

Transforming Islamic Education in Post-Independence Indonesia: Muhammadiyah's Role and Contribution

Nizhar Bahirul Fata

Universitas Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Jl. Gajayana No.50, Malang,
East Java, Indonesia
fata73975@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *This study aims to analyse Muhammadiyah's contribution to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia by examining its educational thought, reform strategies, and institutional innovations in developing modern Islamic education. The study focuses on how Muhammadiyah's educational ideas and practices have addressed the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge and contributed to the development of integrative, progressive, and humanistic Islamic education. This study employs library research with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through documentation of relevant books, scientific articles, organisational documents, and scholarly works by Indonesian and international authors concerning Islamic education, educational reform, and Muhammadiyah's educational development. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing and cross-checking information from various academic and organisational sources. Data analysis combines inductive and deductive approaches to understand conceptual and historical reflections and to identify patterns of educational thought, reform strategies, and institutional innovations. The findings demonstrate that Muhammadiyah has contributed significantly to the transformation of modern Islamic education through the integration of religious and general sciences, the development of inclusive educational institutions, the integration of Islamic and Muhammadiyah values into the curriculum, the strengthening of character-based education, the modernisation of teaching and learning practices, and the expansion of educational access. This study contributes a conceptual and historical synthesis of Muhammadiyah's educational thought, strategies, and innovations, demonstrating their significance in shaping modern Islamic education in Indonesia. The findings suggest that Muhammadiyah's educational model provides a relevant reference for contemporary Islamic education reform, although further empirical research is needed to examine its implementation in specific educational institutions.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kontribusi Muhammadiyah terhadap transformasi pendidikan Islam di Indonesia pasca-kemerdekaan dengan mengkaji pemikiran pendidikan, strategi reformasi, dan inovasi kelembagaannya dalam mengembangkan pendidikan Islam modern. Studi ini berfokus pada bagaimana gagasan dan praktik pendidikan Muhammadiyah mengatasi dikotomi antara ilmu agama dan ilmu umum serta berkontribusi pada pengembangan pendidikan Islam yang integratif, progresif, dan humanistik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui dokumentasi buku-buku relevan, artikel ilmiah, dokumen organisasi, dan karya tulis

akademis dari penulis Indonesia maupun internasional mengenai pendidikan Islam, reformasi pendidikan, dan pengembangan pendidikan Muhammadiyah. Validitas data diperkuat melalui triangulasi sumber dengan membandingkan dan melakukan pemeriksaan silang atas informasi dari berbagai sumber akademis dan organisasi. Analisis data menggabungkan pendekatan induktif dan deduktif untuk memahami refleksi konseptual dan historis serta mengidentifikasi pola pemikiran pendidikan, strategi reformasi, dan inovasi kelembagaan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Muhammadiyah telah berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap transformasi pendidikan Islam modern melalui integrasi ilmu agama dan ilmu umum, pengembangan institusi pendidikan yang inklusif, integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dan Muhammadiyah ke dalam kurikulum, penguatan pendidikan berbasis karakter, modernisasi praktik pembelajaran, serta perluasan akses pendidikan. Studi ini memberikan sintesis konseptual dan historis mengenai pemikiran, strategi, dan inovasi pendidikan Muhammadiyah, serta menunjukkan signifikansinya dalam membentuk pendidikan Islam modern di Indonesia. Hasil penelitian mengindikasikan bahwa model pendidikan Muhammadiyah menjadi referensi yang relevan bagi reformasi pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Meskipun demikian penelitian empiris lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk mengkaji implementasinya pada institusi pendidikan tertentu.

Keywords: *Organisation, Muhammadiyah, Reform, Islamic Education, Post-Independence.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Following Indonesia's independence in 1945, the development of a modern national education system faced a fundamental challenge: how to provide education that could simultaneously strengthen religious values, scientific knowledge, national identity, and social responsibility (Hidayat et al., 2025). This challenge was particularly significant in Islamic education, which historically developed through diverse institutional traditions, including pesantren, madrasah, and modern schools (E. Saputra et al., 2026). The separation between religious and general sciences created an educational dichotomy that limited the development of an integrated educational system capable of responding to the demands of modernity (Utari & Abidin, 2025). Recent studies indicate that the integration of religious and general knowledge remains an important issue in Indonesian Islamic education because the separation of these domains can hinder the development of balanced intellectual, spiritual, and social competencies. Therefore, the transformation of Islamic education should not merely be understood as institutional expansion, but also as a process of reforming educational philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional practices so that Islamic education remains relevant to social and scientific developments.

