Editorial

Forging new directions in islamic education research

Zalik Nuryana [a,1] , **Fadhlurrahman** [a,2], **Yusuf Hanafiah** [a,3], **Muh Alif Kurniawan** [a,4], **Anaas Tri Ridlo Dina Yuliana** [a,5]

[a] Department of Islamic Education, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

[1] zalik.nuryana@pai.uad.ac.id; [2] fadhlurrahman@pai.uad.ac.id; [3] yusuf.hanafiah@pai.uad.ac.id;
[4] muh.kurniawan@pai.uad.ac.id; [5] anaas.yuliana@pai.uad.ac.id

With the publication of Vol. 13 No. 1 (2025), Al-Misbah Journal is proud to introduce a new tradition, an editorial accompanying each issue. This editorial serves not only as a reflection on the content we present, but also as a platform to synthesize the themes, innovations, and scholarly contributions within our pages, while pointing toward new horizons in Islamic education research. Editorials are a vital part of an academic journal's identity. They provide context for each issue, highlight its significance, and offer a lens through which the scholarly community can interpret emerging trends and urgent challenges. For Al-Misbah, the inclusion of a regular editorial is our commitment to enriching academic dialogue and fostering a vibrant intellectual exchange among scholars, practitioners, and readers worldwide.

In this issue, we present seven original articles that address both the foundational values and the evolving challenges of Islamic education today. Each article reflects the dynamism and complexity of the field, bringing diverse perspectives and methodological approaches to the ongoing conversation about what it means to educate in, and for, a rapidly changing world.

The first study, "Transformation of Integration: Indonesian Islamic Values on the Islamic University Curriculum," highlights the pressing need to root Islamic education in local values amid the forces of globalization. By tracing the integration of Islamic Nusantara values at IAINU Tuban over a decade, the authors show how harmony, tolerance, and local wisdom can be meaningfully woven into higher education curricula. This work underscores that contextualization is not just possible, but essential for the relevance and impact of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Our second study, "Spiritual and Mental Harmonization: Religious Education through the Lens of Psychology," offers a holistic approach to Islamic Religious Education by bridging spiritual development and psychological well-being. Through a multidisciplinary literature review, the authors argue that religious education should cultivate not only knowledge and faith, but also address emotional and cognitive needs, thus supporting students in finding balance, meaning, and resilience in their personal lives.

The third study, "Integration of Islamic Education Management Philosophy in a Multicultural Context," responds to growing challenges of intolerance and radicalism. This study affirms that Islamic multicultural education, grounded in the values of tawhid and inclusivity, can foster respect for diversity and prevent social conflict. By examining pesantren as living examples, the research illustrates how these institutions can model harmonious, tolerant communities aligned with Qur'anic principles, providing blueprints for a more just and inclusive national education system.

Tackling behavioral challenges in students, the fourth study, "The Role of Islamic Education to Address Antisocial Behaviors in Students," examines how humility (tawadhu') is nurtured at MTs Muhammadiyah Kasihan. The study demonstrates that teacher role models, school culture, and family environments are critical in cultivating humility and mitigating

antisocial behaviors. It calls for educational institutions and policymakers to prioritize the formation of positive character through structured guidance and a supportive environment.

The digital age presents both opportunities and complexities, as explored in "Integrating Classical Islamic Texts and Digital Technology: Revitalization of Kutub al-Turats in Ma'had Dār al-Qur'ān wa al-Ḥadīth NW Anjani Lombok." This research reveals how digital tools can revitalize engagement with classical Islamic texts, enhancing spiritual and intellectual development while maintaining the integrity of tradition. The study serves as a timely reminder that technology and heritage can work hand in hand to enrich Islamic educational experiences.

In "Strengthening Leadership Integrity in Religious Educational Institutions: The Phenomenon of Muhammadiyah Boarding Schools in Indonesia," the authors investigate how leadership integrity is systematically cultivated in boarding schools. Their findings indicate that a balance of spiritual, intellectual, and moral competencies, fostered through long-term educational policies and continuous cadre development, is vital in shaping trustworthy and visionary leaders for the future.

The final article, "Debate Ethics Education in the Quran: An Examination of Tafsir Al-Misbah," turns to the ethics of dialogue. By analyzing Qur'anic verses through the lens of Al-Misbah, the study highlights the importance of self-control, logical reasoning, and respectful rhetoric in debates. It invites educators to prioritize ethical communication skills as part of Islamic education, equipping students to engage differences constructively and peacefully.

Looking ahead, the collective insights from these articles offer a strong foundation for future research in Islamic education. There is an urgent need for comparative studies that further examine the integration of local values, psychological and spiritual development, the role of technology, and the cultivation of leadership and ethical competencies in diverse educational settings. Al-Misbah Journal encourages scholars to build on these themes innovating, challenging, and refining Islamic education for a rapidly evolving world.

As Islamic education evolves in diverse sociocultural contexts, forging new research directions requires integrating empirical and philosophical approaches. Recent studies highlight the urgent need for reconciling Islamic religious heritage with modern pedagogical demands, especially in non-Muslim majority societies. For instance, Ulfat emphasizes the necessity of empirical educational research in Islamic pedagogy to build sound educational foundations and engage with the lived realities of Muslim students in Europe (Ulfat, 2020). Ulfat's later work offers qualitative insights into how Muslim children conceptualize God, presenting opportunities to rethink and humanize Islamic religious education in contemporary European settings (Ulfat, 2023).

To expand Islamic education's intellectual terrain, foundational studies have proposed frameworks directly rooted in Islam's sacred texts. Stimpson and Calvert conducted a systematic analysis of the Qur'an, identifying core educational principles such as independent reasoning and oral tradition, providing a divinely grounded pedagogy for further scholarly exploration (Stimpson & Calvert, 2021). In parallel, Şahin calls for a rethinking of Islamic education through interdisciplinary lenses, encouraging a shift away from rigid dichotomies toward transformative pedagogical cultures that bridge Islamic and Western educational paradigms (Sahin, 2018).

We thank our authors, reviewers, and readers for their invaluable contributions and engagement. May this issue spark new conversations, collaborations, and pathways toward a more holistic, inclusive, and transformative Islamic education.

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