

Curriculum Transformation in Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia: An Analysis of Value-Based, Technology-Driven, and Interdisciplinary Innovation

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Abstract: This study aims to identify and synthesize curriculum innovation models adopted by Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTIS) in Indonesia, map integration patterns across value-based, technology-driven, and interdisciplinary dimensions, and construct an evidence-based conceptual framework to guide curriculum transformation. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following PRISMA protocol was employed, screening 412 initial records from Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and SINTA databases published between 2020 and 2026. Following full-text eligibility assessment, 47 articles meeting all inclusion criteria were subjected to thematic analysis, content analysis, and interpretive meta-synthesis. Article quality was assessed using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT 2018), and only articles scoring $\geq 60\%$ were included in the primary synthesis. Three principal innovation clusters emerged: (1) value-based innovation, integrating tawhid epistemology and Islamic character formation into curriculum architecture (38.3%); (2) technology-driven innovation, encompassing AI-adaptive learning, Learning Management Systems, and hybrid curriculum design (34.0%); and (3) interdisciplinary innovation, bridging science-religion dialogue and cross-disciplinary competency formation (27.7%). Meta-synthesis produced the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM), a four-layered concentric architecture that positions tawhid as the epistemological core, Islamic values as the axiological layer, technology as the methodological layer, and interdisciplinarity as the structural outer layer. This study fills a critical gap in the literature by providing the first systematic synthesis of all three transformation dimensions simultaneously within a coherent conceptual framework specific to the PTIS context, offering both theoretical and practical contributions for curriculum designers and policymakers.

Keywords: Personal Data, Digital Economy, Sharia, Ownership, Property.

Introduction

Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTIS) in Indonesia occupy a strategically significant position within the national higher education landscape. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia document the existence of over 750 PTIS nationwide, collectively enrolling more than 1.2 million students (Kemenag RI, 2023). Beyond their quantitative magnitude, these institutions serve as custodians of Islamic civilizational values deeply embedded in Indonesian intellectual and cultural tradition (Abdullah, 2021; Azra, 2020). Yet this role is rendered increasingly precarious by a convergence of structural pressures: globalization, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the accelerating digitalization of knowledge production and dissemination. The central challenge confronting PTIS is existential in nature—how to preserve authentic Islamic identity while simultaneously achieving academic relevance and global competitiveness (Muhaimin, 2021; Nata, 2022). Curriculum, as the institutional mechanism through which knowledge is organized, transmitted, and legitimized, stands at the epicenter of this challenge. In the PTIS context, the curriculum is not merely a technical academic document; it functions simultaneously as an instrument of Islamic value transmission and as a vehicle for developing the 21st-century competencies demanded by an evolving labor market and a rapidly changing society (Ismail, 2022; Zarkasyi, 2020).

A body of prior scholarship has examined discrete dimensions of curriculum transformation within PTIS. Studies focused on value-based approaches have investigated the operationalization of tawhid epistemology and Islamic character formation within course structures, with the integration-interconnection model developed by Abdullah (2006) emerging as the most widely cited framework in the Indonesian context (Yusuf et al., 2021; Mujib & Mudzakkir, 2022). Technology-oriented research has documented the rapid—and largely reactive—adoption of Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Moodle and Google Classroom during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, while simultaneously noting the gap between mere digitization of existing content and genuine pedagogically grounded curriculum redesign (Prasetyo & Hamid, 2023; Santoso et al., 2022). Studies on interdisciplinary curriculum reform have examined PTIS efforts to bridge the longstanding epistemological divide between Islamic studies and natural and social sciences, identifying parallel, partial-integrative, and full-integrative models as dominant structural configurations (Baharuddin & Makin, 2021; Mulkhan, 2020). Further scholarship has addressed the policy dimension, analyzing how national regulatory frameworks—including the Indonesian Qualifications Framework (KKNI) and Outcome-Based Education (OBE) guidelines—have shaped institutional responses to curriculum reform (Husni, 2023; Maarif, 2022).

