



## Islam-based holistic learning management: Challenges and opportunities for private islamic university

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### Abstract

The rapid transformation of education in the digital and global era requires approaches that not only emphasize cognitive achievement but also integrate moral and spiritual development, particularly in Islamic higher education. This study aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic-based holistic learning management in private Islamic universities in Jambi Province, focusing on how academic, moral, and spiritual dimensions are integrated, as well as identifying the challenges and opportunities encountered. This study employed a qualitative case study approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and curriculum document analysis, while triangulation techniques were used to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The results indicate that Islamic values-based holistic learning management enhances student engagement, motivation, and overall well-being by integrating values such as tawhid and ihsan into the learning process, while also emphasizing the need for curriculum reform that balances intellectual, character, and spiritual development. However, the study identifies several challenges, including limited technological infrastructure, insufficient human resource capacity, and resistance to change among educators. Overall, this study concludes that Islamic-based holistic learning management provides a relevant and effective approach to addressing contemporary educational challenges, although its successful implementation requires strong institutional commitment, investment in digital infrastructure, continuous professional development, and strengthened collaboration with communities and international partners.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology and information has significantly transformed the landscape of education, making its challenges increasingly complex and dynamic (Alenezi et al., 2023; Rahimi & Oh, 2024). Digital transformation not only changes how teaching and learning are conducted, but also reshapes educational values, cultural perspectives, and overall learning orientations. Under these conditions, education is no longer sufficient if it focuses solely on cognitive achievement. It is also expected to foster students' character, moral awareness, and identity in a more comprehensive manner. This expectation becomes even more critical in Islamic education, which holds a dual responsibility of developing intellectual competence while simultaneously nurturing individuals whose personalities are grounded in Islamic values (Isma, 2026; Moslimany et al., 2024).

In response to these demands, the concept of Islamic values-based holistic learning management has become increasingly relevant in contemporary educational practice (Hidayat et al., 2019; Nordin et al., 2024). This approach aims to integrate spiritual, moral, emotional, and intellectual dimensions into a unified learning process. As a result, education is expected to produce graduates who are not only academically competent, but also possess strong religious awareness and social responsibility (Küpers et al., 2025; Moya & Toledano, 2025; Wilujeng, 2024). Holistic learning based on Islamic values emphasizes the importance of harmonizing scientific knowledge with Islamic

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teachings in all aspects of life, enabling students to internalize these values in their daily behavior (Damanik & Surya, 2023; Zafrullah et al., 2026).

Furthermore, this approach goes beyond academic mastery by focusing on the development of noble character, strengthening faith, and enhancing social skills relevant to the demands of the 21st century (Aini & Mailah, 2024; Gordon, 2022). Through such an approach, students are expected to face the challenges of globalization without losing their Islamic identity (Johari & Ahmad, 2019; Risdianti et al., 2024). This highlights that the integration of religious values and scientific knowledge is no longer optional, but essential in today's educational system.

However, the implementation of Islamic education in the modern era is not without challenges. One of the main issues is how to maintain the relevance of Islamic values within a global and modern environment that often tends toward secularization (Rohman et al., 2024; Wahono et al., 2023). At the same time, digital technology offers both opportunities and challenges. The use of technology, project-based learning, and collaboration among teachers, parents, and communities are considered important components in developing adaptive and innovative learning environments (Fadhli et al., 2023). Nevertheless, not all educational institutions have equal access or readiness to adopt such innovations.

The inequality in access to technology and educational resources has become a major concern, particularly in regions with limited infrastructure (Shofiyyah & Zaelani, 2024). This condition leads to disparities in academic achievement, digital literacy, and students' readiness to face future challenges (Arar et al., 2023; Nunn et al., 2016). In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has further widened this gap, as many institutions were not fully prepared to implement effective distance learning (Jackson & Szombathelyi, 2022). These conditions indicate the need for a more adaptive, inclusive, and value-based educational approach to address such challenges.

Within this context, Islamic values-based holistic learning management emerges as a promising alternative solution. Previous studies have shown that holistic approaches can support the overall development of students, including intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects (Kreimeier et al., 2014). Safrilsyah et al. (2024) emphasize that such an approach creates a balance between academic achievement and character formation, resulting in individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also ethical. Similarly, Rimarioczy et al. (2017) found that the integration of values in learning can enhance student engagement and motivation, while strengthening their commitment to moral and social principles.

