

## Strengthening Learning Priorities in the 21st Century: Review of Islamic Education Policy in Indonesia

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**ABSTRACT.** This research aims to identify and describe how Islamic education policies in Indonesia can be improved to suit the learning needs of the 21st century. This research is a type of library research with a qualitative approach. Data was obtained from three sources "Google Scholar" "ScienceDirect" and "RISE." The discussion in this research highlights and contributes to the formulation of Islamic education policy to prioritize 21st-century learning, which includes building a commitment to mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills, measuring learning periodically, accurately, and relevantly, aligning the system with learning commitments, supporting teachers in the teaching and learning process, and adapting approaches in taking education policies. Apart from that, the agenda for formulating Islamic education policies must focus on these five priorities while maintaining Islamic religious values as the primary foundation. This study shows the importance of reform policies that focus on the use of technology in Islamic education, improving teacher quality, and digital-based innovative learning. Therefore, Islamic education policies in Indonesia must be designed objectively to create a generation that produces graduates with cognitive intelligence, strong character and morals, spiritual strength, and intellectual qualities that can compete on the global stage.

**Keywords:** *21st-century learning, Islamic education policy, teacher quality, technology integration*

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## INTRODUCTION

A phenomenon that is often discussed in the world of education is policy. It aims to find ways to implement these policies optimally in educational practice (Thoma, 2023). The international policy agenda increasingly focuses on the 21st-century skills that tomorrow's workers will need in response to Industry 4.0 (Saleem et al., 2024) and 5.0 (Mohamed Hashim et al., 2024). To ensure the relevance of learning in line with current developments, education policy in Indonesia is essential in adapting to the 21st century (Yahya, 2020). In this context, Islamic education policies must better integrate holistic plans to deal with continuously changing curriculum changes (Amzat, 2022). Learning design should not only focus on theological aspects but must include 21st-century skills called the 4Cs (Sardone & Devlin-Scherer, 2010). Apart from

that, increasing learning priorities must be relevant to the curriculum by considering the quality of teachers using technology (Rohman et al., 2024). In this way, the established policies can prepare competent students, reduce the risk of being left behind, equip them with skills, and be adaptive and competitive globally (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021; Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016).

Education in Indonesia has a long history. After independence, the government inherited a dualistic education and teaching system (Latief et al., 2021). However, government policies seem to only focus on political modernization policies and are discriminatory towards Islamic education; this problem makes it difficult for Muslims to spread their religion through educational institutions (Yuniarti et al., 2022). Another fact is that Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone many changes from before independence to after reform (Kosim et al., 2023); this happens because the regulations and policies that have been set are constantly changing (Arafa, 2023). In addition, many education policies included in the National education system law do not fully support Islamic education (Huda, 2020). On the other hand, Islamic education in madrassas, such as private schools, is considered poor quality because of poor management, and its graduates are incapable of competing with graduates of equivalent educational units (Iskandar, 2019). Of course, this must be studied comprehensively to obtain a constructive solution immediately.

So far, no literature discusses the five learning priorities in the 21st century, which include making a commitment to master basic literacy and numeracy skills; measuring learning periodically, accurately, and relevant; adjusting the system to learning commitments; supporting teachers in the learning process; and changing the approach to taking education policy (Syaputri, 2022). Several articles that have discussed Islamic education policy in the context of learning show three main trends—*first*, conceptualizing 21st-century skills, such as digital literacy, critical thinking, and creativity, into the educational curriculum (Astuti et al., 2019; Bayley, 2022; Cristea et al., 2024; Geiger et al., 2015; Roshid & Haider, 2024). It ensures that students not only master the subject matter but are also prepared to face complex global challenges. *Second*, Islamic education policy strategies strengthen teachers' professional competence, especially in effectively adopting innovative and technology-based learning models and methods (Illah et al., 2022; Munajat & Achmad, 2019; Sulaiman et al., 2024; Yahya, 2020). *Third*, the integration of Islamic education policies can balance the preservation of traditional values and the development of modern educational skills (Fuadi & Suyatno, 2020; Moslimany et al., 2024; Muhyiddin et al., 2022; Sahin, 2018). This study reflects the urgent need to review and update relevant Islamic education policies. However, it has not reviewed the learning priorities that must be implemented to the demands of the 21st century.

