the Reconstruction of the Future of Islamic Education: From Technology Adaptation to Paradigm Transformation

The overall mapping results indicate that the future of Islamic education is not determined solely by the ability of educational institutions to adopt technology. The more fundamental issue is how technology, curricula, pedagogy, teacher competencies, and institutional culture are directed toward achieving substantive educational objectives. The transformation of PAI takes place across at least five layers. First, paradigm transformation, referring to the shift from education centered on knowledge transmission toward education oriented toward learner development. Second, pedagogical transformation, referring to the implementation of more active, personalized, collaborative, contextual, and competency-based learning. Third, digital transformation, referring to the critical, ethical, and human-centered utilization of technology and AI. Fourth, character transformation, referring to strengthening learners' ability to use competencies and technology responsibly. Fifth, institutional transformation, referring to changes in school or madrasah culture to make institutions more adaptive to future learning

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needs. Accordingly, the future of PAI should not be understood merely through the dichotomy between traditional and modern education. Its primary challenge is to undertake critical adaptation in response to global changes. Critical adaptation means embracing relevant developments, selecting appropriate elements, critically examining aspects that are inconsistent with the orientation of Islamic education, and subsequently reconstructing them in accordance with the context of Islamic education.

Based on the overall analysis, this article formulates a conceptual model entitled Transformative Future-Oriented Islamic Religious Education, which encompasses six main characteristics. First, learner-centered, meaning that learners are positioned as active subjects with diverse characteristics and needs. Second, competency-oriented, meaning that learning is directed toward the ability to apply knowledge. Third, lifelong, meaning that learning is understood as a continuous process throughout life. Fourth, digitally intelligent, meaning that technology and AI are utilized critically, productively, ethically, and responsibly. Fifth, globally connected, meaning that learners possess the ability to interact within global society without losing their Islamic identity. Sixth, morally and spiritually grounded, meaning that all transformations remain rooted in faith, moral character, adab, responsibility, and the values of Islamic education.

The model can be formulated through the following transformations:

1. Teacher-centered → Learner-centered.
2. Content-oriented → Competency-oriented.
3. Uniform learning → Personalized learning.
4. Passive learner → Student agency.
5. School-based learning → Lifelong learning.
6. Local orientation → Global citizenship.
7. Technology adoption → Ethical digital intelligence.
8. Knowledge transmission → Character transformation.

These transformations demonstrate that technology is not the ultimate objective of education. Rather, technology is an instrument that needs to be positioned within a broader framework of educational objectives. In the context of Islamic education, the ultimate goal is to develop individuals who are not only academically and technologically competent but also possess intellectual abilities, the capacity for responsible action, character, adab, social responsibility, and spiritual orientation. Accordingly, the future of PAI learning can be developed

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through a synthesis of global relevance and Islamic identity, technological innovation and ethical responsibility, individual agency and social responsibility, as well as future competencies and character development. The transformation of the PAI learning paradigm is therefore not merely a process of following global educational trends but rather a process of pedagogical reconstruction that enables Islamic education to respond to changing times without abandoning its fundamental objectives.

CONCLUSION

Based on the literature review and theoretical mapping, this study concludes that the transformation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in response to the future of learning represents a paradigmatic shift that goes beyond the mere adoption of technology or innovative teaching methods. It involves fundamental changes in educational objectives, learners' positions, teachers' roles, learning outcomes, learning environments, and the relationship between knowledge, skills, character, values, and moral responsibility. Five interconnected trends shape this transformation: future of learning, lifelong learning, personalized learning, competency-based learning, and student agency. Together, these trends emphasize continuous learning, individual learning needs, competency mastery, and learners' active participation and responsibility in directing their own learning processes.

In the context of PAI, these paradigms cannot be adopted mechanically but require critical selection, contextualization, and reconstruction in accordance with the principles of Islamic education. Learner-centered learning must remain grounded in Islamic values; student agency should develop into ethical agency; competency-based learning should integrate academic skills with the actualization of religious values; and personalized learning should accommodate learner diversity without abandoning fundamental Islamic educational objectives. Furthermore, inclusive education, global citizenship, 21st-century competencies, artificial intelligence, and changing learner characteristics are integral to the future of PAI. These developments require equitable learning opportunities, global awareness, ethical digital literacy, and the integration of technological competencies with moral character and social responsibility.

Therefore, this study proposes a future PAI paradigm that is learner-centered, competency-oriented, personalized, agency-based, and grounded in lifelong learning, while remaining value-centered, morally grounded, and spiritually oriented. Learners should become active participants in the educational process while remaining guided by the fundamental

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objectives of Islamic education: developing individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, morally upright, well-mannered, responsible, and capable of responding critically and constructively to changing circumstances. Ultimately, transforming PAI should not be understood as merely following global educational trends but as a process of critical adaptation and paradigmatic reconstruction. Technology, artificial intelligence, personalization, 21st-century competencies, and global interconnectedness should serve as instruments for achieving the broader goal of human development. Thus, future PAI learning must integrate global educational demands with the fundamental values of Islamic education, ensuring its continued relevance without compromising its identity and essential objectives.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future research should empirically examine the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed Transformative Future-Oriented Islamic Religious Education model in various educational settings, particularly schools and madrasahs in Indonesia. Further studies are needed to investigate how learner-centered learning, personalized learning, competency-based learning, and student agency can be integrated into PAI curricula and instructional practices while maintaining the fundamental values of Islamic education. Empirical research using mixed-methods approaches and longitudinal designs would be valuable in evaluating their impact on learners' religious knowledge, competencies, character, moral responsibility, and spiritual development.

Further research should also explore the pedagogical and ethical implications of artificial intelligence in PAI, particularly regarding digital religious literacy, information verification, academic integrity, and teachers' roles in technology-mediated learning environments. In addition, studies should investigate inclusive Islamic education, global citizenship, 21st-century Islamic competencies, and the development of ethical student agency across diverse learner backgrounds. Comparative and multisite studies involving different educational institutions and cultural contexts are necessary to assess the applicability, sustainability, and contextual relevance of the proposed paradigm. Such research will strengthen the empirical foundation for reconstructing PAI learning and support the development of Islamic education that is responsive to global educational changes while remaining grounded in its moral, spiritual, and normative foundations.

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