The Modernization Concepts of Islamic Education, According to Azyumardi Azra

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Abstract. Islam upholds education and the vast and cosmopolitan Islam impacts every aspect of life, including education. Today, the field of education is growing rapidly along with increasingly sophisticated technological developments. This situation is very interesting for the writers, so it needs to be studied more deeply. It is to help provide solutions for the revival of Islamic education so that it is more advanced and developed in accordance with Islamic nature. The method used was descriptive critical analysis. The primary data sources were Azyumardi Azra's works related to the modernization of Islamic education, while the secondary data came from similar works under the same theme. The following is the conclusion based on the data analysis. 1) According to Azra, three important components in the concept of Islamic education include a) the objectives of Islamic education; b) the Islamic education curriculum; (c) the democratization of Islamic education. 2) There is relevance to Azra's thoughts about the modernization of Islamic education compared to national education, which is of the view that Islamic religious education is a compulsory subject for those obliged to receive it. For this reason, national education goals will never be optimally achieved if Islamic religious education is not provided.

Keywords: Islamic Education · Modernization · Azyumardi Azra

1 Introduction

To build Indonesian civil society, the Islamic education sector plays a strategic and practical role. As a result of change, people's education systems adapt to meet changing needs and challenges.

The best way to raise a new generation of youth who are not only simply in touch with their traditions but also are not intellectually or educationally ignorant, outdated, or unaware of advances in any field of human knowledge is through education.

In the current era, fundamental changes are being made to Islamic education, especially in preparing individuals who will interact with people from various cultural, religious, and multi-talented backgrounds, essential for building modern human morality. The process of Islamic education must own two things to produce the best results, noble ideals and a shield for the modern era. *First,* Islamic education teachers should uphold ethics and morals as essential components of one's personality. *Second,* the philosophical

basis of Islamic education has been divided into philosophical values based on Allah's oral revelations, the Qur'an, and hadith, philosophical and normative values, especially the moral values of good morals.

Additionally, the Islamic education system still faces several internal challenges. The confusion between general and religious knowledge is one of them. It is the classic explanation for the low level of competition between Islamic education achievements and overall school performance. On the contrary, conveying religious knowledge is less effective than in Islamic boarding schools. This fact should at least be encouraged by parents to consider other options in determining where their children will study, such as entrusting their children to educational institutions with greater future potential. It is because, in reality, the madrasah offers content, but its learning is limited and does not touch the content offered.

On the other hand, Western civilization (modern civilization) has significantly impacted the way of life and its development pattern. Since it is the dominant civilization in all aspects of modern life, Western civilization has significantly influenced modernity, such as between the sixth and sixteenth centuries AD.

Islamic leaders were encouraged by the reform movement to investigate the factors that led to the decline and weaknesses of the Muslim community, particularly in terms of Islamic religious education, and to consider the paths necessary for progress.

Specifically, Azyumardi Azra is one of the leaders of Islamic education who examines the modernization of Islamic education. He explained that the idea of "modernism" of Islamic thought and institutions as a whole was the origin of the modernization of Islamic education. In other words, the rise of ideas and programs of Islamic modernism cannot be separated from "modernism" in Islamic education. The basic tenet of Islamic "modernism" is that Islamic thought and institutions must "modernize" for Muslims to emerge in modern times. Consequently, Islamic thought and institutions, such as education, needed to be reformed in accordance with the framework of "modernity." The misery of Muslims at being unable to cope with the modern world will only worsen if "traditional" Islamic institutional thinking is maintained.

The Definition of Education

The word "education" comes from the Latin word "pedagogy" (*paedagigie*), which means "education." The Greek word "pedagogy" means "knowledge education." In Greek, a *pedagogos* is a servant or bachelor (youth, pen) who escorts children (student, pen) to and from school. The Greek word *paedagogos*, meaning "servant," is now used for the noble title *paedagoog* (educator, scholar, teacher). According to Hasbullah, education can be understood as a person's effort to guide and direct the growth and development of children on an ongoing and optimal basis so that they are independent and responsible [1].

The Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language states that "education" comes from the word "basic education," which means fostering morals and mental sharpness. In comparison, education means understanding the process of changing the attitudes and behavior of a person or group to teach humans to become adults and apply educational methods.

Education is also a deliberate effort by humans to develop the human potential of other people or to instill values and norms in other members of society. Values and

norms can be transferred in various ways, including through teaching, training, and indoctrination [2, p. 180].

Islamic Education Concept

According to M. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, Islamic education includes the development of one's mind, heart, spiritual and physical, and skills. Therefore, according to Azra, Islamic education allows humans to face the problems of a mixed society of good and bad, sweet and sour, and live in peace and war [3, p. 5].

Zuhairini also claims that Islamic education aims to help a child develop his personality according to Islamic teachings [4, p. 152].

As Muhammad Qutb stated, education, in this case, Islamic education, essentially contains the development of the whole human mind, spirit and body, morals and skills, and all activities, both in the form of personal activities and all personal and social interactions based on Islamic moral values.

The Definition of Modernization

Tajdid is the Indonesian equivalent of the Arabic word for renewal. Reformers or *mujaddids* are the actors. In Islam, reform is a ceremony or activity, both thoughts and actions, to shift Muslims' understanding or living conditions from the current condition (unfavorable) to a new (better) state or life that one wants to realize. The teachings of Islam in the Qur'an and al-Hadith are not reforms within Islam but reforms outside of Islam. Renewal also implies that efforts made for the benefit of Muslims in the world and the hereafter are in accordance with the religion and teachings of Islam, or at least reforms are carried out without violating the Islamic religion. In other words, Islamic fundamentalist teachings are not fundamental teachings but rather a renewed understanding of religion [2, p. 175].

Meanwhile, modernization is changing the mindset and attitude of citizens to meet the demands of modern life [5, p. 158]. Nurcholis Majid also stated that renewal replaces old, irrational mindsets and practical work [6].

The Concept of Modernization

In Islam, the recommended renewal is not Westernization in thinking, acting, and the like in ways contrary to Islamic teachings. Conversely, modern thinking leads to reformers in religion and does not originate from narrow thinking patterns. Thoughts can be broadened, and religious orthodoxy can be maintained by increasing one's knowledge and broadening one's outlook on life in general [7, p. 3]. The transition of society from a traditional state or pre-modern society to a modern society is referred to as modernization.

2 Method

The authors used qualitative research methods in this study. In the opinion of Bogdan and Taylor in Molong, conducting research that produces descriptive data about observable behavior in written or spoken words is known as qualitative research [8, p. 3]. The writers then employed the analysis of literature writing (library research). Because of the library research, the authors utilized documentation techniques to collect data. It

suggests that the data was collected from primary data, namely the works of Azyumardi Azra related to the modernization of education, and secondary data were obtained from documents, including books, journals, magazines, articles, and other scientific works related to the authors' topic. Therefore, the authors' discussion of the modernization of Islamic education is supported by other related reading sources and a collection of main data sources in this writing.

3 Results

1. The Biography of Azyumardi Azra

Azyumardi Azra was born on March 4, 1955, in Lubuk Agung, West Sumatra. He was raised in a religious family and was the third of six children. His father's name is Azikur, and his mother's name is Ramlah. He was brought up by parents who were keenly aware of the importance of education despite the difficult family living conditions. The results of his mother's work as an elementary school religion teacher and his father's hard work as a carpenter and clove trader (SD) made it impossible to pay for his education. However, his mother taught him a lot about Islam, morals, and humanism, and his father taught him a lot about discipline and hard work, so, unsurprisingly, he likes his mother, who works hard [9].

He started formal education at a nearby elementary school at nine before moving to PGAN in Padang. He entered IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta after graduating in 1975 from PGAN to comply with his parents' wish. He began to sharpen his thinking there, not only on campus but also in extracurricular activities, such as HMI Ciputat Branch, from 1981 to 1982. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1982, he continued his master's program in Colombia and New York until 1988, when he received his degree.

