

Reconfiguration of Hadith Studies at State Islamic Universities in Indonesia: Negotiating Scientific Tradition and Global Academic Standards

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Abstract. Even though the Hadith has a central position as the second main source of Islamic knowledge after the Qur'an, Hadith studies remain marginalized in many Indonesian Islamic universities, often overshadowed by Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic law, and Sufism. This study examines how three leading State Islamic Universities, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar, have strategically reconfigured their Hadith Science departments in response to both internal demands for academic quality and external pressures from global educational standards. These universities were selected due to their institutional prominence, academic innovations, and representative models of transformation within Indonesia's State Islamic Religious Higher Education system. This study explores the following questions: (1) how are Hadith Studies departments reconfigured institutionally and academically within these universities? and (2) how do these transformations negotiate between Islamic scientific tradition and global academic standards? Employing qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, policy and document analysis, and field observations, the research identifies four key drivers of revitalization: curricular reform aligned with the KKNI and MBKM frameworks, leadership-driven institutional transformation, integration of digital technologies in Hadith pedagogy, and the establishment of collaborative networks with governmental bodies, religious communities, and international partners. Using a multidisciplinary approach, and drawing primarily on functionalist social theory and Islamic epistemology, the findings reveal that these reforms represent not only academic transformation but also an epistemic negotiation that reconciles religious authenticity with the methodological rigor and global relevance demanded by modern higher education. By harmonizing 'aqli (rational) and naqli (transmitted) traditions, reclaiming intellectual sovereignty through localized innovation, and reorienting curriculum and research practices, this study offers a replicable model for advancing Islamic sciences in other Islamic academic institutions by fostering dialogue between scholarly tradition and contemporary innovation.

Keywords: *Hadith Studies, Islamic Higher Education; Epistemic Decolonization; Institutional Transformation*

Introduction

The Hadith, Prophet Muhammad's sayings, actions, and tacit approvals, occupies a foundational role in the Islamic intellectual tradition.¹ As the second primary source of

¹Khairatun Ni'mah, Ahmad Arifi, and Indal Abror, "Hadith as a Source of Islamic Law: Its Role and Significance," *Studi Multidisipliner: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 11, no. 2 (December 2024): 193–204, <https://doi.org/10.24952/multidisipliner.v11i2.13302>.

Islamic law and theology after the Qur'an, it has historically functioned as a cornerstone of Muslim identity, law, ethics, and spirituality.² However, in the context of Indonesian Islamic higher education, particularly within Islamic Religious Universities (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*, or PTKI), hadith studies have remained comparatively underdeveloped, both in institutional visibility and academic innovation.³ Despite its epistemic centrality, the field is often overshadowed by more established disciplines such as Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and Sufism (*tasawuf*), which dominate both the curriculum and scholarly output.⁴ This disparity raises a critical question, why has hadith scholarship, with its rich epistemological heritage (*turāth*), struggled to gain equivalent academic traction within PTKI?

The issue is particularly urgent in light of national policy interventions that have sought to institutionalize hadith as an autonomous academic discipline. Notably, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs issued a series of regulatory frameworks in 2013 and 2014, Decrees No. 3389 and 4979, that formally separated Hadith Studies (*Ilmu Hadis*) from Qur'anic Studies (*Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*) as distinct departments within PTKI. These reforms were intended to elevate hadith studies to a level of academic independence and specialization. However, subsequent evaluations indicate that these structural changes have yet to generate the desired transformative effect.⁵

Multiple studies confirm the lack of traction. found that student interest in hadith studies is significantly lower than in Qur'anic studies, with a preference ratio of 3:7.⁶ Wahid and Masri further observe that this lag is not new; it reflects a long historical pattern of marginalization dating back to the early stages of Islam's entry into the Indonesian archipelago. Compounding this issue is a lack of integration between the epistemic heritage of classical hadith scholarship and the methodological demands of contemporary academia.⁷

²Lina Nur Anisa, "The Leadership Of Prophet Muhammad: An Ethical Model in Facing Modern Leadership Crises," *Leadership: Jurnal Mahasiswa Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (December 2024): 58–76, <https://doi.org/10.32478/leadership.v6i1.2669>.

³Suyadi et al., "Academic Reform and Sustainability of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia," *International Journal of Educational Development* 89 (March 2022): 102534, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102534>; Abdul Gaffar and Akbar Akbar, "Hadith Studies in Eastern Indonesia: Futurology Analysis on Hadith Sciences Department in Islamic Higher Education," *Al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-Hasil Penelitian*, June 4, 2024, 50–64, <https://doi.org/10.31332/ai.v0i0.8714>; Muhammad Amin Abdullah, "Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia: Challenges, Impact and Prospects for the World Community," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 55, no. 2 (December 2017): 391–426, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2017.552.391-426>.

⁴Kemenag, "Menag, Studi dan Pengajaran Hadits di Indonesia Relatif Marjinal," <https://kemenag.go.id>, accessed October 6, 2025, <https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/menag-studi-dan-pengajaran-hadits-di-indonesia-relatif-marjinal-bmwn0f>; Suryadi Suryadi, "Prospek Studi Hadis Di Indonesia (Telaah Atas Kajian Hadis Di UIN, IAIN, Dan STAIN)," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 16, no. 1 (March 2015): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2015.1601-01>.

⁵Surat Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Nomor: 1429 Tahun 2012 tentang Penataan Program Studi di Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam; Surat Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Nomor 3389 Tahun 2013 tentang Penamaan Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam, Fakultas dan Jurusan pada Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam; Surat Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Islam No. 4979 Tahun 2014.

⁶Suryadi, "Prospek Studi Hadis Di Indonesia (Telaah Atas Kajian Hadis Di UIN, IAIN, Dan STAIN)."

⁷Ramli Abdul Wahid and Dedi Masri, "Perkembangan Terkini Studi Hadis Di Indonesia," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 42, no. 2 (July 2019): 263–80, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v42i2.572>.

