

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC EDUCATION SYSTEMS: PHILOSOPHICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL, AND PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, AND EGYPT

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Abstract: Contemporary Islamic education is shaped by diverse social, cultural, and political contexts across Muslim-majority countries. This study conducts a comparative analysis of Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt, examining their philosophical, sociological, and pedagogical foundations. Utilizing a qualitative approach through literature review, this research explores the similarities and differences in the goals, methods, curricula, and integration of Islamic values in education across these three nations. The study finds that while there are common theological and moral principles, significant variations exist in how Islamic education is integrated into national education frameworks, influenced by political agendas, and adapted to technological advancements. In Indonesia, Islamic education is integrated within the national curriculum through madrasahs and religious education programs in public schools. Malaysia adopts a more centralized approach with a strong governmental control over Islamic education. Meanwhile, Egypt, through Al-Azhar University, maintains a parallel system of Islamic education alongside secular schooling. The research underscores the importance of understanding the socio-political impacts on educational policies and practices. The findings highlight the need for a contextual and adaptive approach to Islamic education, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness in addressing contemporary challenges.

Keywords: Islamic Education, Comparative Study, Educational Philosophy, Sociocultural Factors, Pedagogy

Abstrak: Pendidikan Islam kontemporer dipengaruhi oleh konteks sosial, budaya, dan politik yang beragam di negara-negara mayoritas Muslim. Studi ini melakukan analisis komparatif terhadap sistem pendidikan Islam di Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Mesir, dengan mengkaji dasar filosofis, sosiologis, dan pedagogisnya. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui tinjauan pustaka, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kesamaan dan perbedaan dalam tujuan, metode, kurikulum, dan integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam pendidikan di ketiga negara ini. Studi ini menemukan bahwa meskipun terdapat prinsip-prinsip teologis dan

moral yang umum, terdapat variasi signifikan dalam cara pendidikan Islam diintegrasikan ke dalam kerangka pendidikan nasional, dipengaruhi oleh agenda politik, dan disesuaikan dengan kemajuan teknologi. Di Indonesia, pendidikan Islam diintegrasikan dalam kurikulum nasional melalui madrasah dan program pendidikan agama di sekolah-sekolah umum. Malaysia mengadopsi pendekatan yang lebih terpusat dengan kontrol pemerintah yang kuat terhadap pendidikan Islam. Sementara itu, Mesir, melalui Universitas Al-Azhar, mempertahankan sistem pendidikan Islam paralel di samping pendidikan sekuler. Penelitian ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya memahami dampak sosial-politik terhadap kebijakan dan praktik pendidikan. Temuan ini menyoroti perlunya pendekatan kontekstual dan adaptif terhadap pendidikan Islam, untuk memastikan relevansinya dan efektivitasnya dalam menghadapi tantangan kontemporer. **Kata kunci:** Pendidikan Islam, Studi Perbandingan, Filsafat Pendidikan, Faktor Sosial Budaya, Pedagogi.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has played a pivotal role in the development of Muslim societies, providing a foundation for the transmission of religious, moral, and intellectual values for centuries. As societies evolve, so too does the educational system, with contemporary Islamic education striving to address the challenges posed by globalization, technological advancement, and the increasing interaction with secular education systems. In this context, contemporary Islamic education must adapt to the dynamic social, cultural, and political landscapes within which it operates. The aim of this study is to provide a comparative analysis of the contemporary Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt, focusing on the philosophical, sociological, and pedagogical aspects that shape these systems.

Several studies have highlighted the evolution of Islamic education and its integration with national educational frameworks. For example, Al-Attas emphasized the importance of *tauhid* as the foundation of Islamic education and its role in shaping the moral and spiritual development of students.¹ Similarly, Muhammad Saeed and Iqbal Ahmed argued that the integration of Islamic education with contemporary subjects is necessary to create a balanced and holistic education system². Meanwhile, studies by Said explored the socio-

¹ Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, “The Concept Of Education In Islam,” (*Malaysia:International Institute Of Islamic Thought And Civilization (Istac)*, vol. 1, 1980).

² Muhammad Saeed and Iqbal Ahmed, “An Analytical Review on Rethinking Service-Learning as Critical Transformative Paradigm in Higher Education,” *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)* 2, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.47264/idea.jhsms/2.2.23>.

political factors influencing educational policies in Muslim-majority countries, underlining the challenges faced by educational systems in maintaining Islamic values while adapting to modernity.³ According to Uni, Islamic education is characterized by a commitment to preserving religious teachings while engaging with modern academic and technological advancements.⁴

However, despite the rich body of literature, few comparative studies have systematically explored the implementation and impact of Islamic education in different Muslim-majority countries, particularly in a contemporary context. The gap in the literature lies in understanding how Islamic education in different sociopolitical environments responds to global educational trends and local cultural contexts. This study aims to fill this gap by comparing the educational models in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt—three countries that represent distinct socio-political and educational contexts.

The *state of the art* in this field indicates that while there are emerging frameworks for integrating Islamic education with modern educational systems, there is still limited research on how these models interact with local realities and the global educational agenda. The challenges faced by these systems—ranging from technological adoption to balancing traditional religious education with the demands of the modern world—remain underexplored. Furthermore, the role of political and cultural influences in shaping Islamic education policies in these countries has not been adequately addressed in the literature. Scholars like Palmer have emphasized the need for a more inclusive approach to education that balances spiritual development with practical, modern skills.⁵

Furthermore, the philosophy of Islamic education remains a subject of debate. Ziauddin Sardar and Jeremy Henzell-Thomas have argued that Islamic education must undergo a process of *Islamization of knowledge*, where traditional knowledge systems are aligned with Islamic values, ensuring the integration of religious and secular knowledge.⁶ Theories of knowledge, according to Ashari, must take into account both *naqliyah* (revealed knowledge) and *aqliyyah* (rational

³ Shahirah binti Said, “The Challenges of Islamic Philosophy of Science Based On Contemporary Islamic Science Thinkers,” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 5 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i5/4232>.

