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Strengthening the Relevance of Islamic Education in the Era of Globalization

Abdurrahman Siddiq[1]*

Universitas Muhammadiyah Indonesia UNISMA Bekasi*1
*1email: abdulrahmansiddiq86@gmail.com

Abstract

Globalization has significantly transformed the educational landscape through the rapid development of digital technology, the expansion of global information networks, and increasing international competition. While globalization offers opportunities for educational advancement, it also presents challenges such as the dominance of secular epistemology, moral degradation, cultural disorientation, and the growing commercialization of education. This study aims to examine the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization and to identify strategies for strengthening its role in responding to contemporary global challenges.This study employed a qualitative approach using library research. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources, including books, scientific journals, research reports, and other relevant academic publications related to Islamic education and globalization. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing using philosophical and pedagogical perspectives.The findings reveal that Islamic education remains highly relevant in the era of globalization due to its philosophical foundation based on tawhid, the unity of knowledge, and the integration of intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions. Islamic education provides an alternative educational paradigm that balances scientific and technological advancement with ethical and spiritual values. Furthermore, strengthening Islamic education requires the development of integrative curricula, the transformation of educators into intellectual and moral role models, the critical and humanistic utilization of technology, and the cultivation of critical and inclusive academic cultures. These strategies enable Islamic education to contribute to the development of a just, humane, and sustainable global civilization while maintaining its distinctive identity and values.

Keywords: Islamic Education; Globalization; Tawhid.

Abstrak

Globalisasi telah membawa perubahan yang signifikan terhadap dunia pendidikan melalui perkembangan teknologi digital, perluasan jaringan informasi global, dan meningkatnya kompetisi internasional. Meskipun globalisasi menawarkan berbagai peluang bagi kemajuan pendidikan, fenomena ini juga menghadirkan tantangan berupa dominasi epistemologi sekuler, degradasi moral, disorientasi budaya, serta meningkatnya komersialisasi

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam; Globalisasi; Tauhid.

pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji relevansi pendidikan Islam di era globalisasi serta mengidentifikasi strategi penguatan perannya dalam merespons berbagai tantangan global kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi pustaka (*library research*). Data diperoleh dari sumber primer dan sekunder yang meliputi buku, artikel jurnal ilmiah, laporan penelitian, dan berbagai publikasi akademik yang relevan dengan tema pendidikan Islam dan globalisasi. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan dengan menggunakan perspektif filosofis dan pedagogis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Islam tetap memiliki relevansi yang kuat di era globalisasi karena memiliki landasan filosofis yang bertumpu pada konsep tauhid, kesatuan ilmu, serta integrasi dimensi intelektual, spiritual, dan moral. Pendidikan Islam menawarkan paradigma pendidikan alternatif yang mampu menyeimbangkan kemajuan ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi dengan nilai-nilai etika dan spiritual. Selain itu, penguatan pendidikan Islam perlu dilakukan melalui pengembangan kurikulum integratif, transformasi peran pendidik sebagai figur intelektual dan moral, pemanfaatan teknologi secara kritis dan humanis, serta pengembangan budaya akademik yang kritis dan inklusif. Strategi tersebut memungkinkan pendidikan Islam berkontribusi dalam mewujudkan peradaban global yang adil, manusiawi, dan berkelanjutan tanpa kehilangan identitas dan nilai-nilai dasarnya.

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1. Introduction

Globalization is a historical reality that not only transforms the economic and political landscape of the world but also fundamentally shapes the way human beings understand knowledge, values, and the purpose of life (Held et al., 1999). The rapid development of digital technology, artificial intelligence, and cross-border information flows has drawn education into the vortex of global competition, which emphasizes efficiency, standardization, and competitiveness. However, behind the promise of progress, globalization has also generated serious challenges, including a crisis of meaning, the erosion of moral values, and the reduction of education to merely an instrument for producing human resources (Dewi, 2019).