Efforts to reconfigure Islamic higher education have added new layers of complexity.⁸ The adoption of the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia*, or KKNI) and, more recently, the *Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy, initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, have called for higher education to be more aligned with global academic benchmarks, including outcome-based education, employability, and soft-skill integration.⁹ While such frameworks are designed to enhance competitiveness, they also present a significant challenge: how can disciplines grounded in textually dense traditions like hadith adapt to these modern educational paradigms without compromising their epistemological core?

Nevertheless, signs of innovation have begun to emerge. UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, for instance, has pioneered a paradigm of integration and interconnection between Islamic sciences and contemporary methodologies, including sociological, anthropological, and hermeneutic approaches. This department has been accredited by international agencies such as FIBAA (2023) and recognized nationally with an “Excellent” rating since 2022.¹⁰ Meanwhile, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung has advanced the digitalization of hadith education and was twice ranked the top Islamic university in Indonesia by Webometrics.¹¹ UIN Alauddin Makassar offers a vertically integrated curriculum from undergraduate to doctoral levels and serves as a national hub for interdisciplinary hadith research, focusing on contemporary methods such as *Naqd al-Hadith* (Isnad-cum-Matan) and *Fiqh al-Hadith* (textual, contextual, and intratextual approaches).¹²

These institutions illustrate the potential for bridging the gap between epistemic heritage and global academic standards, a challenge that defines the current transitional phase of hadith studies in Indonesia. However, existing scholarly literature remains limited in scope.¹³ Prior research has tended to focus either on thematic mappings of student theses,¹⁴

⁸Desmaniar et al., “Towards Sustainable Development of Islamic Higher Education: A Meta-Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities,” *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, October 13, 2022, 741–70, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol21.iss3.art5>.

⁹Nora Susilawati, “Merdeka Belajar Dan Kampus Merdeka Dalam Pandangan Filsafat Pendidikan Humanisme,” *Jurnal Sikola: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 2, no. 3 (March 2021): 203–19, <https://doi.org/10.24036/sikola.v2i3.108>; Agus Pahrudin, Listiyani Siti Romlah, and Murtando Murtando, “Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Tinggi Berbasis KKNI SN-Dikti dan Kurikulum Merdeka dan OBE (Outcome Based Education),” *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan* 10, no. 01 (May 2024): 161–68, KKNI SN-Dikti and Merdeka curricula, <https://doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v10i01.9971>.

¹⁰Tim Humas, “Prodi Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Dan 17 Prodi Lainnya Terakreditasi Lembaga Akreditasi Internasional FIBAA,” *Berita*, Mei 2023, <https://ilmuhadis.uin-suka.ac.id/id/berita/detail/7438/>.

¹¹Redaksi, “UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung Raih Top Score Sinta 2023,” *Berita*, January 4, 2024, <https://uinsgd.ac.id/uin-sunan-gunung-djati-bandung-raih-top-score-sinta-2023/>.

¹²Administrator, “Profil Program Studi Ilmu Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar,” *Program Studi Ilmu Hadis*, September 17, 2023, <http://ilh.fuf.uin-alauddin.ac.id/>.

¹³Nz Adriansyah, “Pola Kajian Hadis Akademik Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (Ptkin) Di Indonesia (Studi Skripsi Mahasiswa Tafsir Hadis UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, UIN Syarif Kasim Pekanbaru Dan UIN Imam Bonjol Padang),” *Jurnal Ilmu Agama: Mengkaji Doktrin, Pemikiran, Dan Fenomena Agama* 19, no. 2 (2018): 177–95, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jia.v19i2.2907>.

¹⁴Aliah, M. S., “Kajian Hadis Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri Indoensia (Studi Atas Kecenderungan Kajian Hadis Di UIN Alauddin Makassar Tahun 2014-2019)” (UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2021);

or on the methodological evolution of individual scholars such as Syuhudi Ismail, Ali Mustafa Yaqub, and Kamaruddin Amin.¹⁵ While valuable, these studies offer fragmented insights and often neglect the structural, institutional, and policy-driven dimensions of hadith studies' transformation.¹⁶

What is missing from the current literature is a holistic understanding of how hadith studies in Indonesian Islamic universities are being reconfigured at the intersection of traditional epistemology and contemporary academic standards. This reconfiguration includes the motives and strategies of stakeholders,¹⁷ the influence of national education policies, the adaptability of curricula,¹⁸ and the broader sociological and psychological factors shaping the field's development.¹⁹

Existing studies on hadith studies in Indonesian Islamic higher education remain limited in scope and tend to emphasize thematic mappings of student theses or the intellectual contributions of individual scholars. While these studies provide valuable insights, they often overlook the broader structural, institutional, and policy-driven dimensions of transformation, particularly in relation to how hadith studies engage with contemporary academic standards.²⁰ As a result, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding of how Hadith Studies Departments are being reconfigured at the intersection of epistemological legacy (*turāth*) and the demands of modern higher education, especially within the context of ongoing reforms such as KKNI and MBKM.

The research draws on multiple sources of data to ensure methodological triangulation and enhance the validity of findings, including in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, analysis of institutional documents, and non-participant field observations of academic and managerial activities. These data were interpreted using a multidisciplinary

NIM 16551003 ISBARIA, "Dinamika Kajian Hadis Di Perguruan Tinggi (Studi Skripsi UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta Tahun 2010-2019)" (skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2020), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/39054/>.

¹⁵Muhammad Anshori, "Objek Dan Ruang Lingkup Kajian Hadis Masa Klasik Dan Kontemporer," *Journal al Irfani: Ilmu al Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (December 2021): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v2i2.312>.

¹⁶Hasep Saputra, "Perkembangan Studi Hadis Di Indonesia: Pemetaan Dan Analisis Genealogi" (Disertasi, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2016), <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/41397>.

¹⁷Maryrose Weatherton et al., "All In: Understanding and Motivating Stakeholders to Create an Equitable Culture of Student Success," *CBE—Life Sciences Education* 23, no. 4 (December 2024): es10, <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.24-02-0065>.

