

## THE MEANING OF MODERN ASSESSMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POSTGRADUATE ISLAMIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

Fardila Silvia<sup>1</sup>, Ainur Rofiq Sofa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo

Email: <sup>1</sup>[fardilasilvi@gmail.com](mailto:fardilasilvi@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[bungaaklirik@gmail.com](mailto:bungaaklirik@gmail.com)

### Keywords:

*Modern Assessment, Postgraduate Students, Islamic Education, Authentic Assessment, Learning Evaluation.*

### Abstract

*This study aims to explore the meaning of modern assessment from the perspective of postgraduate Islamic Education students. The development of digital technology and the transformation of higher education have encouraged assessment practices to move beyond conventional written tests toward more holistic, authentic, and process-oriented evaluation. This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis involving postgraduate Islamic Education students. The findings reveal that students interpret modern assessment not merely as the digitalization of assessment instruments, but as a paradigm shift that emphasizes authentic assessment, formative feedback, student participation, and moral responsibility. Self-assessment and peer assessment are understood as forms of muhasabah and spiritual accountability, while technology-based assessment is viewed as a means of improving transparency, efficiency, and academic accountability. However, the implementation of modern assessment also faces several challenges, including digital literacy gaps, limited infrastructure, and the potential reduction of spiritual values when assessment becomes overly mechanical. This study concludes that modern assessment in postgraduate Islamic Education should integrate academic competence, digital literacy, ethical awareness, and Islamic spiritual values in order to support meaningful and holistic learning.*

## INTRODUCTION

The development of education in the era of globalization and digital transformation has brought significant changes to various aspects of learning, including evaluation and assessment systems. Assessment is no longer understood merely as an instrument for measuring students' cognitive achievement through written tests. Instead, it has developed into a more comprehensive, authentic, and competency-oriented approach. This paradigm shift is commonly referred to as modern assessment, which emphasizes process, continuity, and the integration of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social, and moral dimensions in learning (Rahman, 2025).

Modern assessment emerges as a response to the limitations of conventional assessment, which tends to be product-oriented and focuses heavily on final examination scores. In traditional educational practice, learning success is often measured through test results alone, without sufficient attention to the learning process, character development, reflective ability, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Such a model is no longer adequate to meet the demands of contemporary education, which requires learners to develop holistic competencies and adaptive skills in facing complex social, academic, and technological challenges (Sudaryanto & Sofa, 2025).

In the context of higher education, particularly in postgraduate Islamic Education programs, modern assessment has a strategic position. Islamic Education does not only aim to transfer religious knowledge, but also to shape morality, spirituality, intellectual maturity, and Islamic character. Therefore, assessment in Islamic Education should not be limited to measuring students' mastery of concepts, theories, or textual knowledge. It should also be able to evaluate how students internalize Islamic values, demonstrate ethical responsibility, develop academic honesty, and apply religious knowledge in real-life educational contexts (Bulqiyah & Sofa, 2025).

Postgraduate Islamic Education students represent an important academic group in the development of Islamic education. They are prepared to become educators, researchers, curriculum developers, and educational thinkers who are expected to respond critically to changes in educational practice. Their understanding of modern assessment is significant because it will influence how they design, implement, and evaluate learning in the future. As future educational actors, their perspectives provide valuable insight into how assessment is experienced, interpreted, and reconstructed in Islamic higher education (Hasanah & Sofa, 2025).

The meaning of modern assessment is not limited to the technical use of digital platforms or online evaluation tools. It also includes a deeper philosophical understanding of assessment as part of learning, reflection, and character formation. Modern assessment places students as active subjects who are involved in the evaluation process through self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolio assessment, project-based assessment, performance tasks, and continuous feedback. Through these forms of assessment, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning progress and to develop honesty, independence, and reflective awareness (Helmi & Sofa, 2025).

