

RECONSTRUCTING THE POLICY DIRECTION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN INDONESIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF VISION, MISSION, AND OBJECTIVES IN GOVERNMENT REGULATION NO. 55 OF 2007

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Abstract

This study aims to reconstruct the policy direction of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) based on the vision, mission, and objectives stipulated in Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007. The study is motivated by the persistent gap between the normative ideals of PAI, which emphasize faith, piety, noble character, and holistic human development, and its implementation, which remains largely cognitive-oriented and insufficient in fostering value internalization. Using a qualitative library research approach, the study critically examines policy documents, Islamic education literature, and contemporary educational theories. The findings indicate that although the vision, mission, and objectives of PAI are conceptually aligned with the regulatory framework, their implementation has not effectively integrated cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Key challenges include limited pedagogical innovation, weak value internalization, and inadequate responsiveness to digital transformation, social pluralism, and environmental sustainability. The novelty of this study lies in proposing a policy reconstruction framework based on three interconnected paradigms: integrative, humanistic, and transformative. These paradigms are operationalized through curriculum development, contextual-reflective learning, digital literacy, religious moderation, ecological awareness, and authentic assessment. The study concludes that PAI policy should shift toward a comprehensive framework that develops reflective, ethical, moderate, and socially responsible learners in the digital era.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, education policy, PAI reconstruction*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan merekonstruksi arah kebijakan Pendidikan Agama Islam berdasarkan visi, misi, dan tujuan yang tercantum dalam Peraturan Pemerintah No. 55 Tahun 2007. Kajian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kesenjangan antara cita-cita normatif PAI yang menekankan penguatan iman, takwa, akhlak mulia, dan pengembangan manusia secara holistik dengan praktik implementasinya yang masih dominan berorientasi pada aspek kognitif dan belum optimal dalam internalisasi nilai. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi pustaka dengan menganalisis secara kritis dokumen kebijakan, literatur pendidikan Islam, dan teori pendidikan kontemporer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa visi, misi, dan tujuan PAI telah selaras dengan kerangka regulasi, namun implementasinya belum mampu mengintegrasikan dimensi kognitif, afektif, dan perilaku secara efektif. Tantangan utama meliputi keterbatasan inovasi pedagogis, lemahnya internalisasi nilai, serta rendahnya respons terhadap isu transformasi digital, pluralisme sosial, dan keberlanjutan lingkungan. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada tawaran kerangka rekonstruksi kebijakan berbasis paradigma integratif, humanistik, dan transformatif yang dioperasionalkan melalui pengembangan kurikulum, pembelajaran kontekstual-reflektif, literasi digital, moderasi beragama, kesadaran ekologis, dan asesmen autentik. Studi ini menegaskan perlunya transformasi kebijakan PAI menuju

pembelajaran yang membentuk peserta didik reflektif, etis, moderat, dan bertanggung jawab secara sosial di era digital.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam, kebijakan pendidikan, rekonstruksi PAI

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education occupies a strategic position within Indonesia's national education system, not merely as a subject matter but also as a medium for cultivating students' religious identity, morality, and character. In the framework of national education, PAI is expected to contribute to the formation of individuals who are intellectually competent, spiritually mature, and socially responsible. This orientation is explicitly affirmed in Government Regulation number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction, which states that religious education aims to develop learners who possess faith and devotion to God Almighty and demonstrate noble character. (Republik Indonesia 2007) The regulation further mandates that religious education should be conducted through interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, challenging, and participatory learning processes.

However, despite the normative clarity of these policy objectives, a significant gap remains between the ideals articulated in PP No. 55 of 2007 and the realities of PAI implementation in educational institutions. This discrepancy constitutes the central problem addressed in this article. Although the regulatory framework positions character formation, value internalization, and holistic learner development as the primary goals of PAI, learning practices often remain dominated by cognitive-oriented approaches that emphasize the transmission of religious knowledge rather than the transformation of learners' attitudes and behavior. Consequently, the strategic role of PAI as an instrument for developing spiritual, social, and moral competencies has not been fully realized. (Fauzi and Nurrohman 2025)

This central problem gives rise to several derivative issues. *First*, PAI learning continues to be characterized by the dominance of cognitive achievement and memorization-based instruction. A number of recent studies indicate that classroom practices still rely heavily on lecturing methods, rote learning, and cognitive assessments, while affective and psychomotor dimensions receive relatively limited attention. Research conducted by (Muhammad Makinuddin, Mohammad Afwan Choiri Irsyadi, and Mihiyiddin Mubarak 2025), (Arifin 2014), and (Purnomo, Zafi, and Wahid 2022) found that PAI learning in many schools remains teacher-centered and focused primarily on students' mastery of religious concepts rather than on the internalization of Islamic values and character formation. Such findings reinforce Azyumardi Azra's argument that Islamic education overly oriented toward knowledge transfer tends to be less effective in nurturing social awareness, moral sensitivity, and character development. (Azra 2014)

Second, pedagogical innovation in Islamic Education (PAI) remains relatively limited. Learning approaches often position students as passive recipients of information rather than active participants in the meaning-making process. This condition reduces opportunities for critical reflection, contextual understanding, and

experiential learning. From a humanistic perspective, these practices fail to adequately address students' emotional and psychological needs. This integration contradicts Vygotsky's constructivist scaffolding theory and the TPACK framework in supporting digital literacy in Islamic Education learning. (Hendrawati 2025) Vygotsky argued that meaningful learning requires the fulfillment of emotional needs such as appreciation, belonging, and self-actualization. Therefore, Islamic Education (PAI) requires a more humanistic pedagogical approach that emphasizes dialogue, empathy, and the value of *rahmah* (compassion) through digital literacy.