¹⁸Ambar Kusumaningsih et al., "Transformation of Higher Education Curriculum in Indonesia: Effectiveness of Application in the Accounting Department," in *Proceedings of the International Joint Conference on Arts and Humanities 2022 (IJCAH 2022)*, ed. Slamet Setiawan et al., Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (Paris: Atlantis Press SARL, 2023), 724:475–84, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-008-4_53.

¹⁹Brigita Miseliunaite, Irina Kliziene, and Gintautas Cibulskas, "Can Holistic Education Solve the World's Problems: A Systematic Literature Review," *Sustainability* 14, no. 15 (August 2022): 9737, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159737>.

²⁰Muh Yusuf Kasim, "Reformulating Islamic Epistemology: Solution to The Crisis of Modern Science, Technology and The Impact of Globalization," *Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (October 2021): 31–47, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jar.v8i1.9790>.

approach, primarily drawing on functionalist social theory and Islamic epistemology,²¹ to examine institutional adaptation and the repositioning of Hadith knowledge within contemporary academic frameworks.²²

This study aims to examine how hadith studies in selected Indonesian Islamic universities are being reconfigured in response to both their epistemological legacy and the pressures of contemporary academic standards. Focusing on three leading institutions, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar, this research analyzes the strategic, institutional, and pedagogical dimensions of transformation. It seeks to demonstrate that the reconfiguration of hadith studies is not merely an institutional adjustment, but constitutes a broader epistemic negotiation in which traditional Islamic knowledge is rearticulated to maintain its epistemic integrity while adapting to global academic standards. Overall, this research design enables a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how Hadith Studies in Indonesian state Islamic universities are being reconfigured, academically, structurally, and epistemologically, to meet both local educational needs and global expectations.

Examining Three Models of Hadith Science Education in Indonesia

The institutional trajectories of Hadith Science Departments in three prominent Indonesian State Islamic Universities, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar, offer a nuanced illustration of how traditional Islamic disciplines are repositioning themselves within the shifting landscape of contemporary higher education.²³ Rather than representing mere structural divisions from their parent Qur'anic Exegesis units, these departments embody distinct epistemological visions and strategic adaptations aimed at reconciling the *turāth* (classical scholarly heritage) with twenty-first century academic and societal demands.²⁴

At UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, the Hadith Science Department's evolution, catalysed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs' decrees in 2012 and 2014, was not solely an administrative bifurcation; it was also an intentional epistemic realignment. Anchored in the university's *integration-interconnection paradigm* championed by scholars such as M. Amin Abdullah, the department positions Hadith studies as a bridge discipline, one that

²¹Adam Malik and Ahmad Barizi, "The Islamic Perspective on Trilogy Epistemology: Bayāni, Burhāni, and 'Irfāni," *TAJDIR* 29, no. 1 (August 2022): 83, <https://doi.org/10.36667/tajdir.v29i1.857>.

²²Mohd Nur Syafaat Jamiran, Nur Sofurah Mohd Faiz, and Nurshaidah Mohamad Sari, "Postcolonial Critique and Decolonisation Process in Education," *Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies* 5, no. 4 (December 2024): 96–112, <https://doi.org/10.61186/johepal.5.4.96>.

²³Muhammad Alfatih Suryadilaga, "Prospek Kajian Hadis Di Peguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Di Indonesia," *MUTAWATIR* 7, no. 1 (June 2017): 192–214, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2017.7.1.192-214>.

²⁴Wahyudin Darmalaksana, "Pemetaan Penelitian Hadis: Analisis Skripsi UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung," *Riwayah: Jurnal Studi Hadis* 6, no. 2 (October 2020): 191, <https://doi.org/10.21043/riwayah.v6i2.7752>.

synthesizes normative religious texts with social sciences and humanities. The curriculum's emphasis on producing graduates capable of both scholarly rigor and socio-religious activism demonstrates an institutional awareness of the dual necessity for textual mastery and civic engagement.²⁵ This approach aligns with functionalist perspectives on education, where in institutional relevance is maintained by addressing both the intellectual and societal needs of the community.²⁶

In contrast, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung situates its Hadith Science program within the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (Revelation Guiding Knowledge) framework. This paradigm asserts an epistemological hierarchy in which divine revelation serves as the primary referent for all branches of knowledge, while simultaneously acknowledging the necessity of empirical and scientific inquiry.²⁷ The department's responsiveness to phenomena such as *living Hadith* and its investment in digitalization signal a progressive stance toward integrating tradition with technological affordances. By embedding interdisciplinary competencies within a theologically grounded epistemic structure, the department demonstrates an adaptive capacity to produce graduates who can navigate, interpret, and apply Prophetic traditions in both classical scholarly contexts and the digitally mediated realities of modern Muslim societies.²⁸

UIN Alauddin Makassar adopts yet another trajectory, positioning its Hadith Science Department, established as an independent entity in 2015, as a custodian of both scholarly heritage and methodological innovation. The department's vision of "Excellence in the Transformation of Hadith Science Based on Islamic Civilization" reflects a conscious effort to root academic development in a civilizational framework. Its embrace of interdisciplinary methodologies, particularly those drawn from history, anthropology, and sociology, exemplifies a postcolonial academic stance that resists the marginalization of Islamic epistemologies by engaging them in dialogue with contemporary academic discourses.²⁹ The intellectual legacies of figures such as Suhudi Ismail and Kamaruddin Amin serve not merely as institutional heritage but as methodological touchstones for rethinking hadith studies in a way that is both locally grounded and globally conversant.³⁰

²⁵Andrianor Andrianor, Ramadhanita Mustika Sari, and Amri Adhitya, "Institutionalizing Science Integration at UIN Sunan Kalijaga: Insights from Students' Perspectives," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 22, no. 3 (December 2024): 368–86, <https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v22i3.1919>.

²⁶Tim Humas, "Prodi Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Dan 17 Prodi Lainnya Terakreditasi Lembaga Akreditasi Internasional FIBAA."