Azyumardi Azra is now known as an authoritative professor in Islamic history, science, and the morals of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. He served as IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, rector from 1998 to 2006. In May 2002, the institution changed its name to UIN Syarif Hidayatullah. Initially, Azyumardi had no desire to study Islam or was obsessed with it because he wanted to work at the IKIP in general education.

2. The Concept of Education According to Azyumardi Azra
a. The Purpose of Islamic Education According to Azyumardi Azra

Azyumardi Azra classifies educational goals into two groups: general and specific goals. Azra stressed that the purpose of Islamic education and human life in Islam is to produce personal servants of Allah who will always fear Him and be able to enjoy life on earth, in this world, and in the hereafter. In the context of society, nation, and state, this pious person is transformed into *rahmatan lil'alamin,* both on a small and large scale. The purpose of human life is referred to in Islam as the goal or end of Islamic education [3, p. 9].

Regarding specific goals, Azra emphasized that they are more practical in nature, showing that Islamic education includes more than idealistic Islamic education. Thus, goals for cognitive, affective, and psychomotor mastery can be set, and the results achieved can be evaluated. More specific goals can be achieved from these stages [3].

Therefore, it can be concluded that the realization of Islamic knowledge by the students and their application in everyday life is the essential goal of education and the purpose of their life, as they have been promised as individuals who come and return to God.

b. Democratization of Islamic Education According to Azyumardi Azra

The word *"demos,"* meaning "people," and *"crato,"* meaning "government," is the root word for democracy in Greek. Thus, democracy is governed by the people. When it comes to education, democratic education is a point of view that prioritizes equal rights, responsibilities, and treatment of students by educators as participants in the educational process [10, p. 334].

Azyumardi Azra then defines democratization as a step towards democracy. According to Azra, educational democracy is in the process of becoming democratized. Therefore, in Islamic education, democratization is a process toward democracy. Azra emphasized that the goal of the democratization of Islamic education is to create a democratic, moral, and clean Indonesian society that upholds the values of civilization. Azra also mentioned several characteristics of democratic Islamic education, including the following:

a. Students are encouraged to make positive social changes by the fluidity of the curriculum and the space provided for their creativity.
b. A paradigm shift from authoritarian to democratic, prudent closure, and participatory doctrine in Islamic education
c. There is no relationship between the community environment and Islamic educational institutions.

c. Islamic Education Curriculum According to Azyumardi Azra

As stated by Azyumardi Azra, the term "curriculum" comes from Ancient Greece, referring to sporting events. *Currir*, which means runner, and *curere*, which refers to a racetrack, are the root words for curriculum. Runners must cover a certain distance because of the curriculum [11, p. 139]. A curriculum is a tool for achieving educational goals and a guide for teaching at every level of education [10, p. 149].

Then, Azra explained in more detail and said that the curriculum achieves more specific goals with materials, methods, and evaluation systems because participants learn about various aspects at various stages of mastery, including psychomotor, affective, and cognitive [3, p. 9]. This understanding is in accordance with Abuddin Nata's assertion quoted by Crow that the teaching design known as the curriculum is a collection of subjects arranged systematically according to the requirements to complete a particular educational program [12, p. 70].

If included in the Islamic education curriculum, it functions as a planning guide for educators to direct their students towards the highest goal of Islamic education, namely the conceptualization of the whole human being (a good human being). No matter how good the plan is, it will be useless if not implemented properly. Likewise, plans that have been set but are not supported wisely and coherently and get out of the intended planning goals are likely to have little or no success [13].

In this case, curriculum development must provide guidelines and instructions to meet the special needs of students with certain abilities, interests, and talents. Besides, the curriculum orientation aims to support social development so that the final product can answer and show the problems faced. Accordingly, Islamic education must strongly emphasize science and incorporate subjects from various fields, including technology.

