



## Reconstructing the Paradigm of Islamic Education: Harmonizing Theocentrism and Anthropocentrism

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### Abstract

Islamic education faces the problem of dualism between the theocentric paradigm oriented towards divinity and the anthropocentric paradigm oriented towards humans. The first paradigm often closes the space for rationality, while the second eliminates spiritual values. This article attempts to reconstruct the paradigm of Islamic education by integrating the values of transcendence and humanity to create a balance between faith and knowledge. Through a qualitative-descriptive approach based on literature studies on the thoughts of al-Attas, al-Faruqi, and Fazlur Rahman, this study emphasizes four main principles of reconstruction: integrative (revelation and reason), humanistic (development of human potential), transformative (formation of social awareness), and contextual (relevant to the times). This reconstructive paradigm is expected to produce perfect human beings who are knowledgeable, faithful, and have noble character and are able to make Islamic education a moral and intellectual force in building civilization.

**Keywords:** *Anthropocentrism, Integration of Science, Islamic Education, Paradigm Reconstruction, Theocentrism.*

### PRELIMINARY

Islamic education is historically rooted in a theocentric view of life that places God at the center of all human activity and purpose. Since classical times, Islamic education has been directed toward developing individuals with faith, knowledge, and noble morals. In this view, knowledge is not merely a tool for worldly advancement, but rather a means of drawing closer to God and fostering a profound spiritual awareness (Al-Attas, 1993). This theocentric paradigm makes divine values the source of knowledge, morality, and truth, so that the orientation of education always leads to devotion to God.

However, changing times present new challenges for the Islamic education system. Modernization, globalization, and technological advances have given rise to an anthropocentric educational orientation, placing humans at the center of all learning processes. Within this framework, education no longer solely aims to shape pious individuals, but also critical, creative, and productive individuals. Anthropocentrism has fostered a learner-centered paradigm that emphasizes freedom of thought, scientific exploration, and the ability to adapt to social change (Tilaar, 2004).

These two paradigms—theocentrism and anthropocentrism—actually have equally important values in shaping a complete human being. Theocentrism provides spiritual and ethical direction for life, while anthropocentrism allows for the development of human potential and creativity. However, in educational practice, the two often operate separately. Islamic education is often trapped in a normative and doctrinal approach that fails to open up space for dialogue with social realities, while modern education loses its spiritual and moral dimensions (Nasr, 1989).

As a result, a sharp dichotomy emerged between religious and general knowledge, between faith and rationality, between devotion to God and social responsibility. This situation has created an urgent

need to reconstruct the paradigm of Islamic education—an effort to rebuild the philosophical foundations of education so that it can unite divine and human orientations into a unified whole.

This reconstruction means building a transcendental-humanistic Islamic educational paradigm, a system that recognizes God as the source of life's values and goals, while simultaneously respecting the role of humans as active creators of civilization. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi called this process the "Islamization of knowledge," an effort to integrate revelation and reason so that human knowledge does not lose its divine direction (Al-Faruqi, 1982). In this way, Islamic education not only prepares students for life in the world, but also guides them to live with meaning and moral responsibility before God.

This transcendental-humanistic paradigm also aligns with Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's ideas on the need for critical rationality within the Islamic treasury. According to him, reform of Islamic education must be carried out without breaking with the theocentric tradition of Islamic scholarship, but also without rejecting the spirit of modernity that emphasizes freedom of thought (Al-Jabiri, 1990). Thus, the reconstruction of the Islamic education paradigm is not a form of compromise, but rather an effort to harmonize divine values and human reality.

Efforts to harmonize theocentrism and anthropocentrism are crucial in today's era, when humanity is faced with a moral crisis, dehumanization, and loss of spiritual meaning amidst technological advancement. Islamic education that integrates these two major orientations is expected to produce a generation that is both knowledgeable and devout, both rational and spiritual, both intelligent and moral. This is the new direction of Islamic education, one that not only educates people for this world but also educates them for a meaningful life before God and others.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with library research (Assingkiy, 2021). This approach was chosen because the study focuses on conceptual ideas and philosophical thinking regarding the paradigm of Islamic education. Data were obtained from various relevant literature sources, such as classical and contemporary books, scientific journal articles, and the works of prominent Islamic thinkers such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri.

The data collection process involved an in-depth study of texts discussing the concepts of theocentrism, anthropocentrism, and Islamic education. These sources were then analyzed descriptively and analytically, describing the thoughts of the figures and relating them to the current context of Islamic education.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *Findings*

Islamic education is essentially a reflection of the Islamic worldview (*weltanschauung*) rooted in monotheism as an epistemological, ontological, and axiological principle. The paradigm of Islamic education cannot be understood partially as a teaching system, but rather as a process of forming a civilized human being (*insān 'ārif bi rabbih*), namely a human being who knows God through knowledge, deeds, and existential experience. Within this horizon, the entire educational process is oriented towards returning humans to their natural state as theocentric beings with anthropocentric dimensions. The dialectic between God and humans is not a contradiction, but rather a hierarchical and functional relationship within the divine cosmos (Sardar, 1985).

