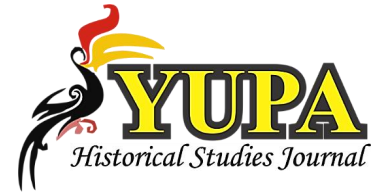


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## The Issue of Islamic Higher Education Development in Indonesia from 1945 to Present

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**Abstract** This research aims to analyze the issues surrounding the development of Islamic Higher Education through the application of literature review methodology. Literature review methodology involves collecting and analyzing relevant literature and references to understand the associated issues within the context of Islamic higher education institutions. The study adopts a qualitative approach by analyzing various literatures, journals, books, and related theoretical sources. The data obtained are descriptively analyzed to identify patterns and trends in the dynamics of Islamic higher education institutions. The findings reveal that these institutions face complex dynamics in addressing contemporary challenges. Furthermore, this abstract identifies challenges encountered by Islamic Higher Education institutions, such as competition with non-Islamic educational institutions, enhancing the quality of human resources, funding, and accreditation issues. These challenges require innovation and appropriate strategies to ensure the sustainability and success of Islamic Higher Education institutions. In conclusion, this abstract highlight the dynamics occurring within Islamic Higher Education institutions.

**Keywords:** Educational Development, Islamic Thought, Islamic Higher Education

**Abstrak** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tentang problematika Perkembangan Perguruan Tinggi Islam melalui penerapan metode studi pustaka. Metode studi pustaka adalah pendekatan penelitian yang mengumpulkan dan menganalisis literatur dan referensi yang relevan untuk memahami isu-isu terkait dalam konteks lembaga pendidikan tinggi Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan melakukan analisis terhadap berbagai literatur, jurnal, buku, dan sumber-sumber teoritis terkait. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis secara deskriptif untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola dan tren dalam dinamika lembaga perguruan tinggi Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lembaga perguruan tinggi Islam menghadapi dinamika yang kompleks dalam menghadapi tantangan kontemporer. Selain itu, abstrak ini mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi oleh lembaga Perguruan Tinggi Islam, seperti persaingan dengan institusi pendidikan non-Islam, peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia, pendanaan, dan masalah akreditasi. Tantangan ini memerlukan inovasi dan strategi yang tepat untuk memastikan kelangsungan dan keberhasilan lembaga Perguruan Tinggi Islam. Dalam kesimpulan, abstrak ini menyoroti dinamika yang terjadi dalam lembaga Perguruan Tinggi Islam.

**Kata kunci:** Pengembangan Pendidikan, Pemikiran Islam, Perguruan Tinggi Islam



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## INTRODUCTION

The ongoing wave of globalization sweeping across the globe has brought about significant changes to societal life. Globalization can be defined as the dissemination of new elements, particularly concerning information on a global scale through print and electronic media. Globalization, with its two sides of the coin (positive and negative), also serves as a catalyst for the unstoppable infiltration of cultures. Cultures now rapidly and easily exchange places and influence each other, including the liberal Western lifestyle infiltrating the more orderly and religiously preserved Eastern culture. The negative impact of globalization, as observed sadly, is a shift towards a moral and ethical crisis, giving rise to a myriad of complex issues (Hildigaris, 2019).

Islamic educational institutions serve as platforms for instilling Islamic values in students and basing all activities on Islamic perspectives and values. However, despite being Islamic in nature, these institutions must also pay attention to general knowledge to avoid lagging behind mainstream educational institutions. Therefore, the ideal Islamic educational institution is one that can integrate both general and Islamic knowledge and adapt to the needs of educational stakeholders (Arifuddin & Karim, 2021).

Currently, Islamic education finds itself in a position of historical determinism and realism, implying that on one hand, Muslims take pride in their historical romance, having once boasted great thinkers and scientists who made significant contributions to civilization and worldly knowledge, acting as transmitters of Greek knowledge. Yet, on the other hand, they face the stark reality that Islamic education is powerless when confronted with the realities of modern industrial and technological society (Saleh, Husni, Ruswandi, & Erihadiana, 2021).

The dichotomy between general knowledge and religious knowledge has led to the stagnation and regression of Islamic civilization, as general knowledge is perceived as something outside of Islam and originating from non-Islamic sources. This is reflected in the current educational practices and scholarly activities in the country, with various negative impacts felt by society. Such circumstances can trigger various challenges in Islamic educational institutions, including societal skepticism towards these institutions (PS, 2019).