The concept of Islamic education transformation is closely related to the idea that education should develop human beings holistically rather than merely transmit religious knowledge (Falaqi et al., 2025). Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, for example, conceptualises Islamic education in relation to the formation of a balanced

human being whose intellectual development is inseparable from moral and spiritual formation (David et al., 2020). In a different educational tradition, Paulo Freire emphasises education as a transformative process that develops critical consciousness and enables learners to respond actively to social realities (Nugraha et al., 2024). These perspectives provide an important theoretical foundation for understanding Islamic educational reform as a process that combines intellectual development, moral formation, critical awareness, and social responsibility. Within the Indonesian context, the integration of Islamic and general knowledge has likewise become an important direction in the development of contemporary Islamic education. Suparta et al. (2021) found that higher education demonstrates that reintegrating Islamic values with general academic disciplines can overcome the rigid separation between religious and secular knowledge and support a more comprehensive educational paradigm.

Within this broader problem, Muhammadiyah represents an important case for examining the transformation of Islamic education in Indonesia. Muhammadiyah developed an educational orientation that sought to respond to the limitations of traditional Islamic education while also addressing the challenges posed by modern education (Utami & Tri, 2025). Its educational thought emphasised the importance of combining religious knowledge with scientific and practical knowledge, developing disciplined educational institutions, and connecting Islamic values with social and national development (Saidah & Fahmi, 2025). Studies of Muhammadiyah education have shown that its modernisation efforts involved the development of educational institutions, curriculum reform, integration of religious and general sciences, and the adoption of modern educational practices. In the post-independence period, these educational principles became increasingly significant as Indonesia sought to establish an education system that could accommodate religious identity while responding to modernisation and national development (F. Nasution & Rahman, 2022).

The problem, however, is not simply whether Muhammadiyah has contributed to Islamic education, but how its educational thought, strategies, and innovations have contributed to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia (Novriadi & Qurniati, 2023). The continuing relevance of this problem can be seen from the persistence of several challenges in Islamic education, including the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, the need for curriculum integration, the development of inclusive educational institutions, and the demand for educational models that are responsive to social and technological change (Malik et al., 2025). Recent research confirms that Islamic education in Indonesia continues to require a more inclusive and visionary paradigm, while studies of knowledge integration emphasise the importance of connecting religious values with scientific and technological development (Al-razi et al., 2024). These conditions demonstrate that examining the historical contribution of Muhammadiyah is not merely an attempt to reconstruct organisational history; rather, it is important for understanding how an Islamic educational movement developed strategies for responding to the structural and intellectual challenges of modern education.

Previous studies have provided important explanations of Muhammadiyah's role in Islamic education. Research by Hamami (2021), for instance, positions Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama as two major pillars of national education and demonstrates the significance of Islamic organisations in shaping Indonesian education. Other studies have examined Muhammadiyah's educational reform in terms of modernisation, the integration of religious and scientific knowledge, and the development of educational

institutions (Utami & Tri, 2025). A literature review by May et al. (2026) specifically discusses the historical role of Muhammadiyah in developing Islamic education in Indonesia, while Mahesa and colleagues examine Muhammadiyah as a movement for Islamic educational renewal. Although these studies establish the importance of Muhammadiyah in the history of Islamic education, many of them primarily emphasise organisational history, general modernisation, or the role of Muhammadiyah in educational development. Consequently, there remains a need for a more focused synthesis that examines Muhammadiyah's educational thought, reform strategies, and institutional innovations as interconnected dimensions of the transformation of modern Islamic education, particularly in the post-independence period.