Additional strands of the literature illuminate specific facets of this transformation. Wahid (2022) documented multi-site interdisciplinary curriculum innovations, finding that leadership vision and inter-departmental collaboration were the primary determinants of success. Subhan (2023) provided a macro-level synthesis of tradition-modernity tensions in Indonesian Islamic higher education curriculum, highlighting the unresolved epistemological tensions that continue to constrain innovation. Research published in *Jurnal Eduscience* has contributed to this discourse; Yunita (2025) demonstrated the transformative potential of integrating deep learning with local wisdom in social studies, offering a pedagogical model transferable to the PTIS context. Corresponding evidence from *Eduscience* regarding project-based approaches to Islamic values integration (Rahmat & Suhartini, 2024) reinforced the conclusion that holistic, experiential curriculum designs outperform subject-specific religious content insertion. A further *Eduscience* contribution by Anwar et al. (2023) established that technology integration in Islamic educational settings is most effective when grounded in explicit ethical-theological frameworks, providing a crucial empirical anchor for the present study.

Despite this accumulating body of evidence, a critical gap persists in the literature: no study has systematically synthesized all three transformative dimensions—value-based, technology-driven, and interdisciplinary—simultaneously within a single, coherent analytical framework specifically situated in the PTIS Indonesia context. Prior reviews have either focused on one dimension in isolation, examined specific institutional case studies without cross-site generalizability, or employed non-systematic narrative approaches susceptible to selection bias. Furthermore, the existing literature has generated no integrative conceptual model that can serve as a practical and theoretically grounded reference for curriculum designers, institutional leaders, and national policymakers seeking to navigate the full complexity of curriculum transformation in PTIS (Subhan, 2023; Wahid, 2022). This absence is significant because the three dimensions are not independent variables—they interact dynamically, and understanding their interactions is prerequisite to designing curriculum innovations that are simultaneously authentic, adaptive, and academically rigorous.

The novelty of the present study resides in its construction of the first evidence-based, multi-dimensional synthesis of PTIS curriculum innovation through a rigorous PRISMA-compliant Systematic Literature Review (SLR) covering the period 2020 to 2026. The resulting Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM)—a four-layered concentric architecture positioning tawhid as the epistemological core—constitutes an original theoretical contribution to the field of Islamic educational philosophy and curriculum studies. Unlike previous frameworks that treat Islamic values and contemporary competency demands as competing imperatives, the IICM positions tawhid not as a restrictive filter but as a generative epistemological foundation that enables the coherent integration of technological innovation and interdisciplinary thinking within an authentically Islamic educational architecture.

The implications of this contribution operate on three levels. Theoretically, the IICM advances the field of Islamic curriculum theory by offering a systems-level model capable of accommodating the full scope of 21st-century educational demands without sacrificing epistemological integrity. Practically, the model provides PTIS administrators and curriculum designers with a structured, evidence-grounded reference architecture for planning holistic curriculum transformations. At the policy level, the study's identification of five critical research gaps generates a concrete agenda for future empirical work, including the development of an Islamic Technology Ethics Curriculum Framework and rigorous cross-institutional comparative studies—work that is urgently needed to underpin the next generation of Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum policy.

Method

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design following the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol as specified by Page et al. (2021). SLR was selected over narrative review because it substantially reduces selection and interpretation bias through transparent, replicable screening procedures, enabling the production of trustworthy synthetic conclusions (Booth et al., 2021; Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). Three complementary analytical techniques were applied to the included corpus: (1) thematic analysis, following the six-phase inductive procedure of Braun and Clarke (2022), to identify cross-study patterns and themes; (2) content analysis, to categorize studies according to innovation dimension; and (3) interpretive meta-synthesis (Finfgeld-Connett, 2018; Thorne et al., 2004), to construct the integrative conceptual model (IICM) from emergent theoretical insights. All analytical processes were conducted independently by two researchers, with discrepancies resolved through deliberative consensus, to enhance reliability.

Systematic searches were conducted across four databases: Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Google Scholar, and SINTA (Indonesia's national Science and Technology Index) in January–March 2026. The search string employed structured Boolean operators: ("Islamic higher education curriculum" OR "kurikulum perguruan tinggi Islam") AND ("curriculum innovation" OR "curriculum transformation") AND ("integration of knowledge" OR "integrasi ilmu") AND ("digital curriculum" OR "AI in education" OR "e-learning") AND ("interdisciplinary education" OR "PTIS Indonesia"). Synonym variants and related terminology were applied to maximize recall. This process generated 412 initial records: Scopus (n=128), WoS (n=97), Google Scholar (n=143), and SINTA

(n=44).