⁴ Siti Qurrotul A’yuni Uni, “Analisis Pemikiran Pendidikan Menurut Ibnu Sina Dan Kontribusinya Bagi Pendidikan Islam Di Era Modern,” *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 1, no. 3 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v1i3.39>.

⁵ P. J Palmer, “The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons,” *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching* 1, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2018.1.2.12>.

⁶ Ziauddin Sardar and Jeremy Henzell-Thomas, *Rethinking Reform in Higher Education: From Islamization to Integration of Knowledge* (International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2017).

knowledge) in the development of educational frameworks.⁷ Similarly, studies on the sociological aspect by Palmer indicate that the interplay between religious institutions and state policies plays a crucial role in shaping educational systems.⁸

Thus, the primary objective of this study is to compare the contemporary Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt, focusing on their philosophical underpinnings, pedagogical methods, and sociological influences. By analyzing these three distinct models, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of each system, offering a nuanced understanding of how Islamic education can adapt to contemporary challenges while maintaining its core values. The findings aim to contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic education by offering a framework for policymakers and educators to develop more responsive, contextually relevant, and effective educational practices.

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a comparative case study method. The goal is to analyze and compare the contemporary Islamic education systems in three countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt. A qualitative methodology is chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of the philosophical, sociological, and pedagogical aspects that influence Islamic education in each context. The research primarily relies on literature review to gather and analyze data from existing sources such as books, academic journals, government reports, and official educational policies from each country.⁹

The data collection process consists of three main techniques¹⁰:

1. **Documentary Analysis:** This involves examining official reports, policy documents, educational curricula, and relevant academic studies from each country. Key sources include government education departments, ministry reports, and academic publications on Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt.
2. **Literature Review:** A thorough review of secondary literature from international and national journals, books, and reports related to Islamic

⁷ Muhammad Khakim Ashari, "Profile of Pancasila Students in Al-Farabi's Educational Philosophy," *Jurnal Ilmiah Iqra'* 17, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.30984/jii.v17i1.2253>.

⁸ Palmer, "The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons."

⁹ Sharan B. and Elizabeth J. Tisdell Merriam, "CHAPTER ONE WHAT IS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH?" in *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 2020.

¹⁰ Patton MQ, "Qualitative Designs and Data Collection," *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* Second Edi, no. Part II-Chapters 5, 6, 7 (1990).

education. This also includes previous comparative studies on Islamic education in different cultural and political settings.

3. Case Studies: Detailed analysis of specific institutions such as madrasahs in Indonesia, Islamic schools in Malaysia, and Al-Azhar University in Egypt. The case studies focus on the practical implementation of Islamic education in these institutions and how they are shaped by local and national contexts.

The data will be analyzed using a comparative framework, focusing on three main categories¹¹:

1. Philosophical Foundations: The values and ideologies that form the basis of each country's approach to Islamic education.
2. Sociological Influences: The social, political, and cultural factors that impact Islamic education systems in each country, including the role of religion, state, and cultural diversity.
3. Pedagogical Methods: The teaching strategies, curriculum designs, and learning outcomes in Islamic education in each country.

The data analysis will be conducted in a descriptive-comparative manner, drawing comparisons between the three countries based on the identified categories.¹² The results will be presented in terms of similarities, differences, and the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of each educational system. See a flowchart below to visually represent the research methodology

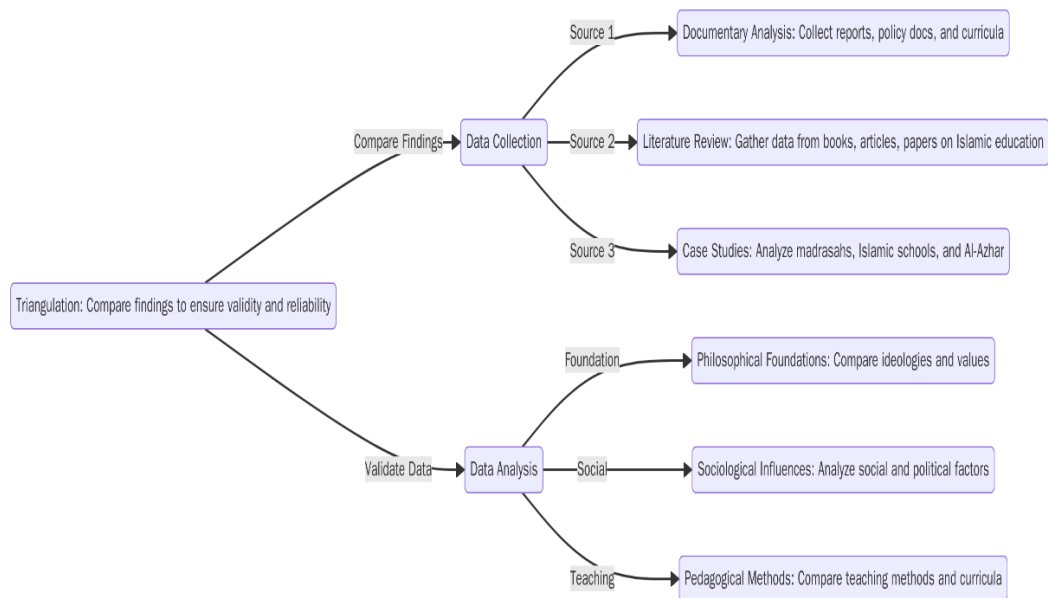


Figure 1 Research Methodology Flowchart

¹¹ J Creswell, “8 Data Analysis and Representation Copy.Pdf,” *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among the Five Traditions*, 2017.