Islamic Education Policy is a collection of public ideas about education that are used as a basis for making decisions in a legally neutral manner and adapting them to the moderate Islamic educational environment (Arfan et al., 2024). It is a collection of public ideas about education that are used as a basis for making decisions in a legally neutral manner and adapting them to the moderate Islamic educational environment (Mahrus, 2021). Some fundamental factors that significantly affect an Islamic education policy are religion, state ideology, community development, and technological development (Isri, 2021). On the other hand, Islamic education policymakers are constantly adapting to changes worldwide, including goal setting, technical assistance, funding, and ideas that benefit the prosperity of education (Neuman & Powers, 2022). An Islamic education policy framework is crucial for achieving these objectives, as it seeks to empower individuals by overcoming limitations, placing human beings at the heart of every initiative, and steering the transformation process (Mae & Chu-Chang, 2013). Through carefully crafted policies, the government should work toward establishing an inclusive education system that remains aligned with both schools and sufficiently supportive madrasas (Meehan et al., 2021).

21st century learning is a transition period. The curriculum designed by schools and madrasas encourages a learning approach from initially focusing on teachers to becoming student-centred (Kuswandi, 2022). In the global education discourse, 21st-century skills are often used to create

creative students, survive, and compete in a dynamic global future (Roshid & Haider, 2024). This term refers to 21st-century skills called the 4Cs: creative thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, and collaboration (Herlinawati et al., 2024). On the other hand, adequate Islamic education is the key to preparing students for technological developments in the 21st century. So that every student can graduate from school with the basic skills required by the needs of society (Bayley, 2022). Since 2015, Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) has conducted a study to find out how to make changes to "Improve the Education System" in seven countries (Indonesia, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Vietnam). The discussion proposed five actions that included "committing, measuring learning regularly; align systems, provide support, and adapt learning" to drive effective teaching system transformation (Pritchett et al., 2022). So this can improve students' ability to learn independently, build literacy, and master technology.

Considering the increasingly rapid development of technology, learning strategies in the 21st century are essential to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially quality education in Indonesia. Education must be adapted to evolving global challenges, such as the digital revolution, climate change, and social inequality (Novieastari et al., 2022). 21st-century learning emphasizes mastery of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills, essential in an increasingly digitally connected world. In addition, the application of technology in learning allows broader and more inclusive access to education, helping to bridge educational gaps in remote areas (Greenstein, 2012; Susanti et al., 2024). Achieving quality education requires cooperation among the government, schools, teachers, and the community to develop a skills-oriented curriculum that incorporates the values of the SDGs. This approach will enable Islamic education in Indonesia to contribute to sustainable development and prosperity, fostering a generation of individuals who demonstrate excellence and integrity on the global stage (Yuliani & Hartanto, 2020; Zuhairi et al., 2024).

This research focuses on identifying and describing how Islamic education policies in Indonesia can be further improved to suit the demands of the 21st century, including critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and creativity in the curriculum. The study focuses on RISE data, where five findings in this 21st-century learning priority include making a commitment to master basic literacy and numeracy skills; measuring learning periodically, accurately, and relevant; adjusting the system to learning commitments; supporting teachers in the learning process; and changing the approach to taking education policy. With a focus on developing modern learning skills, this study seeks to provide concrete recommendations for improving Islamic education policies in Indonesia. So, this research can make a comprehensive contribution to producing graduates who are religious, competitive, innovative, and ready to face global challenges in the future.

## **METHOD**

This study utilizes an online database, employing a library research method with a qualitative approach. The data for this research were gathered from various sources, including books, e-books, scholarly articles, conference proceedings, and websites (Hamzah, 2022). One primary and secondary data collection technique is collecting documentation from different research sources, such as scientific articles, books, websites, and proceedings. The primary data of this research is "RISE." The United Kingdom, Australia, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation financially support this multi-country research program. The procedures in this research include: First, the researcher searched to obtain data relevant to this research, which was obtained from three sources: "Google Scholar" found 17 articles, and "ScienceDirect" data found 19 articles.

We also used “RISE” data to find 3 articles. Then, we strengthened relevant sources through the “website,” which saw 13 articles. It is to support Islamic education policy theory and data and 21st-century learning priorities as discussion material. Second, researchers examine the sources obtained to convey the relevance and credibility of the data based on predetermined categories from the research period (2015-2024). Third, content analysis, we use the data analysis technique, namely content analysis. It is to identify specific themes, basic concepts, or theories in the text analyzed from various relevant literature sources. Fourth, Report the results. Researchers report data acquisition as findings discussed in this article. The data is then drawn to conclusions to combine all the data from reporting findings and discussions on this research topic. The following is an illustrative image of this research road map.