In this global context, education can no longer be understood solely as a process of transferring technical knowledge; rather, it serves as a strategic arena for shaping ethical consciousness, cultural identity, and the direction of civilization (Anisa Al Maulani & Khasanah, 2025). Paulo Freire warned that education detached from humanistic values risks producing educated individuals who are alienated from social realities and moral responsibilities (Freire, 2005). This concern becomes increasingly relevant as contemporary educational systems tend to follow market-oriented logic, where success is measured through

rankings, statistics, and economic productivity, while spiritual and ethical dimensions are often marginalized.

Islamic education occupies a paradoxical position amid the currents of globalization. On the one hand, it is often perceived as normative, traditional, and insufficiently adaptive to contemporary changes. On the other hand, Islamic education possesses a strong philosophical foundation that enables it to respond to globalization in a critical and constructive manner (Opeyemi Ishaaq El-Mubarak & Hassan, 2021). Rooted in the worldview of *tawhid* (the oneness of God), Islamic education regards knowledge as a divine trust entrusted to humanity, intended to bring people closer to Allah while contributing to the prosperity of the earth. From this perspective, there is no dichotomy between religious and secular sciences, as all knowledge ultimately originates from Allah and is bound to moral responsibility (Sassi, 2020).

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas argues that the crisis of modern education does not stem from a lack of knowledge, but rather from the loss of *adab*—the inability to place knowledge within its proper purpose and context (Al-Attas, 1999). This perspective highlights that the relevance of Islamic education is not determined solely by its ability to adapt to global developments, but also by its capacity to preserve moral and ethical orientations amid rapid change. Islamic education is not called to reject modernity; instead, it is tasked with engaging with it critically and selectively, ensuring that the advancement of science and technology remains guided by ethical principles.

Therefore, strengthening the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization should be understood as a dynamic effort to position Islamic education as a contextual intellectual and moral force. Islamic education is challenged to integrate scientific and technological advancements with Islamic values, develop holistic curricula, and cultivate individuals who are not only professionally competent but also spiritually grounded and existentially meaningful. Within this framework, this article seeks to critically examine the position and role of Islamic education amid the challenges of globalization while proposing strategies to reinforce its contribution as a civilized, humanistic, and globally beneficial educational alternative.

Such perceptions are not entirely unfounded when Islamic education is practiced in a purely textual and ahistorical manner. Conceptually, however, Islamic education embodies a prophetic vision that transcends temporal and spatial boundaries, aiming to develop *insan kamil* (the complete human being) who achieves balance among intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions. Consequently, strengthening the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization constitutes both an urgent academic agenda and a practical necessity.

2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research method. This approach was selected because the research focuses on the conceptual and analytical examination of ideas, perspectives, and theoretical constructions of Islamic education in responding to the challenges of

globalization. The study is descriptive-analytical in nature, aiming to systematically describe various views on Islamic education and globalization and subsequently analyze them critically to identify their relevance, challenges, and strategies for strengthening Islamic education in the global era. This approach enables researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon without manipulating research variables.

The data sources used in this study consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included major books and scholarly works discussing Islamic education, globalization, and contemporary educational thought, particularly the works of Azyumardi Azra, Fazlur Rahman, Hasan Langgulung, and Abuddin Nata. Secondary sources comprised scientific journal articles, conference proceedings, research reports, and other relevant documents that supported the analysis and enriched the perspectives of the study.

Data were collected through documentation techniques by identifying, reading, reviewing, and recording relevant literature related to the research focus. The selection process was conducted carefully by considering the credibility of sources and their relevance to the themes of Islamic education and globalization.

Data analysis was carried out through several stages. First, data reduction was conducted by selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research objectives. Second, data presentation involved organizing the data systematically in the form of a narrative description. Third, conclusions were drawn through critical and reflective analysis to identify patterns, meanings, and conceptual implications regarding the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization.

The analysis was conducted using philosophical and pedagogical approaches, particularly from the epistemological, axiological, and ontological perspectives of Islamic education. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing perspectives from various literature sources to obtain a comprehensive understanding and minimize researcher bias.