¹² Esther McMahon and Lizzi O. Milligan, “A Framework for Ethical Research in International and Comparative Education,” *Compare* 53, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2021.1876553>.

To ensure the validity of the findings, the research will use triangulation. This involves comparing data from multiple sources, such as educational documents, reports, and previous studies, to ensure consistency and accuracy.¹³ The use of triangulation helps to cross-verify the data and address potential biases in the interpretation of the findings

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Philosophical Foundations of Islamic Education

The philosophical foundations of Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt are deeply influenced by the core Islamic principle of tauhid, or the oneness of God, which underpins the purpose of education in each country. While all three countries share this central tenet, their educational systems diverge significantly due to historical, political, and socio-cultural factors that shape how Islamic values are integrated with national identities and modern educational goals. These differences are not merely theoretical but have practical implications for how Islamic education is structured, delivered, and perceived by the society.

In Indonesia, the educational philosophy is shaped by the national ideology of Pancasila, which promotes unity in diversity.¹⁴ This ideology influences how Islamic education is integrated into the national curriculum. Indonesia's approach is marked by a commitment to pluralism, where Islamic education is part of a broader national educational framework that accommodates multiple religious and cultural identities. The integration of Islamic values with secular knowledge is emphasized, and this reflects Indonesia's broader national goal of fostering both religious devotion and intellectual competence. The role of tauhid remains central, but there is also a strong focus on preparing students for participation in a diverse, globalized society.¹⁵ The flexibility of Indonesia's decentralized educational system allows for the adaptation of Islamic education to local contexts, which results in diverse educational practices across the country. For instance, Islamic schools

¹³ Lorelli S. Nowell et al., "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16, no. 1 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>.

¹⁴ Imas Kurniawaty, Aiman Faiz, and Purwati Purwati, "Strategi Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Di Sekolah Dasar," *EDUKATIF: JURNAL ILMU PENDIDIKAN* 4, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v4i4.3139>; Rusnaini Rusnaini et al., "Intensifikasi Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Ketahanan Pribadi Siswa," *Jurnal Ketahanan Nasional* 27, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.22146/jkn.67613>; Aulia Nur Jannah and Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, "Implementasi Pancasila Dalam Kehidupan Sosial Budaya Di Masyarakat Abad-21," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 5, no. 1 (2021).

¹⁵ Daimah, "Interreligious Education: Development of Religious Moderation in The Education Sector," *Majalah Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Pemikiran Keagamaan TAJDID* 25, no. 2 (2022).

(madrasahs) and Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) programs are tailored to accommodate the cultural and religious nuances of various regions. This allows for a dynamic, evolving education system that can respond to both local and global educational needs.

In contrast, Malaysia adopts a more centralized approach to Islamic education, which is tightly regulated by the state to ensure that it aligns with national interests. Malaysia's philosophy of education is guided by Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan (National Philosophy of Education), which emphasizes holistic student development across spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical domains.¹⁶ However, the integration of Islamic values is more focused on Islamic nationalism—shaping students who are not only devout in their religious practices but also contribute to the nation-building process. The Malaysian system emphasizes a strong sense of Islamic identity, with tauhid forming the backbone of both the religious and moral education of students.¹⁷ The government's role is crucial here, with agencies like JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) overseeing the Islamic curriculum to ensure that it promotes Islamic orthodoxy and national cohesion. This centralized control ensures uniformity across the country, but it also means that the Malaysian education system is less adaptable to local religious and cultural variations compared to Indonesia's more decentralized approach¹⁸.

Meanwhile, Egypt's educational philosophy is strongly influenced by its traditional religious institutions, most notably Al-Azhar University, which serves as a pillar of Islamic orthodoxy. The philosophical foundation of Islamic education in Egypt is deeply rooted in the classical Islamic sciences, such as fiqh, tafsir, and hadith.¹⁹ Here, the focus is on preserving Islamic purity through the rigorous teaching of traditional religious texts. Unlike Indonesia and Malaysia, Egypt's education system maintains a clear divide between secular and religious education, with Islamic knowledge being taught in religious schools and secular subjects addressed separately. The strong state control exercised by institutions like Al-Azhar ensures that Islamic education remains firmly within the

¹⁶ Uswatun Hasanah and Zaki Faddad SZ, "The Philosophical Analysis of the Future of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia-Malaysia Facing Megatrend 2045," *Al-Fikrah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 11, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.31958/jaf.v11i1.9307>.

¹⁷ Rosnani Hashim, "Malay Philosophies of Education," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1413>.

¹⁸ Azmil Tayeb, "State Islamic Orthodoxies and Islamic Education in Malaysia and Indonesia," *Kajian Malaysia* 35, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.21315/km2017.35.2.1>.

¹⁹ Cahaya Khaeroni, "GAGASAN PEMBAHARUAN PENDIDIKAN ISLAM MUHAMMAD ABDUH (1849-1905)," *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 01 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.24127/att.v1i01.340>.

boundaries of traditional Islamic scholarship. While Egypt has made some efforts to modernize and integrate scientific knowledge and critical thinking into its curriculum, the pace of change has been slow, and traditional pedagogical methods continue to dominate.²⁰

To visualize these differences in philosophical foundations, the bar chart below summarizes the comparative emphasis each country places on three key areas: core philosophical principles, secular integration, and state control. Indonesia scores high on secular integration, reflecting its focus on combining Islamic teachings with modern subjects, while Malaysia scores high on state control, emphasizing the central role of the government in shaping the Islamic curriculum. Egypt’s focus on core philosophical principles (especially Islamic orthodoxy) scores highest, indicating the country’s commitment to maintaining traditional religious values.