Azra also emphasized that the Islamic education curriculum was clearly different and now has to emphasize students' mastery of science and technology, apart from cultivating deep religious values. Only by preparing and fostering knowledgeable human resources can Islamic education be successful, and the technology here is to practice religion. Moreover, poverty can only be eradicated gradually but surely through this methodical and programmed approach [3, p. 66].

Therefore, it is time to pay more attention to the Islamic education system. It is by trying to achieve the goals of Islamic education by using an Islamic education curriculum, which ideally aims to produce students who are knowledgeable, technologically advanced, highly capable, and pious in faith and charity.

3. Modernization of Islamic Education According to Azyumardi Azra

Azra highlighted that the program aimed at modernizing Islamic education is rooted in the ideas of modernism of Islamic thought and institutions. In other words, the rise of ideas and programs of Islamic modernism cannot be separated from the modernism of Islamic education. The public often sharply criticizes three factors causing Islamic education: 1). Developments in technology and science are not interfered with by Islamic education. Thus, it can be said that science and technology have been slow to respond to the Islamic religion. 2) There is a grouping between the sciences, general, and religion. 3). Policymakers have differing opinions regarding education [14].

The basic tenet of Islamic modernism as a whole is that the revival of Muslims in modern times requires modern Islamic thought and institutions. Consequently, Islamic thought and institutions, such as education, must be updated. Reviving them according to a modern framework that maintains an Islamic institutional framework will only exacerbate the misery of Muslims and make them more and more helpless in the face of the progress of the modern world [3, p. 31].

Modernization is also a multifaceted and complex process. On the one hand, education is considered a factor in modernization. Education is one of the conditions and requirements that must be met in this context. Communities absolutely must run the program and achieve development or modernization goals. A society will find it difficult to progress without adequate education. As a result, many education experts argue that "education is the key that opens the door to modernization."

On the other hand, education is often seen as an object of modernization from a different angle. In this context, it is not easy to anticipate it. Supporting modernization programs due to education in developing countries is usually seen as lagging in many ways. Therefore, for education to fulfill the tasks and expectations that have been imposed on it, it needs to be renewed or modernized.

The primary purpose of education in modern or middle-class societies towards modernization is to link students and their ever-changing sociocultural environment. In many

ways, education is deliberately used to educate life, the economy, and changes in the political system. In contemporary society, education serves three main purposes: socialization and schooling.

Modernization of education will also undergo functional and inter-system modifications to achieve all of these goals. The systems approach can be used to formulate these conceptual changes. Public inputs into the education system [3, p. 32] are as follows:

1. Ideological-normative: The education system must widen and strengthen students' understanding of the nation to accommodate specific ideological orientations, expressed in national norms (Pancasila, for example), for newly independent countries whose main goal is national integration.
2. Mobilization for politics: To meet the demands of modernization and development, the education system needs to educate, prepare, and produce leaders and innovators who are capable of sustaining and even accelerating development.
3. Economic mobilization: An education system that trains students to become superior human resources capable of filling various development-related positions is necessary for a reliable workforce.
4. Mobilization of the community workforce: Increasing modernization expectations for social mobility require that education facilitates access and space.
5. Cultural mobilization: For modernization to produce a culture of change, the education system must maintain stability and produce a cultural heritage that supports growth.

Modern education will usually produce excellent schools that develop progressively towards development, progress, and improvement, both in terms of the educational institutions' achievements and the support of the surrounding community. Undoubtedly, the existence of support from the community for a good perspective will maintain harmony in school management. Hopefully, the support from the community will add many innovations for school progress [15]. Educational institutions' efforts need community support because they have a significant role in prioritizing superior quality and have the courage to compete globally [16].

Within the framework of modernization above, Islamic education is expected to meet modern needs, utilize Islamic educational institutions with a modern perspective, produce professional talent, and facilitate social mobility.