Throughout its history, Islamic higher education in Indonesia has undergone various phases of development marked by uniqueness and dynamics. As centers of Islamic knowledge and values, these institutions have been pivotal in shaping intellectuality and guiding younger generations in embracing religious and national values. However, behind the glittering achievements lie issues that need to be deeply addressed to ensure the sustainability and progress of these higher education institutions. The challenges in providing adequate facilities and infrastructure, playing a more crucial role in meeting diverse societal needs, and actively

engaging in building an inclusive society are critical issues that need to be resolved (Amalia, 2020).

As time progresses, the role of Islamic higher education becomes increasingly apparent as the vanguard in upholding the sustainability of Islamic values while keeping pace with the advancements in science and technology. Therefore, a profound understanding of the complexity of these issues is key to finding solutions that are not only academically effective but also consistently reflect human wisdom in addressing the dynamics of the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

Islamic higher education, deeply ingrained in the national education history of Indonesia, has been an inseparable palette in the canvas of this nation's development. Since the early days of independence, Islamic higher education has played an active role in accompanying Indonesia's journey. The emergence of Islamic higher education in the country is the fruit of the collective spirit of Muslims, propelling them towards several noble objectives. Firstly, as a platform to delve into and develop Islamic religious sciences systematically and purposefully. Secondly, as a means to expand the scope of Islamic propagation. Thirdly, as a platform to nurture scholars capable of contributing across various fields. Thus, Islamic higher education is not merely an institution of higher learning but also a cultural and spiritual beacon that leaves a valuable imprint on the journey of Indonesia's civilization (A. Yahya, 2017).

Higher education plays a central role in shaping the intellectuality and character of the younger generation, and this holds true for Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia. Over time, we witness how the dynamics of these institutions pose profound challenges. The emerging constraints are not only academic but also encompass social, cultural, and institutional aspects. In the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, various complex issues arise, demanding deep understanding and solutions that are not only pragmatic but also considerate of humanitarian values. This article will delve deeper into these issues, with the hope of summarizing diverse perspectives involving humanitarian aspects in the context of the development of Islamic Higher Education in the country (Akrom & Hulaimi, 2017).

This research aims to delve deeper into various aspects that pose obstacles and opportunities in the development of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia. With a humanistic approach, we can embrace the cultural diversity and uniqueness of each higher education institution, while understanding the real challenges they face. This profound understanding is expected to serve as a foundation for improvement and innovation, leading to better efforts in supporting sustainable and meaningful growth of Islamic higher education for society.

## **METHOD**

A study involving the dynamics of Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia, both before and after independence, constitutes literature review research. This research method is conducted by meticulously tracing various sources such as reference books, scholarly journals, archives, historical documents, and relevant writings related to the research title. The approach used in this research is a historical approach, focusing primarily on understanding the development of Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. In conducting qualitative research methods, this study emphasizes the collection of data naturally through the aforementioned sources. The data analysis process is carried out critically to produce data presentations that align with documented realities. This approach enables researchers to comprehend the historical context and evolution of Islamic higher education institutions, as well as their implications and impacts on society and the education system in Indonesia (Daliman, 2012; Kuntowijoyo, 2021).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Early Efforts for Islamic Higher Education (1930s to 1945)**

History records Islam's achievements in spreading its teachings in the Indonesian archipelago peacefully, without political pressure or warfare. This occurred when Islam entered the Nusantara islands, which at the time were inhabited by communities with strong religious beliefs such as Hinduism and Buddhism. The significance of this portrayal lies in Islam's global character that can be accepted in various spatial and temporal contexts. However, as Islam permeated various regions, its global character seemed to dim and merge with local forces. There was a tendency for Islam to adapt to existing local interests. Before Indonesia's independence, Muslims in the Nusantara had lived lives heavily influenced by Islamic teachings, encompassing cultural aspects and traditions (Hoddin, 2020).