Table 1. differences in aspect philosophical foundations

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia	Egypt
Core Philosophical Principle	Tauhid (Oneness of God), National Unity via Pancasila	Tauhid, Islamic Nationalism	Tauhid, Preservation of Islamic Orthodoxy
Integration of Secular Knowledge	Strong integration of secular and religious knowledge	Integration of Islamic knowledge with modern subjects	Strong divide between secular and religious knowledge
Role of the State	Decentralized control, allowing local autonomy	Centralized control via JAKIM, state-driven orthodoxy	Decentralized control by Al-Azhar, traditional approach

The Venn diagram above further explores the overlap of core values in the Islamic education systems of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt. While all three countries share the foundational value of tauhid, their educational philosophies diverge significantly based on their respective national contexts. Indonesia’s pluralistic approach focuses on integrating Islamic values with national unity, while Malaysia emphasizes Islamic nationalism and the role of the state in shaping religious education. Egypt, with its strong attachment to Islamic orthodoxy, prioritizes preserving traditional religious knowledge and limiting the integration of secular subjects into the religious curriculum.

²⁰ I Idri, “Enhancement of Islamic Higher Education Management: A Study at Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya Indonesia and Canal Suez University Ismaili Egypt,” *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and ...*, 2021.

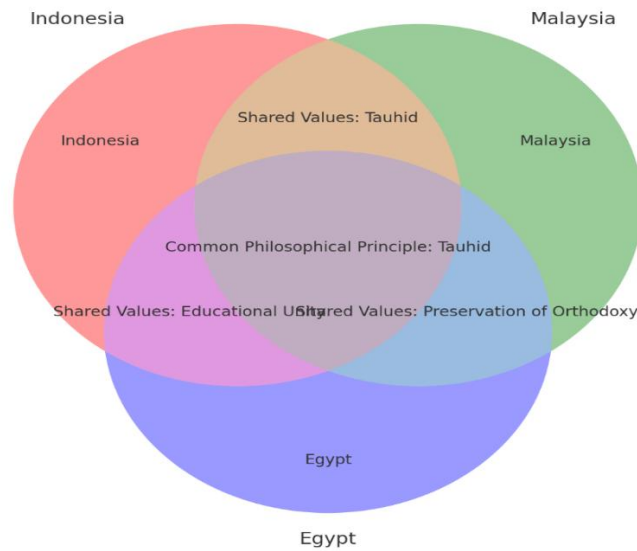


Figure 2. the overlap of core values in the Islamic education systems

The Venn diagram visually represents how tauhid is the common philosophical principle uniting the educational systems, but the countries diverge in how they prioritize national unity, Islamic orthodoxy, and integration with modernity. In Indonesia, there is a strong push for inclusive education that integrates Islamic teachings with global knowledge, while Malaysia's system is characterized by a more rigid state-controlled orthodoxy that focuses on promoting a unified Islamic identity. Egypt, on the other hand, remains more traditionally focused, with a clear demarcation between religious and secular education.

The philosophical foundations of Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt reveal both shared values and significant differences that reflect each country's historical, political, and cultural contexts. Indonesia's educational system is characterized by pluralism and integration of secular and religious knowledge, while Malaysia's system is more centralized, emphasizing Islamic nationalism and state-driven orthodoxy. Egypt, on the other hand, retains a focus on preserving Islamic orthodoxy, with traditional approaches to religious education and a clearer separation from secular education.

Through the use of Venn diagrams, we can visually capture the similarities and differences between these countries' educational philosophies. Understanding these philosophical foundations is crucial for contextualizing how each country's Islamic education system has evolved and how it will continue to adapt to the challenges of modernity. The comparative analysis not only highlights the role of Islamic values in shaping educational practices but

also underscores the influence of state policies, national ideologies, and socio-cultural factors in determining the future trajectory of Islamic education.

Sociological Influences on Islamic Education

The sociological context of Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt plays a crucial role in shaping their educational systems, influencing how Islamic teachings are integrated with national identity, religious values, and societal norms. Despite their shared commitment to Islamic education, the sociological factors that impact these systems differ significantly, reflecting the unique political, cultural, and historical environments in each country. The following analysis explores these sociological influences, focusing on how societal structures, state policies, and historical legacies have shaped Islamic education in each nation.

Islamic education in Indonesia is deeply influenced by the pluralistic nature of its society, which is home to various religious and cultural groups. Indonesia's democratic framework and diverse population have led to a decentralized approach to education.²¹ This approach allows regional autonomy, where local governments have the authority to shape the curriculum to reflect local religious and cultural values. This flexibility has given rise to a diverse educational landscape in Indonesia, with different interpretations of Islam being taught in madrasahs, public schools, and universities. The role of Islamic education in Indonesia is not merely to impart religious knowledge but to foster a sense of national unity and tolerance among its diverse population. Islamic education in Indonesia is seen as a tool for integrating religious diversity into national identity, creating a cohesive social fabric where religious pluralism is celebrated rather than suppressed.²²

In contrast, Malaysia has a more centralized approach to Islamic education, heavily influenced by the state's efforts to promote Islamic nationalism. The government's role in regulating Islamic education is particularly evident through agencies like JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam

²¹ M.Sc. Ed Prof. Dr. H.A.R. Tilaar, *Manajemen Pendidikan Nasional: Kajian Pendidikan Masa Depan, Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya*, 1992; Suci Ramadhanti Febriani and Apri Wardana Ritonga, "The Perception of Millennial Generation on Religious Moderation through Social Media in the Digital Era," *Millah*, 2022, 313–34, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol21.iss2.art1>; Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, Mufaizin Mufaizin, and Moh Kholil Baita Putra, "Kurikulum Merdeka's Authentic Assessment for Multicultural Islamic Religious Education," *Jurnal Al-Murabbi* 8, no. 2 (2023): 60–76.