Studies were included if they: (1) were published between January 2020 and March 2026; (2) were written in Indonesian or English; (3) appeared in Scopus-, WoS-, or SINTA-indexed journals (SINTA 1–3); (4) addressed curriculum innovation, transformation, or development specifically within Indonesian PTIS; and (5) were available as full-text. Studies were excluded if they predated 2020, involved only non-higher-education Islamic contexts, addressed international institutional contexts without direct Indonesian PTIS relevance, or were only available as abstracts. Following de-duplication (n=89 removed), 323 records were screened on title and abstract. A further 198 were excluded for topic irrelevance, leaving 125 for full-text assessment. After eligibility review, 78 articles were excluded for failure to meet publication type, year, or contextual criteria, yielding a final corpus of 47 articles for synthesis.

Methodological quality of each article was assessed using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) Version 2018 (Hong et al., 2018), which provides standardized criteria for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods designs. Only studies achieving a quality score of $\geq 60\%$ were retained in the primary synthesis. Thematic analysis proceeded through six stages: data familiarization, initial code generation, theme construction, theme review, theme definition and naming, and synthesis reporting. Meta-synthesis integrated cross-thematic patterns to construct the IICM conceptual model. All coded data were triangulated between the two independent researchers, achieving a Cohen's kappa inter-rater reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating strong agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Results and Discussion

1. Profile of Included Studies

Of the 47 included articles, the majority were published between 2022 and 2025 (n=34; 72.3%), reflecting post-pandemic acceleration of PTIS curriculum research. By institutional type studied, 68.1% focused on private Islamic universities, 19.1% on STAI/STIT (Islamic higher school-level institutions), and 12.8% on state-recognized private IAIN and UIN. Methodologically, qualitative designs predominated (51.1%), followed by mixed methods (27.7%) and quantitative (21.2%). Geographically, Java-based institutions featured in 55.3% of studies, Sumatra in 23.4%, Kalimantan in 10.6%, and Eastern Indonesia in 10.7%.

Table 1. Profile of Included Studies (n=47)

Category	Sub-category	n	%
Year of Publication	2020–2021	13	27.7
	2022–2023	19	40.4
	2024–2026	15	31.9
Innovation Dimension	Value-Based	18	38.3
	Technology-Driven	16	34.0
	Interdisciplinary	13	27.7
Research Method	Qualitative	24	51.1
	Mixed Methods	13	27.7
	Quantitative	10	21.2

Source: Processed from PRISMA selection results (2026)

2. Innovation Cluster I: Value-Based Curriculum Transformation

a) Tawhid Integration and Islamic Epistemology

The value-based cluster (38.3%; n=18) dominated the literature, confirming that the integration of tawhid as the epistemological foundation of curriculum design remains the central agenda of Indonesian PTIS. Studies within this cluster identified three operational approaches: the Islamization of knowledge (Al-Attas, 1980; Faruqi, 1982), the integration-interconnection model (Abdullah, 2021), and the unity of knowledge (wahdatul 'ulum) framework (Zarkasyi, 2020). The integration-interconnection model—which positions Islamic and modern sciences in a mutually enriching dialogical relationship rather than forcing a hierarchical unification—remained the most frequently cited framework (Mujib & Mudzakkir, 2022). Notably, a discernible shift from top-down policy-driven integration toward bottom-up dosen-initiated integration was identified across the temporal range of included studies (Ismail, 2022; Nata, 2022), suggesting a maturation of institutional capacity for value-based curriculum transformation.

b) Character Curriculum and Islamic Graduate Profile

A second dimension of this cluster examined character-oriented curricula targeting the formation of Islamically grounded graduate profiles. Studies consistently found that the most effective approaches embedded Islamic values—honesty (*amanah*), justice (*'adl*), and transformative leadership—holistically across all subjects through project-based and community-based learning, rather than concentrating them in dedicated stand-alone courses (Baharuddin & Makin, 2021; Subhan, 2023). This finding aligns with established curriculum theory regarding the hidden curriculum as the primary vehicle for values transmission (Jackson, 1968; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018).