In Islamic Education, self-assessment and peer assessment can be understood as forms of *muhasabah*, namely self-reflection and moral evaluation. When students are given the opportunity to assess themselves and their peers, they are not only practicing academic evaluation, but also exercising honesty, fairness, and responsibility before God and others. This shows that modern assessment can be integrated with Islamic spiritual values when it is designed ethically and meaningfully. Thus, assessment becomes not only a pedagogical instrument, but also a medium for strengthening moral and spiritual accountability (Nadia & Sofa, 2025).

The use of technology has further expanded the practice of modern assessment. Learning Management Systems, digital portfolios, online quizzes, assessment applications, and artificial intelligence-based tools have made assessment more flexible, transparent, and efficient. These tools enable lecturers to provide faster feedback, monitor student progress, and document learning outcomes more systematically. For students,

technology-based assessment allows easier access to learning materials, submission of assignments, feedback, and academic records. However, the use of technology also requires digital literacy, infrastructure readiness, and ethical awareness from both lecturers and students (Ilahi & Sofa, 2025).

Despite its potential, modern assessment also faces several challenges in Islamic higher education. Digital literacy gaps, limited internet access, unequal technological facilities, and insufficient understanding of assessment principles may hinder its implementation. In addition, there is a risk that assessment becomes too mechanical when technology is used without ethical and spiritual consideration. If assessment is reduced merely to scores, algorithms, or digital procedures, it may lose its humanistic and Islamic educational essence. Therefore, modern assessment in Islamic Education must be developed carefully so that it remains aligned with academic quality, moral values, and spiritual awareness (Khofifah & Sofa, 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to explore the meaning of modern assessment from the perspective of postgraduate Islamic Education students. The focus of this study is directed toward understanding how students interpret modern assessment, how they experience authentic and technology-based assessment, and what challenges they face in its implementation. By examining students' perspectives, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of modern assessment as both an academic and spiritual practice in Islamic higher education (Mardiyah & Sofa, 2025).

This study is expected to contribute theoretically and practically to the development of learning evaluation in Islamic Education. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse on modern assessment by integrating educational evaluation concepts with Islamic values such as honesty, *muhasabah*, responsibility, and *ihsan*. Practically, the findings may provide input for lecturers, study program managers, and policy makers in designing assessment systems that are more authentic, transparent, fair, and spiritually meaningful. Therefore, modern assessment should be understood not merely as an innovation in evaluation techniques, but as a transformative approach to developing intellectually competent, morally responsible, and spiritually aware postgraduate students (Laili et al., 2026).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Modern assessment is an important concept in contemporary education because it changes the function of assessment from merely measuring learning outcomes to supporting the learning process itself. In conventional assessment, students are often evaluated mainly through written tests, midterm examinations, and final examinations. This model tends to emphasize cognitive achievement and final scores. In contrast, modern assessment provides a broader perspective by considering students' learning processes, skills, attitudes, creativity, collaboration, and reflective abilities. Therefore, modern assessment is more relevant to the needs of twenty-first-century education, which requires learners to develop not only knowledge, but also critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, and ethical responsibility (Sofa, 2024).

One of the main forms of modern assessment is authentic assessment. Authentic assessment requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through meaningful tasks that are close to real-life contexts. This type of assessment may include portfolios, projects, presentations, case analysis, performance tasks, reflective journals, and academic writing assignments. Through authentic assessment, lecturers are able to

observe students' development more comprehensively because the evaluation does not only focus on the final product, but also on the process of learning, thinking, creating, and solving problems. In postgraduate education, authentic assessment is particularly important because students are expected to show analytical maturity, research skills, and the ability to construct academic arguments (Fitria & Sofa, 2025).

Modern assessment is also closely related to formative assessment. Formative assessment is carried out during the learning process to provide feedback and improve students' learning progress. Unlike summative assessment, which is usually conducted at the end of a course, formative assessment emphasizes continuous improvement. Through formative feedback, students can identify their weaknesses, revise their work, and improve their understanding before the final evaluation. This approach makes assessment more educative because it helps students learn from mistakes and develop better academic performance over time (Asror & Sofa, 2025).