²² Fauzan Fauzan, Ayup Lateh, and Fatkhul Arifin, "Analisis Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Indonesia Dan Thailand (Studi Kebijakan Kurikulum 2013 Dan Kurikulum 2008 Di Tingkat SMA)," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 2 (2019): 297, <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v14i2.5989>.

Malaysia), which ensures that the curriculum aligns with the state's agenda of fostering a unified Islamic identity. As Mas'ud et al argue, the Malaysian government has used Islamic education as a tool for political and social cohesion, emphasizing moral discipline and national unity.²³ This centralized system ensures that Islamic education is standardized across the country, but it also limits the degree of regional autonomy seen in Indonesia. Furthermore, the emphasis on Islamic orthodoxy in Malaysia has contributed to the state's ability to control and shape Islamic discourse, ensuring that it aligns with national policies. As Komariah et al points out, the state's investment in Islamic education reflects its desire to manage and maintain Islamic orthodoxy in the face of growing political Islam²⁴.

Egypt, with its deep historical roots in Al-Azhar University, offers a distinct approach to Islamic education. The sociological influence of Egypt's long-standing commitment to Islamic orthodoxy has shaped its education system, where institutions like Al-Azhar remain central to the curriculum.²⁵ As Heba Nassar and Marwa Biltagy observe, Al-Azhar's role as the center of Sunni Islamic thought ensures that Islamic education in Egypt remains focused on traditional religious knowledge, such as fiqh, tafsir, and hadith. This traditionalist approach, however, faces challenges in adapting to modern educational needs²⁶. The state's role in regulating Islamic education is less centralized than in Malaysia, with Al-Azhar maintaining significant autonomy over its curriculum. The influence of Islamic orthodoxy and religious conservatism means that Egypt's Islamic education system has been less receptive to secular integration and pedagogical modernization compared to Indonesia and Malaysia. Moreover, as Fathorrahman (2019) highlights, Egypt's ongoing sectarian tensions and socio-political instability have also shaped the way Islamic education is delivered, often prioritizing religious uniformity over diversity.

²³ Ali Mas'ud, Ah Zaki Fuad, and Ahmad Zaini, "Evolution and Orientation of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.21-49>.

²⁴ Aan Komariah et al., "Implementation of Character Education in Elementary Schools in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education* 12, no. 8 (2021).

²⁵ Durhan Durhan, "INTERNALISASI KONSEP DEMOKRASI DALAM PENDIDIKAN ISLAM (Belajar Dari Praktik Demokrasi Dalam Pendidikan Islam Di Pakistan, Mesir Dan Turki)," *AHSANA MEDIA* 5, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.31102/ahsana..5.1.2019.50-59>; Himya Sipitri et al., "Perbandingan Pendidikan Indonesia Dan Mesir," *Jurnal Insan Pendidikan Dan Sosial Humaniora* 1, no. 4 (2023).

²⁶ Heba Nassar and Marwa Biltagy, "Poverty, Employment, Investment, and Education Relationships: The Case of Egypt," *SAGE Open* 7, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017697156>.

The sociological context also impacts how Islamic education is perceived and practiced. In Indonesia, Islamic education has adapted to its pluralistic society, promoting tolerance and interfaith dialogue within the curriculum. The government's decentralized approach to education has allowed for regional autonomy, which has encouraged a more inclusive approach to Islamic teachings. The integration of religious and secular knowledge reflects Indonesia's commitment to modernity while staying true to its Islamic roots. In Malaysia, however, the focus on Islamic nationalism and the government's tight control over Islamic education has fostered a more uniform, state-driven approach to Islamic teachings. The system emphasizes Islamic unity and moral discipline, which has made the country more cohesive in its educational goals but has also led to a restriction of diverse interpretations of Islam within educational institutions²⁷.

In Egypt, the role of Al-Azhar as a religious authority in education reflects the country's emphasis on maintaining Islamic orthodoxy. While the Egyptian government has made some efforts to modernize education, the influence of Islamic conservatism remains strong. This has contributed to the country's struggle to balance the demands of modernity with the preservation of traditional Islamic values.²⁸ The sociological impact of this tension has been felt in the educational system, where Islamic education often remains separate from secular subjects, limiting the scope of students' knowledge and their ability to engage with modern challenges.

To illustrate the differences in sociological influences, the bar chart below compares the level of state control, Islamic orthodoxy, and integration of secular knowledge in the Islamic education systems of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt. The Venn diagram below illustrates the overlap in the sociological influences of Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt, showing how the countries' unique political and cultural contexts have shaped their educational systems. The diagram highlights the shared commitment to Islamic education but also reflects the diverse sociological landscapes in which these systems operate.

²⁷ Lina Hasnawati and Arif Nadliroh, "Diversity and Pesantren Values as the Basis of Education in Malaysia and Indonesia," *Dawub Guru: Jurnal Pendidikan MI/SD* 3, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.35878/guru.v3i1.674>; Mas'ud, Fuad, and Zaini, "Evolution and Orientation of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia."

²⁸ Sipitri et al., "Perbandingan Pendidikan Indonesia Dan Mesir."