4. Modernization of Islamic Education According to Azyumardi Azra and Its Relevance to Islamic Education in Indonesia

Islam must make efforts to rethink education today by changing institutions and systems. Azra explained that the basic concept of Islamic education is the development of one's personality in all aspects to achieve inner development in accordance with Islamic ideals. One way is to change one's perspective on science and technology. The realization of *taqwa* to Allah is what is meant. In addition, *taqwa* is often operationally omitted as a keyword, making identification of educational evaluation tools simple.

According to Islam, the responsibility for education in managing and developing Islamic education is borne by three main educational institutions: a) parents, b) school, and c) society. According to the analysis of the educational process carried out by these three environments, it can be concluded that mentally-spiritually, the foundations of

education are laid by the family, and academically-conceptually, they are developed by the school so that the development of students is more directed. Meanwhile, for the community, education obtained in the family and school environment is then distributed to the community [17, p. 203].

Therefore, efforts to develop Islamic education materials are always directed towards its main objective, i.e., to educate students as God's creatures with their natural potential, which has the core of Islamic religiosity and develops vertically and horizontally towards inner and outer happiness in outer life. More concrete conceptualization, such as increasing community participation in empowering education management, will be needed in light of expanding the role and empowerment of communities in Islamic education and management in Islamic institutions.

Educational reform is carried out so that national education can achieve its goals. National education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have a noble character, and are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and democratic citizens to educate the nation's life. A dignified nation also uses it to build skills and shape its character and civilization.

To support education development in Indonesia, it is necessary to reform the education system. As a result, the curriculum for the education system can keep up with the times and must be able to change accordingly. The curriculum must also be updated because it is a tool to achieve goals and adapt to society's ever-changing and sustainable development. A renewal is considered partial if it only affects certain parts, such as objectives, content, methods, or systems and only evaluation. If all curriculum components are changed, the curriculum renewal is comprehensive. Various factors influence curriculum changes, including the teaching staff and other supporting factors in the education administration.

Curriculum adjustment involves the following parts: changes to the curriculum evaluation system, curriculum facilities, objectives, content and structure, curriculum strategy, and curriculum. The curriculum will not be able to change things in a more advanced direction if it does not have clear goals, and no one even knows where education is going. In addition, this modification examines the subjects' structure, including each subject's content. Changes that affect curriculum implementation include teaching-learning theory, administration systems, guidance and counseling, and learning outcomes assessment systems. The quality and quantity of the workforce and school facilities, such as libraries, laboratories, and teaching aids, are also affected by this change.

4   Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings and discussion of this study:

1. Azra emphasized three important components in Islamic education, including 1) educational goals. There are two parts to educational goals: a) The goals of Islamic education cannot be separated from the goals of human life in Islam, i.e., to make the individuals of Allah's servants, who always fear Him and will be able to live happily both in this world and the hereafter. b) Azra said that specific goals are more practical, meaning that Islamic education is more than only idealistic Islamic teachings in education so that expectations for mastering cognitive, affective, and

psychomotor skills can be formulated and the results evaluated gradually. 2) The goal of democratizing Islamic education is to create an Indonesian society that is democratic, clean, moral, has character, and upholds civilized values. 3) The Islamic education curriculum is a tool to achieve educational goals and a guide on teaching at every level of education. The curriculum also functions as a planning guide for educators to direct their students towards the highest goal of Islamic education, namely the conceptualization of the whole human being (a good human being).

2. According to Azra, the modernization of Islamic education is that the rise of ideas and programs of Islamic modernism cannot be separated from the modernism of Islamic education. The revival of Muslims in modern times requires modernizing Islamic thought and institutions. Also, it is hoped that Islamic education can meet modern needs through functional and inter-system modifications, and several systems approaches can be used to formulate conceptual changes, such as ideological normative, mobilization for politics, economic mobilization, community workforce mobilization, and cultural mobilization.

3. The connection between Azra's ideas about modernizing Islamic education and national education is that Islamic religious education is a compulsory curriculum. Since some students, especially in certain educational units, do not receive Islamic religious education, it indicates that national education goals will never be fully fulfilled if Islamic religious education is not provided. As a result, Islamic religious education is needed.

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