Other studies also indicate that Islamic values-based holistic learning management has the potential to improve both learning outcomes and student well-being (Semmann et al., 2013). This approach helps students develop essential life skills, such as interpersonal competence and self-management, which are crucial in today's global context. These findings are supported by more recent research highlighting the importance of integrating spiritual values into education to build students' character in the digital age (Fatimah & Sumarni, 2024; Hasan et al., 2023; Karimullah et al., 2022; Moslimany et al., 2024).

Despite these contributions, existing studies still reveal several limitations. Many of them focus mainly on curriculum development or general learning models without systematically linking them to learning management practices within Islamic higher education institutions (Abdillah et al., 2023; Ahmed et al., 2023; Bahrowi, 2022). In addition, previous research often adopts a partial perspective, for example by emphasizing character or moral development without fully integrating cognitive, social, and technological dimensions (Aini & Mailah, 2024; Gordon, 2022; Safrilsyah et al., 2024). On the other hand, studies on technology-based learning in Islamic education tend to concentrate on e-learning or digital tools alone, without connecting them to a holistic, value-based learning framework (Al-Adwan et al., 2021; Alenezi et al., 2023; Fadhli et al., 2023). This suggests that a comprehensive integration of learning management, Islamic values, and technological innovation remains underexplored.

Moreover, research examining the implementation of Islamic values-based holistic learning management in local contexts, particularly in private Islamic universities in regional areas, is still very limited. Local contexts present unique characteristics in terms of resources, academic culture, and institutional readiness in responding to globalization and digitalization (Arar et al., 2023; Putra & Siregar, 2023; Rafid et al., 2024). While some studies have discussed inclusive and adaptive education in response to contemporary challenges (Abidin et al., 2023; Ismail et al., 2022), they have

not specifically addressed how such approaches are managed within an integrated framework that incorporates Islamic values. In addition, research on strengthening value-based education within the context of curriculum transformation and globalization often remains normative and lacks in-depth analysis of practical implementation (Abidin et al., 2021; Rohman et al., 2024; Wahono et al., 2023). Therefore, a clear research gap exists, particularly the absence of a comprehensive and context-sensitive model of Islamic values-based holistic learning management that can bridge global demands, technological developments, and local institutional needs simultaneously.

Based on the identified background and research gap, this study aims to examine and analyze the implementation of Islamic values-based holistic learning management in private Islamic universities, particularly in Jambi Province. Specifically, this study focuses on how fundamental Islamic values, such as tawhid, justice, and ihsan, are integrated into teaching and learning practices, as well as identifying the challenges and opportunities that arise during the implementation process. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how holistic, value-based learning can contribute to creating learning experiences that are contextual, adaptive, and relevant to contemporary educational demands.

The contributions of this study can be described in three main dimensions. First, from a theoretical perspective, this study develops a conceptual framework of Islamic values-based holistic learning management that systematically integrates academic, spiritual, and social dimensions. Second, from an empirical perspective, this study provides contextual evidence on the implementation of this approach in private Islamic universities in regional settings, an area that remains underrepresented in existing literature. Third, from a practical perspective, this study offers strategic insights for educational stakeholders in designing and implementing learning models that are responsive to globalization and digitalization while maintaining the integration of Islamic values within the educational process.

## METHOD

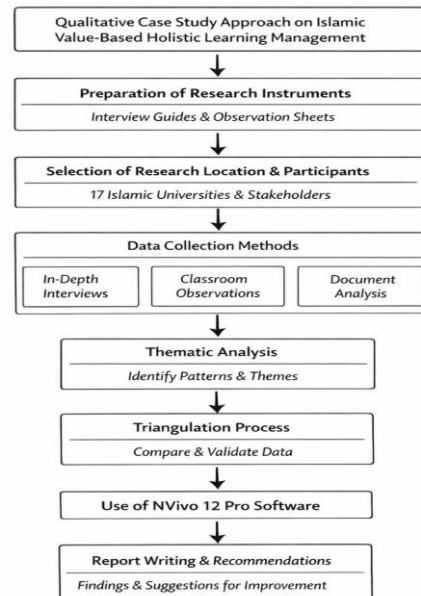
This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to explore the implementation of Islamic values-based holistic learning management in Islamic higher education institutions. This approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of how Islamic values are integrated into learning practices within their real-life context. Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for examining complex social and educational phenomena, as they provide rich and contextual insights that cannot be fully captured through quantitative approaches (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). The case study design allows the researcher to focus on specific institutional settings and to investigate the dynamics of learning management in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