Third, the longstanding dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences continues to affect the development of Islamic education. PAI is frequently treated as a separate domain of knowledge detached from contemporary scientific, technological, and social developments. As a result, learners often encounter difficulties in understanding the relevance of Islamic teachings to modern life. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasized that Islamic education should integrate knowledge and values in order to produce civilized human beings (*insan adabi*) capable of responding wisely to contemporary challenges. (Al-Attas 2010)

In addition, rapid technological advancement and globalization have significantly transformed the ways young people access information, communicate, and construct their worldviews. The emergence of digital culture, artificial intelligence, social media, and unlimited information flows has created new opportunities as well as new challenges for religious education. Manuel Castells describes contemporary society as a network society in which information technology plays a central role in shaping social relations and cultural practices. (Kirtiklis 2017) In this context, PAI is expected not only to utilize digital technology as a learning medium but also to develop students' ethical, critical, and responsible engagement with digital environments.

Furthermore, increasing social complexity and cultural diversity require PAI to strengthen its role in fostering moderation, tolerance, and social cohesion. Phenomena such as intolerance, identity-based polarization, and moral degradation among segments of youth indicate the need to reinforce the transformative function of PAI. These phenomena should not be interpreted as evidence that PAI is the sole cause of such social problems, as they emerge from multiple social, political, economic, and cultural factors. Rather, they demonstrate the importance of enhancing PAI's contribution to developing inclusive religious attitudes and civic responsibility. In this regard, Nurcholish Madjid emphasized that Islamic education should promote universal values of humanity, inclusivity, and tolerance as integral dimensions of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. (Madjid 2008)

Another emerging challenge concerns ecological sustainability. Environmental degradation, climate change, and ecological crises increasingly demand educational responses that cultivate environmental responsibility. Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that the contemporary ecological crisis reflects a deeper spiritual crisis resulting from humanity's loss of sacred relationships with nature. (Nasr 2016) Consequently, PAI should incorporate ecotheological

perspectives that encourage learners to understand environmental stewardship as part of religious responsibility and ethical commitment.

Despite extensive scholarly discussions on Islamic Religious Education and the implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007, most previous studies have tended to focus on normative analyses of policy content, curriculum implementation, or character education objectives. Relatively few studies have offered an operational framework for reconstructing PAI policy that systematically connects vision, mission, goals, curriculum, learning processes, and evaluation mechanisms within a coherent paradigm capable of addressing contemporary educational challenges. This limitation reveals a significant research gap that warrants further investigation.

Therefore, this article argues that PAI requires a reconstructed policy direction that is more integrative, humanistic, and transformative. Such reconstruction is necessary to bridge the gap between normative expectations and educational practice while ensuring the continued relevance of PAI in responding to social pluralism, technological disruption, character formation, and ecological challenges. Accordingly, the author proposes to reinterpret the vision, mission, and objectives of Islamic Religious Education as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 as the conceptual foundation for this reconstruction.

Different from previous studies that tend to describe PP No. 55 of 2007 normatively, this article offers a reconstruction of the policy direction of Islamic Religious Education through the integration of three paradigms: integrative, humanistic, and transformative. These paradigms are employed to reinterpret the vision, mission, objectives, curriculum, learning processes, and evaluation of PAI so that they become more contextual to the challenges of social pluralism, digital disruption, and the need for holistic character development among learners.

METHODE

This study employs a qualitative approach with a library research design.(Mulyatiningsih 2018) The qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to understand and critically analyze the direction of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) policy based on its vision, mission, and objectives as stipulated in Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction. Qualitative research enables researchers to examine policy documents and educational phenomena holistically through the interpretation of textual and contextual data. According to John W. Creswell, qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems through in-depth analysis of descriptive data.(Dewey 2008)

This research is categorized as library research because its primary sources of data consist of written documents and scholarly literature relevant to the research focus.(Sugiyono 2019) The study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data consist of official policy documents, including Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Government

Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction, and other relevant policy documents related to religious education and character development in Indonesia. These documents serve as the principal normative foundation for analyzing the vision, mission, objectives, learning processes, and evaluation of PAI.

Secondary data include scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and previous research findings related to Islamic Religious Education, educational policy, curriculum development, religious moderation, humanistic learning, transformative education, character education, and the integration of knowledge and values. These sources function as theoretical and empirical references for interpreting policy content and contextualizing contemporary challenges faced by PAI.

To ensure the credibility and relevance of the literature reviewed, this study applies specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. (Setyosari 2016) Literature was included if it: (1) discussed Islamic Religious Education, educational policy, curriculum, learning, assessment, religious moderation, humanistic education, or transformative education; (2) was published in peer-reviewed academic journals, reputable academic publishers, or official institutional publications; (3) possessed identifiable academic credentials such as DOI, ISBN, or recognized publisher information; and (4) was relevant to the themes of vision, mission, objectives, curriculum, learning processes, or evaluation in PAI. Conversely, literature was excluded if it lacked academic credibility, was not directly related to the research focus, consisted primarily of opinion pieces without scholarly support, or duplicated findings already represented in other selected sources.

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques, involving the identification, selection, classification, and review of relevant policy documents and academic literature. This technique enables researchers to systematically gather information related to the normative foundations and practical implementation of PAI policy. The data were analyzed using content analysis. According to Krippendorff, content analysis is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences from texts within their contextual framework.² In this study, content analysis was conducted through several systematic stages. First, the researcher identified the principal norms and policy directions contained in Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 and related educational regulations. Second, these norms were classified into analytical categories consisting of vision, mission, objectives, learning processes, and evaluation. Third, the identified normative provisions were compared with findings from previous studies concerning the implementation of PAI in educational institutions. Fourth, a critical interpretation was undertaken to identify gaps between regulatory expectations and educational practice. Finally, the researcher formulated a policy reconstruction model based on integrative, humanistic, and transformative paradigms as a framework for strengthening the relevance and effectiveness of PAI in contemporary society.