The novelty of this study, therefore, lies in its analytical focus on Muhammadiyah not merely as an Islamic organisation or historical reform movement, but as an educational actor whose ideas, strategies, and innovations contributed to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia. Rather than examining Muhammadiyah's history as an end in itself, this study connects its educational philosophy, curriculum orientation, institutional development, integration of religious and general sciences, and character-oriented educational practices to the broader theoretical issue of Islamic education transformation. This perspective also complements previous studies that have discussed Muhammadiyah's modernisation and educational role by bringing these dimensions together within a single analysis. The study consequently aims to analyse Muhammadiyah's contribution to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia by examining its educational thought, reform strategies, and institutional innovations, and to identify how these contributions shaped the development of modern, integrative, progressive, and humanistic Islamic education in Indonesia.

II. METHOD

This study employs library research with a qualitative descriptive approach to examine Muhammadiyah's contribution to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia. Library research was selected because the research focuses on examining historical, conceptual, and educational developments through relevant written sources rather than collecting empirical data directly from educational institutions (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). The study specifically focuses on Muhammadiyah's educational thought, reform strategies, institutional innovations, curriculum development, integration of religious and general sciences, and their contribution to the transformation of modern Islamic education in Indonesia. The primary data sources consist of Muhammadiyah's organisational documents, official publications, historical records, educational guidelines, and other documents that directly describe Muhammadiyah's educational policies and practices. Official Muhammadiyah publications are particularly relevant because they provide organisational records concerning the development of its educational movement and institutions. For example, Muhammadiyah's historical documentation records the establishment of its early educational institutions and the development of an educational model that combined religious and general knowledge. Secondary data sources consist of peer-reviewed scientific articles, academic books, research reports, and other scholarly publications discussing Islamic education, educational reform, Muhammadiyah, and the development of modern Islamic education. Relevant literature

was identified through academic databases and search platforms, including Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and the Indonesian academic databases Garuda and SINTA. The use of both primary organisational documents and secondary scholarly literature enables the study to compare historical records with contemporary academic interpretations.

Data collection was conducted through documentation and a systematic literature review. The documentation process involved identifying, selecting, reading, recording, and categorising written sources relevant to the research objectives (Daruhadi & Sopiati, 2024). The selection of sources was based on their relevance to Muhammadiyah's educational development, academic credibility, publication quality, and contribution to understanding Islamic education reform. The collected literature was then classified into several thematic categories, including Muhammadiyah's educational philosophy, historical development of educational institutions, curriculum reform, integration of religious and general knowledge, educational management, character education, and contemporary educational innovation. To strengthen the literature base, the study incorporates scholarly works by both Indonesian and international authors, particularly those discussing Islamic education, educational transformation, knowledge integration, and educational reform. Muhammadiyah's historical documentation confirms that its educational movement developed through efforts to integrate religious and general knowledge and to establish modern educational institutions, providing important primary evidence for analysing its educational transformation. The literature was examined comparatively by identifying similarities, differences, recurring concepts, and developments across sources. The analysis, therefore, does not merely summarise previous studies but reconstructs the relationship between Muhammadiyah's educational ideas, reform strategies, institutional practices, and the broader transformation of Islamic education.

Data analysis was conducted through three interconnected stages: data reduction, data organisation, and interpretation and conclusion drawing. First, data reduction involved selecting information directly related to the research focus and excluding information that did not contribute to the analysis of Islamic education transformation. Second, the selected data were organised thematically and chronologically to identify patterns in Muhammadiyah's educational thought, strategies, institutional development, and educational innovations during the post-independence period. Third, the data were interpreted using inductive and deductive reasoning. The inductive process was used to identify recurring patterns and themes emerging from the literature, while the deductive process was used to examine these findings in relation to the theoretical concepts of Islamic education reform and educational transformation. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and theoretical triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from Muhammadiyah's official documents, historical publications, academic books, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Theoretical triangulation was conducted by interpreting the findings through different theoretical perspectives concerning Islamic education, educational reform, knowledge integration, and educational transformation. In addition, cross-checking was conducted by comparing historical claims across different independent sources to minimise dependence on a single interpretation. This process is important in library research because the credibility of findings depends on the quality, relevance, consistency, and critical comparison of the sources used. The final analysis focuses specifically on how Muhammadiyah's educational thought, strategies, and innovations contributed to the

transformation of Islamic education into a more integrative, progressive, and responsive educational model in post-independence Indonesia.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Challenges in Islamic Education Post-Independence

The transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia cannot be separated from the structural problems inherited from the colonial education system (Tanjung, 2022). Independence created an urgent need to build an education system that was more inclusive, nationally oriented, and capable of preparing Indonesian society to respond to scientific and social developments. However, the transition was not straightforward. Limited educational infrastructure, unequal access between urban and rural communities, geographical disparities, population growth, and the rapid development of science and technology created complex challenges for the newly independent state. These challenges were particularly significant for Islamic education because educational institutions had to maintain Islamic values while simultaneously responding to the demands of modernisation. Research on Indonesian education confirms that geographical conditions, population growth, and unequal educational facilities have historically affected the government's ability to provide equitable educational services (Nurfadilah et al., 2024). Thus, the central problem was not simply the availability of educational institutions, but the capacity of Islamic education to become an inclusive and adaptive system without losing its religious foundation.

A further challenge concerned the epistemological separation between religious and general knowledge. Before and during the early period of independence, Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren and traditional religious schools tended to emphasise religious subjects, whereas the modern school system inherited from colonial education placed greater emphasis on general and scientific knowledge. This separation produced two educational orientations that developed relatively independently. Habib & Kurniawan (2025) argue that Muhammadiyah's educational model emerged partly as a response to this dichotomy by attempting to bring religious and scientific knowledge into a more integrated educational framework. Integration is important because education is not merely the transmission of religious knowledge but a process of developing individuals who possess intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social capacities. This understanding corresponds with the broader conception of Islamic education as an effort to develop human beings comprehensively through the interaction of revelation, reason, and social experience. Therefore, the post-independence challenge should be understood as a demand for transformation in both the institutional and epistemological dimensions of Islamic education.

The challenge became more complex as Indonesian society entered periods of modernisation and globalisation. The rapid development of science and technology required educational institutions to produce graduates who were not only religiously knowledgeable but also capable of engaging with contemporary scientific, economic,

and social developments (Sunita, 2025). At the same time, the expansion of education demanded greater access for communities that had previously been excluded from formal schooling. In this context, Islamic educational reform became increasingly important because conventional educational models alone could not adequately respond to changing social needs. Studies on the role of Islamic organisations in Indonesian education indicate that community-based organisations contributed to educational development not only by establishing institutions but also by developing curricula and increasing public awareness of the importance of education (Salim & Iswantir, 2024). These conditions provide the context for understanding why Muhammadiyah's educational reform should be examined as a response to concrete educational problems rather than merely as an organisational historical development.

Muhammadiyah and the Idea of Islamic Education Reform

Muhammadiyah's educational reform can be understood through its conception of *tajdid*, which positions renewal as an effort to reinterpret and develop Islamic thought in response to changing circumstances while maintaining the fundamental principles of Islamic teachings (Saipul Wakit, 2024). In the educational context, *tajdid* provided an intellectual basis for moving beyond an educational model that separated religious instruction from modern scientific knowledge (Fernadi, 2024). Muhammadiyah's educational orientation, therefore, did not seek to replace Islamic knowledge with modern science but to construct an educational system in which religious and scientific knowledge could support one another. F. Nasution & Rahman (2022) explain that Muhammadiyah's modernisation of Islamic education was reflected in the establishment of formal schools that combined religious and general knowledge to develop students' intellectual and spiritual competencies. This approach demonstrates that Muhammadiyah's reform was fundamentally educational rather than merely organisational because it involved a redefinition of what Muslim learners should know and what kind of human being Islamic education should produce.

The second dimension of Muhammadiyah's reform was its attempt to connect Islamic educational thought with modern educational practices. The educational model associated with K. H. Ahmad Dahlan responded to the separation between the traditional pesantren system and the colonial school system by introducing an educational structure that accommodated both religious and general subjects. This approach was influenced by broader Islamic reformist thought, including ideas associated with Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida, whose intellectual movements emphasised the importance of knowledge, rationality, and Muslim engagement with modernity (Mohamed et al., 2024). However, Muhammadiyah did not simply reproduce reformist ideas from the Middle East. It translated them into an Indonesian educational context through the development of schools and educational institutions that addressed the needs of Indonesian society (Kurniawati, 2024). This process is significant because it shows that Islamic educational reform can emerge through the interaction between Islamic intellectual traditions and the social realities of a particular society.