²⁷Wawan Ridwan, Nanat Fatah Natsir, and Erni Haryanti, "Konsep Wahyu Memandu Ilmu Sebagai Paradigma Keilmuan UIN Sunan Gunung Djati," *JiIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 1 (January 2022): 234–42, <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v5i1.404>.

²⁸Harie Fachrurrosi and Tajul Arifin, "Penggunaan Teknologi Modern Dalam Penelitian Hadits," *Cakrawala: Journal of Religious Studies and Global Society* 1, no. 2 (December 2024): 159–65, <https://doi.org/10.63142/cakrawala.v1i2.62>.

²⁹Nofri Andy.N and Muhammad Ridha, "Implementasi Integrasi Keilmuan dalam Tradisi Kajian Hadis pada Prodi Ilmu Hadis Uin Alauddin Makassar," *Tahdis: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Hadis* 15, no. 2 (December 2024), <https://doi.org/10.24252/tahdis.v15i2.50958>.

³⁰Amiruddin, Andi Muhammad Ali, "Gen Intelektual Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar," September 16, 2023.

Taken collectively, these three departments illustrate a spectrum of strategic orientations: integrationist synthesis (UIN Sunan Kalijaga), revelation-centered interdisciplinarity (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati), and civilizational-methodological hybridity (UIN Alauddin Makassar). Their shared geographical advantage, situated in urban cultural and educational hubs, further enhances their recruitment potential and academic visibility. Yet their most significant contribution lies in their collective demonstration that Hadith studies, often considered marginal within the modern academic hierarchy, can be reimagined as intellectually vibrant, socially responsive, and globally relevant disciplines. This reconfiguration resonates with broader debates in Global South higher education about the decolonization of knowledge, the integration of indigenous epistemologies, and the negotiation of authenticity within global academic norms.³¹

Navigating Institutional Challenges in Hadith Studies: Issues of Legitimacy, Student Interest, and Strategic Reform

In the context of this study, the term *issue* is conceptualized not merely as a “pressing matter” but as a socially emergent domain of concern that directly affects the adaptive capacity and sustainability of institutional structures, particularly those within the sphere of Islamic higher education. From the perspective of functionalist social theory, such issues represent systemic disruptions.³² If unaddressed, they impair an institution’s ability to maintain equilibrium between its internal operational needs and its external legitimacy.

Within the ecosystem of Indonesia’s State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri, PTKIN), the implementation of Hadith Science Departments (*Ilmu Hadis*) exposes a multilayered set of challenges that intertwine epistemic, structural, and socio-cultural dimensions. Suryadi crystallized several of these: (1) low public awareness of Hadith Science as an autonomous discipline, (2) chronic shortage of specialized human resources compared to Qur’anic Studies, and (3) a constricted scope of textual engagement, heavily weighted toward Qur’anic exegesis at the expense of the broader hadithic corpus.³³ Together, these factors help explain the persistent low enrollment and fragile institutional standing of Hadith Studies within the broader Islamic scholarly landscape.³⁴ Moreover, several data points indicate a declining trend in student interest

³¹Nuraan Davids and Yusef Waghid, “Indigenous Knowledge, Muslim Education, and Cosmopolitanism: In Pursuit of Knowledge without Borders,” in *Indigenous Concepts of Education*, ed. Berte Van Wyk and Dolapo Adeniji-Neill (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2014), 101–12, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137382184_8.

³²Parsons, Talcott, *The Social System* (New York: Routledge (Taylor & Francis Imprint), 1951).

³³Suryadi, “Prospek Studi Hadis Di Indonesia (Telaah Atas Kajian Hadis Di UIN, IAIN, Dan STAIN).”

³⁴Wahid and Masri, “Perkembangan Terkini Studi Hadis Di Indonesia.”

toward certain Islamic studies programs, with Ilmu Hadis often struggling to attract the same level of enrollment as Qur'anic Studies and Fiqh.³⁵

From a Maslovian standpoint, student decision-making is often framed in instrumentalist terms, prioritizing disciplines with clearer professional pathways. In this perception environment, Hadith Science risks being coded as “professionally ambiguous” despite its intellectual rigor.³⁶ This framing is reinforced by the absence of systematic outreach to feeder institutions, particularly Islamic madrasahs, which further narrows recruitment pipelines.

The experiences of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar present alternative trajectories that challenge the dominant narrative of decline. Each has implemented distinct yet mutually reinforcing strategies that illustrate what functionalist theory terms *adaptive recalibration*, the deliberate adjustment of organizational structures, operational practices, and symbolic resources to maintain alignment with changing external and internal contexts.

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta: Institutional Engineering and Quality Assurance

Here, adaptation has been achieved through *institutional coupling*: the simultaneous establishment of the Hadith Science Department alongside the Qur'anic Exegesis Department. This deliberate parallel launch ensured epistemic continuity and reduced the “legitimacy gap” typically associated with new departments. By embedding the new unit within an established academic framework, the department secured both administrative stability and accreditation recognition.³⁷ Further, the institutionalization of a quality assurance loop, via regular engagement with the Quality Assurance Institute (LPM) and adherence to both national (BAN-PT) and international (FIBAA) standards, has enhanced credibility and market appeal. These strategies exemplify functionalist notions of restoring equilibrium through structural and procedural integration.³⁸

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung: Political Will and Knowledge Production

The Bandung model underscores the role of leadership agency in institutional transformation. Under Dean-led initiatives, the Hadith Science Department has operationalized two strategic levers: political will and epistemic productivity. The cultivation of a *publishing culture*, supported by the U.TODAY digital platform and the stewardship of eleven academic journals, has yielded a substantial corpus of student-authored publications

³⁵Desri Ari Enghariano and Toguan Rambe, “The Existence of Religious Studies Programs at PTKIN Amid the Progressiveness of Institutional Transformation | Enghariano | Jurnal Penelitian Medan Agama,” accessed October 6, 2025, <https://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/medag/article/view/23514>; Andrianor, Sari, and Adhitya, “Institutionalizing Science Integration at UIN Sunan Kalijaga.”

