

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ISLAMIC STUDIES: INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN THE MODERN ERA

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Abstract

This study examines a multidisciplinary approach in Islamic studies as an effort to understand Islamic teachings more comprehensively through the integration of educational, social, and religious-cultural perspectives in the modern era. The study is motivated by increasingly complex social developments that require an approach beyond normative religious understanding by considering social and cultural contexts. This research employs a qualitative method using a literature review by collecting data from books, scientific journals, and relevant academic articles. The findings indicate that a multidisciplinary approach in Islamic studies broadens the understanding of Islamic teachings, strengthens the relevance of Islamic education to social life, and encourages adaptive and contextual religious practices. This approach also contributes to the development of Islamic studies that are more open, integrative, and responsive to contemporary social change.

Keywords: *Islamic studies, multidisciplinary approach, Islamic education, religious society, culture.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas pendekatan multidisipliner dalam studi Islam sebagai upaya memahami ajaran Islam secara lebih komprehensif melalui integrasi perspektif pendidikan, sosial, dan budaya keagamaan di era modern. Kajian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh perkembangan masyarakat yang semakin kompleks sehingga menuntut pendekatan keilmuan yang tidak hanya berfokus pada aspek normatif keagamaan, tetapi juga mempertimbangkan konteks sosial dan budaya. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis studi pustaka melalui pengumpulan data dari buku, jurnal ilmiah, dan artikel yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan multidisipliner dalam studi Islam mampu memperluas pemahaman terhadap ajaran Islam, memperkuat relevansi pendidikan Islam dengan kehidupan sosial masyarakat, serta mendorong terciptanya praktik keberagamaan yang adaptif dan kontekstual. Pendekatan ini juga memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan kajian Islam yang lebih terbuka, integratif, dan responsif terhadap perubahan zaman.

Kata Kunci: *studi Islam; multidisipliner; pendidikan Islam; sosial keagamaan; budaya.*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Studies is a field of study that continues to evolve in line with social, cultural, and educational changes in society. Developments marked by globalization, technological advancement, and increasing intercultural interaction require Islamic studies to be understood not only through a normative-theological approach but also through a broader, contextual, multidisciplinary approach. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings, taking into account educational, social, cultural, historical, and even the dynamics of modern society.(Kholik et al., 2020).

Until now, Islamic studies have often been positioned as limited to discussions of religious texts focusing on aspects of Islamic faith, worship, and law. However, Islam, as a religion, is also present in the social sphere, influencing people's thought patterns, behavior, education, and culture.(Bimanyu et al., 2024)Therefore, Islamic studies require openness to various disciplines to address the community's issues in a relevant and contemporary manner. A multidisciplinary approach is crucial because it provides complementary perspectives for a more comprehensive understanding of religious realities.

Theoretically, a multidisciplinary approach is one that combines several branches of science to analyze a phenomenon. In the context of Islamic studies, this approach can utilize an educational perspective to examine the process of internalizing Islamic values, a sociological perspective to understand the relationship between religion and society, and a cultural anthropological perspective to examine religious practices within local traditions. This integration demonstrates that Islam is understood not only as a normative teaching but also as a social and cultural practice that continues to evolve in human life.(Mili et al., 2026). Thus, Islamic studies become more dynamic, open, and able to respond constructively to social change.

A current problem is the continued separation between Islamic studies and other disciplines. As a result, understanding of Islam is often partial and unable to address contemporary challenges such as social change, cultural plurality, character education, religious moderation, and the development of information

technology. Furthermore, the practice of Islamic education in various institutions still faces challenges in connecting religious material to the realities of students' daily lives.(Brotherhood, 2024)This situation demonstrates the need for a more integrative approach so that Islamic studies do not stop at the theoretical level but can make a real contribution to the lives of people.

Based on these issues, this study proposes a multidisciplinary approach as an alternative solution to the development of Islamic studies. Through the integration of education, social, and religious culture, Islamic studies are expected to provide a broader, more inclusive, and applicable understanding. This approach can strengthen the relationship between Islamic values and social practices and encourage the development of a more contextual Islamic education. Furthermore, a multidisciplinary approach can also serve as a means of establishing dialogue between religious teachings and modern science, ensuring that the two are not in conflict but rather mutually supportive.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in Islamic studies and to explain how the integration of educational, social, and cultural perspectives can enrich the understanding of Islamic teachings in the modern era. This study also aims to demonstrate the contribution of a multidisciplinary approach to the development of Islamic education that is adaptive, relevant, and responsive to societal dynamics. Through this study, it is hoped that an understanding will emerge that Islamic studies are not solely oriented toward interpreting texts, but also toward the ability to interpret social and cultural realities wisely in facing the challenges of the times.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a library research approach. This method was chosen because the research focuses on a conceptual study of a multidisciplinary approach to Islamic studies through a review of various relevant scientific sources. Data were obtained through documentation techniques, namely by collecting and reviewing books, journal articles, previous research results, and

academic documents related to Islamic studies, Islamic education, socio-religious studies, and culture.(Zed, 2025).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consist of scientific journal articles and books that directly discuss multidisciplinary Islamic studies. Meanwhile, secondary sources are obtained from supporting scientific works related to the integration of education, social studies, and culture in Islamic studies.