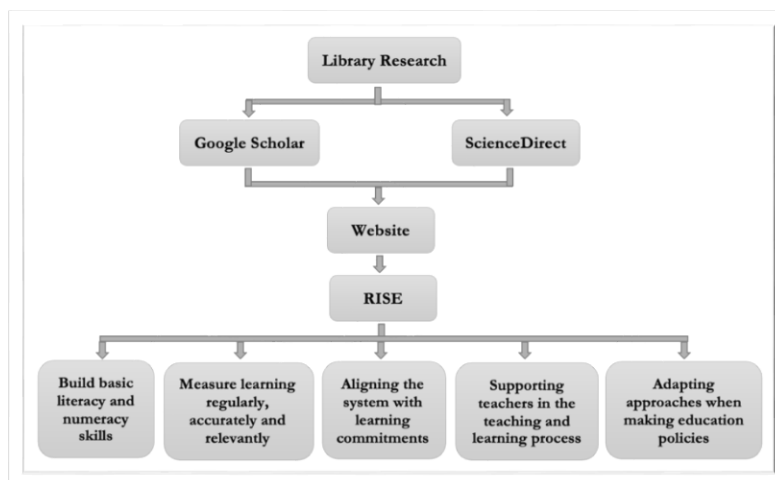


Figure 1. Research roadmap illustration

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

21st-century skills are a new category of skills suggested for society to adapt to the digital age. It aims to make it easier for various sectors, such as education, the economy, companies, and businesses, to develop more (Cristea et al., 2024). Research (RISE) (Syaputri, 2022) emphasized that there are five priorities to improve learning in the 21st century, namely:

*First*, Building a commitment to mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills. The education system needs to be committed to ensuring that every student who attends school has a mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills, not just being able to read, write, and count. The following is a statement of arguments from the RISE Indonesia Program.

*“...The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not limited to basic knowledge but an understanding of concepts and how to apply these concepts in daily life. By mastering basic skills, a student can more easily understand and master the skills taught at the next level of education (Bima, 2022). For more clarity, you can see the discussion through the YouTube account (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwAnkpiH84E>).”* Some of the website data sources that discuss the mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills can be presented by researchers in the table below.

Table 1: Basic literacy and numeracy skills

Author	Topic	Discussion Narrative
(Asyir, 2023)	Commitment to improving literacy	One way to see the low level of literacy is the data released from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) for the last 20 years showing that the literacy scores of Indonesian children are still low and have not increased significantly. The literacy ability of Indonesia students is still below the average literacy ability of students in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.
(Publik, 2023)	Commitment to basic learning must be a priority	In order for there to be a change in program planning, the design of basic learning must be a top priority. There needs to be regular teaching measurements. This is not to assess the quality of the school or student

		graduation, but to find out that the student has mastered the necessary abilities according to the level of education taken.
(Yunita, 2024)	Strategies for developing numeracy literacy skills	The Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) plays an important role in efforts to strengthen students' numeracy competencies, and is an indispensable basic foundation in literacy and numeracy. This is a competency assessment that is urgently needed by students to determine the minimum or basic level of ability that students must have in literacy and numeracy.
(Rosa, Zakiah & Candra, 2024)	Strengthening Literacy and Numeration to Increase the Nation's Competitiveness	Cooperation between teachers and families plays an important role in helping students read and write. This is important to grow the educational program "Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project" (P5) aims to encourage the application of project-based learning to achieve a new paradigm that instills values such as creativity, critical reasoning, diversity, independence, and morality.

Second, measure learning periodically, accurately, and relevantly. Indonesia has made much progress in education in recent decades. Since 2009, the state has allocated at least 20% of the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN) to organize national education. However, this achievement has not been accompanied by an improvement in the quality of education. Like other developing countries, Indonesia is currently experiencing a decline in the quality of learning, as RISE data confirms.

"...In the learning profile compiled by RISE research, it can be seen that students' numeracy skills in Indonesia have regressed. This Learning Profile was compiled using data from the Indonesia Family Life Survey (IFLS) in 2000, 2007, and 2014, which represented 83% of Indonesia's population. The low numeracy ability was also seen in adult respondents, who mostly could not do simple fraction problems. This means that increasing age does not guarantee an increase in numeracy ability, which decreases." The following results show the percentage decrease in numeracy ability in the IFLS test.