To enhance analytical rigor, the study adopts an interpretive-critical perspective that not only examines the normative content of educational policy but also evaluates its practical implications in responding to current challenges, including digital transformation, social pluralism, character formation, and ecological awareness. Through this approach, the study seeks to generate a comprehensive framework for reconstructing the direction of Islamic Religious Education policy that remains rooted in Islamic values while responding effectively to contemporary educational needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Vision of Islamic Religious Education

The normative vision of PAI originates from the fundamental values of Islamic teachings derived from the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. In the Islamic educational tradition, education is not merely intended to transfer knowledge but to cultivate complete human beings (*insan kamil*) who balance spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social dimensions. Consequently, the normative vision of PAI can be formulated as follows:

"To develop learners who are faithful and devoted to Allah SWT, possess noble character, achieve balance between spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social capacities, and are able to implement Islamic values in personal, social, and civic life." (Anastasya Rahma Nur Faizah, Nova Fadliana Rahmawati, and Mardiyah 2025) This vision reflects the holistic nature of Islamic education, which seeks to integrate faith, knowledge, morality, and social responsibility within a unified educational framework.

The regulative vision of PAI is derived from national education policies, particularly Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction. Article 3 of Law No. 20 of 2003 states that national education aims to develop learners into individuals who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, possess noble character, are knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and responsible citizens. Furthermore, Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 explicitly affirms that religious education aims to form learners who understand, appreciate, and practice religious values in daily life. (Rosyad and Zuchdi 2018)

Thus, the regulative vision of PAI represents a policy translation of Islamic educational ideals into the national education system. It emphasizes not only religious understanding but also character formation, citizenship, social responsibility, and harmonious coexistence within Indonesia's pluralistic society. While the normative and regulative visions provide philosophical and legal foundations, the operational vision reflects how these ideals are implemented in educational practice. The operational vision of PAI should be manifested through curriculum design, learning processes, school culture, and assessment systems.

At the curricular level, PAI should integrate religious knowledge with contemporary social, scientific, technological, and ecological issues. At the pedagogical level, learning should move beyond memorization-oriented approaches

toward reflective, dialogical, collaborative, and problem-based learning. At the level of school culture, Islamic values should be embodied through daily habits, exemplary behavior, mutual respect, social service, environmental responsibility, and inclusive interactions. Meanwhile, assessment should not be limited to cognitive achievement but should also evaluate affective development, character formation, social engagement, and religious practice. (Muhlasin 2026)

In this perspective, the operational vision serves as a bridge connecting policy ideals with educational realities. The success of PAI should therefore be measured not merely by students' mastery of religious concepts but by the extent to which Islamic values are internalized and reflected in their attitudes and behavior. (Ahmad Nazar Fakhury et al. 2026) The vision of PAI can be further enriched through the perspectives of prominent Islamic education scholars. Although they share the same fundamental objective of forming ideal Muslim individuals, each scholar emphasizes different dimensions of educational development.

Ahmad Tafsir argues that Islamic education aims to produce individuals who possess faith, knowledge, and noble character. His perspective places moral formation (*akhlak*) as the central outcome of education, emphasizing the balance between knowledge and righteous conduct. Therefore, the success of education is measured not only by intellectual achievement but also by moral integrity. (Tafsir 2017)

Azyumardi Azra emphasizes the need for Islamic education to prepare learners who are capable of responding constructively to social change, modernization, and globalization. For Azra, Islamic education should not be isolated from contemporary realities but must actively engage with scientific advancement, democratic values, and multicultural society. His perspective highlights the importance of adaptability, openness, and social relevance. (Azra 2012)

Meanwhile, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas views education primarily as the process of instilling adab. He argues that the ultimate objective of Islamic education is the formation of civilized human beings (*insan adabi*) through the integration of knowledge, ethics, and spirituality. Al-Attas places strong emphasis on the unity of knowledge and values, rejecting the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. (Putri and Sirozi 2026)

Although these scholars approach Islamic education from different perspectives, they share a common concern regarding the holistic development of human beings. Their primary difference lies in their emphasis: Tafsir prioritizes moral formation, Azra emphasizes modernization and contextual adaptation, while al-Attas focuses on adab and the integration of knowledge and values. Together, their perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for reconstructing the vision of PAI in contemporary contexts.

Based on the synthesis of regulatory foundations and scholarly perspectives, the vision of PAI can be understood as encompassing three interconnected dimensions. *First*, the spiritual dimension aims to strengthen faith and devotion to Allah SWT. *Second*, the moral dimension seeks to cultivate noble character and ethical responsibility. *Third*, the socio-intellectual dimension develops critical thinking, social engagement, adaptability, and the capacity to contribute positively

to society. These dimensions collectively provide the foundation for a more integrative, humanistic, and transformative direction of Islamic Religious Education policy. The explanation above will be presented in the form of a table excerpt as follows:

Table 1. Synthesis of the Vision of Islamic Religious Education According to Regulations and Scholars (Mukarom 2022), (Nikmah, Pramitha, and Puspitasari 2020a), (Rizal, Zahriyanti, and Bahar 2024)