In the context of Islamic Education, assessment should not only measure intellectual achievement, but also reflect moral and spiritual values. Islamic Education aims to develop students who are knowledgeable, ethical, responsible, and spiritually aware. Therefore, assessment in Islamic Education must be designed to evaluate not only cognitive mastery, but also honesty, discipline, sincerity, responsibility, and noble character. In this perspective, modern assessment becomes highly relevant because it provides space for evaluating students' attitudes, participation, reflection, and moral responsibility within the learning process (Agustini & Sofa, 2025).

Self-assessment and peer assessment are important elements of modern assessment. Self-assessment allows students to evaluate their own learning progress, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and develop responsibility for self-improvement. Peer assessment enables students to provide constructive feedback to their classmates based on clear criteria or rubrics. In Islamic Education, these two forms of assessment can be understood as practices of *muhasabah*, or self-reflection. Students are trained to be honest, fair, objective, and responsible in evaluating themselves and others. Thus, assessment becomes not only an academic activity, but also a process of moral and spiritual formation.

Technology has also become an important factor in the development of modern assessment. The use of Learning Management Systems, online quizzes, digital portfolios, assessment applications, and artificial intelligence-based tools can make assessment more efficient, transparent, and accountable. Digital assessment enables lecturers to provide faster feedback, document students' progress, and manage learning data more systematically. For students, technology-based assessment provides easier access to learning materials, assignment submission, feedback, and academic records. Therefore, technology can support the implementation of modern assessment when it is used properly and ethically.

However, the use of technology in assessment also creates several challenges. Digital literacy gaps, limited internet access, unequal availability of devices, and lack of technical skills can affect the effectiveness of technology-based assessment. In addition, assessment may become too mechanical if it relies excessively on digital systems without considering human judgment, ethical values, and spiritual awareness. In Islamic Education, this condition must be anticipated because assessment should not lose its humanistic and religious dimensions. Technology should function as a supporting tool,

not as a replacement for the role of lecturers in guiding, evaluating, and nurturing students.

Student perspectives are essential in understanding the meaning of modern assessment. Students are the subjects who directly experience various forms of assessment in the learning process. Their perceptions can show whether modern assessment is considered meaningful, fair, transparent, burdensome, or helpful for their academic development. In postgraduate Islamic Education, students' perspectives are even more important because they are future educators, researchers, and educational leaders. Their understanding of modern assessment will influence how they design and implement evaluation systems in Islamic educational institutions.

Based on the literature, modern assessment in postgraduate Islamic Education should be understood as a holistic evaluation paradigm that integrates authentic assessment, formative feedback, student participation, technology, and Islamic values. It should not be limited to digitalizing assessment instruments, but should transform the way assessment is understood and practiced. Modern assessment must encourage students to become independent learners, critical thinkers, honest individuals, and spiritually responsible academics. Therefore, modern assessment can serve as a strategic instrument for improving the quality of Islamic higher education while maintaining the moral and spiritual essence of Islamic learning (Asia & Sofa, 2026).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore in depth the essence of the lived experiences of postgraduate Islamic Religious Education students regarding the implementation of modern assessment. Data were obtained directly by the researcher as the main instrument through semi-structured in-depth interviews, observation, and document study involving informants selected through purposive sampling. The narrative data were then analyzed inductively through the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested using triangulation and member checking techniques to ensure scientific credibility (Putri et al., 2026).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Modern Assessment as a Manifestation of Spiritual Accountability: Ihsan and Muhasabah**

Based on interview data, informants from postgraduate Islamic Religious Education students consistently connected the implementation of modern assessment, especially self-assessment and peer assessment, with Islamic theological doctrine. When they were asked to assess their own capacity or evaluate the academic performance of their peers using structured rubrics, they did not view it as an opportunity to manipulate scores for pragmatic benefit (Arifin & Sofa, 2024).