³⁶Maslow, Abraham H., *Motivation and Personality*.

³⁷Abror, Indal., “Strategi Keunggulan Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta,” September 6, 2023.

³⁸Tim Humas, “Prodi Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Dan 17 Prodi Lainnya Terakreditasi Lembaga Akreditasi Internasional FIBAA.”

(1006 articles by mid-2023, including 213 from Hadith Science students).³⁹ This output not only elevates departmental visibility (as recognized by national Webometrics rankings) but also enacts an Islamic epistemological ideal: that knowledge should be both *nafi'* (beneficial) and *muta'addi* (transmissible). From a postcolonial standpoint, this strategy also functions as an act of epistemic sovereignty, positioning Hadith Science as an active contributor to contemporary intellectual life rather than a static repository of tradition.⁴⁰

UIN Alauddin Makassar: Intellectual Legacy and Local-Global Synergy

The Makassar approach draws on an intellectual genealogy anchored in figures such as Suhudi Ismail and Kamaruddin Amin, whose methodological innovations bridged classical *isnad-matn* criticism with modern social-scientific analysis.⁴¹ The department's outreach to pesantren and governmental stakeholders, coupled with applied student programs (KKL, Practicum, KKN PkM), reflects an *embedded scholarship* model, where academic knowledge is co-produced and circulated within community contexts.⁴² This aligns with the Islamic epistemological ethic that al-'ilm must be both contextual and socially responsive. As recent scholarship observes, "decolonial Islamic studies in Indonesia emphasize the necessity of grounding Islamic knowledge in local intellectual traditions while simultaneously engaging with global scholarly currents".⁴³ In this sense, the development of Hadith Science can be read not merely as institutional growth but as an act of epistemic sovereignty within the postcolonial condition.

The table below compares three leading Hadith Science Departments in Indonesian PTKIN, outlining their origins, orientations, and strategic approaches. While their trajectories diverge, they share adaptive strategies to secure academic legitimacy, epistemic relevance, and societal engagement.

Table 1. Comparative Institutional Profile of Hadith Science Departments in Three Indonesian Islamic Universities

Dimension	UIN Sunan Kalijaga (Yogyakarta)	UIN Sunan Gunung Djati (Bandung)	UIN Alauddin (Makassar)
Origins & Paradigm	Established through the bifurcation of the Tafsir Hadith program (2014);	Rooted in the Tafsir Hadith unit; embedded in the	Became independent in 2015; shaped by local intellectual

³⁹Redaksi, "UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung Raih Top Score Sinta 2023."

⁴⁰Mark Woodward, "Paradigms, Models, and Counterfactuals: Decolonializing the Study of Islam in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 32, no. 1 (April 2025): 101–35, <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v32i1.46005>.

⁴¹Amiruddin, Andi Muhammad Ali, "Gen Intelektual Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar," September 16, 2023.

⁴²Administrator, "Profil Program Studi Ilmu Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar."

⁴³M. Mushthafa Mushthafa, "Decolonizing Javanese-Islamic Identity in the Discourses of Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Studies," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 18, no. 1 (August 2024): 55–70, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2024.181-04>.

	grounded in the paradigm of integration interconnection	<i>Wahyu Memandu Ilmu</i> paradigm	figures (Suhudi Ismail, Kamaruddin Amin)
Epistemic Orientation	Synthesizes <i>turath</i> with social sciences and humanities; emphasizes the <i>naqli`aqli</i> synthesis	Revelation as the primary epistemic source, while open to digital humanities approaches	Combines classical heritage with historical sociological methods; highlights local global contextualization
Strategic Goals	Academic legitimacy and social relevance	Scholarly productivity and digital visibility	Renewal of Islamic civilization through Hadith studies; strengthening pesantren and policy linkages
Operational Mechanisms	Quality assurance, accreditation, interdisciplinary curriculum, outreach to schools	Publication culture, management of 11 journals, digitalization, and the <i>U.TODAY</i> platform	Fieldwork programs, community engagement, alumni pesantren networks
Strengths & Vulnerabilities	Strong formal legitimacy and quality assurance; risk of bureaucratizationL	High publication output and digital visibility; risk of compromised quality	Strong intellectual heritage and pesantren roots; limited access to international research funding

The comparative analysis of the table synthesizes the key institutional, epistemic, and strategic dimensions of the three leading Hadith Science Departments examined in this study. By juxtaposing their origins, orientations, operational mechanisms, and performance indicators, the table highlights both the diversity of approaches and the shared adaptive strategies these departments employ to enhance academic legitimacy, epistemic relevance, and societal engagement.

The divergent strategies of these three departments converge on a shared logic: survival and relevance depend on the capacity to articulate the epistemic and professional value of Hadith Science within a crowded and marketized higher education field. Functionalist theory helps explain their structural adaptability; Maslow's hierarchy illuminates the pragmatic calculus behind student choice; Islamic epistemology provides a normative anchor for integrating *naqli* and *'aqli* traditions; and postcolonial critique situates these efforts within a broader struggle for epistemic justice in the Global South.

The implication is clear: without sustained innovation, strategic communication, and deliberate cultivation of institutional trust, Hadith Science risks further marginalization. Conversely, by operationalizing hybrid strategies, combining academic rigor, societal engagement, and market relevance, departments can reframe Hadith studies not as an anachronistic specialization but as a dynamic, future-oriented discipline capable of contributing to both Islamic intellectual heritage and contemporary civilizational needs.

