

Institutional Transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung: Historical Development, Islamic Knowledge Paradigm, and Educational Implications

Muhamad Rizza¹, Sri Murti Ningsih², Afiatuz Zahra³, Iwan Royana⁴

¹Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia ; ^{2,3,4}UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
rizza_m@ahsgs.uum.edu.my; shreemrthy@gmail.com

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Abstract

The transformation of Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia from Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) to Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) involves legal restructuring, academic paradigm development, and institutional quality improvement. However, previous studies have generally addressed knowledge integration and institutional management separately, leaving the relationship between legal transformation, Islamic knowledge paradigms, and institutional development after conversion insufficiently explored. This study reconstructs the transformation of IAIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung into UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung by examining its historical trajectory, legal foundations, *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (WMI) paradigm, and institutional implications. A qualitative library research design was employed, drawing on scholarly articles, government regulations, institutional documents, academic guidelines, and official university publications. Descriptive analysis involved identification, thematic classification, interpretation, and synthesis, guided by Kurt Lewin's organizational change model. The findings indicate that the transformation unfolded gradually through academic expansion, implementation of a wider mandate, legal recognition, and institutional restructuring. The WMI paradigm provided a conceptual foundation for integrating Islamic values with scientific development following conversion. Institutional growth was reflected in the expansion of study programs, improved accreditation, student development, research capacity, and community engagement. These findings highlight the interconnected legal, epistemological, and institutional dimensions of transformation. The study contributes to Islamic higher education scholarship

by emphasizing the importance of aligning regulatory legitimacy, knowledge paradigms, and sustained quality development in institutional transformation.

Keywords: Islamic Higher Education; Institutional Transformation; Knowledge Integration; *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu*; UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of Islamic higher education institutions has become an important phenomenon in the development of contemporary higher education systems, particularly in countries where religious education institutions seek to respond to globalization, scientific advancement, and increasing demands for institutional quality. In Indonesia, the transition of State Islamic Institutes (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri* / IAIN) into State Islamic Universities (*Universitas Islam Negeri* / UIN) represents a significant institutional reform that extends beyond administrative restructuring. This transformation reflects broader changes in academic orientation, organizational governance, disciplinary expansion, and the relationship between Islamic knowledge and modern sciences. The emergence of UIN institutions demonstrates an effort to reposition Islamic higher education as a multidisciplinary academic environment capable of integrating religious scholarship with science, technology, and social sciences (Lukens-Bull, 2013). Therefore, institutional transformation within Islamic higher education should be understood as a complex process involving structural, epistemological, and cultural dimensions rather than merely a change in institutional status.

The transformation from IAIN to UIN reflects a strategic response to challenges faced by Islamic higher education institutions in maintaining religious identity while achieving academic competitiveness. Historically, Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia developed primarily around religious studies, particularly Islamic law, education, and theology. However, changing social demands encouraged these institutions to broaden their academic mandates by establishing programs in science, technology, economics, and other disciplines. According to Abdullah (2017), the transformation of Islamic higher education represents an important milestone in the development of Islamic studies because it encourages interaction between religious knowledge and contemporary scientific disciplines. Similarly, the concept of knowledge integration promoted by many UIN institutions demonstrates an attempt to overcome the dichotomy between religious and

secular sciences. In this context, institutional transformation becomes a mechanism for redefining the mission, identity, and future direction of Islamic universities in Indonesia.

One important example of this transformation is UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, which has undergone a historical development from an Islamic institute into a comprehensive Islamic university. The transformation process involved several interconnected aspects, including regulatory recognition, expansion of academic programs, institutional restructuring, and development of an epistemological framework known as *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (WMI). This paradigm emphasizes the relationship between revelation and scientific inquiry by positioning Islamic values as a foundation for knowledge development. From the perspective of organizational change, institutional transformation requires alignment between structural adaptation, organizational culture, and shared institutional vision Kotter (2012). Therefore, the experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung provides an important case for understanding how Islamic higher education institutions negotiate between historical identity and contemporary academic demands.