Instead, the students interpreted this moment as a form of spiritual exercise that tested honesty. There was a transcendental awareness that the completion of evaluation sheets was vertically supervised by Allah. The authority of assessment, which was shifted from lecturers to students through modern assessment, encouraged a strong sense of moral responsibility, in which objectivity was viewed as a reflection of piety (Yunus & Sofa, 2025).

This construction of meaning shows that modern assessment at the postgraduate level is able to reach a high affective-spiritual domain. While conventional evaluation models tend to position students as passive objects assessed unilaterally, self-assessment and peer assessment provide a space for autonomy that demands radical honesty (Baharun & Mundiri, 2020).

In the epistemology of Islamic education, this phenomenon represents a concrete transformation of evaluation instruments into a medium of *muhasabah* or self-introspection and a manifestation of *ihsan*, namely doing good because one feels constantly observed by God. Evaluation is no longer coercive, but becomes an internal awareness.

### **Paradigm Shift: Deconstructing Product Orientation toward Process Appreciation**

Informants expressed critical views of traditional assessment models, such as written midterm and final examinations based on textual memorization, which were considered highly reductionist. For postgraduate students, conventional assessment fails to capture the actual spectrum of their analytical skills and philosophical thinking. The essential meaning of modern assessment that they experienced lies in the implementation of authentic assessment, such as performance assessment, academic journal draft writing, and project-based assessment (Widiyanto, 2023).

Students felt that their capacities as prospective master's or doctoral graduates in Islamic Religious Education were more appreciated because lecturers monitored the development of their competencies from day to day through portfolios, rather than merely observing static numbers on final examination papers.

The shift from product-oriented assessment to process-oriented assessment reflects the successful adoption of twenty-first-century educational principles. Authentic assessment encourages students to construct knowledge, conduct critical analysis, and solve real problems found in society or local Islamic educational institutions.

Nevertheless, the interview findings also revealed a dilemma. Process-based assessment requires much greater energy, time, and concentration from students. The complexity of modern assignments sometimes creates psychological tension when instructions and assessment parameters are not communicated transparently by lecturers from the beginning of the course.

### **Technology-Based Assessment: Efficiency, Transparency, and Academic Accountability**

The third emerging theme is the integration of digital technology into the evaluation ecosystem. Postgraduate Islamic Religious Education students interpret modern assessment as a system attached to the use of Learning Management Systems and artificial intelligence-based assessment applications. Based on their lived experiences, the use of digital systems has brought significant positive impacts on grade transparency (Ramadani et al., 2024).

Students are able to track the drafts of assignments they have uploaded, view detailed revision notes, and know their final scores directly without anything being hidden

by lecturers. This rapid feedback process allows students to immediately improve their academic weaknesses without having to wait until the end of the semester.

The meaning of modern assessment in this context has shifted into a symbol of efficiency and distributive justice. Through computerized assessment, lecturer subjectivity, which is often complained about in traditional assessment, can be significantly reduced. Students receive their right to evaluation in a more accountable manner.

Instant feedback facilitated by modern data-processing technology has proven to accelerate the teaching and learning cycle at the postgraduate level, which requires a high degree of independent thinking.

### **Dynamics of Obstacles: Digital Literacy Gaps and Technological Infrastructure**

Although the digital dimension of modern assessment offers high practicality, field data show narratives of obstacles experienced by some informants. Not all postgraduate students have the same level of readiness in responding to digitalized evaluation. Students with traditional pesantren educational backgrounds or those from remote areas with limited internet access often consider LMS-based assessment or intelligent applications as new technical burdens (Salsabela & Sofa, 2025).

This condition creates an ambivalent interpretation. On the one hand, technology is praised as a helpful solution. On the other hand, it is perceived as intimidating and may create inequality for those who lack digital skills or adequate hardware facilities.