Strategic Repositioning of Hadith Science Departments at PTKI: Institutional Responses, Epistemic Renewal, and Civilizational Relevance

The Hadith Science Departments at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar operate within a complex matrix of structural and dynamic challenges that are both internal to their institutions and symptomatic of broader conditions in Indonesia's Islamic higher education sector.⁴⁴ These challenges encompass: (1) stringent demands for administrative compliance with national accreditation and bureaucratic protocols; (2) the volatility of educational politics, where shifts in ministerial priorities and leadership reshuffles can abruptly alter institutional trajectories; (3) the uncertain articulation of graduate employment pathways in a competitive labor market; and (4) the ongoing requirement to secure legitimacy from both governmental bodies and non-governmental stakeholders.⁴⁵

From the vantage point of functionalist social theory,⁴⁶ these constraints are not isolated operational difficulties but indicators of a deeper systemic disequilibrium that necessitates *institutional recalibration*, the process by which organizations restructure their roles, strategies, and symbolic capital to restore stability within their socio-educational environment.⁴⁷ Each department's adaptive strategy reflects its unique historical formation, leadership orientation, and capacity to mobilize resources in response to environmental pressures.

Despite their differing institutional logics, a unifying theme emerges: all three departments articulate an *epistemic optimism*, a forward-looking vision grounded in the recognition of hadith as both a central pillar of Islamic epistemology and a socio-religious resource for addressing contemporary moral and intellectual fragmentation.⁴⁸ This vision is not merely a defensive preservation of religious orthodoxy but an active response to what postcolonial theorists term *epistemic dislocation*, the destabilization of indigenous knowledge systems under the hegemony of global academic norms.⁴⁹ In this reading, the departments'

⁴⁴Nizar Alam Hamdani, "Scrutinizing Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (June 2023): 79–92, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.24478>.

⁴⁵Desmaniar et al., "Towards Sustainable Development of Islamic Higher Education."

⁴⁶Parsons, Talcott, *The Social System*.

⁴⁷M. Adib Fuadi Nuriz and Jaffary Awang, "Islamic Education in Indonesia: Study of Azyumardi Azra's Thought," *Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (June 2021): 205–24, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jar.v5i2.9836>.

⁴⁸Suyadi et al., "Academic Reform and Sustainability of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia"; Administrator, "Profil Program Studi Ilmu Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar"; Wahyudin Darmalaksana, "Rencana Implementasi Penelitian Hadis Pada Pendidikan Tinggi Indonesia: Sebuah Analisis Kebijakan," *Jurnal Hadis Fakultas Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung*, Fakultas Ushuluddin, 2020, <https://digilib.uinsgd.ac.id/32134/>.

⁴⁹Mushthafa, "Decolonizing Javanese-Islamic Identity in the Discourses of Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Studies."

re-engagement with Prophetic traditions is not a nostalgic retreat into the past, but a culturally and theologically situated strategy for ethical reconstruction and moral coherence in the face of modernity's crises of meaning.

Islamic epistemology provides the normative foundation for this reorientation.⁵⁰ It insists upon the integration of *naqli* (transmitted) and *'aqli* (rational) sources in the production of *'ilm nāfi*, knowledge that is both useful and transformative. The life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad serve as the locus of this synthesis, offering metaphysical anchoring for belief and normative guidance for socio-political engagement.⁵¹ The departments under study therefore position contemporary hadith scholarship not as a static repository of tradition, but as an evolving field that must employ modern interpretive tools, including linguistics, hermeneutics, sociology,⁵² and digital humanities,⁵³ to mediate between classical textual heritage and the lived realities of twenty-first-century Muslim societies.⁵⁴

This epistemic repositioning reflects a dual imperative, to safeguard the integrity of Islamic scholarly heritage while ensuring its methodological and thematic relevance to the conditions of the present. In doing so, these departments are not only addressing their immediate institutional sustainability. They are also participating in a broader intellectual project of reasserting the value of indigenous Islamic epistemologies within the contested terrain of global knowledge production.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Adaptive Strategies of Hadith Science Departments within Functionalist Theory, Islamic Epistemology, and Postcolonial Critique

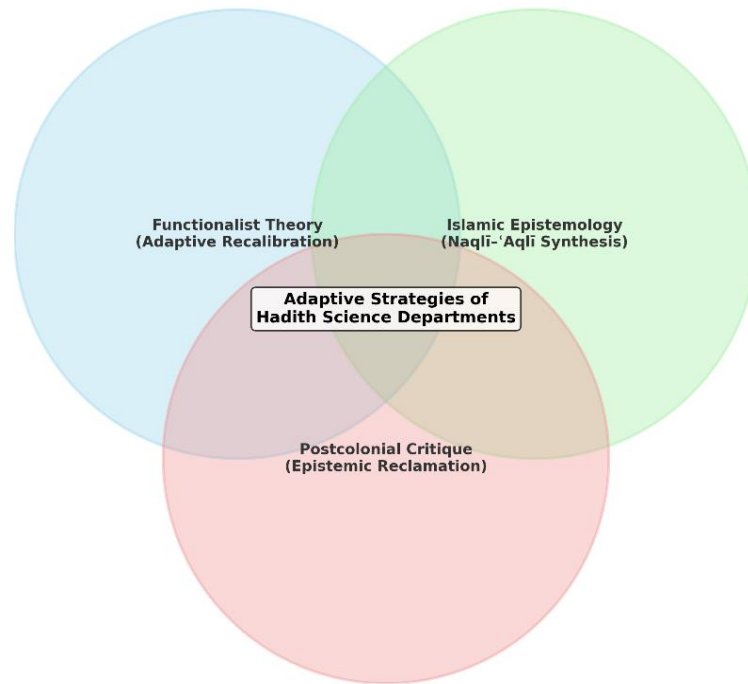
⁵⁰Kasim, "Reformulating Islamic Epistemology."

⁵¹Anisa, "THE LEADERSHIP OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD."

⁵²Abror, Indal, "Strategi Keunggulan Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta," September 6, 2023.

⁵³Administrator, "Profil Program Studi Ilmu Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar."

⁵⁴Amiruddin, Andi Muhammad Ali, "Gen Intelektual Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar," September 16, 2023.