Theocentrism in Islamic education asserts that the source of knowledge, truth, and values is God Almighty. Al-Attas refers to education as *ta'dīb*, namely the instilling of *adab* (morality) so that humans place their knowledge and existence in accordance with the correct cosmic order. *Adab*, in this view, is not merely moral etiquette, but a metaphysical structure of consciousness through which humans recognize their position in relation to God, nature, and others. Islamic education, therefore, is not merely an effort to rationalize knowledge, but a process of *ta'dīb al-'aql wa al-nafs* (the process of *ta'dīb al-'aql wa al-nafs*), the organization of the mind and soul to submit to divine reality. Within this framework, knowledge is not neutral; it is laden with values because it serves to lead humans to *ma'rifah* (knowledge that reveals the transcendent meaning behind empirical reality) (Al-Attas, 1993).

Meanwhile, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi asserted that the crisis in modern Muslim education is rooted in the epistemological disconnect between revelation and reason. The world of education, which has adopted a Western paradigm, has removed God from the realm of knowledge, thereby losing its moral and metaphysical orientation (Al-Faruqi, 1982). Al-Faruqi's Islamization of knowledge was not merely an addition of Islamic values to modern disciplines, but rather a complete reconstruction of the epistemological foundations of science itself, returning it to the principle of *tawḥīd al-maʿrifah*, the unity of knowledge. Thus, Islamic education must be a project to unite revealed truth and human rational discovery within a single, unified divine horizon.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr deepens this perspective by stating that modernity has desacralized knowledge and severed the link between the intellect (*ʿaql*) and the center of transcendence (Nasr, 1989). For Nasr, modern education is Faustian: it expands human power over the world, but sacrifices its spiritual dimension. Islamic education, therefore, must restore sacred knowledge, science, which embodies the ontological awareness that all reality is a reflection of God's Names and Attributes. Knowledge is not merely a rational representation of phenomena, but also a contemplative medium that reveals the essential meaning of life. Education that lacks sacredness will only produce technically educated individuals, but lacking meaning and direction in life.

In these three ideas, it is clear that true Islamic education is theocentric, but not in the sense of eliminating humans. God is the center of values and direction, while humans are the epistemological and ethical subjects who actively process revelation and reality. Rigid theocentrism without respect for human potential will give rise to fatalism and dogmatism, while anthropocentrism, detached from divine awareness, gives rise to secularism and nihilism. Therefore, the paradigm of Islamic education needs to be reconstructed toward a dialectical synthesis between theocentrism and anthropocentrism, namely an integrative paradigm that views God as the source of values and humans as caliphs who interpret those values dynamically throughout history.

This reconstruction is not simply a unification of two different orientations, but rather a reaffirmation of the principle of *tawḥīd* as the basis of the unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd al-tarbawiyah*). *Tawḥīd* guarantees the connection between the spiritual and rational dimensions of humankind; it eliminates the dichotomy between religious and worldly knowledge, between *dhikr* and thought, between worship and work. Within the framework of *tawḥīd*, knowledge is a trust (*amānah al-ʿilm*), and humans, as recipients of this trust, are required to manage knowledge ethically and transcendently. This principle is combined with *tazkiyah*, namely self-purification so that knowledge not only broadens insight but also refines the soul. *Tazkiyah* demands that every pursuit of knowledge is a spiritual journey toward God. *Taklīf*, on the other hand, provides a moral and social dimension: humans not only know but are also responsible for the knowledge they possess (Al-Faruqi, 1982).

Thus, Islamic education is not an attempt to transfer knowledge from teacher to student, but rather an ontological and epistemological process that returns humans to the spiritual center of their existence. Education becomes a spiritual training that balances the potential of the body, mind, and spirit. This is where the dialectical relationship between theocentrism and anthropocentrism finds its form: humans learn not only to become more knowledgeable, but to become more aware. This awareness gives birth to a learned servant who is also a responsible caliph—a servant who submits to God, yet actively manages the earth with reason and morality (I. R. al-Faruqi & L. L. al-Faruqi, 1986).

The reconstruction of the Islamic educational paradigm also demands a redefinition of the concept of "progress" in education. In modern anthropocentric logic, progress is measured through efficiency, innovation, and productivity; whereas in theocentric logic, progress is measured through proximity to divine truth and wisdom. The new, integrative paradigm demands a balanced epistemology: material progress without spiritual degradation. Modern humans must re-realize that knowledge disconnected from God is knowledge that has lost its existential meaning. Therefore, Islamic education must function as a bridge between rationality and transcendence, between scientific objectivity and spiritual subjectivity (al-Attas, 1995).