Source of Thought	Core Vision	Main Dimension	Policy Implication
Law No. 20 of 2003	Development of faithful, pious, knowledgeable, capable, and responsible citizens	Spiritual, intellectual, civic	Integration of religious and national educational goals
Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007	Formation of learners who understand, internalize, and practice religious values	Faith, piety, character	Character-based religious education and value internalization
Ahmad Tafsir	Formation of knowledgeable, faithful, and morally upright individuals	Akhlak and moral development	Strengthening character education and moral assessment
Azyumardi Azra	Formation of religious individuals capable of responding to social change and modernization	Adaptability, social relevance	Contextual curriculum, digital literacy, and multicultural education
Syed M. Naquib al-Attas	Formation of civilized human beings (insan adabi) through integration of knowledge and values	Adab, integration of knowledge and values	Elimination of knowledge dichotomy and holistic curriculum design
Reconstruction of PAI Vision (This Study)	Development of faithful, ethical, socially responsible, and	Spiritual, moral, socio-intellectual	Integration of curriculum, learning, school culture, and

adaptive learners
through
integrative,
humanistic, and
transformative
education

assessment
systems

This is in line with the main mission of the Prophet Muhammad SAW sent to the world, namely to perfect human morals according to the hadith from Abu Hurairah *Radhiyallahu 'Anhu*, the Messenger of Allah *Shallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam* said:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Meaning: "Indeed, I was sent only to perfect moral righteousness." (HR. *Al-Baihaqi*). (Albaihaqi 2000) Allah SWT also confirms this in His Word:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

Meaning: "And indeed, you are of a great moral character." (QS *Al-Qalam*: 4). (Departemen Agama RI 2007)

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Meaning: "Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the mercy of) Allah and (the coming of) the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (QS *Al-Ahzab*: 21). (Departemen Agama RI 2007)

Therefore, it can be concluded that the vision of Islamic Religious Education represents an ideal depiction of the direction of student development, oriented not only toward religious aspects but also encompassing intellectual, social, and moral aspects. This vision serves as the foundation for formulating Islamic Religious Education policies, curricula, and teaching practices in Indonesia.

B. Islamic Religious Education Mission

The mission of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) represents a strategic and operational pathway for realizing its vision of developing learners who are faithful, pious, possess noble character, and are capable of contributing positively to society. While the vision provides the ultimate direction of Islamic education, the mission translates that vision into concrete educational actions through curriculum development, learning processes, assessment systems, and school culture. (Faruq, Raharjo, and Sholeh 2024)

Normatively, the mission of PAI is rooted in the objectives of national education as stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and further elaborated in Government Regulation Number 55 of

2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction. These regulations emphasize that religious education is intended to develop learners who believe in and fear God Almighty and who demonstrate noble character in both personal and social life. Consequently, the mission of PAI encompasses not only the transmission of religious knowledge but also the cultivation of values, attitudes, and competencies necessary for holistic human development.

To provide a clearer conceptual framework, the mission of PAI can be organized hierarchically into five interconnected dimensions: spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and adaptive missions. These dimensions reflect the progressive stages through which Islamic education contributes to the development of the whole person (*insan kamil*). (Juliani et al. 2024)

1. Spiritual Mission: Strengthening Faith and Piety

The spiritual mission constitutes the foundational mission of PAI. Its primary objective is to cultivate faith (*iman*) and piety (*taqwa*) as the basis of learners' personal and social life. Through the study and internalization of Islamic teachings, students are expected to develop awareness of their relationship with Allah SWT and demonstrate religious commitment in daily practice. This mission serves as the foundation for all other dimensions of Islamic education because spiritual awareness provides the ethical and motivational basis for character development, social responsibility, and lifelong learning. (Rizka et al. 2024)

2. Moral Mission: Developing Noble Character (*Akhlak al-Karimah*)

Building upon spiritual formation, the moral mission seeks to cultivate noble character and ethical conduct. PAI aims to shape learners who embody Islamic virtues such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, justice, empathy, and integrity. Ahmad Tafsir argues that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is the formation of morally upright individuals whose knowledge is reflected in righteous behavior. Therefore, moral development should not be viewed merely as a supplementary educational outcome but as a central indicator of educational success. (Putra and Harahap n.d.)

3. Intellectual Mission: Developing a Comprehensive Understanding of Islam

The intellectual mission of PAI focuses on fostering a comprehensive and contextual understanding of Islamic teachings, including *aqidah* (faith), *sharia* (religious practices), and *akhlak* (ethics). Beyond memorizing religious concepts, learners should be encouraged to develop critical thinking, reflective reasoning, and the ability to relate Islamic teachings to contemporary issues. (Haq, Tahir, and Nursalam 2025)

This mission also addresses the need to overcome the traditional dichotomy between religious knowledge and modern sciences. Islamic education should enable learners to understand religion as a dynamic source of guidance relevant to scientific, social, technological, and cultural developments.

4. Social Mission: Promoting Religious Moderation, Tolerance, and Social Responsibility

The social mission aims to develop learners who are capable of living harmoniously within Indonesia's pluralistic society. In this regard, PAI plays an important role in promoting religious moderation (*moderasi beragama*), tolerance,

empathy, and civic responsibility.(Aflahah, Nisa, and Aldeia 2023) Religious moderation has become a significant policy agenda in Indonesia, particularly through the Ministry of Religious Affairs' framework of *Moderasi Beragama*, which emphasizes four key indicators: (1) commitment to national values (*komitmen kebangsaan*), (2) tolerance toward diversity, (3) rejection of violence and extremism, and (4) appreciation of local culture and traditions. These indicators provide an operational framework for strengthening inclusive and peaceful religious attitudes among learners.(Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia 2019)

This perspective aligns with Nurcholish Madjid's view that Islamic education should nurture inclusive, humanistic, and universal values as manifestations of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. Therefore, PAI should contribute to strengthening social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and respect for diversity rather than merely transmitting doctrinal knowledge.(Syaifulloh 2020)