3. Result and Discussion

a. Globalization and Contemporary Educational Challenges

Globalization presents contemporary educational challenges in the form of the need for technological adaptation, relevant curricula, and disparities in educational quality. Education is required to enhance digital competencies in order to produce graduates who are globally competitive without losing their local cultural identity. In the author's view, there are several major educational challenges in the era of globalization:

1) Digital Divide and Quality of Access: Inequality in technological facilities and the quality of teaching between developed and underdeveloped regions.
2) Curriculum Mismatch: Rigid curricula often fail to align with the dynamic demands of the labor market and the rapid development of science and technology.

3) Threats to Cultural Identity: The influx of foreign values through information flows that trigger moral crises and weaken local cultural identity.
4) Educator Competence: Teachers are required to transform themselves into facilitators who are proficient in technology rather than merely transmitters of information.
5) Commercialization of Education: Unequal access to education resulting from market-oriented approaches that neglect social justice.

To address these challenges, curriculum transformation, digital literacy enhancement, and strong character education are required to preserve national identity.

Globalization has shifted the educational paradigm toward competition, efficiency, and market orientation. Education tends to be reduced to an instrument for producing ready-to-use human resources, while ethical and transcendental dimensions are often marginalized. As a result, a generation emerges that is cognitively intelligent but morally fragile.

For Islamic education, the challenges of globalization encompass several major aspects:

1) The Dominance of Secular and Positivistic Western Epistemology

One of the most fundamental challenges faced by Islamic education in the era of globalization is the dominance of Western epistemology characterized by secular, positivistic, and reductionist perspectives. This epistemology places reason and empirical experience as the only legitimate sources of knowledge, while revelation, intuition, and metaphysical dimensions are marginalized within the structure of knowledge. Consequently, knowledge develops in a fragmented manner and becomes detached from value orientation and transcendental meaning.

From the Islamic perspective, knowledge is not value-neutral. Knowledge possesses a tawhidic dimension, as it is bound to the recognition of the oneness of Allah as the source of all reality and truth. Therefore, the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences, or between science and ethics, represents an epistemological construct that is inconsistent with the Islamic worldview. When Islamic education adopts Western epistemology uncritically, it risks losing its identity and becoming trapped in the secularization of knowledge that erodes the spiritual and moral dimensions of learners.

Islamic education is therefore required to develop an integrative epistemology capable of harmonizing reason, revelation, and empirical reality. In this way, Islamic education becomes not merely a consumer of global knowledge but also a producer of alternative scientific paradigms rooted in the values of tawhid and universal humanity.

Al-Attas (1995), in *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, argues that the greatest challenge facing Muslims is the “de-Islamization” of knowledge. Islamic education must respond through the process of the Islamization of Knowledge so that knowledge is not value-neutral but

remains firmly rooted in tawhid. The integration of religious knowledge and science is considered a solution to the educational dichotomy that has hindered Muslim intellectual progress (Hidayat, 2020).

2) The Penetration of Popular Culture and the Erosion of Spiritual Values

Globalization has also facilitated the massive penetration of global popular culture through digital media, the entertainment industry, and unrestricted flows of information. Popular culture often promotes values of hedonism, consumerism, moral relativism, and the glorification of freedom without responsibility. In the educational context, this phenomenon contributes to the weakening of spiritual and ethical values and leads to moral disorientation among younger generations.

From an Islamic perspective, culture is not merely an aesthetic expression but a reflection of a system of values and worldview. When global popular culture is accepted passively, Islamic education faces serious challenges in maintaining a balance between cultural openness and moral steadfastness. Spirituality, which should serve as the center of character formation, is increasingly displaced by materialistic and symbolic orientations.

Nevertheless, Islam does not reject culture and modernity a priori. Rather, these challenges require Islamic education to be selective, critical, and creative by using spiritual values as both a filter and a source of inspiration. Islamic education needs to develop cultural and media literacy so that learners can engage with global culture consciously, ethically, and responsibly.

Azra (2012) emphasizes that Islamic education should function as a cultural filter. Islamic education should not reject modernity a priori; instead, it should foster media literacy so that students can interact with global culture critically and ethically. Furthermore, strengthening character education based on local wisdom has proven effective in counteracting the negative impacts of global popular culture (Prasetyo, 2021).