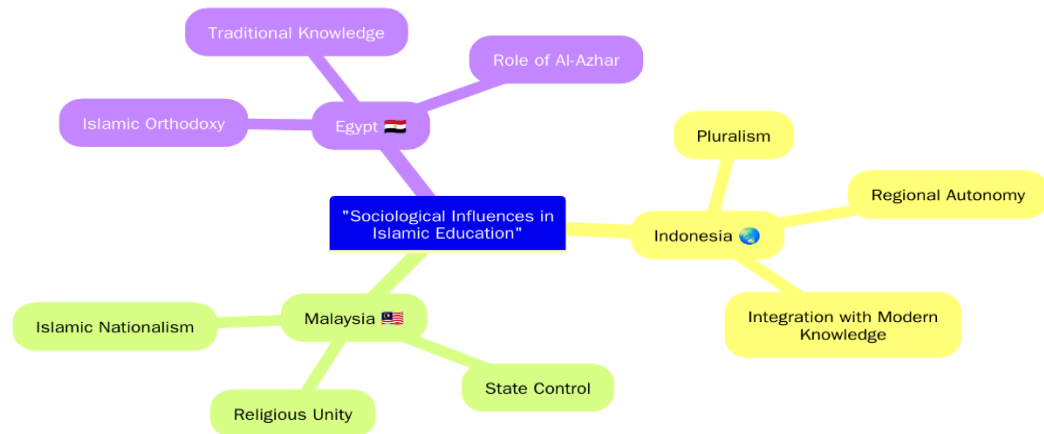


Figure 3. differences in sociological influences

The sociological influences on Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt illustrate how society, politics, and culture intersect to shape educational practices. While all three countries emphasize Islamic education, their approaches differ significantly based on their historical contexts, government policies, and societal structures. Indonesia's pluralistic and decentralized approach contrasts with Malaysia's centralized focus on Islamic nationalism and state-driven orthodoxy, while Egypt remains deeply rooted in Islamic conservatism and the authority of Al-Azhar. These differences are further illustrated through the bar chart and Venn diagram, which help visualize the varying degrees of state control, Islamic orthodoxy, and integration with secular knowledge. Understanding these sociological influences is essential for recognizing the diverse ways in which Islamic education adapts to local and global challenges while maintaining its core values.

Pedagogical Methods in Islamic Education

When comparing pedagogical methods in Islamic education, each country employs distinct strategies to achieve the educational objectives based on their national philosophies and sociopolitical contexts. Pedagogical methods in Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt reflect not only the philosophical foundations of the education systems in these countries but also their sociological and political environments. Each country's approach to Islamic education has evolved based on its historical, cultural, and social context. The pedagogical methods employed in Islamic education aim to produce individuals who are both knowledgeable in religious matters and equipped with the skills necessary to navigate the modern world. This section examines the diverse pedagogical approaches in these countries and explores how their

historical, political, and cultural backgrounds have influenced their educational methods.

Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation, moving from traditional pondok pesantren schools to more modernized educational institutions. According to Mas'ud et al., madrasahs and public schools in Indonesia offer Islamic studies alongside modern subjects.²⁹ The pedagogical methods in Indonesian Islamic schools focus on student-centered learning and the integration of Islamic values with secular subjects. In particular, Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) is taught not only as a means of instilling religious morals but also as a way to encourage critical thinking and reflection. As Herlanti (2017) notes, Pedagogy Content Islamic Knowledge (PCIK) in Indonesian Islamic education is designed to promote critical reflective activity, where students engage with the natural world and reflect on how it is created by Allah.³⁰ This method of integrating religion with scientific knowledge allows students to explore the relationship between Islamic teachings and modern disciplines such as biology, reflecting the broader goal of Islamic education in Indonesia to produce holistically developed individuals.

In Malaysia, Islamic education has evolved under a more centralized system that emphasizes Islamic nationalism and the development of a unified Islamic identity. According to Tayeb, Malaysia's pedagogical methods are teacher-centered, with a strong emphasis on moral discipline, Islamic values, and religious uniformity. While the system integrates secular subjects with Islamic teachings, the government plays a central role in determining the curriculum, ensuring that it aligns with Islamic orthodoxy and the national Islamic identity.³¹ The Islamic education curriculum in Malaysia is designed to produce students who are well-versed in both religious knowledge and practical skills necessary for nation-building. Pedagogical strategies in Malaysian Islamic schools include lecture-based teaching, memorization of the Qur'an, and Islamic ethics, often supplemented by extracurricular activities aimed at reinforcing leadership and citizenship values³².

²⁹ Mas'ud, Fuad, and Zaini, "Evolution and Orientation of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia."

³⁰ Fauzan, Latch, and Arifin, "Analisis Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Indonesia Dan Thailand (Studi Kebijakan Kurikulum 2013 Dan Kurikulum 2008 Di Tingkat SMA)"; Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, "MODEL PENGEMBANGAN KURIKULUM MULTIKULTURAL," *Al-Insyiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.35309/alinsyiroh.v5i2.3516>.

³¹ Tayeb, "State Islamic Orthodoxies and Islamic Education in Malaysia and Indonesia."

³² Che Noraini Hashim and Hasan Langgulung, "Islamic Religious Curriculum in Muslim Countries: The Experiences of Indonesia and Malaysia," *Bulletin of Education & Research* 30, no. 1 (2008): 1–19.

In Egypt, Al-Azhar University plays a central role in shaping the pedagogical methods employed in Islamic education. The educational philosophy at Al-Azhar emphasizes the transmission of traditional Islamic knowledge, such as fiqh, tafsir, and hadith, with a strong focus on memorization and oral transmission of religious texts. The teaching methods in Egypt's Islamic schools are characterized by a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher's authority is central to the learning process.³³ Al-Faruqi notes that halaqah (study circles) remain an important pedagogical method, where students engage in group discussions and oral recitations of religious texts.³⁴ However, Egypt's educational system has faced challenges in adapting to modern pedagogical techniques, as the integration of secular subjects and Islamic knowledge remains limited. This conservative approach, while deeply rooted in Islamic tradition, often leaves little room for the critical engagement with contemporary issues or modern knowledge systems³⁵ (Nasr, 1993).

The table below illustrates the comparative pedagogical methods in Islamic education across these three countries, focusing on student-centered versus teacher-centered approaches, integration of secular and religious knowledge, and the role of state control in shaping pedagogical practices.