The participants in this study were drawn from 17 private Islamic universities in Jambi Province. The selection of participants was conducted purposively, focusing on institutions that are known to implement Islamic values in their learning processes. The study involved various stakeholders, including lecturers, students, parents, and community members, to obtain diverse perspectives regarding the implementation of holistic learning management. This multi-stakeholder involvement was essential to ensure that the findings reflect not only institutional practices but also the broader educational environment in which these practices take place.

The instruments used in this study included interview guides, observation sheets, and document analysis protocols. In-depth interviews were conducted with educators and educational managers to capture their experiences and perspectives regarding the integration of Islamic values in learning management. Classroom observations were carried out to examine actual teaching and learning practices, while curriculum documents and teaching materials were analyzed to identify how Islamic values are embedded in the formal structure of education. These instruments were designed to complement each other and to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Data collection in this research followed a triangulation strategy to ensure the credibility and validity of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Triangulation was conducted by comparing and cross-checking data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. This approach is consistent with Creswell's view that triangulation enhances research validity by reducing bias and

ensuring consistency across multiple data sources (Creswell, 2021). The overall research procedure, as illustrated in Figure 1, began with the preparation of research instruments, followed by the selection of research sites and participants, data collection through multiple techniques, data analysis, and finally the reporting of findings and recommendations.



**Figure 1.** Research Procedure of Islamic Values-Based Holistic Learning Management

Figure 1 illustrates the systematic stages of the research process, starting from instrument preparation, participant selection, and data collection, to data analysis and reporting. The figure highlights that the research design follows a cyclical and iterative process, where data collection and analysis are interconnected rather than strictly linear. This structure reflects the nature of qualitative research, which requires continuous reflection and refinement throughout the study. The integration of multiple data sources in this process also reinforces the credibility of the findings and ensures a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic values-based holistic learning management.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes related to the implementation of holistic learning management. The analysis process involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by NVivo 12 Pro software to enhance the organization and interpretation of qualitative data. The use of NVivo facilitated systematic coding and helped ensure consistency in identifying key themes across different data sources. The findings were then validated through triangulation to confirm their accuracy and reliability. The research concluded with the development of a comprehensive report that presents the findings and provides recommendations for improving the implementation of Islamic values-based holistic learning management in Islamic higher education institutions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The results of the study show that integrating Islamic values into learning management can provide a more comprehensive and relevant approach to student development. One of the main findings is:

1. *Holistic learning management based on Islamic values in the context of Islamic education at Islamic universities in Jambi Province:*

The results of the study show that integrating Islamic values into learning management can provide a more comprehensive and relevant approach to student development. One of the main findings is the need for curriculum reform that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also on the formation of students' character and spirituality. This aims to create graduates who are not only

competent in the field of science but also have strong personalities and good ethics in accordance with Islamic teachings.

**Table 1.** List of the Number of PTKIS, Lecturers, and Students of Jambi Province

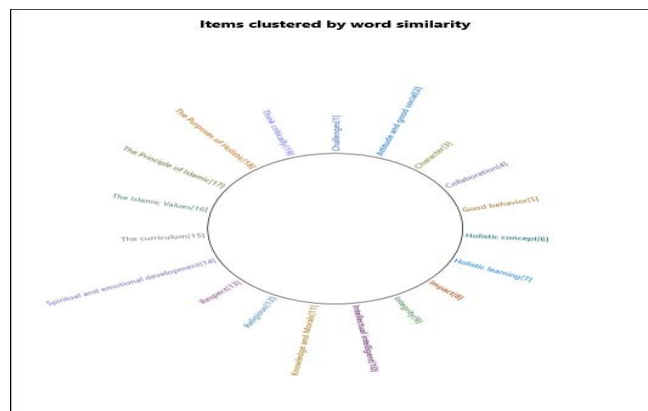
Regency/City	Number of Universities Under the Ministry of Religion - Private	Number of Educators Under the Ministry of Religion - Private Sector	Number of Students Under the Ministry of Religion - Private
Kerinci	0	0	0
Merangin	1	51	1640
Sarolangun	2	75	1297
Batang Hari	1	115	2580
Muaro Jambi	0	0	0
Tanjung Jabung Timur	2	38	881
Tanjung Jabung Barat	2	95	1797
Tebo	2	87	1637
Bungo	2	99	3343
Jambi City	4	137	2527
Sungai penuh	1	21	202
Sum	17	718	15904