3) The Demand for Professionalism without Moral Integrity

Globalization has shifted educational orientation toward efficiency, competition, and labor market demands. Professionalism is often narrowly interpreted as the mastery of technical skills and functional competencies, while moral integrity and social responsibility tend to be overlooked. As a result, education risks being reduced to a mere machine for producing workforce-ready human resources.

From the Islamic perspective, professionalism cannot be separated from *akhlaq* (morality), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and moral responsibility. The concepts of *itqān* (excellence in work), *amanah*, and *ihsān* emphasize that the quality of work is measured not only by outcomes but also by intentions, processes, and contributions to the welfare of society. Professionalism without morality has the potential to produce individuals who are technically competent but ethically fragile.

Therefore, Islamic education has a strategic role in integrating professional competence with character development. Islamic education must produce individuals who are not only globally competitive but also possess strong moral integrity as the foundation of a just and humane civilization.

These challenges require Islamic education to undertake critical reflection and methodological renewal without losing its identity.

Nata (2014) argues that the objective of Islamic education is not merely to produce skilled workers but to cultivate *Insan Kamil* (the complete human being). Professionalism without morality will only produce "soulless technocrats" who may ultimately harm humanity. Furthermore, the integration of character-based soft skills curricula within Islamic educational institutions has been shown to enhance graduates' competitiveness while preserving their integrity in the workplace (Isnaini & Inayah, 2025).

b. Philosophical Foundations of Islamic Education

The philosophical foundations of Islamic education are primarily rooted in the Qur'an and As-Sunnah, aiming to develop individuals who possess noble character, knowledge, and a strong commitment to tawhid. This foundation integrates tawhid as a spiritual basis, along with Islamic axiology and epistemology, to produce individuals who maintain a balance between intellectual potential, the heart, and action in order to attain happiness in both this world and the hereafter.

The Qur'an and As-Sunnah serve as the highest foundations governing all objectives and methods of Islamic education. The concept of the oneness of Allah constitutes a holistic paradigm that integrates the spiritual, moral, and intellectual dimensions of human beings. Consequently, the nature of existence views humans as creations of Allah endowed with potential, reason, and the responsibility to serve as khalifah (vicegerents) on earth. Therefore, educational goals and values focus on the formation of noble character, intellectual-spiritual balance, and the mastery of knowledge for social benefit (*amal*). This foundation positions education as an integral part of worship aimed at achieving the complete human being.

Langgulung (2003) in *Asas-Asas Pendidikan Islam*, explains that Islamic education is a process of developing human creative potential in order to fulfill the responsibility of vicegerency (*khilafah*). Knowledge, in this context, serves as a means of worship to draw closer to the Creator while simultaneously functioning as an instrument for social welfare.

Islamic education is firmly rooted in the worldview of *tawhid*, namely the fundamental belief in the oneness of Allah as the source, center, and ultimate purpose of all reality. Tawhid is understood not only theologically but also epistemologically and axiologically, as it forms the basis through which humans understand knowledge, truth, and the purpose of life. Within this framework, knowledge is regarded as a means of worship, serving both as a medium for drawing closer to Allah and as an instrument for promoting human welfare on earth.

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1991), in his book *The Concept of Education in Islam*, emphasizes that the objective of Islamic education is not

merely to produce economically productive citizens, but to cultivate “good human beings” (*adab*). Education is a process of instilling values within individuals based on the recognition of the oneness of Allah. Tawhid, as the foundation of epistemology, ensures that knowledge is not value-free but is instead bound by transcendental responsibility (Sari, 2020).

The Qur’an explicitly states that human beings are entrusted as *khalifah fi al-ardh* (vicegerents on earth), responsible for prospering the earth (*isti‘mār al-ardh*) through the development of knowledge, ethics, and civilization. Therefore, within Islamic education, the pursuit of knowledge is never value-neutral but is always linked to moral orientation and transcendental responsibility. Knowledge is not merely a tool for dominating nature, but rather a means of service and the preservation of life in a just and sustainable manner.