Fazlur Rahman offers a dynamic approach within this framework. He asserts that Islam demands a double movement: from the context of revelation to the historical context, and from the historical context to modern reality (Rahman, 1982). Islamic education must therefore be critical, progressive, and

contextual, yet without losing its theological roots. This is a form of anthropocentrism guided by theocentrism, not secular humanism, but theistic humanism, which positions humans as bearers of divine values in history.

This paradigm paves the way for Islamic education that is not merely normative but also transformative. It emphasizes not only the mastery of knowledge but also an ethical and spiritual orientation in the use of that knowledge. In it, God is not positioned as a static "doctrinal object" but as a horizon of meaning that animates the entire educational process. Humans, in turn, are not reduced to passive beings awaiting revelation, but rather creative subjects who interpret, develop, and actualize the values of revelation in history (Azra, 2019). Thus, Islamic education becomes a meeting ground between the divine and the human, between revelation and reason, between faith and *ijtihad* (Nasr, 1989).

This entire process confirms that the reconstruction of the Islamic educational paradigm is not merely an academic project, but a civilizational mission. It demands a repositioning of humans within their cosmic relationships: not as autonomous centers as in Western humanism, nor as passive entities devoid of creative power. Humans are moral and spiritual subjects who embody divine values in the empirical world. Herein lies the intersection of theocentrism and anthropocentrism, a synthesis that makes education a path to "knowing" and "being," to thinking and worshipping, to developing the world without losing sight of God (Azra, 2019).

### ***Theocentrism in Islamic Education***

Theocentrism in Islamic education is an epistemological and axiological orientation that places God as the center of all sources of values, knowledge, and morals. In the Islamic worldview, all reality is understood as a manifestation of Divine will and wisdom. Therefore, education is not merely a means of intellectual development, but also a path to knowing and serving God. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas explained that Islamic education must begin with the recognition of the divine reality as the source of ultimate truth (*al-haqq*), and knowledge must be understood as a trust that guides humanity toward knowing God. Thus, this theocentric orientation is not merely a matter of theological belief, but rather a framework that unifies the epistemology, ontology, and axiology of Islamic education (al-Attas, 1995).

Historically, this theocentric orientation has been the foundation of Islamic education since classical times. Institutions such as *kuttab* (Islamic boarding schools), *madrasahs* (Islamic schools), and *zawiyah* (Islamic boarding schools) were founded on the recognition that knowledge is part of worship, and that seeking knowledge is a form of devotion to God. Al-Ghazali, in his *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (Theology of the Divine Principles), emphasized that the goal of education is not merely worldly skills, but rather the attainment of purity of heart and closeness to God. Knowledge that does not lead to obedience to God is considered useless (*'ilm ghayr naf'i*) (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Thus, the traditional Islamic education system emphasizes the balance between knowledge, faith and charity, and views knowledge as a means of forming civilized and moral human beings (Makdisi, 1981).

Theocentrism also gave rise to an educational orientation that emphasized the moral and spiritual development of students. Education within this framework was aimed at shaping character, internalizing the values of monotheism, and fostering ethical awareness in every aspect of life. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi stated that Islamic education should function to instill a sense of "tawhid" in students, namely the awareness that all knowledge and human activity must be grounded in the unity of divine values. (Al-Faruqi, 1982). This orientation places moral and spiritual development at the heart of the educational process, as only then can humans properly fulfill their caliphate. Theocentric Islamic education thus has a strong moral dimension: it shapes individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually pure and ethically responsible (Nasr, 1981).

However, the theocentric paradigm is not without criticism. In some contexts, this orientation is considered to overemphasize the transcendental, thus tending to close off space for freedom of thought and scientific exploration. This tendency is particularly apparent when religious understanding is positioned dogmatically, without opening up space for dialogue with reason and empirical experience. Seyyed Hossein Nasr believes that the fault lies not with theocentrism itself, but rather with the narrow way modern humans understand it (Nasr, 1993). He emphasized that, in the true Islamic perspective, monotheism actually encourages humans to understand nature as a sign of God, and therefore, studying nature means reading the signs of His greatness. However, in historical practice, many Islamic educational

institutions have stagnated because they interpret the theocentric dimension exclusively and do not allow for intellectual *ijtihad*.

Criticism of theocentrism has also come from contemporary thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman and Abid al-Jabiri. Rahman argues that Islamic education focuses too much on normative aspects and neglects the critical-rational dimension that is essential for the advancement of civilization (Rahman, 1988). According to him, the theocentric approach needs to be complemented by an anthropocentric spirit, namely by positioning humans as active subjects seeking meaning and knowledge. Meanwhile, al-Jabiri, in *Bunyah al-'Aql al-'Arabi*, criticized the Islamic scientific tradition, which tends to be textual and authoritative, often restricting freedom of scientific thought (Al-Jabiri, 1990). In their view, theocentrism must be reconstructed into a transcendental-humanistic paradigm, where God remains the center of values, but humans are given space to develop their reason as part of the divine mandate.