Source: Ministry of Religious Affairs, Odd Semester Data/*Ministry of Religious Affairs, Odd Semester Data through [BPS Jambi Province](#)*

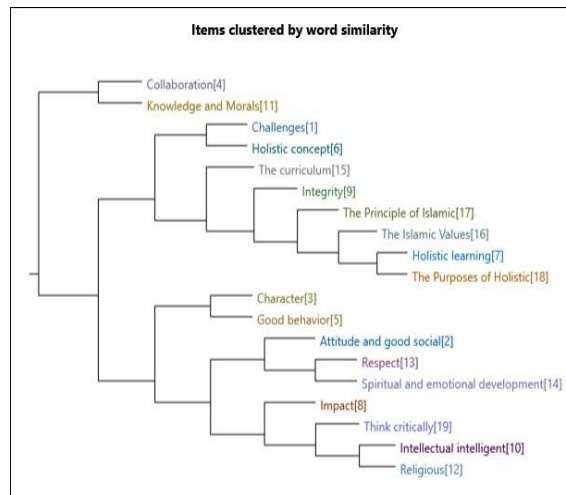
The data provides an overview of the number of private Islamic universities, educators, and students under the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Jambi Province, and provides relevant insights when associated with Islamic-based holistic learning. Here are some general views on this data:

Variation in the Number of Educators and Students in Various Regions of Jambi Province: The number of educators and students varies quite significantly between regions. For example, Jambi City has the largest number of private universities (4 universities) and a large number of educators and students (137 educators and 2527 students). On the other hand, areas such as Sungai Penuh City have only 1 university with many fewer educators and students (21 educators and 202 students). This imbalance reflects the need to adapt the implementation of Islamic-based holistic learning to match the institutional capacity in each region. In areas with limited resources, there may be challenges in adopting a more comprehensive, holistic learning method.

Challenges in Regions with Limited Educators: Regions such as Tanjung Jabung Timur (38 educators and 881 students) and Sungai Penuh City (21 educators and 202 students) face greater challenges in implementing Islamic-based holistic learning. The limited number of educators can affect the quality of interaction between educators and students, as well as limitations in the development of programs that support a comprehensive learning experience. In this area, special management is needed to optimize existing resources, such as through increased training for educators or collaboration with other institutions to expand access to learning.



**Figure 2.** Conceptual Mapping of Holistic Learning Themes Based on Word Similarity



**Figure 3.** Hierarchical Clustering of Themes in Islamic Values-Based Holistic Learning

From Figure 2 & 3 above, this data shows that the implementation of Islamic-based holistic learning in Jambi Province must consider local capacity, both in terms of the number of educators and students, in order to run effectively. Regions with larger resources can be pioneers in implementing this model, while regions with limitations need to focus on optimizing existing potential through training, cooperation, and innovation in learning.

Research shows that the traditional curriculum often focuses on teaching academic material without considering the relevance of Islamic values in students' daily lives. In this regard, Islamic values-based holistic learning management offers a solution by integrating Islamic principles into all aspects of learning. For example, by adopting a problem-based learning approach that links practical cases to Islamic teachings, students can see the direct relevance between theory and practice. This not only improves their understanding but also teaches them to apply Islamic principles in solving problems.

*2. Challenges and opportunities facing private Islamic universities in Jambi Province in integrating a holistic approach to create relevant learning experiences:*

Private Islamic universities in Jambi Province face various challenges and opportunities in integrating holistic approaches to create a more holistic and relevant learning experience of the times. First, the main challenge is the lack of adequate infrastructure and technology. Many colleges in the area are still limited in terms of access to modern technology, which is a key component of a holistic approach that combines aspects of technology with education. Without adequate infrastructure support, it is difficult to implement innovative learning methods and adapt to the demands of global digitalization.



## Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Islamic values-based holistic learning management plays a significant role in addressing contemporary educational challenges, particularly those highlighted in the introduction regarding the need for integrating cognitive, moral, and spiritual dimensions in the era of globalization and digital transformation (Alenezi et al., 2023; Rahimi & Oh, 2024). This study demonstrates that the integration of Islamic values into holistic learning practices enables students to develop not only intellectual competence but also moral awareness and spiritual depth, which aligns with the dual responsibility of Islamic education (Isma, 2026; Moslimany et al., 2024). In this context, holistic learning management becomes a strategic approach that bridges the gap between academic achievement and character formation, as emphasized in previous studies (Küpers et al., 2025; Moya & Toledano, 2025; Wilujeng, 2024). The results further support the argument that education systems that integrate spiritual and intellectual dimensions are more effective in producing balanced individuals who are capable of responding to modern challenges without losing their identity (Damanik & Surya, 2023; Zafrullah et al., 2026).

Moreover, the study reveals that holistic learning management contributes significantly to the development of students' character, including leadership, cooperation, and ethical responsibility. This finding is consistent with earlier research indicating that Islamic values play a crucial role in shaping students' behavior and resilience in facing global challenges (Aini & Mailah, 2024; Gordon, 2022; Hussain, 2021). In addition, the integration of Islamic values into the curriculum strengthens students' religious identity and sense of belonging, particularly in diverse academic environments such as private Islamic universities in Jambi Province (Abidin et al., 2023; Fatimah & Sumarni, 2024). This supports the notion that value-based education can foster inclusive and harmonious learning environments, which are essential in multicultural and dynamic educational contexts (Ismail et al., 2022).

The findings also indicate that when learning content is aligned with students' values and real-life contexts, their engagement and participation increase significantly. This aligns with previous studies highlighting the importance of relevance in learning as a key factor influencing student motivation and academic performance (Hasan et al., 2023; Rochbani & Nurdianingsih, 2023). In line with the arguments presented in the introduction, this study confirms that holistic learning management is not only a theoretical concept but also a practical solution to improve learning outcomes and prepare students for future challenges. Furthermore, the integration of technology within this framework enhances learning accessibility and effectiveness, supporting earlier findings that digital tools can strengthen value-based learning when used appropriately (Fadhli et al., 2023; Jackelén, 2021). Furthermore, the integration of technology within this framework enhances learning accessibility and effectiveness, supporting earlier findings that digital tools can strengthen value-based learning when used appropriately (Fadhli et al., 2023; Jackelén, 2021; Rashid, 2020).

However, despite its potential, the implementation of Islamic values-based holistic learning management is not without challenges. One of the main obstacles identified in this study is resistance to change among educators and institutional stakeholders who are accustomed to conventional teaching approaches (Rochbani, 2024). This finding reinforces previous research emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development and institutional support in implementing innovative educational models (Al-Adwan et al., 2021; Al-Sharhan, 2016). In addition, limitations in technological infrastructure and financial resources remain significant barriers, particularly in regional institutions (Grigg, 2004; Maslov, 2020; Rafid et al., 2024). These challenges reflect broader issues discussed in the introduction regarding inequality in access to educational resources and digital technology (Arar et al., 2023; Shofiyah & Zaelani, 2024).

Another important finding is the role of collaboration among stakeholders, including parents, communities, and educational institutions, in strengthening the effectiveness of holistic learning management. This result supports previous studies suggesting that community involvement enhances the relevance and impact of education (Abidin et al., 2021; Ahmed et al., 2023). In addition, partnerships with other institutions, both local and international, provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and the adoption of best practices (Arar et al., 2023; James & Hauli, 2017). These collaborative efforts are essential in addressing the challenges of globalization and ensuring that Islamic education remains adaptive and responsive to changing demands.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of developing comprehensive evaluation systems that go beyond traditional academic assessments. The findings suggest that evaluation should include multiple dimensions, such as character development, social participation, and real-world application of Islamic values (Hasan et al., 2023; Pokhrel, 2021). This aligns with the broader discourse on holistic education, which emphasizes the need for multidimensional assessment approaches to capture the full range of student development (Nunn et al., 2016). Such evaluation systems are crucial in ensuring that the objectives of holistic learning management are achieved effectively.