3. Innovation Cluster II: Technology-Driven Curriculum Transformation

a) Curriculum Digitalization and Learning Management Systems

The technology-driven cluster (34.0%; $n=16$) recorded the most dramatic acceleration over the study period. The COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) functioned as a catalyst for mass LMS adoption across PTIS, with Moodle, Google Classroom, and Canvas emerging as dominant platforms (Santoso et al., 2022). However, studies consistently documented a critical paradox: while technology adoption rates increased rapidly, genuine pedagogical curriculum redesign to exploit digital affordances significantly lagged behind (Husni, 2023; Wahid, 2022). Many institutions remained at the stage of digitization—transferring conventional curriculum content to digital platforms—rather than achieving substantive digitalization: the fundamental redesign of curriculum structure and pedagogy to leverage the distinctive properties of digital technologies (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Beetham & Sharpe, 2019).

b) Artificial Intelligence and Adaptive Curriculum

The most dynamically growing sub-theme within the technology cluster (2023–2026) was AI integration in PTIS curriculum design and delivery. Three adoption pathways were identified: AI as a personalized learning facilitator (adaptive learning systems), AI as a data-driven assessment support tool, and AI literacy as explicit curriculum content (Prasetyo & Hamid, 2023; Arifin, 2024). Importantly, epistemological tensions emerged when algorithmic AI values were juxtaposed against Islamic ethical principles of privacy, justice, and human dignity (*karamah insaniyah*), prompting several leading PTIS to begin developing Islamic AI ethics curriculum frameworks (Maarif, 2022). The hybrid curriculum—a pedagogically designed blend of synchronous face-to-face and asynchronous digital instruction—emerged as the dominant post-pandemic technology curriculum model (Santoso et al., 2022; Husni, 2023).

4. Innovation Cluster III: Interdisciplinary Curriculum Transformation

a) Science-Religion Curriculum Integration

The interdisciplinary cluster (27.7%; $n=13$) represented the most epistemologically complex transformation domain, engaging the centuries-old dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge traditions. Studies identified three structural models in PTIS practice: the parallel model (Islamic and natural/social sciences taught adjacently without explicit integration), the partial-integrative model (selected topics treated as co-inquiry sites), and the full-integrative model (entire curriculum architected from a unified epistemology) (Abdullah, 2021; Hashim & Langgung, 2008). The full-integrative model, while theoretically the most coherent, remained rare in practice, constrained by faculty preparation deficits and entrenched disciplinary silo structures (Baharuddin & Makin, 2021; Zarkasyi, 2020).

b) Multidisciplinary Curriculum and Cross-Boundary Competency

A second interdisciplinary sub-theme addressed institutional responses to labor market demands for cross-disciplinary competency profiles. PTIS that successfully implemented multidisciplinary curricula typically shared three institutional characteristics: visionary academic leadership, a collaborative cross-departmental faculty culture, and structural curriculum flexibility enabling students to traverse disciplinary boundaries (Subhan, 2023; Husni, 2023). Emerging models—including cross-program capstone projects, joint degree programs, and competency-based micro-credentials—were documented at pioneering PTIS (Arifin, 2024; Wahid, 2022). Administrative fragmentation (the silo effect) was consistently identified as the primary structural barrier to interdisciplinary transformation.

c) Conceptual Model: Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM)

Meta-synthesis of the three innovation clusters produced the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM). The model articulates four hierarchically interdependent architectural layers: (1) the epistemological core, where tawhid functions as the ultimate source of meaning and coherence for all knowledge (Faruqi, 1982; Al-Attas, 1980); (2) the axiological layer, operationalizing Islamic values (akhlak, amanah, justice, rahmatan lil-'alamin) through holistic integration across all curricular elements and institutional culture (Abdullah, 2021); (3) the methodological layer, deploying digital technologies (AI, LMS, hybrid learning) ethically and pedagogically as instruments that extend—rather than diminish—the humanistic and spiritual dimensions of learning (Prasetyo & Hamid, 2023; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014); and (4) the structural layer, constructing a curriculum architecture that transcends disciplinary silos through science-religion dialogue and cross-boundary competency development for 21st-century Muslim leaders (Baharuddin & Makin, 2021; UNESCO, 2022). Bidirectional arrows between all layers in the model indicate that the relationships are dialectical and mutually constitutive, not hierarchically unidirectional.