The third dimension concerns the relationship between educational modernisation and moral formation. Muhammadiyah's educational thought did not regard scientific competence as sufficient in itself. The development of knowledge was expected to be accompanied by faith, morality, social responsibility, and a commitment to improving society. This orientation is reflected in the educational philosophy that connects intellectual development with religious and social values (Prayitno et al., 2026). The integration of these dimensions can also be seen in the development of Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah Studies as part of Muhammadiyah's educational curriculum. Rather than positioning religious education as an isolated subject, this curriculum provides a framework for connecting Islamic values with students' broader educational experiences. Consequently, Muhammadiyah's reform can be interpreted as a transformation from a narrow understanding of religious education toward an integrative conception of Islamic education in which knowledge, faith, character, and social engagement are mutually reinforcing.

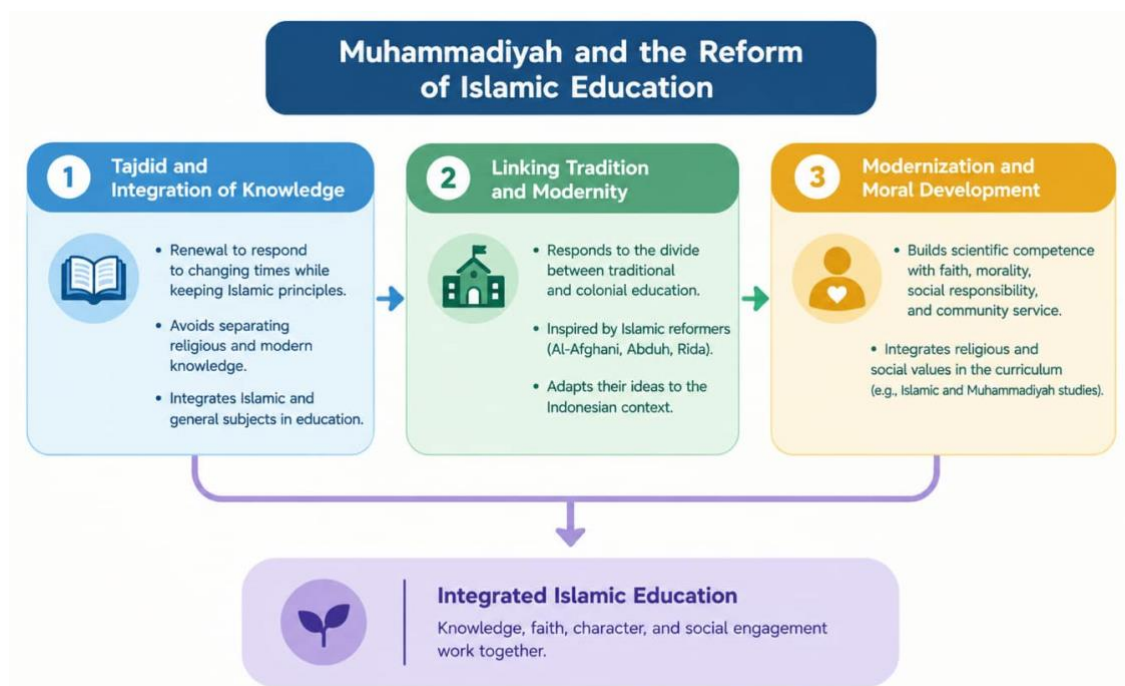


Figure 1. *The Transformation of Muhammadiyah Islamic Education through Tajdid and the Integration of Knowledge*

Transformation of the Muhammadiyah Education System

The transformation of Muhammadiyah education became visible through the expansion and diversification of educational institutions after independence. *First*, Muhammadiyah maintained and expanded its network of educational institutions across different levels, from early childhood education and elementary schools to secondary schools and higher education (A. Saputra, 2026). This expansion was significant because it transformed Muhammadiyah's educational reform from an intellectual idea into an institutional system that could reach wider segments of Indonesian society. The development of educational institutions outside major urban centres also strengthened

the social function of Islamic education by providing access to communities that faced geographical and infrastructural limitations (Nada & Khasanah, 2025). In this sense, institutional expansion was not merely quantitative growth; it represented a strategy for making modern Islamic education more accessible and socially embedded.