The differentiated strategies adopted by the Hadith Science Departments at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar can be systematically compared through the lens of their respective theoretical orientations. While all three operate under the shared structural pressures of Indonesia's State Islamic Higher Education system, each has articulated a context-specific mode of adaptation that reflects its institutional history, leadership priorities, and sociocultural environment.

In terms of graduate employability, the Hadith Science Departments share the same structural concerns as other Islamic studies programs within Indonesian PTKIs. However, the perception of limited career opportunities is arguably less a matter of inherent disciplinary limitation and more a consequence of how the field is framed to prospective students and stakeholders.⁵⁵ If the graduate profile is reconfigured to emphasize versatile competencies, critical thinking, textual analysis, cultural mediation, and digital literacy, Hadith Science graduates can reasonably compete for the same range of professional roles as their peers in education, research, public service, and the non-profit sector.⁵⁶ (Mahmud,

⁵⁵Amy Irwin, E. Nordmann, and K. Simms, "Stakeholder Perception of Student Employability: Does the Duration, Type and Location of Work Experience Matter?," *Higher Education* 78, no. 5 (November 2019): 761–81, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00369-5>.

⁵⁶Hasanuzzaman Tushar and Nanta Sooraksa, "Global Employability Skills in the 21st Century Workplace: A Semi-Systematic Literature Review," *Heliyon* 9, no. 11 (November 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e21023>.

2022) The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), for instance, has since 2017 explicitly included Quran-Hadith, Islamic History, Aqidah-Akhlak, and Fiqh as teaching specializations in Calon Aparatur Sipil Negara (CASN) recruitment,⁵⁷ indicating that formal career pathways do exist for those whose training aligns with national competency standards.

From a Maslovian perspective, the attractiveness of Hadith Studies will increase if the discipline is framed as capable of fulfilling higher - order needs, such as meaning, belonging, and ethical contribution, while simultaneously offering realistic career trajectories.⁵⁸ Theoretical relevance alone will not suffice; departments must integrate theological formation with market-oriented competencies to overcome the current perception of professional ambiguity.

The trajectories of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar illuminate the multidimensional interplay of structural adaptation, epistemological renewal, and socio-political negotiation. Functionalist theory helps explain how these departments recalibrate their structures and practices to restore equilibrium in the face of external pressures. Maslow's hierarchy of needs reveals the motivational drivers that shape student choice and institutional reform.⁵⁹ Islamic epistemology underscores the discipline's theological grounding in the *uswah hasanah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Meanwhile, postcolonial critique situates these dynamics within the asymmetrical global knowledge order, where Islamic sciences remain marginalized in secular academic hierarchies.

From a Global South perspective, the challenges faced by these departments are not isolated administrative or technical deficiencies but symptoms of deeper systemic tensions that characterize postcolonial higher education.⁶⁰ The bureaucratic instability, fragmented policy direction, and uncertain graduate pathways mirror the epistemic and political vulnerabilities of academic disciplines that resist full assimilation into the Global North's secular-academic paradigm.⁶¹ The colonial legacy continues to shape what counts as "legitimate" knowledge, marginalizing non-Western epistemologies in both recognition and resource allocation.⁶²

⁵⁷Paputungan, Aswar Anas, "Lulusan PTKI Merapat! Kemenag Buka 5.915 Formasi CPNS 2024 Untuk Anda, Ini Rinciannya," *Berita*, September 21, 2024, <https://www.initrends.com/berita/95513455838/lulusan-ptki-merapat-kemenag-buka-5915-formasi-cpns-2024-untuk-anda-ini-rinciannya?>

⁵⁸Maslow, Abraham H., *Motivation and Personality*; Lau Han Sein et al., "Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Learning Theory and Its Implementation in Islamic Religious Education," *Proceeding International Conference on Religion, Science and Education* 4 (April 2025): 1379–89.

⁵⁹Sein et al., "Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Learning Theory and Its Implementation in Islamic Religious Education."

⁶⁰Nour Dados and Raewyn Connell, "The Global South," *Contexts* 11, no. 1 (February 2012): 12–13, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504212436479>; Mushthafa, "Decolonizing Javanese-Islamic Identity in the Discourses of Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Studies."

⁶¹Kirandeep Kaur et al., "Ethics and Epistemic Injustice in the Global South: A Response to Hopman's Human Rights Exceptionalism as Justification for Covert Research," *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 15, no. 2 (August 2023): 347–73, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huad008>.

⁶²Tanja Pommerening et al., "Introduction: Decolonizing Academic Disciplines and Collections," *ICOFOM Study Series* 52–1 (2024): 7–16, <https://doi.org/10.4000/11zlm>.

Here, the dual struggle of Hadith Studies becomes evident: first, to modernize and institutionalize the field in a manner that meets academic and accreditation standards; and second, to retain epistemic authenticity by anchoring its curriculum in *turāth* while simultaneously engaging with contemporary methodologies, linguistics, hermeneutics, sociology, and digital humanities.

From the vantage of Islamic epistemology, the hadith corpus occupies a unique position as a sacred source of knowledge that is textual, existential, and moral.⁶³ This richness is often overlooked in secular universities, where disciplines are judged mainly by their immediate economic value.⁶⁴ By contrast, the prophetic paradigm offers an integrated vision that fuses metaphysical anchoring with socio-political guidance, making it potentially more transformative than purely technical knowledge systems, provided this vision is effectively communicated to modern audiences.⁶⁵

The three Hadith Science Departments examined in this study, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, and UIN Alauddin Makassar, exhibit notable institutional resilience through context-specific innovation. UIN Sunan Kalijaga advances its relevance via strategic policy engagement, aligning academic development with governmental frameworks.⁶⁶ UIN Sunan Gunung Djati capitalizes on digital platforms and a culture of academic productivity to expand its scholarly reach,⁶⁷ while UIN Alauddin Makassar leverages its heritage-based intellectual capital to maintain scholarly authority in hadith studies.⁶⁸ These adaptive approaches demonstrate that the discipline can remain viable by fusing tradition with modern tools, thereby challenging the narrative of inevitable decline in Islamic sciences.⁶⁹ Collectively, these cases offer potential models for other Global South institutions seeking to balance the demands of global academic standards with the preservation of local epistemic integrity.⁷⁰

Despite these strengths, the departments face persistent vulnerabilities that temper their progress. Their reliance on state policy direction exposes them to the risks of

⁶³Umayah, “Epistemology of Hadith Understanding: A Theoretical Study,” *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani* 3, no. 3 (March 2023): 739–62, <https://doi.org/10.55927/mudima.v3i3.3567>; Aswin Nasution et al., “Islamic Epistemology,” *Proceedings Series on Social Sciences & Humanities* 12 (October 2023): 386–96, <https://doi.org/10.30595/pssh.v12i.825>.