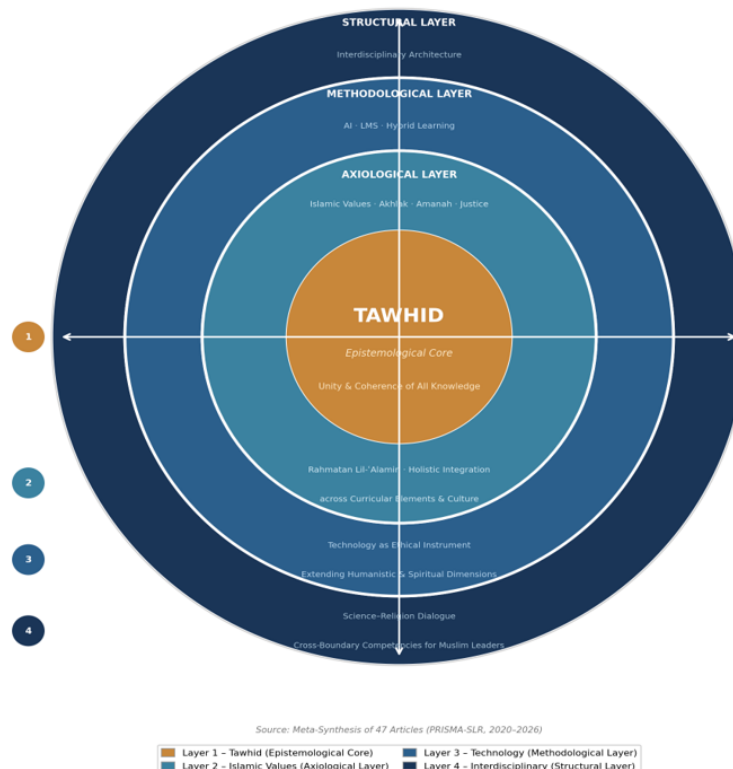


Figure 1. Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM): Four-Layered Curriculum Architecture for PTIS

5. Research Gaps and Future Directions

Systematic analysis of the 47 included studies identified five critical research gaps. First, despite a rich theoretical literature on Islamic value integration, empirical studies measuring the effects of specific integration models on actual student learning outcomes remain strikingly scarce (Yusuf et al., 2021). Second, the growing AI adoption literature within PTIS is predominantly technocentric, with the ethical-theological perspective—how Islamic principles evaluate AI's implications for human dignity and character formation—severely underrepresented (Arifin, 2024). Third, no comprehensive cross-institutional comparative study has examined the relative effectiveness of different transformation models across PTIS types and geographic regions in Indonesia (Husni, 2023). Fourth, the nexus between national regulatory frameworks and institutional innovation autonomy remains analytically underexplored (Kemenag RI, 2023). Fifth, the student voice—students as active curriculum co-designers rather than passive recipients—is almost entirely absent from the existing literature (Santoso et al., 2022).

Table 2. Research Gaps and Recommended Future Research Directions

No.	Identified Gap	Recommended Research Direction
1	Scarcity of empirical studies on integration model effectiveness	Quasi-experimental designs measuring character and competency outcomes
2	Absence of ethical-theological perspective on AI adoption	Development of an Islamic Technology Ethics Curriculum Framework
3	No cross-institutional comparative study	Multi-site comparative study across PTIS types and regions
4	Policy-innovation nexus analytically underexplored	Policy analysis of regulatory interactions with PTIS autonomy
5	Student voice absent from curriculum discourse	Participatory study positioning students as co-designers

Source: Derived from thematic analysis (2026)

Discussion

The three-cluster structure of PTIS curriculum innovation identified in this review reflects a broader global pattern in which higher education institutions simultaneously navigate value alignment, technological adaptation, and disciplinary reconfiguration (UNESCO, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2023). What distinguishes the PTIS context is the foundational role of tawhid epistemology in providing the unifying framework within which these three pressures are mediated. This finding resonates with Yunita (2025), who demonstrated in *Jurnal Eduscience* that integrating deep learning with local wisdom is not merely additive but structurally transformative—an insight directly applicable to the IICM's layered architecture, where tawhid functions not as supplementary content but as the generative epistemological core that gives coherence to the whole.