Second, Muhammadiyah diversified its educational institutions in response to changing social and economic needs. The development of vocational education, alongside general and religious education, indicates that Muhammadiyah increasingly positioned Islamic education as preparation for participation in contemporary society (Ariadin et al., 2025). Educational institutions were expected to produce graduates who possessed religious understanding while also having practical, scientific, and professional competencies. This orientation is consistent with the broader Muhammadiyah educational philosophy that emphasises mastery of science and technology alongside Islamic values. The Muhammadiyah perspective on knowledge encourages a critical and open attitude toward scientific development, while maintaining religious and ethical commitments. Thus, the transformation of Muhammadiyah education involved not only adding general subjects to religious education but also changing the purpose of education itself: from the transmission of knowledge toward the formation of competent individuals capable of contributing to society.

Third, the transformation occurred through curriculum and pedagogical integration. Muhammadiyah education sought to reduce the dichotomy between Islamic knowledge and general science by placing religious values within a broader educational framework (Gusmian, 2025). Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah Studies became an important component of this process because they provide students with structured exposure to Islamic teachings, moral values, and Muhammadiyah's educational orientation. The significance of this curriculum lies in its potential to connect cognitive learning with ethical and social development. This approach is consistent with the argument that Islamic education should develop learners holistically rather than treat religious knowledge as separate from intellectual and social competencies. Recent research similarly emphasises the importance of integrating Islamic values with scientific and educational development to create an educational paradigm that is more responsive to contemporary needs (H. M. Nasution, 2025).

Changes in educational management and governance accompanied the fourth, institutional transformation. Muhammadiyah developed organisational mechanisms for managing its educational institutions, including educational councils, school leadership structures, quality control, and school-based management (Jemain et al., 2025). Juniar & Prasetyo (2025) identify school-based management, curriculum autonomy within Muhammadiyah's educational framework, and quality assurance as important features of Muhammadiyah educational governance. This indicates that Muhammadiyah's reform extended beyond curriculum and teaching into institutional management. The combination of Islamic values with modern organisational practices enabled educational institutions to develop greater organisational capacity while remaining connected to the

movement's broader educational mission. Therefore, the transformation of Muhammadiyah education can be understood as multidimensional, involving institutional expansion, educational diversification, curriculum integration, pedagogical development, and governance reform.

Contribution and Impact of Muhammadiyah Reform on Modern Islamic Education

The findings indicate that Muhammadiyah's educational reform has made a substantial contribution to the development of modern Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly by challenging the traditional separation between religious and general knowledge (Sholihah et al., 2026). The integration of these domains represents more than a curriculum strategy; it reflects a different epistemological understanding of Islamic education. Religious knowledge provides moral and spiritual orientation, while scientific knowledge provides intellectual and practical tools for engaging with contemporary realities (Qiso et al., 2025). By bringing these dimensions together, Muhammadiyah developed an educational model in which Muslim learners were expected to become religiously committed while also possessing scientific competence. This finding supports previous research identifying knowledge integration as one of the important directions in the modernisation of Indonesian Islamic education. In this respect, Muhammadiyah's contribution lies in demonstrating that modernisation does not necessarily require the abandonment of Islamic identity; instead, modernisation can become a means of strengthening Islamic education's relevance to social change (F. Nasution & Rahman, 2022).

A second contribution concerns the expansion of educational access. The establishment and development of Muhammadiyah educational institutions across different regions enabled Islamic education to reach broader social groups, including communities outside major urban centres. This institutional network strengthened the social function of education by making educational opportunities available to communities that might otherwise have faced limitations in access. The role of Islamic organisations in expanding educational access is particularly important in the Indonesian context because the development of national education has historically involved cooperation between the state and civil society organisations. Pribadi et al. (2025) explain that Islamic organisations can contribute directly through the establishment and management of educational institutions and indirectly through public education and awareness. Muhammadiyah's experience demonstrates how organisational capacity can be translated into sustained educational provision and therefore contribute to the democratisation of Islamic education.