Previous studies have examined Islamic higher education transformation from various perspectives. Some studies focus on epistemological reform, particularly efforts to integrate Islamic knowledge with modern sciences. These studies emphasize that knowledge integration has become a central discourse in developing a more comprehensive Islamic educational paradigm (Al-Attas (Syed.), 1991; Kuntowijoyo, 2004). Other research has explored institutional management, leadership, and quality improvement within Islamic universities, demonstrating that successful transformation requires strategic governance, organizational commitment, and continuous institutional development (Fridiyanto & Firmansyah, 2025). Furthermore, studies on higher education transformation suggest that organizational change in universities involves complex interactions between policy frameworks, institutional culture, leadership practices, and academic communities. However, these studies often examine specific dimensions separately, resulting in limited understanding of how legal transformation, knowledge paradigm, and institutional performance interact within a single transformation process.

Based on the previous literature, a research gap can be identified regarding the need for an integrated analysis of Islamic higher education transformation. Existing studies have provided valuable insights into either philosophical aspects of knowledge integration, leadership strategies, or institutional development, but fewer studies have examined how

these dimensions are interconnected in the transformation of a specific UIN institution. In particular, the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung has not been sufficiently analyzed as a continuous institutional process involving regulatory legitimacy, epistemological reconstruction, and organizational development. This gap is important because institutional transformation cannot be evaluated solely through changes in legal status or academic expansion but must also consider how institutions construct new identities and maintain their Islamic mission within modern higher education environments. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis is needed to understand the mechanisms and implications of transformation within Islamic higher education institutions.

This study is theoretically grounded in organizational change theory, particularly the perspective that institutional transformation involves processes of unfreezing existing structures, implementing change, and establishing new organizational conditions (Lewin, 1951). In addition, institutional theory explains that organizations develop and maintain legitimacy through adaptation to external regulations, social expectations, and internal values (Scott, 2013). These theoretical perspectives are relevant for analyzing UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung because its transformation involved both external pressures, such as national higher education policies, and internal efforts to develop an institutional identity based on Islamic knowledge integration. By combining organizational change and institutional perspectives, this study provides a framework for examining transformation as a multidimensional process involving policy, knowledge, and institutional performance.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the institutional transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung by examining its historical development, legal foundation, Islamic knowledge paradigm, and educational implications. Unlike previous studies that mainly discuss Islamic higher education transformation from isolated perspectives, this study seeks to provide an integrated understanding of how regulatory legitimacy, epistemological orientation, and institutional development interact in shaping the transformation process. The contribution of this study lies in presenting a conceptual analysis of Islamic university transformation as a dynamic process that requires alignment between institutional identity, knowledge development, and quality improvement. Through this analysis, the study is expected to contribute to broader discussions on Islamic higher education management and provide insights for other Islamic higher education institutions undergoing similar transformation processes.

METHODS

1. Research Type and Design

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design to analyze the institutional transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. A qualitative approach was selected because the research focuses on understanding historical processes, institutional changes, and conceptual developments rather than measuring numerical relationships among variables. Library research enables researchers to systematically examine various written sources to construct interpretations based on existing knowledge and documented evidence (Snyder, 2019). This approach is appropriate for examining the transformation of Islamic higher education institutions because the research object involves historical development, policy changes, institutional documents, and academic paradigms that are primarily represented through textual sources. Therefore, this study was designed as a descriptive-analytical study to reconstruct the transformation process of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung from historical, institutional, and epistemological perspectives..

2. Data Sources and Selection Criteria

The data sources in this study consisted of academic publications, institutional documents, government regulations, official reports, and other relevant documents related to the transformation of Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia, particularly UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The selection of sources was conducted purposively based on several criteria: relevance to the research focus, academic credibility, accessibility of information, and direct connection with the institutional transformation process. Primary sources included official regulations concerning the transformation of Islamic higher education institutions, institutional profiles, strategic plans, academic documents, and official publications from UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Secondary sources included journal articles, books, and scholarly works discussing Islamic higher education transformation, organizational change, knowledge integration, and higher education management. The use of multiple source categories allowed the study to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the transformation process through source triangulation (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation analysis. The researchers identified, collected, and reviewed relevant documents related to the historical

development, legal transformation, academic paradigm, and institutional achievements of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The collected materials were then organized based on thematic relevance, including institutional history, regulatory transformation, the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (WMI) paradigm, academic development, and quality improvement. Documentation analysis was selected because written records provide important evidence for examining institutional development and historical processes. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is an effective qualitative research technique because documents contain contextual information that can support interpretation of social and organizational phenomena. Through this process, the researchers established a structured database of relevant information before conducting further analysis.

4. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis through several stages: data identification, categorization, interpretation, and synthesis. First, relevant information from documents and literature was identified based on the research objectives. Second, the extracted information was categorized into major themes, including historical transformation, legal foundation, knowledge paradigm, and institutional implications. Third, each category was interpreted by connecting empirical information from documents with relevant theoretical perspectives, particularly organizational change theory and institutional theory. Finally, the findings were synthesized to develop an integrated understanding of how regulatory legitimacy, epistemological orientation, and institutional development contributed to the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Content analysis allows researchers to systematically interpret textual materials and identify meaningful patterns within qualitative data (Krippendorff, 2018).

5. Data Validity and Trustworthiness

The credibility of the findings was maintained through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from academic literature, official institutional documents, and government regulations. This strategy was implemented to minimize bias and ensure that interpretations were supported by multiple sources of evidence. In addition, the researchers applied careful source selection by prioritizing authoritative publications and documents directly related to the research topic. The interpretation process was conducted systematically by maintaining consistency between research objectives, data categories, and analytical procedures. Through these procedures, the study sought to produce a reliable

conceptual explanation of the institutional transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of institutional documents, regulatory records, academic publications, and official reports related to the transformation of IAIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung into UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The results are organized into several themes, including the historical development of the institution, the legal and organizational transformation process, the implementation of the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* paradigm, and post-transformation institutional achievements. The findings describe the stages, evidence, and outcomes of institutional transformation as identified from the collected sources.

1. Historical Development of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

The findings show that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung occurred through a gradual institutional development process that reflected changes in the direction of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. The institution initially developed as a State Islamic Institute (Institut Agama Islam Negeri/IAIN) with a primary focus on Islamic religious studies. Over time, the institution expanded its academic orientation by developing broader scientific disciplines and strengthening its institutional capacity. This development was marked by changes in academic structure, study programs, organizational governance, and institutional vision. The transformation process eventually resulted in the establishment of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung as a university with a wider academic mandate.

The historical development indicates several important phases in the institutional transformation process. The first phase involved the establishment and consolidation of Islamic higher education institutions as centers for religious studies. The second phase involved academic expansion through the introduction of multidisciplinary programs beyond traditional Islamic studies. The third phase was characterized by institutional conversion into a university structure that integrated Islamic studies with various scientific fields. These phases demonstrate that institutional transformation occurred through continuous development rather than a single administrative change.

The transformation process also involved strengthening institutional identity through the development of a broader academic vision. UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

positioned itself as an Islamic university that integrates religious values with scientific development. This orientation influenced the development of academic programs, research activities, institutional policies, and educational practices. The transformation therefore resulted not only in a change of institutional status but also in a broader restructuring of academic direction.

Table 1. Chronology of Institutional Development of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

Tahun	Peristiwa	Data/Sumber
1968	The establishment of IAIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.	April 8, 1968; Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 56 of 1968.
2005	The institutional status of IAIN was transformed into UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.	Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 57 of 2005; October 10, 2005.
2022	The Wahyu Memandu Ilmu paradigm was studied and developed as the scientific paradigm of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.	Ridwan, Natsir, & Haryanti (2022).
2025	UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung had 67 study programs, with 43 programs achieving A/Excellent accreditation status.	Fourth Quarter 2025 Performance Report.
2026	UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung reached its 58th anniversary.	58th Dies Natalis Reflection, April 8, 2026.

2. Legal and Institutional Transformation from IAIN to UIN

The findings indicate that the transition from IAIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung to UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung was supported by formal regulatory processes that provided institutional legitimacy. The transformation involved changes in institutional authority, academic scope, organizational structure, and educational responsibilities. The conversion allowed the institution to establish broader academic programs and operate as a multidisciplinary university.

The legal transformation created opportunities for institutional development through the expansion of faculties and study programs. Following the conversion, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung developed academic programs in various fields, including social sciences, economics, science, technology, and education, while maintaining Islamic studies as an essential foundation. This expansion changed the institutional profile from a primarily religious institute into a comprehensive Islamic university.