This reality proves the existence of a digital divide within postgraduate Islamic higher education. Modern assessment cannot be separated from its supporting technological ecosystem. If a study program rushes to implement advanced assessment systems without measuring the digital literacy index of students and lecturers as well as infrastructure readiness, then the substance of modern assessment, namely humanizing and personalizing the learning process, will fail to be achieved (Syauqi et al., 2020).

### **Modern Assessment as a Stimulus for Autonomous Learning**

The final theme that completes the structure of informants' meaning is the role of modern assessment as a stimulus for autonomous learning. Because modern assessment formats, such as case studies, critical analysis of classical Islamic texts or digitalized *kitab kuning*, and mini research projects, demand authentic performance, postgraduate Islamic Religious Education students realize that they can no longer depend solely on one-way explanations from lecturers in the classroom (Agustine & Fauji, 2024). Modern assessment encourages them to actively search for reference sources independently outside lecture hours, study methodology independently, and manage their study time flexibly in order to meet the high standards of assignment rubrics. Conceptually, modern assessment functions as assessment as learning. From the students' perspective, adaptive and challenging assignments become a positive stimulus for developing independent intellectual capacity. This learning autonomy is crucial for postgraduate students because they are being prepared to become researchers and conceptual thinkers in Islamic education in the future.

In addition, autonomous learning generated through modern assessment also strengthens students' academic discipline and responsibility. When students are required

to complete portfolios, research-based assignments, digital projects, or critical reflections, they are encouraged to plan their learning activities, select credible references, evaluate the quality of their work, and revise their assignments based on feedback. This process trains postgraduate Islamic Religious Education students to become more independent, reflective, and accountable in their academic journey. Therefore, modern assessment does not only measure learning achievement, but also develops students' capacity to regulate their own learning, construct knowledge independently, and prepare themselves as future scholars and educators in Islamic education.

The independence generated through modern assessment trains higher-order thinking skills, including the ability to evaluate and create.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of modern assessment at the postgraduate level of Islamic Religious Education has successfully deconstructed the conventional evaluation model from a product-oriented system into an appreciation of the learning process that encourages students' autonomous learning through authentic assessment. From the students' perspective, various instruments such as self-assessment and peer assessment are not merely viewed as technical tools, but are deeply interpreted as manifestations of spiritual accountability, namely as media of *muhasabah* and expressions of *ihsan* based on transcendental honesty.

Although the integration of digital technology, such as Learning Management Systems and artificial intelligence, has proven capable of increasing efficiency and grade transparency in an accountable manner, its implementation in practice still leaves several challenges, particularly digital literacy gaps and limited network infrastructure. Therefore, the success of this assessment transformation depends greatly on the readiness of the supporting ecosystem and the holistic understanding of the academic community so that the essence of modern assessment can operate effectively without reducing the spiritual values of Islam.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agustini, A., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Mencintai karena Allah: Konsep dan aplikasinya dalam kehidupan sosial berdasarkan Al-Qur'an dan Hadits serta implikasinya di kampus Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo. *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 3(1), 35–41.
- Arifin, M. Z., & Sofa, A. R. (2024). Ilmu sebagai kunci kesuksesan dunia dan akhirat menurut Al-Quran dan Hadist. *Inspirasi Dunia: Jurnal Riset Pendidikan Dan Bahasa*, 3(4), 118–125.
- Asia, S., & Sofa, A. R. (2026). THE ROLE OF INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC STUDIES IN STUDENTS'SPIRITUAL AND INTELLECTUAL AWARENESS. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Global and Multidisciplinary*, 2(2), 422–433.
- Asror, M., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Pemahaman makna harfiah dan majazi dalam bahasa Arab: Potret kemampuan siswa SMP Lubbul Labib. *Lencana: Jurnal Inovasi Ilmu Pendidikan*, 3(2), 61–75.
- Bulqiyah, H., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Strategi meningkatkan kompetensi maharoh qiroah dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Pondok Pesantren Rofiu Darojah. *Ikhlas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam*, 2(2), 136–148.