A third contribution is reflected in the strengthening of character-based Islamic education. Muhammadiyah's educational model places faith, morality, independence, discipline, social responsibility, and intellectual competence within an interconnected framework (Arqam et al., 2025). Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah Studies function not merely as an additional religious subject but as an instrument for cultivating values that

can be reflected in students' attitudes and social practices. The pedagogical orientation associated with K. H. Ahmad Dahlan, particularly the connection between Qur'anic teachings and social realities, illustrates this approach (Akhyar & Zukdi, 2025). The teaching of Islamic values is meaningful when learners are encouraged to translate religious understanding into social responsibility. Therefore, Muhammadiyah's character education represents an effort to move Islamic education from cognitive religious instruction toward a praxis-oriented educational model in which faith is manifested through ethical and social action.

The fourth contribution is the increasing institutional and global reach of Muhammadiyah education. The development of higher education institutions strengthened the capacity of Muhammadiyah education to produce teachers, professionals, researchers, and community leaders, while the international expansion of Muhammadiyah educational initiatives indicates that its educational model has moved beyond a purely local context (Edi et al., 2025). This development suggests that the transformation of Islamic education is not limited to changes within individual schools but involves the creation of a broader educational ecosystem. Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that institutional expansion should not automatically be equated with educational quality. The continued relevance of Muhammadiyah's reform depends on its ability to maintain curriculum integration, strengthen teacher competence, improve quality assurance, and adapt educational practices to technological and social changes (Ridlo, 2024). Thus, the most important impact of Muhammadiyah's educational reform is not simply the number of institutions established, but the development of an educational paradigm that seeks to combine Islamic identity, scientific competence, character formation, social responsibility, and responsiveness to modernity.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that Muhammadiyah's contribution to Islamic education can be understood through four interconnected dimensions: accessibility, knowledge integration, character formation, and institutional modernisation. These dimensions reinforce one another. Expanded access provides a broader social basis for Islamic education; knowledge integration enables learners to engage with scientific and contemporary developments; character education ensures that intellectual competence remains grounded in Islamic values; and institutional modernisation provides the organisational capacity required to sustain educational development. This interconnected model distinguishes Muhammadiyah's reform from an approach that treats Islamic education merely as religious instruction. It also explains why Muhammadiyah remains an important reference for understanding the transformation of Islamic education in Indonesia. The findings therefore reinforce the argument that the modernisation of Islamic education can be achieved not through the separation of religious identity from modern knowledge, but through their critical and contextual integration.

Table 1. Synthesis of the Muhammadiyah Education Reform Movement

Aspects	Strategy	Impact
Ideology (<i>Tajdid & Tajrid</i>)	Renewal of Islamic understanding and purification of teachings based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.	Islamic education is rational, progressive, and adaptive.
Institutional Transformation	School extensification from kindergarten to PTM, diversification of vocational schools and universities.	Improving access and equity in education.
Integration of Knowledge	Merger of AIK with science and technology	The birth of an integrated Islamic curriculum model.
Character Education	Implementation of AIK and contextual learning (tauhid, moral, social values)	Religious, nationalist, and characterful people are formed.
Educational Management	Muhammadiyah's typical MBS, ISMUBA, digitalisation of governance	Professional and sustainable governance

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Muhammadiyah has made a significant contribution to the transformation of Islamic education in post-independence Indonesia through the development of an integrative educational system that combines Islamic values with general knowledge, expands access to inclusive education, strengthens character and moral education, and promotes institutional development. Its educational reform demonstrates that Islamic education can respond to modernisation and contemporary challenges without losing its religious foundation, resulting in a progressive, integrative, and socially responsive educational model. However, this study is limited to library-based analysis and does not examine the implementation of Muhammadiyah's educational reform through empirical field data. Future researchers are therefore encouraged to conduct field-based studies in Muhammadiyah educational institutions to examine how these reform ideas and strategies are implemented in practice and to assess their educational and social impacts in specific contexts.

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