Nevertheless, theocentrism remains fundamental to Islamic education because it maintains the moral and spiritual direction of the entire educational process. In a modern world dominated by secularization and moral relativism, theocentrism serves as a bulwark of values, reminding us that knowledge is not value-free and must be directed toward the welfare of humanity within a divine framework. This paradigm can be developed dynamically if it is understood not as a constraint on reason, but as a guide for human rationality to remain within ethical and spiritual boundaries. The integration of theocentrism and anthropocentrism, then, can produce a balanced Islamic educational paradigm that respects freedom of thought while preserving the sacred dimension of knowledge (Nasr, 1981).

### ***Anthropocentrism in Modern Education***

Anthropocentrism is a view that places humans as the center of values, the measure of knowledge, and the benchmark of truth. In the context of the history of Western thought, this paradigm emerged as a reaction to the dominance of medieval theocentrism that placed God as the center of reality and the source of knowledge. Since the Renaissance and Enlightenment eras, humans began to be positioned as autonomous subjects with the rational ability to understand the world without having to rely on religious authority. Francis Bacon (1620) with his empiricism, René Descartes (1637) with his rationalism, and Immanuel Kant (1781) with his idealism became symbols of the birth of modern human consciousness that believes in the power of reason and experience as the primary source of knowledge. Since then, knowledge is no longer considered an emanation from God, but rather a result of human construction that can be verified rationally and empirically (al-Attas, 1995).

This anthropocentric paradigm later became the foundation for the development of modern education in the West. Education was no longer understood as a process of religious moral formation, but rather as an effort to liberate humans from ignorance to the autonomy of thought. John Dewey (1916) in *Democracy and Education* emphasized that education must function to develop critical, experimental, and pragmatic thinking skills so that humans can adapt to social change. Rationality and empiricism became the main principles, while spiritual and theological values were considered subjective and unscientific (M. Horkheimer & T. W. Adorno, 1947). As a result, the modern education system emphasized the cognitive, technological, and productive dimensions, while neglecting the transcendental aspect. Education was directed toward achieving efficiency, innovation, and material progress that were worldly in nature.

One of the main characteristics of anthropocentrism in modern education is the emergence of a rational, empirical, and secular approach. This view holds that everything can be explained through natural laws and human reason, without the need for reference to divine revelation or authority. Auguste Comte (1830), a pioneer of positivism, asserted that true knowledge can only be obtained through empirical observation and scientific verification. Meanwhile, Charles Darwin (1859), through his theory of evolution, asserted that human life can be fully explained through biological processes, not as a special creation of God. These thoughts reinforce the belief that humans are rational beings capable of understanding, transforming, and mastering nature through their own intellectual abilities. Consequently, education becomes a means to develop human potential autonomously and scientifically, without the intervention of transcendental elements.

However, although anthropocentrism has brought great progress in science, technology, and educational methods, this paradigm has also created a crisis of values and meaning in human life. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1981) criticized that by removing God from the center of reality, humans have lost their

spiritual orientation and made knowledge a tool of domination, not devotion. In Nasr's view, modern education, detached from divine awareness, has produced a "fragmented" human being who is intellectually intelligent but spiritually impoverished. He called this phenomenon the desacralization of knowledge, namely the loss of the sacredness of knowledge that originally connected humans to transcendent reality. This critique shows that anthropocentrism, when implemented without a balance of spiritual values, will give rise to a humanitarian crisis and moral degradation.

Similar criticisms have been voiced by social thinkers such as Max Weber (1905) and Jürgen Habermas (1984). In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber described modernity as having resulted in a "disenchantment of the world." The world has lost its charm because everything has been reduced to instrumental rationality. Education, which should shape meaningful human beings, has become an institution for the production of labor. Habermas (1984) then added that modern rationality has become trapped in a "colonization of the lifeworld," where technological reason and economic systems dominate human cultural and moral spaces. Thus, anthropocentrism, unaccompanied by spiritual and moral balance, actually gives rise to human alienation from their true nature as beings with a spiritual dimension.

In the context of education, the impact of anthropocentrism is seen in the secularization of the curriculum and the loss of spiritual orientation in the modern education system. Education becomes a tool for social and economic mobility, no longer a means of character building and life wisdom. Paulo Freire (1970) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* warned that education detached from human values will turn into a process of "dehumanization," making humans mere objects of production and consumption. He emphasized the need for liberating education, namely education that restores human awareness of meaning, value, and moral responsibility. Freire's critique resonates in the context of modern education, which tends to be mechanistic and materialistic, thus ignoring the spiritual dimension that is at the core of humanity itself.