The institutional transformation can be identified through several indicators, including organizational restructuring, academic diversification, increased educational capacity, and development of institutional management systems. The transformation process

also encouraged improvements in academic services, research activities, and community engagement programs. These changes demonstrate the institutional consequences of the transition from IAIN to UIN.

Table 2. Stages of Institutional Transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

Transformation Stage	Main Characteristics	Institutional Development
Islamic institute development	Focus on Islamic religious studies	Strengthening religious academic foundations
Academic expansion	Development of multidisciplinary programs	Broader scientific fields and educational capacity
Institutional conversion	Transition from IAIN to UIN	Wider mandate and university-level structure
Post-conversion development	Improvement of quality and competitiveness	Academic growth, research, and institutional strengthening

3. *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* as an Institutional Knowledge Paradigm

The findings reveal that the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (WMI) paradigm became one of the main conceptual foundations in the academic development of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The paradigm emphasizes the relationship between revelation and scientific knowledge by positioning Islamic values as a guiding framework in the development of academic disciplines. The implementation of WMI influenced the institution's academic orientation, curriculum development, research direction, and educational activities.

The WMI paradigm was reflected through efforts to integrate Islamic perspectives with various scientific fields. Academic development was directed toward creating interactions between religious knowledge and contemporary sciences rather than separating them into independent domains. This approach was applied through curriculum formulation, academic policies, research themes, and institutional programs.

The findings show that the implementation of WMI contributed to the formation of institutional identity after the transformation into UIN. The paradigm provided a conceptual framework for maintaining Islamic characteristics while developing broader academic disciplines. Through this orientation, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung developed as an institution that combines Islamic values with multidisciplinary scientific development.

Table 3. Implementation of Wahyu Memandu Ilmu Paradigm

Dimension	Implementation Form
Academic dimension	Integration of Islamic values within multidisciplinary studies
Curriculum dimension	Development of learning approaches based on Islamic knowledge orientation
Research dimension	Encouragement of interdisciplinary research themes
Institutional dimension	Strengthening Islamic identity within university development

4. Prestasi dan Capaian UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung sampai 2026

The findings indicate that the transformation from IAIN to UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung was followed by significant institutional development reflected in academic expansion, quality improvement, research productivity, student achievements, and community engagement activities. The post-transformation development demonstrates changes in institutional capacity, where the university expanded its academic services while strengthening its position as a multidisciplinary Islamic higher education institution.

In the academic quality aspect, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung experienced continuous improvement in the development and accreditation of study programs. The institutional data show that the university currently manages 67 study programs, with 43 programs achieving A/Excellent accreditation status in 2025. This achievement reflects the development of academic quality assurance systems and institutional efforts to improve educational standards across various disciplines.

In terms of student development, the findings show that UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung has supported student achievement through various academic and non-academic activities. In 2025, a total of 508 students reported achievements through the student achievement system. These achievements covered several areas, including academic competitions, research activities, innovation, arts, sports, entrepreneurship, and community engagement. The data demonstrate the diversity of student achievement development after the institutional transformation.

The transformation also contributed to the strengthening of research and innovation capacity. The institutional report indicates that UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung recorded 25 registered patents as part of its innovation achievements within the State Islamic Higher Education (PTKIN) environment in 2026. In addition, the university continued to develop its scientific publication capacity, with five institutional journals achieving Scopus indexing status, including the International Journal of Islamic Khazanah (IJIK) in 2025.

Beyond academic and research development, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung also demonstrated growth in community engagement activities. In 2026, a total of 6,740 students participated in the Community Service Program (Kuliah Kerja Nyata/KKN) through 12 implementation schemes with activities reaching eight countries. These activities represent the expansion of the university's social contribution through educational, community, and international engagement programs. The specific achievements after transformation are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Specific Achievements of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

Achievement Area	Identified Data	Year
Student Achievements	A total of 508 students reported achievements through the student achievement system, covering various fields including academic competitions, research, innovation, arts, sports, entrepreneurship, and community engagement.	2025
Study Program Quality	A total of 43 out of 67 study programs achieved A/Excellent accreditation status, indicating institutional improvement in academic quality assurance.	2025
Research and Innovation	UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung recorded 25 registered patents reported as institutional achievements within the State Islamic Higher Education (PTKIN) environment.	2026
Scientific Publications	Five journals managed by UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung have been indexed in Scopus, including the International Journal of Islamic Khazanah (IJK).	2025
Community Engagement	A total of 6,740 UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung students participated in the 2026 Community Service Program (Kuliah Kerja Nyata/KKN) through 12 implementation schemes across eight countries.	2026