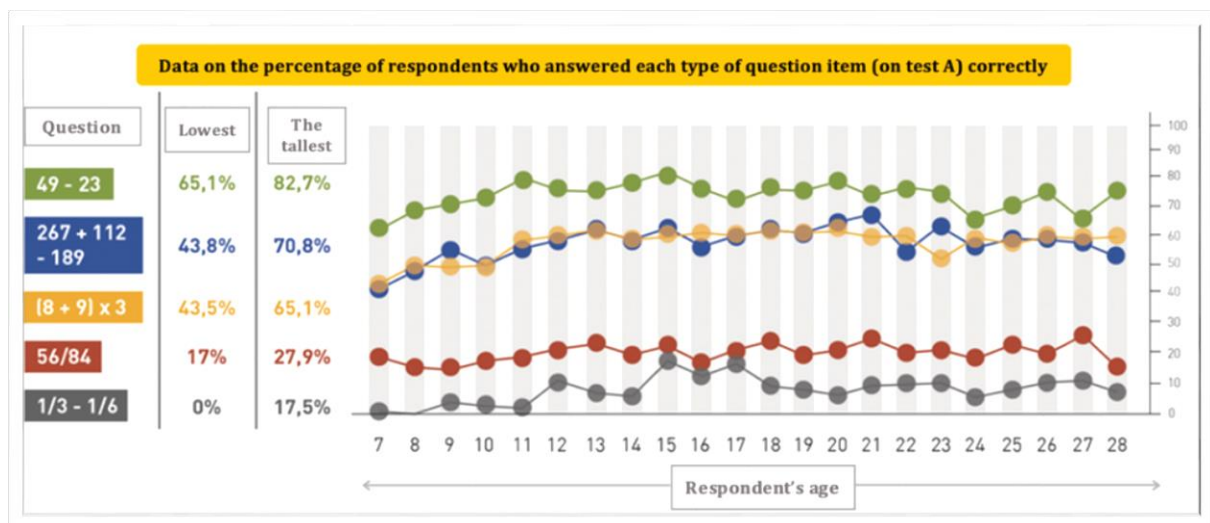


Figure 2: Acquisition of IFLS test data (2000-2014). Sumber: (rise.smeru.or.id)

This reality shows that the education challenges in Indonesia today are different from a few decades ago. After successfully ensuring that most children in Indonesia can attend school, the government needs to pay more attention to the next stage, namely the implementation of quality education. The government must ensure that children who go to school acquire knowledge and master skills that are appropriate to the level of education they are taking. The following is the response to the data from the website about the crisis of declining learning, as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Learning decline crisis

Author	Topic	Discussion Narrative
(Napitupulu, 2020)	Comprehensive Action is Needed to Overcome the Learning Crisis	Learning in Indonesia is experiencing a crisis. This can be seen from the low level of education of Indonesia students even though they have been in school for longer. The amount of time spent studying in school is not in line with the mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills.
(Purbowati, 2023)	5 Ways to Know Students' Understanding of Subject Matter	Teachers can use a variety of approaches to evaluate students' understanding of the subject matter. The following are some approaches that can be applied in the classroom to observe students' understanding in learning activities including: learning journals; bridging; re-explaining; self assessment; summarizing the reading.

*Third*, aligning the system with learning commitments. The education system's goals can only be achieved if all elements align and work towards the same goals or commitments. The Alignment of elements in the education system must occur at all levels, from policies at the centre regional to the grade level, as RISE data shows.

*"... Alignment in a good education system can increase effective accountability. For example, the recruitment of teachers in Indonesia still seems to overlap. Improving teachers' quality in Indonesia is the most important task if the process is well structured. So far, there has been no role for politicians to encourage the improvement of the quality of teacher conservation that prioritizes the quality of education."* The following is an overview of the RISE framework for improving teacher recruitment.