5. Adaptive Mission: Integrating Knowledge and Values in Responding to Contemporary Challenges

The adaptive mission reflects the need for Islamic education to respond effectively to globalization, technological transformation, environmental challenges, and rapid social change. This mission emphasizes the integration of religious values with scientific knowledge, digital literacy, ecological awareness, and contemporary life skills.(Rahman Sanusi Ginting 2023) Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasizes the importance of integrating knowledge and values to produce civilized individuals (*insan adabi*), while Azyumardi Azra highlights the necessity for Islamic education to adapt to modernization and changing social realities. Accordingly, PAI should equip learners with the capacity to navigate digital environments responsibly, critically evaluate information, and apply Islamic ethical principles in addressing contemporary challenges.(Rifdillah 2025a)

From this perspective, the adaptive mission functions as a bridge between Islamic values and modern realities, ensuring that PAI remains relevant and responsive in the twenty-first century. In conclusion, the mission of Islamic Religious Education extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge. It encompasses a comprehensive effort to cultivate spiritual awareness, moral integrity, intellectual competence, social responsibility, and adaptive capacity. To achieve these objectives effectively, the mission of PAI must be translated into curriculum design, learning strategies, assessment systems, and school culture that reflect integrative, humanistic, and transformative educational principles.

Table 2. Mission of Islamic Religious Education and Implementation Indicators (Muhammad Yusuf and M. Sayyidul Abrori 2022), (Rifdillah 2025b)

Mission Dimension	Core Mission	Implementation Indicators	Learning Implications
Spiritual Mission	Strengthening faith and piety	Regular worship practices, spiritual reflection, awareness of religious	Experiential religious learning and value internalization

		obligations	
Moral Mission	Developing noble character	Honesty, discipline, responsibility, empathy, integrity, ethical behavior	Character-based learning and authentic assessment
Intellectual Mission	Developing comprehensive understanding of Islam	Critical thinking, contextual understanding of Islamic teachings, integration of theory and practice	Inquiry-based, reflective, and problem-solving learning
Social Mission	Promoting moderation, tolerance, and social responsibility	Tolerance, anti-violence attitudes, commitment to national values, appreciation of diversity and local culture	Collaborative learning, multicultural education, community engagement
Adaptive Mission	Integrating knowledge and values in responding to contemporary challenges	Digital literacy, ethical use of technology, environmental awareness, adaptability to social change	Technology-integrated learning and interdisciplinary approaches

The Islamic Religious Education mission is a strategic step towards realizing the Islamic Religious Education vision, namely to develop students who are faithful, pious, and have noble morals. This mission serves as the operational direction for learning implementation, curriculum development, and Islamic education policies.

C. Objectives of Islamic Religious Education

The objectives of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) constitute a systematic effort to develop complete human beings (*insan kamil*) who possess a balanced integration of spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and practical competencies. Normatively, these objectives are grounded in Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007, which affirms that religious education aims to develop learners who are faithful, pious, and characterized by noble conduct. This orientation is consistent with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which emphasizes the holistic development of learners' potential, encompassing spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and social responsibility.

Accordingly, the objectives of PAI extend beyond the cognitive transmission of religious knowledge. They include the internalization of Islamic values and the transformation of learners' attitudes and behavior. Islamic education is expected not only to provide knowledge about religion but also to cultivate religious consciousness that is reflected in everyday actions and decision-making. Ahmad Tafsir argues that the primary objective of Islamic education is to develop individuals who understand and practice Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Therefore, the objectives of PAI should be understood as encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains that are developed in an integrated manner.

Furthermore, the objectives of PAI include the formation of social character grounded in Islamic values such as empathy, tolerance, justice, cooperation, and social responsibility. In the context of Indonesia's pluralistic society, Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in fostering inclusive and moderate religious attitudes. Nurcholish Madjid emphasized that Islamic education should promote universal humanitarian values as an expression of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. Consequently, the objectives of PAI are directed not only toward individual piety but also toward social piety and constructive citizenship. (Mukaromah n.d.)

In addition, the objectives of PAI must respond to contemporary developments in science, technology, and global society. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasized that Islamic education should integrate knowledge and values in order to produce civilized individuals (*insan adabi*). Therefore, the objectives of PAI include the development of critical, reflective, and adaptive thinking skills that enable learners to engage constructively with contemporary challenges. This perspective is reinforced by Azyumardi Azra, who argues that Islamic education must continuously transform itself to remain relevant within changing social and global contexts.

Based on the synthesis of regulatory foundations and scholarly perspectives, the objectives of Islamic Religious Education can be categorized into six interrelated dimensions.

1. **Spiritual Dimension (Faith and Piety):** This dimension aims to strengthen learners' faith and devotion to Allah SWT through the development of religious awareness, spiritual commitment, and consistent worship practices. The expected outcome is the internalization of Islamic values as a guiding framework for personal and social life.
2. **Moral Dimension (Noble Character):** This dimension focuses on cultivating noble character (*akhlak al-karimah*) reflected in honesty, discipline, responsibility, integrity, empathy, and respect for others. Learners are also expected to avoid negative behaviors such as dishonesty, bullying, intolerance, discrimination, and irresponsible digital behavior.
3. **Cognitive Dimension (Islamic Understanding):** The cognitive dimension seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings, including *aqidah*, *sharia*, and *akhlak*. Learners should be able to explain Islamic concepts critically and relate them to contemporary social realities and ethical challenges.