One of the fundamental principles of Islamic education is the rejection of the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. This dichotomy is viewed as a historical construct originating from the tradition of Western secularism rather than from Islamic epistemology. From an Islamic perspective, all knowledge—whether derived from revelation (*naqliyah*) or from reason and empirical experience (*‘aqliyah*)—ultimately originates from Allah, who is *Al-‘Alīm* (The All-Knowing).

Fazlur Rahman argues that the crisis of modern Islamic education began when Muslims accepted the dichotomy of knowledge uncritically, resulting in fragmented educational systems that lost their moral vision (Rahman, 1982). In contrast, the classical Islamic intellectual tradition demonstrated a harmonious integration of science, philosophy, and theology, as reflected in the works of scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali.

Within this context, Islamic education aims to develop the *insan kāmil* (the complete human being), namely individuals who simultaneously possess intellectual intelligence, spiritual depth, and social awareness. This unity of knowledge serves as an essential foundation enabling Islamic education to respond to the challenges of globalization without losing its identity and ethical orientation. Nata (2014) states that a philosophical approach to Islamic education must be capable of producing individuals who are academically intelligent while also possessing moral integrity (*akhlak mulia*). This serves as the primary safeguard for learners against value disorientation in the era of globalization.

c. Implications for Contemporary Islamic Education

Based on the worldview of *tawhid* and the principle of the unity of knowledge, Islamic education bears a historical and moral responsibility to develop an integrative curriculum that does not separate science, technology, and Islamic values. Tawhid, as an epistemological foundation, affirms that all reality originates from Divine will and wisdom; therefore, no branch of knowledge exists outside the scope of religious meaning. Within this framework, Islamic education does not view modern knowledge as a neutral and value-free entity, but rather as an intellectual trust that must be directed toward the welfare of humanity.

An integrative curriculum in Islamic education is not merely a formal combination of religious and secular subjects, but rather a synthesis of paradigms that places science and technology within the ethical framework of tawhid.

Modern sciences—such as physics, biology, information technology, and artificial intelligence—are understood not only from their functional and instrumental aspects but also from their moral, social, and ecological implications. Consequently, learners are taught not only how to master technology but also for what purpose and for whose benefit such technology is developed.

From this perspective, the mastery of modern knowledge is never positioned as a threat to faith. On the contrary, it is understood as a *wasilah*—a means of connection—to deepen awareness of God and strengthen humanity's responsibility as khalifah on earth. Science developed within the horizon of tawhid expands human reverence for the greatness of Allah, as every scientific discovery unveils new dimensions of the order, beauty, and complexity of His creation. When knowledge is detached from values, it has the potential to become an instrument of domination and destruction; however, when guided by faith, knowledge becomes a force for liberation and the preservation of life.

The responsibility of vicegerency requires Islamic education to produce generations who are not only technologically competent but also possess ethical sensitivity and social awareness. In a global world marked by environmental crises, social inequality, and dehumanization caused by technology, Islamic education is called upon to offer an alternative paradigm: human beings as moral subjects who utilize knowledge to maintain balance between exploitation and preservation, between progress and sustainability. Thus, an integrative curriculum becomes a space for the formation of prophetic character, namely a character that unites intellectual intelligence, spiritual depth, and commitment to humanitarian values.

Furthermore, this integrative approach emphasizes that faith and reason are not two opposing poles that negate one another, but rather two potentials that mutually reinforce each other. Islamic education rooted in tawhid encourages the development of critical thinking, creativity, and innovation because mature faith does not generate fear of change but rather the courage to engage in dialogue with the times. Therefore, Islamic education does not remain on the margins of globalization; instead, it emerges as an intellectual and moral force capable of directing globalization toward a more just, humane, and meaningful civilization.

Accordingly, Islamic education possesses strategic relevance in presenting an educational paradigm that is oriented not only toward material progress but also toward the development of a moral and just civilization. This principle provides a philosophical advantage for Islamic education in addressing the fragmentation of knowledge that characterizes modern education.