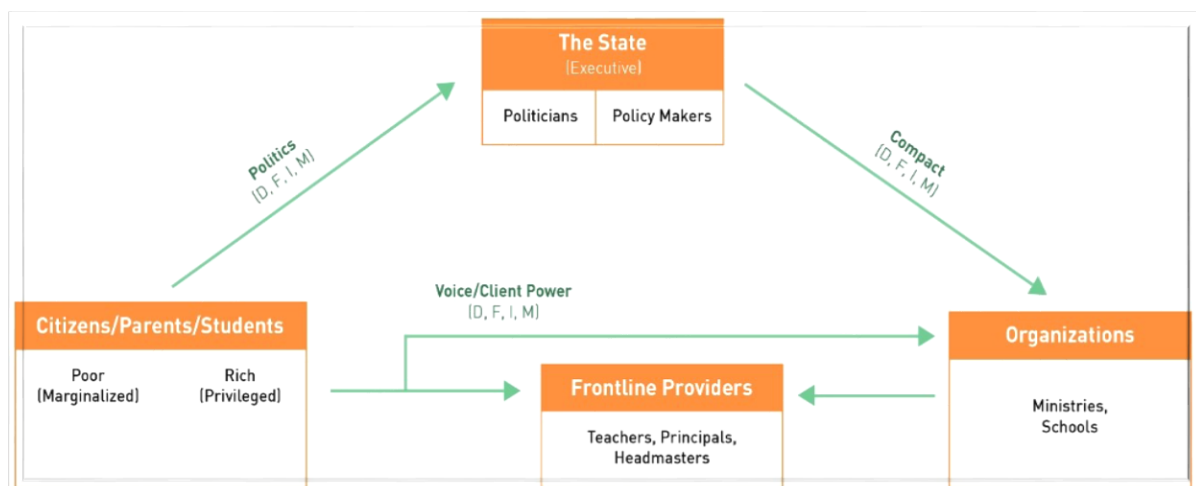


Figure 3: Framework for improving the quality of teacher recruitment. Sumber: (smeru.or.id)

Then below are some of the responses to the website data regarding system adjustments for a consistent learning focus.

Table 3: A commitment system for effective learning

Author	Topic	Discussion Narrative
(Hwa et al., 2020)	Aligning Levels of Instruction with Goals and the Needs of Students (ALIGNS): Varied Approaches, Common Principles	It is important for education policymakers to identify in the progress of learning design, this includes: defining learning objectives that are clear and consistent with ability levels; combine learning in accordance with the targeted learning plan; provide effective and coherent support to teachers; Find ways to apply previous principles contextually.
(Piper, 2022)	Translating commitment to foundational learning into action in the classroom	In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, about 70% of children in low- and middle-income countries have difficulty reading and comprehending simple texts. Many education leaders are unaware of this crisis to solve the problem. However, the



		Remediation program is a solution and method to answer teachers' problems in dealing with students who have difficulties in the classroom to catch up.
(Jenna, 2024)	A Comprehensive Guide to 21st Century Skills	Teachers can integrate 21st century skills by creating learning experiences that encourage the 4Cs. Here, students are asked to collaborate on group projects in solving real-world problems, using technology to dig up information, and undertaking service-learning projects to demonstrate a sense of social responsibility and empathy.

*Fourth*, supporting teachers in the teaching and learning process. To teach well, teachers need to get adequate provisions and assistance. This support is provided since prospective teachers start their education in teacher training programs and during teacher professional education (pre-service). This support must be provided continuously to produce and retain qualified teachers, as RISE data confirms that.

*"...Graduates of the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program believe that the knowledge they have acquired is too theoretical and does not help them deal with classroom teaching problems. In addition, this program does not equip prospective teachers with literacy and numeracy knowledge. However, the basis of the problem of low academic outcomes for Indonesian students for many years is low literacy and basic numeracy skills, which is a big problem if there is no ideal solution." The following are the participants' responses after participating in the PPG program."*

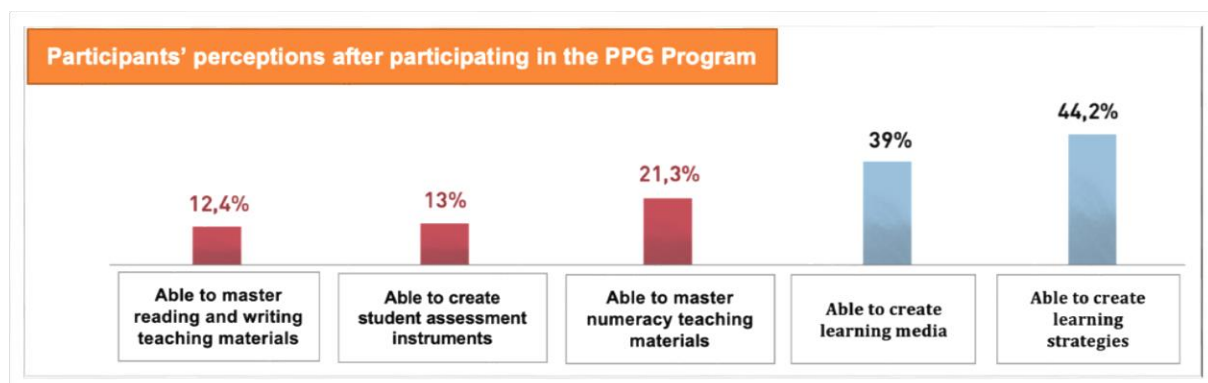


Figure 4: Development of PPG program evaluation results for the year (2018)

Therefore, the PPG program must concentrate more on equipping prospective teachers with practical teaching skills, especially in teaching in the 21st century. Teachers do not just provide lessons to students but can also receive support appropriate to their competence level. In addition, the response data from the website regarding teacher support in the teaching and learning process is as follows.