Therefore, although anthropocentrism has made important contributions to the advancement of rationality and science, it also raises the urgent need to reintegrate the spiritual dimension into education. Contemporary Islamic thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas (1995) and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1982) emphasize that the crisis of modern education stems from the epistemological dislocation of knowledge, separating it from values and from God. Al-Attas calls this condition "confusion of knowledge," a disorder in understanding the hierarchy of knowledge that leads to moral disorientation. Meanwhile, al-Faruqi (1982) emphasizes the importance of reconstructing the educational paradigm through the process of Islamization of knowledge so that humans do not lose their spiritual direction in their intellectual pursuits. Thus, the solution to the crisis of anthropocentrism is not to reject rationality, but rather to replace it within the framework of monotheism and transcendental consciousness (Abdullah, 2014).

### ***Transcendental-humanistic paradigm***

The transcendental-humanistic paradigm in Islamic education emerged as an attempt to reconstruct thought that rejects the dichotomy between divine orientation (theocentrism) and human orientation (anthropocentrism) (Al-Faruqi, 1982). This paradigm seeks to unite absolute divine values with empirical, rational, and dynamic human reality. In this view, education is not only directed at forming faithful and pious humans, but also humans who are able to actualize their human potential in the midst of modern social and intellectual life. This thinking is rooted in the Islamic worldview that places God as the center of all reality, while humans become caliphs tasked with managing, understanding, and developing His creation in accordance with the guidance of revelation (Al-Attas, 1993).

This paradigm rejects the secular view that separates knowledge and values, and also rejects the dogmatic approach that denies the role of human reason and experience. Instead, it seeks to create an epistemological balance: that revelation and reason are two complementary sources of knowledge. Within this framework, revelation provides normative and ethical direction, while reason becomes a means of exploring and interpreting reality. Al-Attas (1993) calls this integration *ta'dib*, namely education that instills *adab*, namely knowledge of the proper place of God, humans, and nature. Thus, the transcendental-humanistic paradigm does not marginalize the aspect of rationality, but rather subordinates it to a spiritual framework that stems from monotheism (Nasr, 1989).

This concept finds its relevance in the idea of the perfect human being, namely a perfect human being capable of uniting the divine and human dimensions within himself. The perfect human being is not only a spiritual being obedient to God, but also a social and intellectual being capable of managing the world responsibly. This concept was widely developed by Sufi figures and Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Arabi (1999) and al-Ghazali (2005), who viewed humans as a microcosm (al-'alam al-saghir) that reflects the divine macrocosm (al-'alam al-kabir). In the context of education, this goal means developing individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also morally and spiritually mature.

The theological foundation of this paradigm can be traced from several verses of the Qur'an. QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 30 explains the role of humans as caliphs on earth, a symbol of moral and social responsibility stemming from the divine mandate. QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5 emphasizes that the source of true knowledge is God who teaches humans with the pen, so that knowledge is not merely the result of rationality, but also a spiritual gift. Meanwhile, QS. Al-Mujadalah [58]: 11 emphasizes the glory of those who have knowledge in the sight of God, which shows that intellectual development must always be linked to divine values. These three verses emphasize that education in Islam is rooted in the integration of faith, knowledge, and good deeds (Rahman, 1982).

The transcendental-humanistic approach also has practical relevance to the crisis in modern education, which tends to emphasize solely cognitive and technological aspects. In this context, Islamic education is challenged to present a learning model that not only develops intellectual competence but also fosters spiritual awareness and humanitarian ethics. According to Syed Hossein Nasr (1993), modernity has given rise to a spiritual crisis because humans are alienated from the source of transcendent values. Therefore, Islamic education must be a means of spiritual healing by restoring humanity to harmony between reason, spirit, and revelation.

The transcendental-humanistic paradigm also offers an alternative to secular Western educational approaches by presenting an integrative epistemology. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi emphasized the importance of the Islamization of knowledge as an effort to return science to its divine purpose, namely to create justice and human welfare under the will of God (Al-Faruqi, 1982). Thus, science is not value-neutral, but rather has an ethical and theological orientation. Within this framework, humans are positioned as creative subjects responsible to God, not mere consumers of worldly knowledge.

Finally, the transcendental-humanistic paradigm asserts that true Islamic education is a process of unifying 'ilm (knowledge), iman (faith), and 'amal (action). This paradigm seeks to return education to its ontological purpose: to shape human beings who know God, understand themselves, and play an active role in building a civilized civilization (Al-Attas, 1993). Through this synthesis of transcendence and humanity, Islamic education is expected to produce a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also spiritually clear and moral in its actions (Nasr, 1993).