The data analysis technique used content analysis, which involves identifying, grouping, interpreting, and drawing conclusions from the various data collected. Data were analyzed descriptively and analytically, emphasizing understanding meaning, interconnectedness between concepts, and the relevance of the approach.(Siregar et al., 2022)Multidisciplinary approach in the development of Islamic studies in the modern era. Data validity is strengthened through source triangulation by comparing various relevant references to obtain comprehensive study results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Integrating Islamic Studies with Educational Sciences Strengthens Contextual Islamic Learning

The integration of Islamic Studies with educational science demonstrates that Islamic learning will be more meaningful when it is not solely oriented toward conveying religious material but also relates it to the realities of students' lives. In the context of modern education, Islamic learning is required not to stop at the mere memorization of religious concepts, propositions, or theories, but rather to encourage students to understand Islamic values as guidelines for life that can be applied in everyday life. Therefore, a multidisciplinary approach is crucial because it creates a space for dialogue between Islamic teachings and educational theories that emphasize character building, experiential learning, and the development of critical thinking skills.

The study's findings demonstrate that integrating Islamic studies into education can strengthen contextual learning by adapting teaching materials to students' needs and surrounding social developments. Islamic education is no longer positioned solely as a transfer of knowledge, but also as a process of moral development, personality formation, and value instillation. Teachers not only convey material on faith, worship, and morals but also relate these to real-life issues such as tolerance, honesty, responsibility, social awareness, and social media ethics. In this way, students can see that Islamic teachings are closely related to their daily lives.

This finding is in line with researchLubis, 2022which explains that the formation of students' morals in madrasas is influenced not only by religious subject matter but also by the school environment, teacher competence, and the overall quality of education. This research shows that Islamic education becomes more effective when religious values are integrated into the learning culture and social interactions within the educational environment. This emphasizes that contextual Islamic learning requires a connection between religious teachings, educational strategies, and the students' social environment.

Furthermore, other research in Islamic education journals has shown that learning approaches that link religious material to students' real-life experiences tend to be more successful in increasing their understanding and internalization of religious values. Students more easily grasp moral concepts when examples are given that relate to their lives, such as good manners toward parents, mutual respect at school, or wise use of social media. Contextual learning helps students make Islam a practical guideline, not just theoretical knowledge.(Wafa et al., 2025).

From the perspective of Islamic educational theory, this integration also aligns with the goals of Islamic education, which emphasize holistic human development, encompassing spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects. Islamic education aims to shape individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and virtuous. This goal will be more easily achieved if Islamic studies are combined with a pedagogical approach that positions students as active subjects in the

learning process. Teachers act as facilitators, connecting Islamic teachings with students' learning experiences in a reflective and applicable manner.(Sihono & Hamami, 2025).

Thus, the integration of Islamic studies with educational sciences fosters a more contextual, relevant, and responsive Islamic learning. This approach not only broadens students' understanding of Islam but also helps them actualize Islamic values in their personal and social lives. Through contextual learning, Islamic education becomes more vibrant, grounded, and able to meet the needs of the modern generation without losing the fundamental values of Islamic teachings.

Social Studies Help Understand Islam as a Practice of Community Life

The social approach in Islamic Studies provides an understanding that Islam exists not only as normative teachings contained in the Quran and Hadith, but also as a lived practice practiced in society. Islam cannot be separated from social reality because its teachings touch on various aspects of human life, from the individual's relationship with God to interpersonal relationships within the family, education, economy, and wider society. Therefore, social studies are a crucial part of Islamic studies because they help us understand how religious teachings are understood, applied, and passed down in everyday life.

The study results show that Islamic values have a strong influence on shaping social behavior. Values such as mutual assistance, justice, deliberation, responsibility, concern for others, and tolerance are part of Islamic teachings that are deeply embedded in social interactions. These practices are evident in various community activities such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong), socio-religious activities, group religious study groups, charity to those in need, and a culture of mutual assistance in daily life. Through a social approach, Islam is understood not merely as a personal belief, but as a value system that shapes patterns of communal life.