From an axiological perspective, Islamic education places values at the heart of the entire educational process. Education is not understood as a neutral technical activity but as a process of humanization filled with meaning and moral orientation. Within this perspective, educational success is measured not merely by the intellectual abilities or technical skills possessed by learners, but by the quality of character and ethical awareness developed within them. Islamic education therefore emerges as a civilizational project rather than merely a human resource training project; it is fundamentally concerned with building meaningful human beings.

The primary objective of Islamic education is to produce meaningful human beings, namely individuals who are aware of their existence as servants of God, social beings, and guardians of the universe. Such individuals are not only capable of rational thinking but also possess a moral compass that guides their actions. In a modern world characterized by technological acceleration and pragmatic lifestyles, Islamic education seeks to restore the dimension of meaning so that individuals do not become trapped in spiritual emptiness and ethical crises.

The values instilled in Islamic education are holistic and transcendent, encompassing responsibilities toward oneself, society, and the environment. Responsibility toward oneself is reflected in the cultivation of honesty, discipline, and integrity. Social responsibility is manifested through concern for justice, solidarity, and the common good. Meanwhile, ecological responsibility positions human beings as khalifah who are obligated to preserve environmental balance rather than rulers who are free to exploit nature without limits.

Within this axiological framework, Islamic education critiques the paradigm of modern education that places excessive emphasis on economic output and market competitiveness. Education that focuses solely on employability skills risks producing individuals who are professionally competent but lacking in empathy and social responsibility. In contrast, Islamic education asserts that skills and competencies must be accompanied by values and ethics so that science and technology truly function as instruments of liberation and prosperity rather than tools of domination and destruction.

Furthermore, the axiological approach of Islamic education promotes harmony between knowledge, attitudes, and actions. Values do not remain at the cognitive level but are internalized and manifested in real behavior. Thus, Islamic education contributes to the formation of individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also wise in applying their knowledge. This is the essence of the meaningful human being envisioned by Islamic education: a person whose life provides benefit, direction, and hope for others and for the world as a whole.

Accordingly, Islamic education possesses significant potential to correct the direction of globalization, which tends to be materialistic and exploitative. Ultimately, the essential goal of Islamic education is not merely to produce workers for the global market but to cultivate civilized human beings. Referring to the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, education is a process of *ta'dib* that instills the values of justice within human beings as moral subjects. When technology and science are placed within the framework of *adab*, every innovation that emerges becomes a *wasilah* for public welfare rather than an instrument of dehumanization (Al-Attas, 1993). Through this vision, Islamic education serves as the last safeguard in preserving human dignity amidst the currents of materialism in the modern world.

d. Relevance and Strategies for Strengthening Islamic Education in the Global Era

The era of globalization has fundamentally transformed the face of education. Education no longer takes place within a closed and homogeneous

environment but exists within the dynamics of global flows characterized by advances in digital technology, international competition, cultural exchange, and the penetration of new values that are often pragmatic and utilitarian in nature. In this context, education faces a major dilemma: whether it will merely adapt passively to global demands or emerge as a critical force capable of directing globalization toward a more meaningful humanity. Therefore, strategies for strengthening education in the era of globalization must be formulated in a visionary, integrative, and value-based manner.

1) Reorienting Educational Goals: From Competition to Meaning

The first and most fundamental strategy is the reorientation of educational goals. Globalization tends to drive education toward market logic, where success is measured by competitiveness, productivity, and economic efficiency. As a result, education risks being reduced to a mechanism for producing labor, while ethical, humanistic, and spiritual dimensions become marginalized.

Strengthening education requires the courage to reaffirm that the primary purpose of education is the formation of the whole person, not merely the development of skilled individuals. Education must produce individuals who possess intellectual competence alongside moral awareness, social responsibility, and global sensitivity. Without a meaningful orientation, education will produce generations that are technologically advanced but ethically fragile.

2) Developing an Integrative and Contextual Curriculum

The second strategy is the strengthening of an integrative curriculum capable of bridging modern knowledge and moral-cultural values. In the era of globalization, the fragmentation of knowledge has become a serious problem: science and technology develop rapidly but are often detached from ethical considerations and their social consequences.