⁶⁴Seumas Miller, “Whither the University? Universities of Technology and the Problem of Institutional Purpose,” *Science and Engineering Ethics* 25, no. 6 (December 2019): 1679–98, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-019-00147-7>.

⁶⁵Andrianor, Sari, and Adhitya, “Institutionalizing Science Integration at UIN Sunan Kalijaga”; Kasim, “Reformulating Islamic Epistemology.”

⁶⁶Abror, Indal, “Strategi Keunggulan Ilmu Hadis UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta,” September 6, 2023.

⁶⁷Redaksi, “UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung Raih Top Score Sinta 2023.”

⁶⁸Amiruddin, Andi Muhammad Ali, “Gen Intelektual Hadis UIN Alauddin Makassar,” September 16, 2023.

⁶⁹Desmaniar et al., “Towards Sustainable Development of Islamic Higher Education.”

⁷⁰Desri Ari Enghariano and Toguan Rambe, “The Existence of Religious Studies Programs at PTKIN Amid the Progressiveness of Institutional Transformation | Enghariano | Jurnal Penelitian Medan Agama.”

bureaucratic volatility and shifting political agendas.⁷¹ Although formal career pathways exist, the insufficient alignment between curriculum design and labor market requirements perpetuates the perception of limited employability among graduates.⁷² Moreover, the integration of *turāth* with contemporary methodologies remains inconsistent, some programs overemphasize preservation at the expense of innovation, while others adopt modern techniques superficially without ensuring deep epistemological coherence. These limitations underscore the ongoing challenge of sustaining institutional relevance while safeguarding the intellectual and spiritual foundations of hadith scholarship in a rapidly changing educational and societal landscape.⁷³

In sum, the Hadith Science Departments' condition reflects the broader tension of knowledge production in the Global South, the need to secure institutional survival within policy-driven, accreditation focused environments while resisting epistemic homogenization under the Global North's academic hegemony.⁷⁴ Their strategies, though varied, signal a shared aspiration to reposition hadith studies as not merely an inherited tradition but a living, adaptive intellectual project capable of addressing contemporary civilizational challenges. This study thus contributes to both the sociology of Islamic higher education and the global discourse on epistemic justice, offering a nuanced view of how religious scholarship can survive, adapt, and thrive in a postcolonial age.⁷⁵

Conclusion

Despite its longstanding marginalization within many Indonesian Islamic universities, often overshadowed by Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic law, and Sufism, Hadith Studies at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and UIN Alauddin Makassar have demonstrated remarkable institutional resilience and epistemic innovation. These departments have successfully repositioned the discipline from a peripheral specialization into a dynamic and responsive field that bridges classical Islamic epistemology with the demands of contemporary higher education. This transformation has been driven by strategic leadership, proactive institutional governance, curriculum autonomy, and

⁷¹M Falikul Isbah et al., "Strategies to Enhance the Employability of Higher Education Graduates in Indonesia: A Way Forward," *Society* 11, no. 2 (December 2023): 398–414, <https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v11i2.592>.

⁷²Devi Yulianti and Ade Fitriansyah, "Employment and Skill Development Initiatives in the Labor Markets: The Cases of Indonesia and Thailand," *Journal of Policy Studies* 39, no. 1 (April 2024): 41–55, <https://doi.org/10.52372/jps39104>.

⁷³Latifah Abdul Majid et al., "Exploring Innovations and Challenges in The Study of Hadith in The Digital Era," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 14, no. 3 (March 2024): Pages 1057-1071, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i3/20957>; Mohammed Adnan Abdulrahman, "The Future of Hadith Studies in the Digital Age: Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of Ecobumanism* 3, no. 8 (November 2024), <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.4927>; Abas Hidayat, Siti Fatimah, and Didin Nurul Rosidin, "Challenges and Prospects of Islamic Education Institutions and Sustainability in The Digital Era," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (April 2022): 351–66, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v5i2.2106>.

⁷⁴Joseph E. B. Lombard, "Islam and the Challenge of Epistemic Sovereignty," *Religions* 15, no. 4 (March 2024): 406, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040406>.

⁷⁵Jamiran, Faiz, and Sari, "Postcolonial Critique and Decolonisation Process in Education."

extensive stakeholder engagement, further reinforced by the integration of digital pedagogy, sustained scholarly productivity, and alignment with national frameworks such as KKNI and MBKM. Their active participation in national policy networks and scholarly platforms like ASILHA has amplified both their intellectual influence and institutional adaptability.

These institutional responses constitute a coherent form of adaptive recalibration, stabilizing Islamic higher education structures under growing systemic pressures while fostering an epistemic realignment with contemporary educational, societal, and spiritual imperatives. Beyond meeting pragmatic demands such as graduate employability and academic recognition, these departments address deeper aspirations for ethical purpose and moral clarity. By reclaiming intellectual sovereignty through localized innovation, reintegration of the classical Islamic heritage (*turāth*), and the decolonization of curriculum and research, they challenge the epistemic dominance of Global North paradigms. Through the harmonization of rational (*'aqlī*) and transmitted (*naqlī*) knowledge traditions, they illustrate how sacred knowledge can serve as both a stabilizing institutional force and a dynamic framework for producing transformative, community-responsive scholarship.

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