Social studies also help explain that a person's religious beliefs do not exist in isolation, but are influenced by their social environment. Family, school, friendship groups, and community play a crucial role in shaping how a person

understands and practices Islamic teachings. A supportive environment strengthens religious habits and fosters Islamic character, while a less supportive environment can weaken religious practice. This demonstrates that understanding of Islam is shaped not only through formal education but also through ongoing social interactions.

This finding aligns with various Islamic education studies that place the social environment as a crucial element in shaping students' character and religiousness. One such study is Lestari et al., 2025. This study demonstrates that the formation of students' morals is significantly influenced by the school environment, social relationships between students, and the role of teachers as role models in everyday life. These findings confirm that Islamic values are more easily ingrained when they are present in social practices that can be directly seen, felt, and imitated by students. In other words, Islam is more effectively understood when taught through social experiences, not just through classroom theory.

Furthermore, social studies demonstrate that Islam has the ability to adapt to societal changes. Changing communication patterns, the development of digital technology, urbanization, and increasing intercultural interaction require Muslims to continue to understand religious teachings in ways that are relevant to evolving social conditions. For example, the value of Islamic brotherhood is now realized not only through face-to-face meetings but also through digital spaces such as social media, online religious forums, and da'wah activities through technology platforms. This demonstrates that Islamic practices continue to evolve in line with social changes without abandoning their fundamental values. (Mujahidah et al., 2024).

Thus, a social approach to Islamic studies broadens the perspective on religion as a practice of social life. Islam is understood not only as a teaching of individual worship but also as a social guideline governing human relationships with others. Social studies help position Islam as a living value within society and continually interact with social change. Through this perspective, Islamic studies

become more contextual, applicable, and able to address the needs of modern society in communal life.

Religious Culture Shows the Relationship between Islamic Teachings and Local Traditions

The cultural approach in Islamic Studies demonstrates that Islamic teachings developed through dynamic interactions with local cultures. Islam did not exist in a vacuum, but rather grew and developed within pre-existing local traditions, customs, and values. In the process of its dissemination and practice, Islamic teachings interacted with local cultures, giving rise to various forms of religious culture unique to each region. This relationship demonstrates that Islam does not always appear in a uniform form but is able to adapt to the social and cultural context of society without abandoning its core principles.

The study's findings indicate that religious culture is a concrete manifestation of the integration of Islamic values with local traditions. Practices such as commemorating the Prophet's birthday, kenduri (celebration of the Prophet's birthday), communal prayers, tahlilan (religious gatherings), village religious studies, Ramadan traditions, and other religious activities exemplify how Islamic teachings are integrated into the cultural life of the community. These traditions are not only a form of religious expression but also serve as a means of strengthening social ties, maintaining cultural identity, and transmitting Islamic values between generations. Thus, religious culture provides a space where religious and cultural values converge and reinforce each other.

Cultural studies help explain that a society's acceptance of Islamic teachings often occurs through an approach that is close to their culture. The spread of Islam in Indonesia, for example, was largely achieved through a cultural approach that respects local customs. Scholars and religious figures did not immediately erase existing traditions, but instead adapted their values by incorporating Islamic teachings into the community's cultural practices. This gave rise to forms of religious traditions that retain local characteristics but embody

Islamic values. This demonstrates that Islam is open, adaptive, and capable of dialogue with other cultures.(Hasan, 2025).

These findings align with various studies in educational and socio-religious journals, which explain that local culture plays a crucial role in strengthening a community's religious identity. Religious traditions passed down from generation to generation often serve as an effective means of non-formal Islamic education. Through religious cultural activities, communities learn about prayer, etiquette, togetherness, respect for religious scholars, and the value of mutual cooperation. These values are not always taught through formal educational institutions but develop through cultural experiences within the community.(Alfianti et al., 2026).

On the other hand, a cultural approach also helps understand that the relationship between Islam and local traditions is not always without challenges. Globalization, modernization, and lifestyle changes impact the continuity of religious culture in society. Some traditions undergo changes in form, adaptations, and even begin to be abandoned by the younger generation. This situation presents a challenge in itself in maintaining the continuity of religious culture as part of the identity of Muslim communities. However, these changes also demonstrate that religious culture is dynamic and continually adapts to changing times.(Jenuri et al., 2024).

Thus, religious culture demonstrates the close relationship between Islamic teachings and local traditions in community life. Islam exists not only as a teaching system but also as part of a living, inherited, and evolving cultural practice. A cultural approach to Islamic studies helps understand that a society's religiosity cannot be separated from the cultural context in which those teachings are practiced. Therefore, studying Islam from a cultural perspective is crucial for viewing Islam more holistically, contextually, and closely related to the realities of community life.