Table 4: Teacher support in improving learning

Author	Topic	Discussion Narrative
(Santoso, 2022)	How important is the quality of teachers in teaching?	The fact is, many students do not care about what they do during learning as a result, student exam results are often below the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). To deal with these problems, teachers' actions include: continuing higher education; participating in training that improves the quality of teachers; participate in active research; and build a movement to love reading.
(Purnama, 2023)	The role of teachers in creating a supportive learning environment	Teachers must play a variety of roles to ensure that students have a supportive learning environment, so that they can learn well, feel comfortable, and develop fully. Some of these roles include, being an educator/supervisor, facilitator, motivator, mediator, and evaluator.

*Fifth*, adapting approaches in taking education policies. The consequence of the decentralization of education is that education problems differ in each district or city. In 2023, Indonesia had 514 districts and cities, so solutions to education problems must be adjusted to the issues faced by each region, as RISE data underlines.

*"...Regarding Islamic education policy innovations in districts/cities, policy adaptations to overcome learning crises must be adjusted to their sociocultural circumstances. However, many local governments do not have enough ability to make new policy innovations in their areas. Local governments need help changing policies to suit the local situation. Seeing this situation, the central government must determine which regions need additional assistance. On the other hand, local governments can collaborate with the private sector and other organizations to develop and implement educational innovations by the region's capabilities."* Then below are some of the website data responses about strategies to formulate Islamic education policy actions.

Table 5: Adjusting Islamic education policy-making strategies

Author	Topic	Discussion Narrative
(Hannahan, 2020)	Adapting approaches to deliver quality education in response to COVID-19	The COVID-19 pandemic has made the world adapt to new unpredictable circumstances. All sectors of government, business, society, education, and other activities are affected by this phenomenon. One of the Universal Education Centers (CUE), has offered educational programs in various countries to overcome these problems. In which, leaders of various sectors are needed to work together in education programs with a multi-stakeholder approach.
(Amling, 2024)	Here's how you can adapt to the evolving education policies and reforms	Education policies are constantly changing, which can be a challenge for teachers to provide the best learning experience for students. However, there are opportunities for teachers to develop professionally and improve students' academics, including: embracing technology in learning; creating discussion collaboration with colleagues; Reflecting on Teaching Practice.

## Discussion

Due to technological advancements and globalization, the world is currently experiencing very rapid development. To optimize learning in the 21st century, the government must design Islamic education policy in schools and madrasahs. First, Building a commitment to mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills for students is the foundation for creating a generation that can compete in the future (Maki, 2023; Syaputri, 2022). Literacy refers to a person's ability to read, write, and understand written texts (Dorn & Jones, 2023). Meanwhile, numeracy refers to an individual's ability to understand, use, and manage numbers and help them think critically, solve problems, and make decisions based on accurate information (Goos et al., 2020). In the context of literacy, six basic skills must be mastered: numeracy, digital, Financial, reading and writing, science, and culture and citizenship (Geiger et al., 2015). Increasing school competitiveness through literacy activities requires serious attention from all parties; this also involves the community to attract their attention (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021). On the other hand, when beginning to learn, it is possible to design a learning system that can be adapted to the local literacy culture. Teachers must be creative and innovative in managing learning related to local culture to increase students' enthusiasm for literacy based on local wisdom and to strengthen public trust (Amalia et al., 2022).

With a strong commitment from all parties, including preparing an Islamic education policy that ensures that educational programs can improve the quality of education in schools and madrasahs, it is easier for teachers to obtain in-depth education on basic literacy and numeracy skills (Main, 2020). The *first* step for educators is to design a Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM). It is an assessment of the essential competencies required by students. This activity aims to increase students' knowledge, help them solve problems using reasoning, and develop student participation in society (Ernawati et al., 2022). On the other hand, teachers need to conduct learning evaluations,



which aim to inform progress, provide direction, and assess student effectiveness. This assessment system's design ensures that all teaching and learning activities have been implemented effectively (Shepard, 2019). In addition, teachers must be able to create the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) so that students can learn character strengthening and learning from the surrounding environment (Chamisijatin et al., 2023; Rediyono, 2024). Through agreed policies, this can ensure that students are prepared to achieve academic success and equipped with the necessary skills to contribute to society (Chung, 2019).