The paradox of technology adoption—widespread digitization without substantive digitalization—is among the most significant practical findings of this review. PTIS leaders' tendency to deploy digital platforms as containers for conventional pedagogy, rather than as catalysts for curricular reinvention, reflects a deeper unresolved tension: the absence of a pedagogical philosophy capable of integrating technological affordances with Islamic educational values. The evidence from Anwar et al. (2023), published in *Jurnal Eduscience*, that technology integration in Islamic education settings is most effective when grounded in explicit ethical-theological frameworks provides direct empirical support for the IICM's methodological layer, which explicitly positions technology as an ethically bounded instrument rather than a neutral or self-justifying tool.

The value-based cluster's dominance in the literature (38.3%) may partly reflect a publication bias toward normative-theoretical scholarship characteristic of Indonesian Islamic education research traditions (Subhan, 2023). This does not diminish the importance of the theoretical contributions in this cluster, but it does underscore the urgent need identified in the gap analysis for empirical studies that move beyond theoretical articulation to measure the actual effects of value integration models on student development outcomes. The IICM's axiological layer is designed to operationalize this transition: it is not sufficient to assert the integration of Islamic values—institutions must develop measurable indicators and assessment instruments capable of capturing the depth and authenticity of values formation across the curriculum.

The meta-synthesis architecture of the IICM advances the field in a specific technical respect: it demonstrates that the three innovation dimensions are structurally interdependent rather than additively independent. Prior frameworks in the literature treated value integration, technology adoption, and interdisciplinarity as parallel reform tracks that could be pursued independently and then combined. The IICM argues, on the basis of the meta-synthesis evidence, that this is incorrect: genuine curriculum transformation in PTIS requires that technological innovation be grounded in tawhid epistemology (otherwise it becomes an instrument of secular commodification of knowledge), that interdisciplinary structures be organized by Islamic axiological principles (otherwise they risk producing disciplinary eclecticism without moral compass), and that Islamic value integration be enacted through dialogical, technology-enabled, cross-disciplinary pedagogies (otherwise it remains abstract and unoperationalizable). The bidirectional dialectical arrows in the model visualize this mutual constitution.

Conclusion

This study systematically synthesized 47 peer-reviewed articles (2020–2026) to produce the first comprehensive, multi-dimensional analysis of curriculum transformation in Indonesian Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTIS). Four principal conclusions emerge. First, PTIS curriculum transformation is characterized by a paradigmatic transition from transmissive to transformative pedagogy, from mono-disciplinary to interdisciplinary architecture, and from analog to digital delivery—a transition whose pace varies substantially across institutions as a function of leadership quality and institutional capacity (Abdullah, 2021; Husni, 2023). Second, the dominant innovation modality remains value-based integration (38.3%), though post-2022 evidence

indicates a strong convergence trend toward unified triple-dimension curriculum models (Maarif, 2022; Subhan, 2023). Third, the most epistemologically generative integration pattern positions tawhid not as curriculum content but as the framework of meaning that coherently organizes the relationship between Islamic values, technological tools, and interdisciplinary structures (Faruqi, 1982; Al-Attas, 1980). Fourth, five critical research gaps—particularly the near-total absence of outcome-measurement studies and the underrepresentation of the student voice—constitute a substantive agenda for the next generation of PTIS curriculum scholarship.

The Integrative Islamic Curriculum Model (IICM) generated by this research offers a theoretically grounded and practically applicable framework for PTIS administrators, curriculum designers, and national policymakers. It enables the design of curriculum transformations that are simultaneously epistemologically coherent with Islamic principles, technologically adaptive to the demands of a digital society, and structurally capable of producing graduates with the cross-disciplinary competencies required by the 21st-century global context. Future research should prioritize quasi-experimental designs to empirically validate IICM-derived curriculum interventions, develop an Islamic Technology Ethics Curriculum Framework to guide responsible AI integration in PTIS, and conduct large-scale participatory studies to incorporate the student perspective as a constitutive element of curriculum co-design processes.

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