An integrative curriculum does not merely combine subjects but unifies worldviews within the learning process. Learners need to understand that knowledge always carries value implications. Through this approach, education teaches not only what can be done but also what ought to be done. A contextual curriculum must also be responsive to real global issues, such as environmental crises, social inequality, and humanitarian conflicts.

3) Transforming the Role of Educators: From Instructors to Moral Intellectuals

Amid the rapid flow of digital information, the role of educators can no longer be limited to the transmission of knowledge. Strengthening education requires transforming educators into intellectual mentors and moral role models. Teachers and lecturers must be able to cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and ethical awareness among learners rather than merely pursuing administrative curriculum targets.

Educators who possess strong academic competence but lack exemplary character will lose their moral authority. Conversely, educators who combine academic excellence with personal integrity will become central figures in building an educational culture that is meaningful and resilient in the face of globalization.

4) Utilizing Technology Critically and Humanistically

Globalization cannot be separated from the digital technological revolution. Therefore, strategies for strengthening education must include the critical and humanistic use of technology. Educational technologies—such as online learning, artificial intelligence, and big data—should be positioned as supporting tools rather than substitutes for human relationships in education.

A critical approach is necessary to ensure that technology does not cause education to lose its dialogical and reflective dimensions. Education that relies excessively on technology risks producing generations who are rich in information but shallow in understanding. Therefore, technology must be integrated with pedagogical approaches that foster empathy, collaboration, and social responsibility.

5) Strengthening Values and Character in a Global Environment

Another important strategy is strengthening values and character education as a safeguard against the global moral crisis. Globalization introduces a plurality of values that do not always align with the principles of humanity and justice. Education must equip learners with the ability to evaluate, select, and take responsibility for their life choices.

Values education is not indoctrination but a process of internalization through dialogue, reflection, and exemplary conduct. Through this approach, learners become not only global citizens but also moral subjects committed to peace, justice, and sustainability.

6) Building a Critical and Inclusive Academic Culture

Finally, strengthening education in the era of globalization requires the development of an academic culture that is critical, open, and inclusive. Education must become a safe space for the exchange of ideas, differences of opinion, and intercultural dialogue. Without a critical culture, education can easily fall into dogmatism or simply follow global trends without reflection.

A strong academic culture will produce lifelong learners who are not only capable of adapting to global changes but also actively contributing to shaping the direction of those changes.

Strengthening the relevance of Islamic education does not mean rejecting globalization; rather, it means managing it selectively and critically. Islamic education needs to adopt technological advancements and modern pedagogical innovations, such as digital learning and interdisciplinary approaches, while simultaneously instilling ethical and spiritual values as its primary foundation.

Strategies for strengthening Islamic education include: (1) curriculum integration that unites science, technology, and Islamic values; (2) improving the quality of educators as intellectual and moral figures; and (3) developing an academic culture that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and social awareness. Through these strategies, Islamic education can emerge as a transformative force that is locally relevant and globally significant.

Strengthening the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization should not be interpreted as a rejection of the modern world and its dynamics. On the contrary, Islamic education is required to engage consciously, critically, and visionarily in managing the inevitable currents of globalization. Globalization is neither a reality that must be entirely accepted nor entirely rejected; rather, it is a

complex phenomenon containing both opportunities and challenges for the preservation of values, identity, and human civilization.

Within this perspective, Islamic education does not occupy a defensive and closed position but assumes an active role as an intellectual and moral subject capable of filtering, interpreting, and directing globalization. A selective and critical attitude is essential. Being selective means possessing the ability to distinguish values, knowledge, and technologies that are consistent with the principles of justice, humanity, and sustainability. Being critical means having the courage to question global assumptions that are often presented as progress while concealing underlying logics of domination, materialism, and dehumanization.