4. Psychomotor Dimension (Religious Practice): This dimension emphasizes the ability to perform religious practices correctly and consistently while translating Islamic values into daily behavior. It also includes active participation in religious, social, and environmental activities.
5. Social Dimension (Empathy and Religious Moderation): The social dimension aims to develop tolerance, social concern, cooperation, and respect for diversity. Learners are expected to demonstrate attitudes consistent with religious moderation, including commitment to national values, rejection of violence, appreciation of cultural diversity, and constructive engagement with others.
6. Intellectual-Adaptive Dimension: This dimension focuses on developing critical thinking, reflective reasoning, digital literacy, and adaptability to social and technological change. Learners should be able to utilize technology ethically and responsibly while applying Islamic values in addressing contemporary issues. (Kadi n.d.)

In conclusion, the objectives of Islamic Religious Education are not limited to the acquisition of religious knowledge. Rather, they encompass the holistic development of learners' spiritual, moral, social, intellectual, and practical capacities. To ensure that these objectives can be effectively implemented and evaluated, they must be translated into measurable indicators, learning activities, and assessment strategies that support the development of learners as faithful, ethical, competent, and socially responsible individuals.

Table 3. Objectives of Islamic Religious Education, Learning Forms, and Assessment Strategies (Rohman n.d.), (Mustaghfiroh, Manshur, and Mubaroq 2025), (Al Khansa et al. 2024)

Dimension of PAI Objectives	Behavioral Indicators	Learning Forms	Assessment Strategies
Spiritual Dimension	Consistent worship practices, religious awareness, sincerity, spiritual reflection	Worship reflection, habituation programs, spiritual mentoring, Qur'anic contemplation	Reflective journals, observation, self-assessment, teacher notes
Moral Dimension	Honesty, discipline, responsibility, integrity, empathy, respect for others	Moral case studies, role-playing, character education activities, value clarification	Attitude rubrics, observation sheets, peer assessment, behavioral portfolio
Cognitive Dimension	Understanding of <i>aqidah</i> , <i>sharia</i> , and	Inquiry-based learning,	Written tests, essays,

	<i>akhlak</i> ; ability to analyze contemporary issues from an Islamic perspective	discussions, problem-based learning, case analysis	presentations, concept mapping
Psychomotor Dimension	Correct performance of worship, application of Islamic values in daily life, participation in religious activities	Practical worship sessions, service learning, religious projects	Performance assessment, practical examinations, activity portfolios
Social Dimension	Tolerance, cooperation, social empathy, commitment to moderation and citizenship values	Social projects, collaborative learning, multicultural dialogue, community engagement	Social project portfolios, observation, community feedback, reflective reports
Intellectual-Adaptive Dimension	Critical thinking, digital literacy, ethical technology use, adaptability to change	Digital literacy projects, analysis of Islamic digital content, interdisciplinary learning	Digital portfolios, project-based assessment, media analysis reports
Ecological Dimension (recommended addition for reconstruction model)	Environmental responsibility, sustainable behavior, ecological awareness based on Islamic values	Ecotheological learning, environmental campaigns, green school projects	Project reports, environmental portfolios, observation of sustainable practices

The reconstruction of PAI objectives demonstrates a shift from a predominantly cognitive orientation toward a holistic framework integrating spiritual, moral, social, intellectual, adaptive, and ecological dimensions. This framework aligns with the article's broader paradigm of integrative, humanistic, and transformative Islamic Religious Education, ensuring that policy objectives are not merely normative statements but are translated into observable learning outcomes and measurable educational practices.

D. Implementation of Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 in Islamic Education Learning

Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction serves as the primary regulatory framework governing the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia. The regulation emphasizes that religious education aims to develop learners who possess faith (*iman*), piety (*taqwa*), and noble character (*akhlak mulia*). (Nikmah, Pramitha, and Puspitasari 2020b) Furthermore, Article 3 and the provisions concerning the implementation of religious education emphasize that learning should be conducted through interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, challenging, and participatory processes that encourage learners' active involvement in educational activities. These provisions indicate that PAI is intended not merely as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but as a transformative process for developing learners' character and holistic competencies.

1. Implementation in Curriculum Development

The implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007 at the curricular level requires PAI to encompass a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings, including *aqidah*, *sharia*, *akhlak*, and their relevance to contemporary life. The curriculum should integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on religious knowledge. (Liyandani and Kolis n.d.)

From this perspective, the curriculum should facilitate the internalization of Islamic values through contextual learning experiences. Ahmad Tafsir emphasizes that the ultimate purpose of Islamic education is the formation of noble character; therefore, curriculum development should prioritize value internalization alongside conceptual understanding. Consequently, curriculum content should be linked to issues such as digital ethics, social responsibility, religious moderation, environmental awareness, and citizenship.

2. Implementation in the Learning Process

The learning process constitutes the core mechanism through which the objectives of PAI are realized. PP No. 55 of 2007 mandates learning that is interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, challenging, and capable of encouraging active learner participation. Therefore, PAI should move beyond teacher-centered instruction and memorization-based approaches toward student-centered and experience-based learning. (M. Zaini Al Fannani 2026)

Learning strategies such as reflective learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and community engagement activities can facilitate deeper value internalization. Through such approaches, learners are encouraged not only to understand Islamic teachings cognitively but also to experience and practice them in real-life contexts.

3. Implementation in Assessment

The implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007 also requires a comprehensive assessment system. Assessment should not be limited to measuring cognitive achievement but should evaluate learners' attitudes, behaviors, religious practices, and social engagement.

Authentic assessment approaches are particularly relevant because they allow educators to evaluate the extent to which Islamic values have been internalized. Assessment instruments may include reflective journals, behavioral

observation, portfolios, project reports, peer assessment, self-assessment, and community-based evaluations. Such approaches are consistent with the holistic objectives of Islamic Religious Education.