*Second*, measuring learning on a regular, accurate, and relevant basis for students is a critical element in ensuring the effectiveness of the educational process. According to (Kosim et al., 2023; and Syaputri, 2022), an excellent Islamic education policy is a policy that considers capabilities in the field so that its implementation is gradually supported and thinks the workforce and the availability of funds can be appropriately optimized. Opinion (Richlin, 2023). One of the biggest challenges for teachers when designing assessments in the learning process is creating instruments that provide relevant and helpful information about students' progress. The goal is to collect data regularly that shows students' progress over time. In this way, teachers can identify student needs and adjust the teaching strategies that have been implemented. On the other hand, (Cofré et al., 2019) argue that teachers who make accurate measurements ensure that the results obtained reflect students' abilities and understanding effectively so that the necessary interventions can be carried out on target. According to (Rusilowati and Wahyudi, 2020), relevance in measurement is essential to ensure that what is assessed is in line with the competencies needed in real life and by the demands of the curriculum.

Then, teachers can help students reach their maximum potential in 21st-century learning by facilitating their abilities through differentiation and collaboration in teaching and learning. As a result, every student can feel welcomed, valued, and inspired to learn and develop optimally (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). In this context, the relevant form of measurement when assessing students is memorizing information and applying that knowledge in appropriate contexts (Harris et al., 2019). In addition, teachers' activities in measuring learning correctly help students, educators, and schools improve the quality of education and ensure the achievement of expected educational goals (Blazar & Pollard, 2023). To ensure that students understand the material well applied in the classroom, teachers can do various things, such as the existence of a "learning journal, bridging; re-explaining, self-assessment, Summarizing the reading" (Purbowati, 2023). As such, the measurement results can encourage students' overall development, help them find weaknesses, and encourage them to continue learning and growing.

*Third*, aligning the system with the students' commitment to learning is essential to ensure that every student receives a quality education according to their needs (Syaputri, 2022). According to (Hwa et al., 2020) they are affirming that Islamic education policymakers need to identify the progress of learning design. It includes defining learning objectives that are clear and consistent with the level of ability, combining learning with the targeted learning plan, providing practical and coherent support to teachers, and finding ways to apply previous principles contextually. In this context, (Amzat, 2022) said that when the Islamic education policy system, starting from the curriculum, objectives, methods, funding, media, and teaching evaluation, can be aligned with the learning commitment, all educational institution elements can achieve the goals they want to achieve. Opinion (Gueldner, Barbara A., 2020). This overall plan ensures that each student gets the attention they deserve for their potential and helps create an environment that supports their intellectual, spiritual, moral, and emotional development. In line with (Sulaiman et al., 2024), a consistent learning system, teachers can focus more on applying effective and relevant methods, and schools can be more stable in improving the educational process.

In addition, this alignment also creates clarity and transparency in realizing responsibilities and expectations for all parties involved, including students, teachers, and parents (Setiadi et al., 2024). A visible phenomenon is that some education leaders need to be made aware of the crisis

of commitment to learning for students. However, the opinion (Piper, 2022) contributes to providing programs such as "Remediation" to improve student learning outcomes. This program aims to create learning approaches suitable for students so that teachers can encourage students to be innovative, creative, and independent in learning. On the other hand (Jenna, 2024), Given the integration of 21st-century skills, teachers must create learning experiences that encourage the 4Cs. Students are asked to work together on group projects, solve real-world problems, use technology to dig up information, show a sense of social responsibility, and understand empathy. Therefore, (Isri, 2021). This is an essential note for stakeholders in formulating an IEP that considers commitments consistently to create an effective learning direction. So that teachers can form students who are ready to face future challenges, and the policies formulated are the main foundation for achieving comprehensive and sustainable success.