Islamic education, with its tawhidic foundation and ethical orientation, possesses adequate conceptual tools to undertake this process of selection. Globalization, which offers technological advancement, unlimited access to knowledge, and intercultural networks, can be adopted as a means of strengthening educational quality. However, aspects of globalization that promote value relativism, consumerism, and the reduction of human beings to mere economic commodities must be confronted with critical awareness. In this regard, Islamic education functions as a guide rather than merely a follower of global trends.

The critical stance of Islamic education toward globalization is also reflected in its rejection of the false dichotomy between faith and progress. Islamic education does not regard modernity as an inherent threat to religiosity but rather as a test of the intellectual and spiritual maturity of Muslims. Modern science and technology are viewed not as ultimate ends but as instruments of civilization that must be directed toward human welfare and the prosperity of the earth. In this way, Islamic education is able to free itself from both romanticism toward the past and uncritical enthusiasm for modernity.

Furthermore, managing globalization critically requires Islamic education to strengthen the ethical and humanistic dimensions of the educational process. In a world increasingly fragmented by global economic and political interests, Islamic education is called upon to reaffirm the values of justice, solidarity, and social responsibility. The relevance of Islamic education does not lie in its ability to imitate global systems but in its courage to offer an alternative civilization that positions human beings as dignified subjects rather than objects of exploitation.

Thus, strengthening the relevance of Islamic education means making it a space for creative dialectics between tradition and modernity, locality and globality, faith and reason. Islamic education is not anti-globalization; rather, it opposes forms of globalization that have lost their moral direction. In this position, Islamic education can emerge not merely as an educational institution but as a cultural and intellectual force that actively contributes to shaping a world that is more just, humane, and meaningful.

Globalization tends to push education toward market logic, where success is measured solely by productivity and economic efficiency. However, as emphasized by Rahman (1982) Islamic education must remain committed to its primary objective: producing individuals who possess both intellectual depth and

moral integrity, rather than becoming merely a mechanism for producing labor within the currents of global materialism.

An integrative curriculum does not simply combine subjects but unifies worldviews within the learning process. This is consistent with the ideas of M. Amin Abdullah (2020), who emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in which science and technology are continuously interconnected with ethical values so that scientific progress remains grounded in the welfare of humanity.

Strategies for strengthening education require transforming educators into intellectual mentors and moral exemplars. According to Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud (1998), educators in the Islamic tradition are not merely transmitters of information but individuals who internalize the values of truth within learners, thereby fostering strong and dignified character.

A critical approach is necessary to ensure that technology does not cause education to lose its dialogical and reflective dimensions. From the perspective of Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1981), modern science and technology must be repositioned under the guidance of sacred knowledge so that the use of digital tools in education does not alienate human beings from their spiritual and human essence.

Strengthening the relevance of Islamic education in the era of globalization means making it a space for creative dialogue between tradition and modernity. As observed by Azra (2012) Islamic education is required to adopt a proactive and selective stance, embracing global advancements pragmatically while maintaining Islamic identity as a filter against the negative impacts of global dehumanization.

4. Conclusion

Islamic education possesses strong relevance in the era of globalization when it is understood and developed in a dynamic, critical, and contextual manner. Grounded in the principles of *tawhid* and a holistic value orientation, Islamic education offers an alternative educational paradigm that balances material progress with spiritual depth. Rather than rejecting globalization, Islamic education is encouraged to engage with it selectively and critically by adopting scientific and technological advancements while maintaining ethical and spiritual values as its fundamental foundation. In this way, globalization should be viewed as an opportunity for Islamic education to reaffirm its role as a moral guide and a contributor to the development of a just and humane civilization.

The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on the relevance of Islamic education through the integration of *tawhid*-based values, the unity of knowledge, and contemporary educational demands within the context of globalization. The study contributes theoretically by strengthening the discourse on Islamic education as an integrative framework that harmonizes science, technology, ethics, and spirituality. Therefore, it is recommended that Islamic educational institutions develop integrative curricula, strengthen the role of educators as intellectual and moral role models, utilize technology in a critical and humanistic manner, and foster academic cultures that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and social responsibility. Through these efforts, Islamic education can remain relevant locally while making a meaningful contribution to global society.

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