In relation to the research gap identified in the introduction, this study provides empirical evidence that addresses the lack of comprehensive and context-specific models of Islamic values-based holistic learning management. While previous studies have often focused on curriculum development or partial aspects of value integration (Abdillah et al., 2023; Ahmed et al., 2023; Bahrowi, 2022), this study demonstrates how these elements can be systematically integrated within a management framework that incorporates academic, social, spiritual, and technological dimensions. In addition, the findings extend previous research by providing insights into the implementation of this approach in private Islamic universities in regional contexts, which have been relatively underexplored (Putra & Siregar, 2023; Rafid et al., 2024).

The study also identifies several opportunities that can support the successful implementation of holistic learning management. One of the key opportunities is the increasing awareness of the importance of value-based education in the digital era, which encourages institutions to adopt more integrative and adaptive approaches (Karimullah et al., 2022; Idris et al., 2019). Additionally, curriculum innovation plays a crucial role in aligning educational practices with the demands of globalization and technological advancement (Abdillah et al., 2023; Wilujeng, 2024). By developing flexible and adaptive curricula, universities can better prepare students to face the complexities of the modern world while maintaining their ethical and spiritual foundations (Afrianto, 2018; Putra & Siregar, 2023).

Nevertheless, achieving optimal implementation requires strong institutional commitment and strategic management. Universities must ensure that their holistic learning approaches align with national and international accreditation standards, which remains a critical challenge (Anwar et al., 2018; Ehlers, 2017). This requires continuous evaluation, curriculum adjustment, and improvement in teaching quality. In addition, effective leadership and governance are essential in facilitating the integration of holistic learning practices within institutional systems (Wang, 2024).

Overall, the findings of this study reinforce the argument that Islamic values-based holistic learning management is a relevant and effective approach in addressing the challenges of modern education. By integrating academic, spiritual, and social dimensions, this approach provides a comprehensive framework for developing students who are not only intellectually competent but also morally grounded and socially responsible. At the same time, the study highlights the importance of addressing structural and contextual challenges to ensure successful implementation. Therefore, this approach has significant potential to contribute to the development of more inclusive, adaptive, and value-oriented educational systems, particularly in the context of private Islamic universities in regional areas (Nunn et al., 2016; Pokhrel, 2021; Siskandar, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic values-based holistic learning management provides a relevant and effective approach to addressing contemporary educational challenges, particularly in the context of private Islamic universities in Jambi Province. The findings show that this approach not only enhances students' academic understanding but also strengthens their moral character, spiritual awareness, and social responsibility. By integrating values such as *tawhid*, justice, and *ihsan* into learning practices, education becomes more meaningful, contextual, and aligned with the demands of globalization and digital transformation. However, the study also reveals several critical challenges, including limited technological infrastructure, insufficient human resource capacity, and financial constraints, which hinder the optimal implementation of this approach. At the same time, the results highlight important opportunities, such as the increasing awareness of value-based education, the potential of digital technology integration, and the strengthening of collaboration

among educational institutions, communities, and international partners to support more adaptive and inclusive learning systems.

Based on these findings, this study implies that the successful implementation of holistic learning management requires a comprehensive and strategic approach that integrates pedagogical innovation, institutional commitment, and stakeholder collaboration. Practically, universities are encouraged to invest in digital infrastructure, enhance educators' competencies through continuous professional development and international collaboration, and develop holistic evaluation systems that assess both academic achievement and character development. In addition, strengthening partnerships with local communities and global institutions is essential to ensure the relevance and sustainability of educational practices. Future research is recommended to further explore the development of operational models and measurement frameworks for Islamic values-based holistic learning management in different institutional and cultural contexts. Overall, this study contributes to the advancement of value-based education by offering a contextual and integrative perspective that supports the development of graduates who are intellectually competent, ethically grounded, and socially responsive in the modern era.

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### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

ZA contributed to conceptualization, methodology, data collection, formal analysis, and drafting the original manuscript. FN contributed to supervision, validation, reviewing and editing the manuscript, and final approval of the manuscript.

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