*Fourth*, supporting teachers in the teaching and learning process in schools and madrasas is very important to ensure the quality of education provided to students to adjust to the 21st-century learning plan (Syaputri, 2022). To ensure that education is tailored to Islamic values and student needs, the formulation of Islamic education policy must support teachers in the learning process to have a significant impact. This support can be in the form of training that focuses on teaching based on Islamic teachings, providing teaching materials by the Islamic curriculum, and adequate facilities for teaching and learning activities (Humam et al., 2024). In addition, Indonesia's Islamic education policy framework for improving human resources and increasing the country's competitiveness must focus on five areas: access to education, quality of education, synergy between governments, industry, and higher education, industrial linkages, and incentive systems (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021). When teachers receive strong support from the government, teachers can deliver material effectively according to the structure of the learning program so that students can better understand and appreciate the consistency of the material taught (Nilson, 2016). This policy support also helps to create a good learning environment where teachers feel valued and motivated to improve teaching continuously.

In schools, teachers are the spearhead who have essential duties as guides, encouragers, motivators, mediators, and evaluate student learning outcomes (Purnama, 2023). However, one of the problems often faced by teachers in schools is the low results of students' exams, where their scores are often below the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). To overcome this problem, teachers can take several steps: continuing education to a higher level, participating in training to improve the quality of teaching, participating in active research, and encouraging movements to increase interest in reading (Santoso, 2022). Through government support and appropriate training, teachers can continue to improve their skills, use innovative teaching methods, and adapt to achieve competitive academic success according to the demands of the times. In addition, schools also need to provide supporting facilities and infrastructure, such as relevant learning materials and technology that support the teaching and learning process (Ally et al., 2014). This strategy can create a positive learning environment; teachers will feel valued so that these needs can help them overcome the daily challenges they face in the classroom.

*Fifth*, adapting the approach to taking the Islamic education policy is essential to building an education system that is responsive, inclusive, and relevant to the needs of students in various contexts (Syaputri, 2022). This policy serves as a guideline for action and regulates the actions of organizations, schools, and communities to achieve goals. In reality, Islamic education policies in Indonesia are constantly changing, making it difficult for teachers to provide the best education for students. However, there are also opportunities for teachers to create learning innovations, such as using technology, collaborating with colleagues, choosing methods and models, and improving the overall student learning experience (Amling, 2024). On the other hand, to ensure that the education provided is not only relevant to the times, the role of the government must be objective in taking Islamic education policy, both in schools and madrasas. Adaptive education policies allow school institutions to adapt according to the design of 21st-century learning programs

(Asy'arie et al., 2024). Creating a curriculum that teaches academic knowledge and strengthens the student's intellectual, moral, and spiritual support for their overall development is essential.

Each student has a different background, ability, and learning style, requiring a flexible education policy formulation to tailor the curriculum to suit students' needs. In addition, curriculum design must be tailored to students' future, invest in teachers' professional training, and sustainably create teach (As'ad, 2021). In this context, there is a need for policies that encourage cooperation through the intervention of academics and various other sectors; this aims to help students be ready to adapt to the world of work. The Center for Universal Education (CUE) has offered educational programs in various countries to address this issue. In the program, leaders from multiple education sectors are expected to be able to work together with a multi-stakeholder approach (Hannahan, 2020). It aims to create a holistic and responsive Islamic education system that meets the community's needs by involving various parties, including the government, educational institutions, teachers, parents, and the community (Nudin, 2020). Through this collaboration, it is hoped that the quality of education can be improved with a relevant curriculum to achieve all the expected targets.

## CONCLUSION

Current Islamic education must instil strong religious values amid rapid global change; this aims to prepare the younger generation who face the challenges of the times. In this context, Islamic education policies must be formulated by considering the demands of 21st-century learning, such as instilling creativity, critical thinking skills, and digital literacy and increasing teachers' ability to adapt to these changes. As discussed above, learning priorities in the 21st century are based on RISE data. Islamic education policy in Indonesia must focus on five main points, which include building a commitment to mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills, measuring learning periodically, accurately, and relevantly, aligning the system with learning commitments, supporting teachers in the teaching and learning process, and adapting approaches in taking education policies. Apart from that, Islamic education policymakers must also foster a broad educational environment where students can develop spiritual, intellectual, creative, innovative, and practical skills in a balanced manner. It is done to ensure students not only excel academically but also have moral integrity and the ability to adapt to an increasingly competitive work environment. Therefore, the policies implemented must have the ability to integrate religious education with the demands of modernity. So, determining educational policies can produce graduates with cognitive and moral intelligence, spiritual strength, and solid intellectual qualities and can compete internationally. Next, we provide suggestions for future research agendas in the context of implementing Research and Development (R&D). It can support teachers in using technology as a learning medium, produce product designs to make learning innovations using digital media, and educate students to use technology well.

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