Table 2. compares the pedagogical methods

Pedagogical Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia	Egypt
Teaching Approach	Student-centered, encourages critical thinking and problem-solving.	Teacher-centered, emphasizes Islamic moral discipline and national identity.	Teacher-centered, emphasizes memorization and oral transmission of religious texts.
Integration of Secular & Religious Knowledge	Strong integration; Islamic teachings blend with modern subjects, especially in madrasahs and public schools.	Moderate integration; Islamic teachings are integrated with secular subjects but with a focus on Islamic orthodoxy.	Low integration; focus on traditional Islamic subjects, with limited inclusion of secular subjects.
State Control & Curriculum Development	Decentralized; regional autonomy allows for flexible	Centralized; the state controls and standardizes the	Centralized; Al-Azhar plays a central role in

³³ Sipitri et al., "Perbandingan Pendidikan Indonesia Dan Mesir."

³⁴ Ismail Al Faruqi and Lamy'a' Al Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 3, no. 1 (1986), <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v3i1.2768>.

³⁵ Carolyn Barnett, "The Socialization of Female Islamists: Paternal and Educational Influence," *Hawwa* 7, no. 1 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.1163/156920809X449544>.

Pedagogical Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia	Egypt
	curriculum that adapts to local needs.	Islamic curriculum through agencies like JAKIM.	setting the curriculum, with strong emphasis on Islamic orthodoxy.
Focus on Leadership & Citizenship	Emphasis on Masyarakat Madani (civil society), developing leadership skills and civic engagement.	Focus on moral discipline and Islamic values that align with national goals of unity.	Limited focus on leadership or citizenship; more focused on religious scholarship and moral behavior.
Pedagogical Methods Used	Collaborative learning, interactive discussions, extracurricular activities (debates, student organizations).	Lecture-based teaching, memorization, and structured learning focused on moral education.	Traditional methods such as halaqah (study circles), oral recitations, and memorization.
Extracurricular Activities	Debates, scouting, student organizations play a significant role in leadership and civic engagement.	Emphasis on religious-based extracurricular activities like Quranic recitation and moral teachings.	Limited extracurricular activities, with a strong focus on religious studies .

The pedagogical landscape in Indonesia is shaped by the country’s commitment to diversity and the integration of modern and religious knowledge. This innovative approach has been emphasized in Islamic schools that aim to prepare students for active citizenship in a democratic society. As Saputra and Krismono argue, Indonesian Islamic schools focus on developing leadership skills and social responsibility by incorporating democratic values and active citizenship into their teaching methods.³⁶ These schools employ collaborative learning, interactive discussions, and extracurricular activities such as debates and student organizations to cultivate civic engagement and leadership qualities in their students. Despite challenges such as limited

³⁶ Kurniawan Dwi Saputra and Krismono Krismono, “The Reconstruction of Aligarh and Santiniketan Educational Philosophy: The Creative Ijtihad of Trimurti in Developing Islamic Education in Indonesia,” *TSAQAFAH* 17, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v17i2.6879>.

resources and insufficient government support, these schools aim to shape future leaders who are committed to building a just and democratic society.

In Malaysia, the state-driven approach to Islamic education places significant emphasis on Islamic moral values and discipline. According to Majid et al, Malaysia's approach to pedagogy involves the integration of Islamic teachings with secular subjects, while the primary focus remains on developing a unified Islamic identity. The teacher-centered methods are designed to instill discipline and a deep understanding of Islamic teachings. However, Islamic education in Malaysia is also experimenting with critical pedagogy, as Majid et al note, by incorporating emancipatory knowledge and critical thinking into the curriculum.³⁷

In Egypt, the pedagogical methods used in Al-Azhar and other Islamic institutions emphasize classical Islamic education, focusing on memorization and oral teaching. While these methods are deeply ingrained in Islamic tradition, they face challenges in meeting the demands of modern education, especially with regards to critical thinking and the integration of secular subjects. The teacher-centered model has been effective in preserving traditional Islamic values but is often criticized for its inability to engage students in critical discourse on contemporary issues³⁸.

The pedagogical methods of Islamic education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt reflect each country's unique approach to balancing Islamic values with modern educational goals. Indonesia is at the forefront of integrating secular and religious knowledge, using student-centered methods that encourage critical reflection and problem-solving. Malaysia, while centralized and state-controlled, emphasizes Islamic nationalism and moral discipline through teacher-centered methods, but is slowly incorporating critical pedagogy into its curriculum. Egypt remains focused on Islamic orthodoxy and traditional pedagogical methods, which are deeply rooted in religious authority but face challenges in adapting to modern educational needs. These differences are highlighted in the bar chart and reflect how each country's educational philosophy and pedagogical methods are shaped by their historical, political, and sociological contexts.

Synthesis of Findings: Commonalities and Differences

The comparative analysis of Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt reveals both shared values and distinct differences in the

³⁷ Latifah Abdul Majid et al., "The Contribution of Islamic Education in Strengthening Malay Identity," *Journal of Applied Sciences Research* 8, no. 8 (2012).

³⁸ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity* (Zondervan, 2009).

ways these countries approach the integration of Islamic principles within their educational frameworks. All three systems emphasize the core Islamic value of tauhid (the oneness of God), which forms the foundation of their educational philosophy. However, their methods of achieving the balance between modernity and tradition diverge significantly due to historical, political, and cultural influences. In Indonesia, the educational system is more decentralized and pluralistic, embracing a balance between secular and religious knowledge. Malaysia, on the other hand, is more centralized, with a strong state-driven approach focused on Islamic nationalism. Egypt retains a more traditionalist model, emphasizing Islamic orthodoxy and focusing on memorization and classical Islamic knowledge through institutions like Al-Azhar.