A Multidisciplinary Approach Makes Islamic Studies More Responsive to Modern Developments

A multidisciplinary approach in Islamic studies makes Islamic studies more open and responsive to current developments. Rapid social changes in the modern era, such as globalization, the development of digital technology, shifting communication patterns, and the dynamics of social life, require Islamic studies to continually evolve to remain relevant. Islamic studies can no longer be understood solely through textual and normative approaches; they need to be integrated with various disciplines to address contemporary issues facing society.

The study's findings demonstrate that a multidisciplinary approach allows Islamic studies to interpret changes in a broader and more in-depth manner. Through the integration of education, sociology, anthropology, history, and culture, Islamic teachings can be understood not only from the text but also from the ever-changing realities of life. This is crucial because current issues facing the Muslim community are increasingly complex, ranging from challenges to character education, religious moderation, the use of information technology, social relations in the digital space, to changes in the values and culture of the younger generation. With a multidisciplinary approach, Islamic studies can emerge as a field of study that not only upholds the fundamental values of the teachings but also adapts its delivery and application to the current context.

In education, a multidisciplinary approach encourages Islamic learning to be more adaptive to the needs of today's students. The shift from teacher-centered learning methods to active, collaborative, and technology-based learning is one example of how Islamic education adapts to developments. Islamic values remain the primary foundation, but delivery strategies evolve to meet the needs of the modern generation. The use of digital media, learning videos, online platforms, and interactive discussions demonstrates that Islamic education is capable of transforming without abandoning the substance of its teachings.(Olfah, 2024).

These findings align with various studies in Islamic education journals, which emphasize that the development of religious education needs to adapt to social and technological changes. The integration of technology into Islamic

Religious Education (PAI) learning, for example, not only helps deliver material more engagingly but also opens up opportunities for students to understand Islam through approaches that are more relevant to their daily lives. This demonstrates that Islamic studies are not static but rather constantly evolving to meet the needs of society.(Musyahid et al., 2025).

Furthermore, a multidisciplinary approach also helps Islam respond to the socio-religious challenges emerging in the modern era. Issues such as pluralism, interfaith tolerance, changes in digital culture, and the increasing flow of information require a wise and contextual understanding of Islam. Through the aid of social and cultural sciences, Islamic studies can objectively interpret these phenomena and present solutions consistent with Islamic values. This demonstrates that Islam is not separate from the changing times but rather exists to provide direction and guidance in addressing these changes.(Faizal et al., 2023).

A multidisciplinary approach also strengthens the position of Islamic studies in academia. Islam is studied not only as a religious science but also as a branch of knowledge that can dialogue with other disciplines. This relationship opens up space for the broader development of theories, methods, and practices of Islamic studies. Thus, Islamic studies becomes more dynamic, critical, and able to respond to the challenges of the times without losing its scientific identity.(Muna & Fauzi, 2025).

Based on this, it is understandable that a multidisciplinary approach makes Islamic studies more responsive to modern developments because it connects the values of Islamic teachings with the realities of modern life. This approach demonstrates Islam's flexibility in responding to social, cultural, educational, and technological changes. Therefore, a multidisciplinary approach is a crucial strategy for maintaining the relevance of Islamic studies, ensuring its viability, development, and ability to make a tangible contribution to society in the modern era.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that a multidisciplinary approach to Islamic studies makes a significant contribution to broadening understanding of Islamic teachings in the modern era. The integration of educational, social, and cultural perspectives demonstrates that Islam is understood not only as normative teachings related to worship and belief, but also as values that live and develop in society. This approach makes Islamic studies more comprehensive because it connects religious texts with social and cultural realities and constantly changing educational needs. Through a multidisciplinary approach, Islamic studies become more contextual, adaptive, and relevant in responding to the challenges of the times without abandoning the fundamental values of Islamic teachings.

The research findings also demonstrate that integrating Islamic studies with educational sciences strengthens contextual and applicable Islamic learning. Meanwhile, social studies help understand Islam as a practice within society, and a cultural approach demonstrates the close relationship between Islamic teachings and local traditions. These findings collectively confirm that a multidisciplinary approach can make Islamic studies more open to scholarly dialogue and more responsive to developments in modern society.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that educators, particularly Islamic Religious Education teachers and Islamic studies lecturers, apply a multidisciplinary approach in the learning process so that Islamic material is closer to the real experiences of students and is easily understood in everyday life. For Islamic educational institutions, this approach can be used as a basis for developing a curriculum that integrates Islamic values with social sciences, culture, and technological developments so that learning becomes more relevant to the needs of the times. In addition, future researchers are advised to develop field research on the application of a multidisciplinary approach in Islamic studies in schools, madrasas, and the community to obtain a broader picture of its implementation in educational practices and socio-religious life.

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