- Fitria, S. R., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Strategi pemaknaan dalam memahami teks narasi berbahasa Arab di SMA Terpadu Darut Tauhid Patemon Kerejengan. *Pragmatik: Jurnal Rumpun Ilmu Bahasa Dan Pendidikan*, 3(3), 110–131.
- Hasanah, U., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Peran Imam al-Asy'ari dan al-Maturidi dalam pengembangan pemikiran Aswaja di pendidikan Islam. *Ikhlās: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam*, 2(2), 123–135.
- Helmi, M., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Melahirkan generasi berkarakter unggul melalui transformasi sosial yang berbasis pendidikan, nilai, dan kolaborasi masyarakat di MTs Miftahul Khoir Alastengah Besuk. *Reflection: Islamic Education Journal*, 2(1), 186–199.
- Ilahi, D. S. K., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Digitalisasi konsep mawaddah wa rahmah dalam Al-Qur'an dan Hadist: Strategi psikologi keluarga untuk membangun keharmonisan rumah tangga di Desa Bucor Wetan Probolinggo. *Jurnal Budi Pekerti Agama Islam*, 3(1), 180–200.
- Khofifah, N., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Upaya Pemeliharaan Kesehatan dan Kebersihan di Pondok Puteri Pusat Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong Berdasarkan Ajaran Al-Qur'an dan Hadits. *Karakter: Jurnal Riset Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, 2(2), 164–191.
- Laili, N., Sofa, A. R., Bukhori, I., Aziz, A., & Islam, M. H. (2026). Pengembangan Self-Regulation Melalui Kegiatan Ekstrakurikuler Tahfidz Al-Qur'an di Sekolah Dasar Kalianan Krucil Probolinggo. *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 10(2), 1170–1185.
- Mardiyah, A., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Strategi pengembangan mufradat bahasa Arab dalam pembelajaran kontemporer. *Dinamika Pembelajaran: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa*, 2(2), 364–373.
- Nadia, R. Y., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Keutamaan Ilmu dan Klasifikasi Pendidikan Menurut Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Qayyim: Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadits. *Jurnal Budi Pekerti Agama Islam*, 3(1), 291–300.
- Putri, F. A., Sofa, A. R., Bukhori, I., Aziz, A., & Islam, M. H. (2026). Pembentukan Karakter Siswa Melalui Pembiasaan dan Keteladanan Study Kasus di Kelas III SD Unggulan Cahaya Cendekia Glagah Kecamatan Pakuniran. *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 10(2), 1034–1049.
- Rahman, N. A. (2025). *Competency-Based and Ethical Assessment Models in Contemporary*. (1), 57–69.
- Salsabela, K., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Kosakata serapan dalam bahasa Arab pada buku Al-'Arabiyyah Bayna Yadayk: Kajian linguistik kontemporer. *Dinamika Pembelajaran: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa*, 2(2), 348–363.
- Sofa, A. R. (2024). Ibtikarat Fi Ta'lum Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyya Min Khilal Al-Dhaka' Al-Istina'i: Istratijiyyat Fa'ala Litahsin Itqan Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyya Fi Al-Jami'a Al-Islamiyyah Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo. *Ukazh: Journal of Arabic Studies*, 5(4), 741–757.
- Sudaryanto, M. U., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Implementasi Pembelajaran Tajwid sebagai Sarana Tadabbur Al-Qur'an di SD Negeri III Kalianan Krucil Probolinggo: Strategi,

Tantangan, dan Dampaknya terhadap Pemahaman Keislaman Siswa. *Ikhlas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam*, 2(2), 57–68.

Yunus, M., & Sofa, A. R. (2025). Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Al-Qur'an dan Hadits Nabi Dalam Kehidupan Peserta Didik di MTS. Raudlatul Hasaniyah Mojolegi Gading Probolinggo. *Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 2(1), 209–225.