However, difficult conditions occurred during the Dutch and Japanese colonial periods before Indonesia's independence. Muslims faced various forms of discrimination, including in religion, race, politics, education, and economy. The Dutch colonial government imposed various regulations limiting the movement of Muslims, such as the Priesterrden (1882), Teacher Ordinance (1905 and 1925), and Wild School Ordinance (1932). The desire for Islamic higher education existed since the colonial era. M. Natsir noted that Dr. Satiman and Mahmud Yunus had aspirations to establish Islamic universities. Although this idea was only in the form of an idea in the 1930s, the spirit to establish Islamic universities had emerged. Muhammadiyah also had a long-standing intention to establish Muhammadiyah University, but this plan was halted due to World War II. The emergence of the Islamic High School in Padang in 1940, which was

later closed by the Japanese government in 1942, indicates early efforts to create Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia (Rofi, 2017).

At the dawn of independence, the establishment of Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTAI) was heavily influenced by the spirit of resistance against Dutch colonialism. The colonial government established several colleges in Indonesia, but with limited access. PTAI became an alternative for young Muslims to obtain higher education while accommodating religious sentiments and anti-colonial spirit.

The endeavor to establish Islamic Colleges (PTIs) continued to gain momentum among Muslims, with Masyumi (Indonesian Muslim Council) leading the way as a coalition of Islamic organizations spearheading this initiative. In April 1945, a meeting in Jakarta was attended by various Islamic organization figures who were members of Masyumi, marking the initial step towards establishing PTIs. Islamic figures from various organizations, such as PBNU represented by KH. Abdul Wahab, KH. Bisri Syamsuri, KH. Wahid Hasyim, KH. Masykur, and Zainal Arifin, PB Muhammadiyah represented by Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, KH. Mas Mansur, KH. Hasyim, KH. Farid Ma'ruf, KH. Mu'thi, KH. M. Yunus Anis, and Kerto Sudarmo, as well as representations from other organizations, gathered to formulate steps towards the establishment of PTI (Akbar, Ashar, Prabu, & Ondeng, 2022).

During this meeting, the decision was made to form a planning committee for the Islamic High School (STI) led by Moh. Hatta, with M. Natsir as the secretary. With the assistance of the Japanese Government, STI was inaugurated on the 27th of Rajab 1364 H or July 8, 1945, in Jakarta, with the inauguration held at the Gondangdia Central Immigration Office building. Later, the journey of STI underwent a significant transformation into the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII). This transformation not only reflected the development of Islamic higher education institutions but also marked efforts to advance the world of Islamic education in Indonesia. On March 22, 1948, STI was converted into UII in Yogyakarta, and the university began to take shape with four faculties, namely the Faculty of Religion, Law, Economics, and Education (Pulungan & Dalimunthe, 2023).

The importance of UII's role in the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia became increasingly apparent. Although UII was not managed by the government and had private, non-public status, its contribution was immense. Over time, after the Faculty of Religion at UII was transformed into State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTAIN) by the Government, UII continued to exist with faculties of Law and Economics. Despite the closure of the education faculty due to a shortage of lecturers, UII continued to operate and make valuable contributions to the development of Islamic education in Indonesia.

### **Development of PTAI, PTTKIN, STAIN and IAIN (1945 to 1997)**

The development of State Islamic Colleges (PTAIs), State Islamic Institutes (PTKINs), State Islamic Institutes for Islamic Studies (STAINs), and State Islamic Institutes (IAINs) (1945 to 1997) cannot be separated from the significant role played by the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII). The emergence of State Islamic Colleges (PTAINs) marks a crucial step in advancing Islamic higher education in Indonesia, with its early history closely linked to UII. On August 12, 1950, PTAIN was established when the religious faculty previously under the management of UII was separated and taken over by the government. This move was aimed at strengthening higher education institutions, and on September 26, 1951, a new college named PTAIN was officially inaugurated under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. PTAIN was not an independent entity but rather a continuation of UII's religious faculty, signifying the dynamic development of Islamic higher education institutions in line with the evolution of society and the needs of Muslims (Indra, 2016).

Established in Yogyakarta in 1951, PTAIN originated from UII's religious faculty, which, in turn, left UII with only its law, economics, and pedagogical (education) faculties. Over time, PTAIN became an integral part of the journey of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Alongside PTAIN, the Academy of Islamic Studies (ADIA) emerged as a joint venture between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Teaching, and Culture. Founded in Jakarta in 1957 in response to the need for advanced religious education teachers and religious school teachers and judges, ADIA served as a training school for officials serving in the government (Ministry of Religious Affairs) and in teaching religion in various schools, both general and vocational.