4. Implementation in School Culture

The implementation of PAI extends beyond classroom activities and should be reflected in the overall culture of educational institutions. School culture plays a strategic role in reinforcing religious values through habituation, role modeling, social interaction, and institutional practices.

Examples include congregational prayer programs, Qur'anic literacy activities, social service programs, environmental campaigns, respectful communication practices, and inclusive interactions among students. Thomas Lickona argues that character formation occurs not only through formal instruction but also through the values embodied within the culture of educational institutions. Therefore, school culture serves as an important medium for translating policy objectives into everyday practice.

5. Challenges of Implementation

Despite the clarity of the regulatory framework, several challenges continue to hinder the effective implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007:

First, the vision and objectives of PAI often remain normative and abstract, lacking measurable operational indicators. Consequently, implementation frequently depends on individual teachers' interpretations and capacities.

Second, learning practices continue to be dominated by cognitive-oriented and memorization-based approaches. Although policy emphasizes character formation and value internalization, classroom implementation often prioritizes content mastery and examination performance.

Third, PAI has not fully adapted to contemporary challenges such as digital transformation, globalization, ecological crises, and social pluralism. Many learning activities remain disconnected from learners' lived realities.

Fourth, the dichotomy between religious knowledge and general knowledge remains evident in educational practice. Islamic teachings are frequently presented independently from scientific, technological, and social developments, limiting their relevance to contemporary issues.

Fifth, the social dimensions of PAI, including empathy, tolerance, and religious moderation, have not been optimally implemented. The existence of social tensions, intolerance, and exclusivist attitudes within society highlights the need to strengthen the transformative role of PAI. These phenomena should not be interpreted as evidence that PAI is the sole cause of such problems; rather, they indicate the importance of enhancing its contribution to character formation and social cohesion.

6. Direction for Policy Reconstruction

To bridge the gap between normative policy expectations and educational practice, a reconstruction of PAI policy is required. This reconstruction should be based on three complementary paradigms: integrative, humanistic, and transformative. (Verawati n.d.)

- a. Integrative Paradigm: The integrative paradigm seeks to eliminate the dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences by connecting Islamic teachings with scientific knowledge, technology, environmental issues, and social realities. Within this paradigm, PAI is not treated as an isolated subject but as a value framework that informs all educational activities. Curriculum content should therefore integrate themes such as digital ethics, environmental stewardship, social justice, citizenship, and technological responsibility within Islamic perspectives.
- b. Humanistic Paradigm: The humanistic paradigm positions learners as active subjects who possess unique experiences, needs, emotions, interests, and potentials. Learning should therefore emphasize dialogue, reflection, empathy, participation, and meaningful engagement. This paradigm encourages the use of learner-centered pedagogies that foster emotional connection and value internalization. Through approaches based on *rahmah* (compassion), educators become facilitators who guide learners toward personal and moral growth rather than merely transmitting information.
- c. Transformative Paradigm: The transformative paradigm emphasizes the capacity of Islamic Religious Education to generate meaningful change in learners' attitudes, behaviors, and social awareness. The success of PAI should not be measured solely through academic achievement but through its contribution to character development and societal transformation. Within this framework, PAI should strengthen religious moderation, social empathy, ecological responsibility, ethical digital citizenship, and active community engagement. The transformative paradigm thus positions Islamic education as a strategic instrument for addressing contemporary social challenges while remaining rooted in Islamic values.

In summary, the implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007 requires comprehensive integration across curriculum, learning processes, assessment systems, and school culture. Although the regulation provides a clear normative foundation, significant gaps remain between policy expectations and educational realities. Consequently, an integrative, humanistic, and transformative reconstruction of PAI policy is necessary to ensure that Islamic Religious Education contributes effectively to the development of faithful, ethical, socially responsible, and adaptive learners in the twenty-first century.

Table 4. Implementation Gap of Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 in Islamic Religious Education (Pramitha n.d.), (M. Zaini Al Fannani 2026), (Permatasari et al. 2026)

Regulatory Mandate (PP No. 55/2007)	Implementation Reality	Main Problem	Impact	Reconstruction Recommendation
Development of faith,	Learning remains	Weak value internalization	Religious knowledge is	Reflective learning,

piety, and noble character	predominantly cognitive and memorization-oriented		not fully reflected in behavior	character-based learning, authentic assessment
Interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, and participatory learning	Teacher-centered instructional practices remain dominant	Limited pedagogical innovation	Low student engagement and meaningful learning	Student-centered and project-based learning
Holistic learner development	Assessment focuses mainly on cognitive achievement	Affective and psychomotor domains are underassessed	Character development is difficult to measure	Portfolio, observation, self-assessment, and performance-based assessment
Religious values integrated into educational practice	Religious learning often disconnected from real-life issues	Theory-practice gap	Reduced relevance of PAI	Contextual and experiential learning
Development of social responsibility and harmony	Religious moderation and social empathy are inconsistently implemented	Weak social dimension of PAI	Limited contribution to social cohesion	Social projects, intergroup dialogue, moderation-based learning
Character formation through educational environment	School culture does not always support value internalization	Inconsistent institutional support	Values are not reinforced outside the classroom	Whole-school approach and value-based school culture
Preparation for future challenges	Limited digital literacy and technology integration	Lack of adaptive capacity	Learners are unprepared for digital challenges	Digital ethics, media literacy, and interdisciplinary learning
Integration of values and knowledge	Religious and general sciences remain separated	Knowledge dichotomy	Fragmented learner competencies	Integrative curriculum and interdisciplinary approaches

