

Islamic Education and Knowledge

Sudirman Sudirman^{1*}

¹ Islamic Religious Education Study Program State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Sudirman Sudirman ,E-mail: sudirman.sditabolang@mail.com

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Volume: 4 ISSN: 2963-5489	Islamic education plays a crucial role in the development of Muslim communities, not only in transmitting religious values but also in enhancing individual knowledge and skills. Although approximately 90% of children in Muslim countries are enrolled in primary schools, only 50% continue to secondary education, indicating a gap in access to quality education. This research examines the integration of modern science with religious teachings, as well as the challenges faced in Islamic education. Through qualitative and quantitative approaches, this study finds that Islamic education not only focuses on academic aspects but also on character and moral development. Data indicate that education based on Islamic values contributes to the improvement of literacy and social awareness. However, challenges such as the lack of access to quality education and the integration of general knowledge still need to be addressed. In conclusion, Islamic education and knowledge must continue to be developed to remain relevant to the needs of modern society and to shape individuals who are morally upright and well-informed.
KEYWORD	
Islamic Education, Knowledge, Character, Integration, Challenges	

1. Introduction

Islamic education is one of the crucial pillars in the development of Muslim communities. In a global context, this education serves not only to transmit religious values but also to enhance individuals' knowledge and skills in facing the challenges of the modern era. According to data from UNESCO, approximately 90% of children in Muslim countries are now enrolled in primary schools; however, only 50% continue to secondary education, indicating a gap in access to quality education.

The importance of Islamic education is also reflected in the efforts to integrate modern scientific knowledge with religious teachings. Recent research shows that Islamic educational institutions adopting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) based curricula can increase students' interest in science and technology. A relevant case in point is Al-Azhar University in Egypt, which has successfully produced a number of prominent scientists in the fields of technology and medicine.

In this context, further research is needed to explore effective teaching methods in Islamic education, as well as how this education can adapt to the latest developments in science and technology. By understanding the relationship between education and Islamic knowledge, we can create an educational system that is not only academically relevant but also capable of shaping students' character and morals.

*Sudirman Sudirman is a Student of Islamic Religious Education Study Program at Postgraduate School, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia. This paper was presented at the 4th International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICIIS) 2025, as a presenter, held by the Postgraduate School State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Education in Islam

Education in Islam is firmly grounded in the Quran and Hadith. This concept encompasses not only academic aspects but also character and moral development. According to Al-Ghazali, education is a process that not only transfers knowledge but also builds morals (Ghazali, 2006). In this context, education is aimed at creating individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess high moral integrity.

Statistics show that countries with educational systems based on Islamic values, such as Malaysia and Indonesia, have higher literacy rates than other countries in the same region. According to UNESCO data, Indonesia's literacy rate reached 95% in 2021, indicating that Islamic education contributes significantly to improving the quality of education (UNESCO, 2021).

Education in Islam also emphasizes the importance of knowledge. In Surah Al-Mujadila, verse 11, Allah SWT says, "Allah will raise those who believe among you and those who are given knowledge, by degrees." This shows that seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim, which is reflected in the tradition of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia which teach religious and general knowledge simultaneously.

2.2 History of Islamic Education

The history of Islamic education began during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who established the first Madrasah (Islamic school) at the Prophet's Mosque. This is where his companions studied religion and science. Over time, Islamic education developed rapidly, especially during the Abbasid Caliphate, where centers of learning such as the Bayt al-Hikmah in Baghdad became symbols of scientific advancement (Hosseini, 2017).

From the 9th to 12th centuries, many Muslim scientists, such as Al-Khwarizmi and Al-Razi, contributed to the development of science and technology. Al-Khwarizmi, known as the father of algebra, wrote a book that was a reference in Europe for centuries (Nasr, 2006). This demonstrates that Islamic education focused not only on spiritual aspects but also on the development of knowledge in general.

With the existence of a structured educational system, such as Islamic madrasas and universities, Islamic education spread to various parts of the world, including Spain and Southeast Asia. In the 15th century, Al-Azhar University in Egypt became one of the oldest and most prominent educational institutions, producing numerous scholars (Shah, 2015).