The pedagogical methods in these countries reflect their respective cultural and political environments. Indonesia has adopted more modern and progressive pedagogies, integrating secular subjects with Islamic teachings to prepare students for both religious and academic pursuits. Student-centered learning, interactive discussions, and critical thinking are emphasized in Indonesian Islamic schools, aiming to foster holistic development in students³⁹. In contrast, Malaysia's teacher-centered approach prioritizes Islamic moral education, emphasizing Islamic values and discipline within a state-regulated curriculum. The centralized control by the Malaysian government ensures that the curriculum reflects a unified national Islamic identity, focusing on fostering students' moral character alongside academic skills⁴⁰. Egypt, meanwhile, continues to rely on traditional teaching methods that emphasize memorization and oral recitations of religious texts, such as the Qur'an, hadith, and fiqh, with limited integration of modern pedagogies or secular subjects⁴¹.

While Indonesia and Malaysia have increasingly integrated modern teaching methods and technology into their Islamic education systems, Egypt remains more focused on preserving Islamic orthodoxy through traditional

³⁹ Mas'ud, Fuad, and Zaini, "Evolution and Orientation of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia."

⁴⁰ Komariah et al., "Implementation of Character Education in Elementary Schools in Indonesia and Malaysia"; Karine Rizkita and Achmad Supriyanto, "Komparasi Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Di Indonesia Dan Malaysia Dalam Upaya Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan," *Jurnal Akuntabilitas Manajemen Pendidikan* 8, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.21831/jamp.v8i2.32362>.

⁴¹ Johanna Kemper and Ursula Renold, "Evaluating the Impact of General versus Vocational Education on Labor Market Outcomes in Egypt by Means of a Regression Discontinuity Design," *Journal of Development Economics* 166 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2023.103172>; Alaa Eldin A. Ayoub, Ahmed M. Abdulla Alabbasi, and Ahmed Morsy, "Gifted Education in Egypt: Analyses from a Learning-Resource Perspective," *Cogent Education* 9, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2082118>; Dina Allam, "Explaining the Persistence of 'Decentralisation' of Education in Egypt," *International Journal of Educational Development* 82 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102357>.

pedagogical methods. In Indonesia, Islamic education is viewed as a means of developing both the intellectual and spiritual capacities of students, preparing them for a globalized world while staying grounded in Islamic values. The secular integration in Indonesian schools allows students to explore Islamic teachings alongside subjects like science, math, and social studies. In Malaysia, the emphasis is on Islamic nation-building through education, and while secular subjects are included, they are typically taught alongside a curriculum heavily focused on Islamic teachings that reinforce the country's Islamic identity (Tayeb, 2017). Conversely, Egypt's educational model remains firmly focused on religious education, with less flexibility for integrating secular knowledge, reflecting the country's conservative approach to education.

The level of state control in each country significantly impacts the development and delivery of Islamic education. Malaysia has the highest degree of state control, with the government regulating the Islamic curriculum to ensure consistency and alignment with national values. Indonesia, with its decentralized system, allows local authorities to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of diverse regions, leading to more variation in the implementation of Islamic education across the country. Egypt, although traditionally centralized, still maintains significant control through Al-Azhar in shaping the Islamic curriculum, with limited room for modern pedagogical reform⁴². These structural differences in governance reflect how state priorities influence the pedagogical methods and the extent to which modernity and secular integration are embraced in Islamic education.

In conclusion, while Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt share common core values such as tauhid and the emphasis on moral development, their pedagogical methods diverge significantly due to the unique sociopolitical environments in each country. Indonesia's decentralized and pluralistic approach contrasts with Malaysia's centralized system, which emphasizes Islamic unity and state control. Egypt's traditionalist approach, influenced by Al-Azhar, remains more focused on preserving Islamic orthodoxy and classical knowledge. The differences in pedagogical methods and state control are shaped by each country's commitment to Islamic education while addressing modern educational needs and societal demands.

⁴² Nassar and Biltagy, "Poverty, Employment, Investment, and Education Relationships: The Case of Egypt."

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt reveals that while these countries share foundational Islamic values, including the centrality of tauhid (the oneness of God) and the importance of moral development, their educational approaches diverge significantly due to their unique sociopolitical contexts, historical backgrounds, and cultural influences. Despite these differences, all three systems aim to produce individuals who are not only spiritually devout but also capable of contributing to society in meaningful ways.

Indonesia's pluralistic and decentralized approach to Islamic education, which integrates secular knowledge with Islamic teachings, reflects its commitment to modernity and flexibility. The country's educational system seeks to balance the need for religious adherence with the demands of a globalized world, encouraging critical thinking and technology integration alongside traditional religious studies. In contrast, Malaysia's centralized approach to Islamic education emphasizes Islamic unity and national identity, with the state playing a significant role in shaping the curriculum and ensuring religious orthodoxy. This system, while more uniform, has limited flexibility for regional adaptation, though it still integrates modern subjects within the Islamic educational framework.

Egypt, with its strong reliance on Al-Azhar University and traditional pedagogical methods, remains more focused on preserving Islamic orthodoxy through memorization and oral recitation. While efforts to modernize have been made, Egypt's educational system continues to prioritize religious knowledge and classical Islamic sciences over the integration of secular subjects or modern pedagogies. The influence of Al-Azhar and the centrality of religious tradition in shaping educational practices remain defining features of the Egyptian system.

In conclusion, while the Islamic education systems in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt share common goals, their methods of achieving these goals are shaped by distinct cultural, political, and sociological influences. Indonesia's more dynamic and inclusive approach contrasts with Malaysia's focus on Islamic nationalism and state control, while Egypt's adherence to traditionalism underscores its commitment to preserving Islamic orthodoxy. Understanding these differences and similarities can offer valuable insights for educational policymakers and Islamic educators who seek to balance modernity with tradition in a rapidly evolving global context.

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