The subsequent development witnessed the birth of the State Islamic Institute (IAIN), which did not emerge out of thin air but had a strong background. In May 1960, the Ministry of Religious Affairs merged PTAIN and ADIA into IAIN or Al-Jami'atul al-Islamiyah al-Hukumiyah. This step, taken on August 24, 1960, in Yogyakarta, marked a significant milestone in the development of State Islamic Religious Institutes (PTKINs) in Indonesia. With the establishment of IAIN, the Indonesian Muslim community hoped to advance Islamic teachings in the country. IAIN became a center for Islamic studies and development, carrying social and academic expectations to provide Islamic responses and solutions to contemporary challenges and to influence the Islamic character of the Muslim community as a whole. These social and academic expectations formed the basis for IAIN's significant role in the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

State Islamic Institutes (STAIN) play a crucial role as Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia, emerging after the establishment of IAIN. As a new entity, STAIN did not emerge in isolation but rather evolved in conjunction with the development of IAIN. Both

institutions are interrelated and mutually contribute to the advancement of Islamic education for the community.

Government efforts, particularly by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, persist in enhancing the quality of IAIN in Indonesia. Presidential Decree No. 11 of 1997 and Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 285 of 1997 served as the foundation for transformation, where 38 branch faculties of IAIN in various regions were reclassified as State Islamic Institutes (STAIN). This step provided each STAIN with the autonomy to develop independently, no longer under the control of IAIN. Some STAINs even succeeded in achieving higher status, such as STAIN Serang, which transformed into IAIN, and some became State Islamic Universities (UIN), like STAIN Malang transforming into UIN Malang. Although these changes raised questions about their status within the Indonesian education system, they can be considered positive developments for STAINs (Alam, 2020).

Previously, in the context of State Islamic Religious Institutes (PTKIN) in Indonesia, there were already private universities, such as the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII), that had long contributed to the education landscape in the country. The emergence of State Islamic Universities (UIN) was not uncommon, with UII serving as a source of inspiration for the birth of UIN. Nevertheless, UIN did not arise solely due to these factors but also due to other underlying factors. UII set an example for the development of Islamic universities in Indonesia and paved the way for the establishment of UIN.

### **Transformation into UIN and Recent Developments (2002 to Present)**

Subsequent developments witnessed the transformation of IAIN and STAIN into UIN, which cannot be separated from the evolution of time and scholarly demands. The scholarly spirit in religious education continues to respond to global developments, making religious education more than just about morality, tolerance, and communalism. These changes are based on several factors, such as the suboptimal role of IAIN in the academic world, curricula that have not kept pace with developments in science and technology and the complex changes in society, and to provide opportunities for broader restructuring of higher education (Adibah, 2021).

This transformation simultaneously presents challenges and opportunities for UIN graduates to access a wider job market. With the presence of general faculties alongside religious faculties, UIN graduates can work in various sectors such as banking, industrial and service companies, and other sectors. This also aims to accommodate graduates of Madrasah Aliyah that have evolved into religious-themed High Schools (SMA). The transformation of IAIN and STAIN into UIN is also a step towards enhancing the dignity of Islamic Higher Education under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, thus placing it on par with public universities under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education. This is done to address the marginal position of

Islamic higher education institutions, which are often overlooked compared to public universities.

Moreover, this change is deemed necessary to synchronize the perspectives of students and lecturers with contemporary needs. Many Islamic scholars at IAIN are sometimes limited in understanding current contemporary issues. Therefore, this change is expected to bridge that gap and make a greater contribution to addressing the challenges of modernization and globalization (Husain & Wahyun, 2023).

Through this transformation, IAIN and STAIN are expected to continue to evolve as Islamic higher education institutions that not only uphold moral and religious aspects but also respond to the needs of the times with a high scholarly spirit. This development is in line with the religious spirit and scholarly ethos taught in every religion. Thus, this change becomes part of the evolution of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, which continues to adapt to the developments of the times.

The journey of transformation of State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) in Indonesia has been ongoing since the establishment of the Islamic Higher School (STI) in July 1945 until the change of status to State Islamic University (UIN) in 2002. Although STI and the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII) were not state institutions, their initial roles were significant in the history of PTKIN. PTKIN in Indonesia has a unique journey with its own peculiarities, both institutionally and intellectually. Political factors and the aspirations of the Indonesian Muslim community have played an integral part in the evolution of PTKIN (Maghfuri, 2020).