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung represents a multidimensional institutional change involving historical development, regulatory transformation, knowledge paradigm reconstruction, and academic performance improvement. The transition from IAIN to UIN cannot be understood merely as a change in institutional status, but rather as a continuous process involving organizational adaptation, identity reconstruction, and strategic development within Islamic higher education. The results show that institutional transformation occurred through the interaction between external factors, such as national higher education policies and regulatory frameworks, and internal factors, including academic vision, institutional culture, and knowledge development orientation. Therefore, this discussion interprets the transformation process through the perspective of organizational change, institutional development, and Islamic higher education management. The following sections discuss how the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung reflects broader patterns of institutional change and contributes to understanding the development of contemporary Islamic universities.

1. Institutional Transformation as Organizational Change in Islamic Higher Education

The findings indicate that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung reflects a process of organizational change rather than a simple administrative conversion. The transition from IAIN to UIN involved modifications in institutional structure, academic scope, organizational identity, and educational objectives. From the perspective of organizational change, institutional transformation occurs when organizations respond to internal and external pressures by adjusting their structures, strategies, and operational systems. Lewin's change model explains that organizational transformation involves three interconnected stages: unfreezing existing conditions, implementing change, and refreezing new organizational practices (Lewin, 1947). In the context of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, the initial development from an Islamic institute toward a multidisciplinary university represents a process of institutional preparation and adaptation to broader educational demands. The conversion into UIN subsequently established a new organizational structure with wider academic authority and institutional responsibilities.

The transformation process demonstrates that higher education institutions must continuously adapt to changes in their external environment while maintaining their fundamental identity. Institutional transformation in universities is often influenced by government regulations, societal expectations, academic competition, and demands for quality improvement (Scott, 2013). The findings show that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung was supported by regulatory legitimacy through formal government policies that enabled institutional expansion and academic diversification. However, regulatory approval alone was insufficient to ensure successful transformation because institutions also required internal readiness, including academic restructuring and the development of a shared institutional vision. This finding confirms that organizational change in higher education involves both structural reform and cultural transformation. Therefore, the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung represents an organizational process in which institutional legitimacy and internal capacity developed simultaneously.

The expansion from IAIN to UIN also reflects a change in the institutional role of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Previously, Islamic higher education institutions primarily focused on religious studies, whereas the UIN model introduced a broader academic mandate that integrates Islamic scholarship with various scientific disciplines

(Murtini et al., 2026; Siregar et al., 2026; Sulistyorini et al., 2026). This transformation indicates a shift from a specialized religious institution toward a comprehensive university model. Altbach & Hans de Wit (2018) explain that higher education institutions worldwide experience transformation due to globalization, knowledge expansion, and increasing demands for academic competitiveness. In this context, the development of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung illustrates how Islamic universities respond to contemporary higher education challenges while maintaining their religious identity. The institutional transformation therefore represents not only organizational growth but also a repositioning of Islamic higher education within the national and global academic landscape.

Furthermore, the transformation process highlights the importance of leadership, institutional vision, and organizational commitment in sustaining educational change. Successful organizational transformation requires alignment between institutional goals, stakeholder involvement, and continuous improvement mechanisms (Kotter, 2012). The findings regarding academic expansion, accreditation improvement, research development, and community engagement indicate that post-transformation development depends on the ability of the institution to translate structural changes into sustainable academic practices. In the case of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, the transformation created opportunities for strengthening institutional capacity while maintaining its Islamic educational mission. Therefore, the experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung provides an example of how Islamic higher education institutions can undergo organizational transformation through the integration of regulatory adaptation, academic development, and institutional identity formation.

2. *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* as an Epistemological Foundation of Islamic Higher Education Transformation

The findings regarding the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* (WMI) paradigm indicate that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung was not limited to institutional restructuring but also involved an epistemological transformation in understanding the relationship between revelation and scientific knowledge. The development of WMI demonstrates an effort to establish an academic identity that integrates Islamic values with contemporary scientific development (Kusuma, 2020; Ridwan et al., 2022; Supiana et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic higher education, the transformation from IAIN to UIN requires not only the expansion of academic disciplines but also the reconstruction of the philosophical foundation that guides knowledge production (Rizza et al., 2026). Therefore,

WMI functions as a conceptual framework that provides direction for academic development after institutional conversion. This finding suggests that institutional transformation becomes more sustainable when structural changes are accompanied by changes in knowledge orientation and academic identity.