### ***Discussion***

One of the most fundamental problems facing Islamic education today is the issue of paradigm dualism, namely the separation between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge. This phenomenon is rooted in the long history of colonialism and the process of educational modernization that introduced a secular system to the Islamic world. Since the colonial era, Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas have focused on teaching religious knowledge (tafaqquh fi al-din), while colonial and modern educational institutions have emphasized general knowledge that is empirical and rational. As a result, two parallel but non-interacting scientific traditions have emerged: one oriented towards the afterlife, and the other towards this world. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1993) calls this phenomenon a "crisis of adab" (civilization crisis), a loss of awareness of the position and purpose of knowledge, which should be derived from revelation and lead humanity to ultimate truth.

The separation between religious and secular knowledge also results in a narrow and normative-dogmatic orientation of Islamic education. In many cases, Islamic education is understood solely as a process of teaching religious doctrine that emphasizes ritual and moral aspects without developing critical and scientific thinking skills. As a result, a generation is born that is ritually pious but weak in mastery of science and technology. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi believes that the failure of Muslims in facing the challenges of modernity is rooted in the inability of the Islamic education system to integrate knowledge epistemologically and ideologically (Al-Faruqi, 1982). According to him, Islam does not recognize the

dichotomy of knowledge; all knowledge, both religious and empirical, has a unified purpose: to know and serve God. However, when education emphasizes only the formal-normative aspect, knowledge loses its transcendent dimension and becomes merely the memorization of texts without any applicable meaning for life.

This situation is exacerbated by the dominance of a dogmatic approach to religious education, which tends to close off space for scientific reasoning and creativity. Many educational institutions still employ a one-way method of knowledge transmission, where the teacher is considered the source of absolute truth and students are merely passive recipients. This approach ultimately fosters a culture of imitation and weakens the spirit of *ijtihad*, even though in Islamic tradition, critical and dynamic thinking is part of intellectual worship. Al-Ghazali, in his *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, asserts that knowledge without deep understanding and spiritual reflection will be dry and will not bring inner enlightenment (al-Ghazali, 1983). Meanwhile, Fazlur Rahman emphasized the need for methodological reformulation in Islamic education so that religious teachings are not separated from the social and intellectual context of modern society (Rahman, 1982).

On the other hand, modern education in the Islamic world often lacks spirituality and divine ethics. Educational systems that adopt Western models tend to be oriented toward material achievement, efficiency, and instrumental rationality, without regard for the character and spiritual development of students. As a result, the phenomenon of the dehumanization of education has emerged, turning humans into objects of knowledge production and economics, rather than moral subjects with responsibilities to God and others. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in *Knowledge and the Sacred*, calls this crisis the "disenchantment of knowledge," the loss of the sanctity of knowledge due to the secularization of epistemology (Nasr, 1989). Education, which should be a means of self-improvement (*tazkiyah al-nafs*), has instead become an instrument for pursuing social status and economic power.

The lack of integration of spiritual values in modern education has created a gap between intellectual progress and moral decline. In many Muslim countries, educational progress is measured solely by academic achievement and technological capabilities, while aspects of moral development and transcendental awareness are often neglected. However, in the Islamic perspective, the goal of education is to shape human beings who are balanced between the spiritual and physical dimensions, between reason and faith, between knowledge and good deeds. This concept is reflected in QS. Al-Mujadalah [58]: 11, which emphasizes that Allah elevates the status of those who have knowledge and faith, not just those who have worldly knowledge. Therefore, Islamic education should integrate theocentric and anthropocentric dimensions so that humans are not uprooted from their spiritual roots amidst the currents of modernity (Al-Qaradawi, 1996).

To overcome this dualistic problem, thinkers such as al-Faruqi and al-Attas proposed the idea of the "Islamization of knowledge" as an epistemological project to return knowledge to the framework of monotheism. According to al-Faruqi, Islamization does not mean rejecting modern science, but rather returning it to divine values and human goals (Al-Faruqi, 1982). Al-Attas added that Islamic education must begin with the instillation of an Islamic worldview, so that every science is studied with the awareness that all knowledge originates from God and aims to lead humanity to truth and virtue (Al-Attas, 1993). Thus, the transformation of Islamic education is not only about the curriculum, but also about the formation of a new epistemological awareness that integrates revelation, reason, and human experience into a unified and meaningful system.

### ***Reconstruction of the New Paradigm***

The reconstruction of the Islamic education paradigm is an effort to rebuild the philosophical and epistemological foundations of education rooted in the Islamic worldview. This process involves not only technical changes in the education system but also touches on more fundamental aspects, namely how humans view the nature of knowledge, truth, and the purpose of life. Throughout its history, Islamic education has experienced a crisis of orientation due to the legacy of the dualism between religious and worldly knowledge born of the influence of colonialism, Western modernity, and epistemological secularization. Therefore, paradigm reconstruction is an urgent need so that Islamic education can again function as an instrument for the formation of a complete human being (*al-insan al-kamil*) who is in harmony with divine will and responsive to the challenges of modern humanity. As stated by Al-Attas

(1993), the crisis in Islamic education is not merely an institutional crisis, but also a crisis of morality, namely the loss of awareness of the rightful place of God, humanity, and knowledge in the cosmic order.