In terms of age, PTKIN in Indonesia has been present for 71 years since the establishment of STI in 1945. Considering the founding of PTAIN in 1951, its age reached 65 years in 2016. From these two perspectives, PTKIN has long been a part of Indonesian educational history. The number of PTKIN continues to grow in various provinces and cities in Indonesia, with 25 IAIN, 19 STAIN, and 11 UIN as of December 2015. The process of PTKIN transformation has occurred over 71 years since the formation of STI. The number of IAIN, which was initially 14 in 1960, increased to 25 by 2015. STAIN, which numbered 33 in 1973, decreased to 19 by 2015. Meanwhile, UIN, which first appeared in 2002 with the transformation of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, had reached 11 institutions by 2015 (Fauzi, 2016).

Politics played a crucial role in the emergence of STI, especially in the politically unstable situation in Indonesia in 1945. Institutionally, STI took the form of a "Higher School" with a scholarly focus on Islamic studies. However, in 1948, STI transformed into UII, characterized as a "university." This transformation reflected the desire of the Muslim community at that time to have an integrated Islamic higher education institution that combined religious and secular knowledge. The existence of UII served as tangible evidence of



knowledge integration by opening faculties such as Islamic Studies, Law, Economics, and Education.

In 1951, the government took the Islamic Faculty at UII to form PTAIN. However, PTAIN did not take the form of a university because there was no integration of knowledge as in UII. Subsequent transformations saw the formation of ADIA as an academy exclusive to civil servants. Furthermore, PTAIN and ADIA were transformed into IAIN, which later officially became STAIN. Both institutions maintained the dichotomy of knowledge between religious and secular education. IAIN and STAIN even had a cat-and-mouse game with the Ministry of National Education regarding general study programs (Yuliyani et al., 2023).

The desire to establish Islamic universities resurfaced around the year 2002. During that time, IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah transformed into UIN, followed by STAIN Malang becoming UIN Malang. This change reflects fluctuations in the position of knowledge, from dichotomy to integration, and back to dichotomy. However, the presence of UIN with the concept of integrated knowledge brings optimism, where students can become experts in various fields besides Islamic studies.

In its journey, the transformation of PTKIN in Indonesia did not proceed linearly. From STI to UII, then PTAIN, ADIA, IAIN, STAIN, and finally to UIN, the scholarly positions and institutional characteristics varied. However, through UIN, the integration of knowledge is once again emphasized as the main foundation. This process is expected to propel PTKIN towards advancement, producing a generation not only focused on Islamic studies but also proficient in various other disciplines as envisioned by its founders at the inception of STI (Ibrahim & Wahidah, 2021).

## **CONCLUSION**

The development of State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) in Indonesia is the result of a long journey influenced by political factors, the aspirations of the Muslim community, and scholarly demands. Initially, the emergence of the Islamic Higher School (STI) in 1945 marked the first step in creating Islamic higher education institutions. The transformation involved changes in status from STI to the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII) in 1948, followed by the separation of the Faculty of Islamic Studies to establish the State Islamic Higher Education Institution (PTAIN) in 1951. Subsequently, through the passage of time and a series of transformations, PTAIN and the Academy of Religious Sciences (ADIA) became the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) in 1960. Furthermore, IAIN and the State Islamic Higher School (STAIN) evolved into the State Islamic University (UIN) in 2002, indicating the integration of religious and general knowledge. This transformation process was not a linear journey but reflected fluctuations in the position of knowledge from dichotomy to integration

and then back to dichotomy. These changes were made with the aim of enhancing the quality of Islamic higher education, providing broader opportunities for PTKIN graduates in the job market, and synchronizing the perspectives of students and lecturers with contemporary needs. The transformation was also motivated by a desire to bridge the gap between the understanding of religious knowledge and the complexities of contemporary challenges, as well as to make a greater contribution to responding to modernization and globalization. With the existence of State Islamic Universities (UIN), the hope is to create Islamic higher education institutions that not only uphold aspects of morality and religion but also respond to the needs of the times with a high scholarly spirit. Although the journey of PTKIN in Indonesia has not always been straightforward, through UIN, it continues to strive to be part of the evolving landscape of Islamic higher education that adapts to the changing times.

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