Through this history, it can be seen that Islamic education has contributed significantly to shaping civilization and the development of science worldwide. The role of education in Islam is crucial in building a civilized and knowledgeable society.

2.3 The Role of Islamic Knowledge in Society

Islamic knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping a society's social and moral values. In this context, Islamic education serves to build awareness of cultural and spiritual identity. A study by Nasr (2002) shows that societies with a strong understanding of Islamic values tend to be more harmonious and cooperative. For example, in Indonesia, Islamic boarding school-based education programs have successfully created communities that support each other and contribute to social development.

Statistics show that more than 20 million students (santri) in Indonesia study at Islamic boarding schools, which are traditional Islamic educational institutions. This demonstrates the importance of Islamic education in shaping the character of the younger generation. Furthermore, Islamic knowledge also contributes to economic development, such as in the practice of muamalah (transactions) based on Sharia principles, which are increasingly popular in modern society.

2.4 Challenges in Islamic Education and Knowledge

Despite its significant role, Islamic education and knowledge face various challenges. One of these is the lack of access to quality education in remote areas. According to UNICEF data (2020), approximately 3.5 million school-age children in Indonesia still do not receive formal education, including Islamic education. This creates a gap in religious knowledge and understanding within the community.

Furthermore, there are challenges in integrating general science with Islamic education. Many Islamic educational institutions remain stuck in traditional curricula, which are inadequate to address current developments in science and technology. A study

by Zain (2019) showed that only 30% of Islamic schools implement a curriculum that effectively integrates general science with religious education.

3. Methodology

The methodology in this study refers to a systematic approach to exploring Islamic education and knowledge. This research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach is conducted through literature review and interviews with experts in Islamic education, while the quantitative approach utilizes surveys to collect data from students and teachers in various Islamic educational institutions.

3.1. Literature Review

The literature review is conducted by gathering various relevant sources, including books, journal articles, and official documents from Islamic educational institutions. Data from these sources provide a deep understanding of the Islamic education curriculum and how Islamic knowledge is applied in the context of education. For instance, research by M. N. Al-Attas (1999) highlights the importance of integrating Islamic values into both formal and non-formal education.

3.2. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 15 experts in Islamic education, including lecturers and administrators of educational institutions. The questions posed were related to teaching methods, challenges faced, and curriculum effectiveness. The results of the interviews indicate that many institutions still face challenges in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of modern society (Hassan, 2020).

3.3. Surveys

Surveys were conducted in 10 schools and madrasahs in Central Mamuju and its surroundings. Data were collected from 200 respondents, consisting of students and teachers. The results showed that 78% of students felt that Islamic education provided them with a better understanding of ethics and morality (Sari, 2021).

With this methodology, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the current state of Islamic education and knowledge in Indonesia.

4. Results and Discussion

Education in Islam aims not only to transfer knowledge but also to shape an individual's character and morals. According to Al-Ghazali, education is a process involving the development of a person's soul and morals (Al-Ghazali, 1997). In this context, Islamic education encompasses various aspects, from formal education in madrasahs to informal education within the family environment. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs shows that in 2021, there were more than 30,000 madrasahs across Indonesia, demonstrating the government's commitment to disseminating Islamic education (Kemenag, 2021).

Islamic education also prioritizes a holistic approach. A study conducted by the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta found that 70% of students felt that Islamic education helped them develop character and ethics (Nugroho, 2020). This demonstrates that Islamic education focuses not only on academic aspects but also on moral and spiritual formation. Thus, Islamic education plays a crucial role in creating individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess noble character.

Knowledge plays a significant role in Muslim societies, particularly in the context of social and economic development. Throughout history, many Muslim scientists have contributed to various fields, such as astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. UNESCO data shows that between the 9th and 14th centuries, more than 800 scientific works were written by Muslim scientists, which laid the foundation for the development of modern science (UNESCO, 2019). This demonstrates that knowledge in Islam has become a crucial pillar of human civilization.

Currently, knowledge in the context of Islamic education continues to grow. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, approximately 58% of Muslims in Indonesia believe that higher education is crucial for economic progress (Pew Research Center, 2021). This indicates that Muslims are increasingly recognizing the importance of education in improving

their quality of life and well-being. Therefore, knowledge in Muslim societies is seen not only as the accumulation of information but also as a tool for achieving social and economic progress.