The integration of revelation and science represented by WMI reflects a broader discourse within Islamic higher education regarding the relationship between religious knowledge and modern scientific disciplines. Historically, Islamic educational institutions have faced challenges related to the separation between religious sciences and secular sciences, which influenced curriculum structures and academic development. Al-Attas (Syed.) (1991) argues that Islamic education requires a worldview based on the unity of knowledge, where scientific development remains connected with ethical and spiritual values. Similarly, Kuntowijoyo (2004) emphasizes the importance of developing Islamic knowledge that is capable of interacting with social realities through scientific approaches. Within this perspective, WMI represents an institutional effort to overcome knowledge fragmentation by encouraging dialogue between revelation-based understanding and scientific inquiry. Thus, the paradigm provides an epistemological foundation for developing an Islamic university model that maintains religious identity while engaging with modern academic challenges.

The implementation of WMI also demonstrates that knowledge integration requires institutional mechanisms to translate philosophical ideas into academic practices. The findings show that the paradigm influences academic orientation, curriculum development, research direction, and institutional identity. This indicates that epistemological transformation must be supported by organizational commitment and academic policies to become part of institutional culture. According to Barnett (2000), universities are not only knowledge-transmitting institutions but also spaces where knowledge frameworks and academic values are continuously negotiated. Therefore, the success of an integrated knowledge paradigm depends on how effectively institutions transform philosophical principles into educational processes, research agendas, and scholarly activities. In this context, WMI represents not only an intellectual concept but also an institutional strategy for shaping the academic character of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

Furthermore, the WMI paradigm contributes to repositioning Islamic higher education within contemporary academic competition by providing a distinctive institutional

identity. While many universities pursue scientific excellence through specialization and global competitiveness, Islamic universities face the additional challenge of maintaining their religious mission while participating in broader knowledge development. Higher education institutions increasingly need to balance global academic demands with local and institutional identities (Ali et al., 2026; Makgene & Mkhomazi, 2026; Mbangeleli et al., 2026). The experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung demonstrates that Islamic universities can respond to modernization without abandoning their foundational values. Therefore, WMI can be understood as an epistemological strategy that connects institutional transformation with the preservation and development of Islamic intellectual traditions.

3. Implications for Islamic Higher Education Management

The transformation experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung provides important implications for the management and development of Islamic higher education institutions. The findings demonstrate that institutional transformation requires more than changes in organizational structure because it involves the alignment of vision, academic orientation, governance systems, and quality development strategies. For Islamic higher education institutions seeking similar transformations, the case of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung illustrates that institutional change should be managed as a comprehensive process involving structural, cultural, and epistemological dimensions. Therefore, transformation policies should not only focus on achieving formal institutional status but also on developing sustainable academic capacity and institutional identity. This perspective emphasizes that successful transformation depends on the ability of institutions to connect strategic planning with long-term educational missions.

One important implication is the need for Islamic higher education institutions to develop a clear knowledge paradigm as a foundation for academic transformation. The experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung demonstrates that institutional expansion requires an intellectual framework capable of maintaining religious identity while supporting scientific development. Without a clear epistemological direction, institutional transformation may result only in structural expansion without strengthening academic character. Baber et al. (1995) explain that contemporary knowledge production requires universities to become more adaptive, interdisciplinary, and responsive to complex social challenges. In this context, Islamic universities need to formulate knowledge frameworks that encourage interaction between religious values and scientific advancement. Therefore,

the development of institutional paradigms such as *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* provides strategic guidance for managing academic transformation within Islamic higher education.