The first principle of the reconstruction of the Islamic educational paradigm is integrative, namely the effort to combine revelation and reason as two primary sources of knowledge. In the Islamic scientific tradition, revelation is seen as the source of absolute truth, while reason is an instrument for understanding and interpreting reality. When these two sources are separated, an epistemological imbalance occurs: science loses its spiritual value, while religion loses its rational relevance. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1982) in the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge emphasizes that the reconstruction of Islamic education must begin with the unification of the epistemology of revelation and reason so that knowledge is not reduced to a mere pragmatic tool. With an integrative paradigm, Islamic education not only teaches what is true, but also why and for what purpose the truth is studied. This view is in line with the principle of monotheism, that all knowledge essentially comes from God and must return to Him. In this context, QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1-5 serves as a strong theological foundation, affirming that true knowledge is a gift from God that elevates human dignity through the process of reading, thinking, and understanding His signs.

The integrative principle also demands a reorientation of educational epistemology. Knowledge should not be understood solely within an empirical-positivistic framework, but rather as part of an intellectual worship aimed at bringing humanity closer to divine truth. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1993) highlighted that the secularization of knowledge in modern civilization has severed the link between knowledge and holiness. He emphasized the need to "restore the sacredness of knowledge" so that education can once again become a means of spiritual enlightenment, not merely a material instrument. Within this framework, reconstructing the Islamic educational paradigm means building a system that unites science and values, technology and ethics, reason and revelation. Therefore, integration is not only conceptual but also practical, encompassing curriculum, methodology, and educational objectives based on the values of monotheism.

The second principle is humanistic, which is based on the Islamic view of the nature of humans as beings with multidimensional potential: spiritual (ruh), intellectual ('aql), emotional (qalb), and physical (jasad). True Islamic education should not only be oriented towards cognitive mastery, but must maintain the balance of all these potentials. Al-Ghazali emphasized that the main goal of education is the purification of the soul (tazkiyah al-nafs) which will lead humans to happiness in this world and the hereafter (al-Ghazali, 2005). However, tazkiyah does not mean ignoring the role of reason and worldly activities, because Islam actually encourages humans to think, work, and innovate as a manifestation of the responsibility of the caliphate on earth. The humanistic principle in Islamic education is rooted in the concept of insan kamil, humans who are able to harmonize their spiritual and rational dimensions, thus becoming beings who are both knowledgeable and moral. Within this framework, QS. Al-Mujjadi [58]: 11 emphasizes that human glory is determined by the integration of faith and knowledge: "Allah raises the rank of those who believe and have knowledge among you."

The humanistic dimension of Islamic education also emphasizes the importance of spiritual education as the core of character formation. Al-Attas calls this concept ta'dib, the process of instilling adab (good manners) that encompasses knowledge of the proper place of each reality, God, humans, and nature (Al-Attas, 1993). Education that emphasizes only the cognitive aspect without the moral and spiritual dimensions will produce intelligent individuals who lack a sense of direction. Conversely, education that ignores reason will produce fatalistic and unproductive attitudes. Therefore, the humanistic paradigm requires a balance between the development of spirituality, intellect, and social skills so that humans can function as both 'abd Allah (servants of God) and khalifat Allah (managers of the earth) with full responsibility (Nasr, 1987; Al-Attas, 1993).

The third principle is transformative, namely emphasizing the social function of Islamic education as a process of change towards a more just, civilized, and divinely valued life. Education should not stop at the level of knowledge transfer, but must foster critical and moral awareness to carry out social transformation. Fazlur Rahman in his work *Islam and Modernity* stated that Islamic education must be oriented towards the formation of an ethical ethos and social responsibility rooted in the principle of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil) (Rahman, 1982). Thus, education not only produces pious individuals personally, but also a society that is committed to truth and justice. In the

modern context, the transformative principle demands that Islamic education be able to address global challenges such as moral crises, social inequality, and environmental damage with the spirit of monotheism. Education becomes a means of spiritual and social emancipation that encourages humans to change themselves and their society for the better, as emphasized in QS. Ar-Ra'd [13]: 11 that Allah will not change the fate of a people until they change what is in themselves.

The fourth principle is contextual, which emphasizes that Islamic education must always be rooted in divine values while remaining relevant to social realities and the needs of the times. Islam is a universal and dynamic religion, so education built on its foundation must not be static or dogmatic. Yusuf al-Qaradawi emphasized the importance of *tathwir al-manhaj* (curriculum development) so that Islamic education can address contemporary issues without becoming trapped in the secularization of values. This means that Islamic values must be creatively translated into contemporary contexts such as developments in science, digital technology, the global economy, and cultural plurality (Al-Qaradawi, 1996). The contextual principle also embodies the spirit of pedagogical *ijtihad*, the ability to reinterpret Islamic values in the form of innovative learning models relevant to the realities of students. In this way, Islamic education does not become a museum of past values, but a laboratory of civilization that lives and moves with the times (Al-Faruqi, 1982).