The formulation of an integrative, humanistic, and transformative Islamic Religious Education policy direction must be based on the normative principles contained in Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007, specifically regarding the

goal of developing students with faith, piety, and noble character through interactive, inspiring, and student-centered learning. This integrative policy direction demands the elimination of the dichotomy between religious knowledge and general knowledge by integrating Islamic values into the entire educational process, including the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture. This means that PAI is no longer positioned as a stand-alone subject but rather as a foundation of values that animates all educational activities, ensuring a balanced integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

Furthermore, the humanistic approach to Islamic Religious Education policy emphasizes the importance of viewing students as learning subjects with diverse potential, needs, and experiences. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education policy must encourage the use of dialogic, reflective, and experience-based learning models, allowing for the in-depth internalization of values. In this context, learning based on compassion (*rahmah*), role models, and social interaction is crucial for building students' emotional engagement. This approach also serves as a bridge to overcome the tendency for learning to be too cognitive-doctrinal, so that religious values are not only understood but also felt and internalized.

Furthermore, the direction of transformative Islamic Religious Education policy must be directed at the ability of education to produce real changes in students' behavior and social awareness. This includes strengthening religious moderation, social empathy, digital literacy, and ecological awareness in response to global challenges. Thus, Islamic Religious Education policy should not only focus on achieving academic learning outcomes but also on developing 21st-century character and competencies grounded in Islamic values. By integrating these three approaches, it is hoped that the gap between normative vision and implemented reality can be effectively bridged, so that Islamic Religious Education truly functions as a strategic instrument in developing a generation that is religious, humanistic, and adaptable to changing times.

The author's analysis is as follows: The implementation of PP No. 55 of 2007 in Islamic Religious Education learning must be carried out comprehensively through the integration of curriculum, learning, assessment, and the educational environment. Although normatively, this policy provides clear direction, in practice, innovation and strengthening are still needed to optimally achieve the goals of developing faith, piety, and noble character.

The vision, mission, and objectives of Islamic Religious Education are conceptually well-founded, but they still face various weaknesses in operational, pedagogical, and contextual aspects. Therefore, a reconstruction of the vision, mission, and objectives of Islamic Religious Education is needed to be more operational, integrative, humanistic, and contextual, taking into account global developments, societal needs, and a more transformative learning approach. This reconstruction is crucial so that Islamic Religious Education is not merely a normative instrument but also capable of having a real impact in shaping the character and civilization of students.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the vision, mission, and objectives of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) are conceptually and normatively aligned with the policy framework established in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Instruction. The regulatory framework emphasizes the development of learners who are faithful, pious, and characterized by noble conduct, while simultaneously fostering intellectual, social, and personal development. In this regard, the vision, mission, and objectives of PAI reflect a holistic orientation toward the formation of complete human beings (*insan kamil*) through the integration of spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social dimensions.

However, the study also reveals a significant gap between the normative ideals of PAI and their implementation in educational practice. Although Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 mandates interactive, inspiring, participatory, and character-oriented religious education, learning practices in many educational settings continue to be dominated by cognitive-oriented instruction, memorization, and teacher-centered approaches. Consequently, the internalization of religious values, character formation, social responsibility, and transformative learning outcomes has not been fully achieved. Furthermore, the implementation of PAI remains constrained by limited pedagogical innovation, the persistence of the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, insufficient integration of digital literacy and ecological awareness, and the incomplete development of religious moderation and social empathy.

The principal contribution of this article lies in its reconstruction of the policy direction of Islamic Religious Education through three interconnected paradigms: integrative, humanistic, and transformative. The integrative paradigm seeks to connect Islamic teachings with scientific knowledge, technology, environmental issues, and social realities. The humanistic paradigm positions learners as active subjects with unique experiences, emotions, needs, and potentials, thereby emphasizing dialogue, reflection, participation, and compassionate learning (*rahmah*). The transformative paradigm directs PAI toward producing meaningful changes in learners' attitudes, behaviors, social awareness, religious moderation, digital ethics, and ecological responsibility. Together, these paradigms provide a comprehensive framework for reinterpreting the vision, mission, objectives, curriculum, learning processes, assessment systems, and school culture of PAI in response to contemporary challenges.

Based on these findings, this study proposes a reconstructed model of Islamic Religious Education policy in which the vision of PAI is translated into operational indicators, the mission is implemented through integrative and learner-centered educational practices, and the objectives are measured through holistic and authentic assessment systems. This model moves beyond a purely normative understanding of PAI and positions it as a transformative educational instrument capable of developing learners who are religiously committed, ethically responsible, socially engaged, digitally literate, and environmentally conscious.

The practical implications of this study are significant for policymakers, curriculum developers, educational institutions, and teachers. First, PAI curriculum

development should integrate religious values with contemporary issues such as digital citizenship, environmental sustainability, social cohesion, and global citizenship. Second, teacher professional development programs should strengthen competencies in student-centered pedagogy, value internalization, religious moderation, and digital learning innovation. Third, learning design should emphasize reflective, experiential, collaborative, and project-based approaches that facilitate the internalization of Islamic values. Fourth, assessment practices should move beyond cognitive measurement toward authentic assessment that evaluates spiritual growth, character formation, social engagement, and practical application of Islamic teachings.

In conclusion, the future direction of Islamic Religious Education should not merely preserve its normative foundations but should also strengthen its capacity to respond to the realities of contemporary society. Through an integrative, humanistic, and transformative policy framework, PAI can function more effectively as a strategic instrument for cultivating a generation that is faithful, ethical, socially responsible, adaptive, and capable of contributing to the development of a humane and sustainable civilization grounded in Islamic values.

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