Another implication relates to the importance of strengthening governance and quality assurance systems after institutional transformation. The expansion of academic programs, student populations, research activities, and institutional responsibilities requires effective management mechanisms to ensure sustainable development. According to Salmi & Bank (2009), world-class universities are developed through the combination of strong governance, concentration of talent, and supportive resources. Although each Islamic university has different institutional contexts, the principle of strengthening organizational capacity remains essential for maintaining competitiveness and academic quality. Therefore, PTKIN institutions undergoing transformation should prioritize strategic leadership, performance evaluation systems, research development, and continuous improvement mechanisms. These efforts are necessary to ensure that institutional transformation produces meaningful academic and social outcomes.

Furthermore, the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung provides implications for redefining the role of Islamic higher education in society. The development of multidisciplinary academic programs, research activities, and community engagement demonstrates that Islamic universities can function as centers of knowledge production and social contribution. Altbach and de Wit (2018) argue that higher education institutions must balance global academic engagement with their local and institutional identities. For Islamic higher education institutions, this balance requires maintaining religious foundations while actively participating in scientific, technological, and social development. Therefore, institutional transformation should be understood as an opportunity to strengthen the contribution of Islamic universities at national and international levels. The experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung offers a model showing that Islamic higher education institutions can achieve modernization while preserving their distinctive academic identity.

4. Research Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research employed a qualitative library research approach, which relied primarily on institutional documents, regulatory sources, and academic literature to reconstruct the transformation process of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Although this approach provides a comprehensive understanding of historical and institutional

development, it does not directly capture the experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of institutional actors involved in the transformation process. Consequently, the findings primarily represent a documentary and conceptual analysis of institutional change rather than an empirical evaluation of organizational practices. Future studies may strengthen these findings by incorporating interviews with university leaders, lecturers, administrative staff, students, and other stakeholders involved in the transformation process.

Second, this study focuses specifically on UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung as a single case of Islamic higher education transformation. Although the case provides valuable insights into the process of institutional development from IAIN to UIN, differences in historical background, organizational culture, governance systems, and regional contexts may influence transformation processes in other Islamic higher education institutions. Therefore, the findings should not be generalized to all State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) without considering contextual variations. Comparative studies involving several UIN institutions in Indonesia would provide broader perspectives regarding similarities, differences, and various models of Islamic higher education transformation.

Future research may also examine the long-term impacts of institutional transformation on academic quality, research productivity, international collaboration, and social contribution. Quantitative or mixed-method approaches could be applied to measure the relationship between institutional transformation strategies and educational outcomes. Furthermore, future studies may investigate how epistemological paradigms, such as Wahyu Memandu Ilmu, are implemented in curriculum development, research practices, and academic culture. Such investigations would provide deeper insights into how Islamic higher education institutions maintain their identity while responding to contemporary challenges in higher education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the transformation of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung from IAIN to UIN represents a gradual process of institutional transformation involving academic expansion, regulatory consolidation, epistemological development, and quality improvement. The findings demonstrate that the conversion process was not merely an administrative change following the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 57 of 2005, but a long-term institutional development that had been prepared through wider mandate

initiatives, the establishment of general study programs, and organizational restructuring. This transformation reflects the dynamic nature of Islamic higher education institutions in responding to changing educational demands while maintaining their institutional identity.

The study also concludes that the *Wahyu Memandu Ilmu* paradigm plays an important role as an epistemological foundation in shaping the academic identity of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung after transformation. The paradigm provides a framework for integrating Islamic values with scientific development, allowing the university to expand its academic scope while preserving its Islamic characteristics. Furthermore, the institutional achievements after transformation, including academic program development, accreditation improvement, research productivity, publication growth, innovation activities, and community engagement, indicate the strengthening of institutional capacity as a multidisciplinary Islamic university.

This study contributes to Islamic higher education studies by presenting an integrated understanding of institutional transformation as a process involving three interconnected dimensions: regulatory legitimacy, knowledge paradigm development, and institutional performance improvement. The findings suggest that successful transformation of Islamic higher education institutions requires more than formal status changes; it requires strategic management, academic identity formation, and continuous quality development. The experience of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung provides valuable insights for other Islamic higher education institutions undergoing similar transformation processes.

However, this study is limited by its reliance on documentary sources and its focus on a single institutional case. Future research may explore comparative studies among UIN institutions, conduct empirical investigations involving institutional stakeholders, and examine the long-term impact of transformation on academic culture, research development, and educational outcomes. Such studies would provide deeper understanding of how Islamic higher education institutions sustain transformation and strengthen their contribution in national and global academic contexts.

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