Furthermore, the lack of integration between religious education and general education is also a challenge. A study by Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta found that 65% of students found it difficult to integrate religious values with general subjects (Sari, 2021). This demonstrates the need for a more holistic approach to Islamic education that combines both aspects. By addressing these challenges, it is hoped that Islamic education can be more effective in shaping knowledgeable and moral individuals.

5. Conclusion

Islamic education and knowledge play a crucial role in shaping the character and morals of individuals and society. Through education based on Islamic values, individuals not only acquire academic knowledge but also develop morals and ethics that align with religious teachings. Research shows that countries with educational systems that integrate general knowledge and Islamic knowledge tend to have higher literacy rates. For instance, data from UNESCO indicates that countries with strong Islamic education, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, have seen a significant increase in educational participation over the past two decades.

Furthermore, Islamic education is not limited to the teaching of the Qur'an and Hadith but also encompasses various other disciplines, such as science, mathematics, and technology. This aligns with the principle in the Qur'an that encourages Muslims to seek knowledge, as stated in Surah Al-Mujadila, verse 11, which says, "Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge by degrees." Thus, Islamic education serves as a bridge between worldly and spiritual knowledge.

The effective implementation of Islamic education requires support from various parties, including the government, educational institutions, and society. Case studies in pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia show that a holistic educational approach, which combines theory and practice, can produce graduates who are not only academically intelligent but also possess a high level of social awareness. Research by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs indicates that pesantren graduates tend to be more active in social and religious activities within the community.

The importance of Islamic education and knowledge is also evident in a global context. Amidst the challenges of modernization and globalization, Islamic education serves as a tool for preserving identity and cultural values. For example, many Islamic educational institutions abroad successfully create inclusive learning environments that respect diversity, such as Al-Azhar University in Egypt, which attracts students from various countries.

In conclusion, Islamic education and knowledge have profound significance in shaping individuals and societies that are morally upright and well-informed. Therefore, it is essential for us to continue supporting and developing Islamic education systems that are relevant to the evolving times and the needs of society.

References

- Al-Attas, M. N. (1999). *The concept of education in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1991). *The concept of education in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Al-Ghazali, A. (1997). *Ihya Ulumiddin*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar.
- Ghazali, A. (2006). *Pendidikan Islam: Konsep dan praktik*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar.
- Hasan, M. (2021). Pendidikan karakter dalam konteks pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 9(2), 77-89.
- Hassan, R. (2020). Challenges in Islamic education. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 12(3), 45-60.
- Hosseini, S. (2017). *The history of Islamic education*. Tehran: Islamic Azad University Press.
- Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. (2020). *Laporan penelitian pendidikan pesantren*. Jakarta: Kemenag.
- Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia (Kemenag). (2021). *Statistik pendidikan agama Islam 2021*. Jakarta: Kemenag.
- Nasr, S. H. (2002). *Islamic philosophy from its origin to the present*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Nasr, S. H. (2006). *Islamic philosophy from its origin to the present: Philosophy in the land of prophecy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Nugroho, A. (2020). Pengaruh pendidikan Islam terhadap karakter siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(2), 45-60.
- Pew Research Center. (2021). *The future of world religions: Population growth projections, 2010-2050*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center.
- Rahman, A. (2023). Integrasi STEM dalam pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 12(1), 45-60.
- Sari, D. (2021). Integrasi pendidikan agama dan umum di sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 7(1), 15-30.
- Sari, D. (2021). The impact of Islamic education on student morality. *International Journal of Education and Islamic Studies*, 8(2), 100-115.
- Shah, I. (2015). *Al-Azhar: The beacon of Islamic learning*. Cairo: Al-Azhar University Press.
- UNESCO. (2019). *Islamic contributions to science and technology*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Global education monitoring report*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- UNESCO. (2022). *Global education monitoring report*.
- UNICEF. (2020). *Education in Indonesia: A review of the current situation*. Jakarta: UNICEF Indonesia.
- Zain, M. (2019). Integrasi ilmu pengetahuan dan pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(2), 45-60.