Furthermore, the contextual principle requires a reform of the curriculum and learning methodology that emphasizes not only theoretical mastery but also reflective and applied skills. Seyyed Hossein Nasr warned that modern education often fails because it separates knowledge from its spiritual roots and social context. In Islam, knowledge is always directed towards the common good (*maslahah*), not merely material gain (Nasr, 1993). Therefore, the Islamic education curriculum must be able to balance religious and worldly knowledge, between idealism and reality, between the eternity of values and the dynamics of change. This kind of education will shape individuals capable of living amidst modernity without losing their spiritual orientation, individuals capable of thinking globally while remaining rooted in divine values.

Through the application of the four integrative, humanistic, transformative, and contextual principles, the reconstruction of the Islamic educational paradigm is aimed at creating an educational system that balances revelation and reason, faith and knowledge, the individual and society, and tradition and modernity. This new paradigm is not merely a technical improvement, but a spiritual and intellectual movement to restore the true meaning of education: as a process of purifying the soul, enlightening the mind, and shaping civilization. As emphasized by al-Attas, the ultimate goal of Islamic education is to shape civilized human beings who know their God, understand themselves, and fulfill the mandate of the caliphate on earth with divine awareness (Al-Attas, 1993). Education based on these principles not only produces a workforce, but also fosters individuals with a monotheistic spirit who view knowledge as a path to wisdom, not merely a tool of power.

### ***Implementation of the Reconstructive Paradigm***

The implementation of a reconstructive paradigm in Islamic education is a necessity in facing the increasingly complex challenges of the times. This paradigm stems from the realization that Islamic education can no longer operate within a dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge, between spirituality and rationality, or between values and practical skills. The reconstruction of Islamic education demands a harmonious integration of revelation and reason, between divine values and human needs. In this context, education is no longer understood merely as a process of transferring knowledge, but rather as a process of unifying values, knowledge, and good deeds within a unified framework of monotheism. As emphasized by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, the essence of Islamic education is *ta'dib*, namely the instilling of *adab* (ethics) that leads humans to understand their place before God, nature, and fellow human beings (Al-Attas, 1993).

One concrete form of this reconstructive paradigm is the design of an integrative curriculum that unites religious knowledge and science in a single epistemological system based on monotheism. This kind of curriculum does not place religious knowledge and worldly knowledge face to face, but rather links them in a single meaning. Modern science, when viewed from an Islamic perspective, is not neutral, but has moral and spiritual dimensions that should be directed towards knowing the Creator. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi calls this principle the *tawhidic* paradigm, namely a framework of thought that unites all branches

of science under the unity of divine values and goals. With an integrative curriculum, science is no longer a secular instrument that alienates humans from God, but instead becomes a path to knowing His greatness, as stated in QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5 which emphasizes that Allah is the source of knowledge who teaches humans with the pen.

In addition to the curriculum, the reconstructive paradigm also demands a values-based and experiential learning approach. Education in Islam is not merely an intellectual activity, but also a spiritual and emotional one. Islamic values cannot be instilled solely through memorization and lectures, but through direct experience, self-reflection, and moral example. Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, asserts that true education must liberate humans through critical awareness that grows from their own life experiences (Freire, 1970). This principle aligns with the Prophet Muhammad's educational method, which not only conveys revelation but also instills values through role models and social experiences. QS. Al-Jumu'ah [62]: 2 emphasizes that the Prophet's task is not only to teach the scriptures, but also to purify the soul and instill wisdom. Thus, learning in Islam should combine cognitive knowledge with the formation of moral and spiritual awareness. Zakiah Daradjat explains that religious experience in education has a much stronger internalization power than mere cognitive knowledge, because it touches the deepest realm of human consciousness (Daradjat, 1996).

In the context of its implementation, the role of teachers is a key element in the reconstructive paradigm. Teachers are no longer merely *mu'allim* (teachers), but also *murabbi* (moral and spiritual educators) and *mujaddid* (reformers). As *murabbi*, teachers play a role in guiding students towards moral perfection through exemplary behavior, attention, and spiritual guidance. Hasan Langgulung emphasized that the primary task of educators in Islam is to foster a balance between the mind, heart, and body to produce knowledgeable and moral individuals (Langgulung, 1986). Meanwhile, as *mujaddid*, teachers are expected to be agents of reform in the education system, updating methods, enriching approaches, and presenting Islamic values in a modern context without losing the spirit of monotheism. Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1996) calls this role *al-tajdid al-tarbawi*, namely the renewal of Islamic education so that it remains alive, adaptive, and meets the needs of the times. Therefore, teacher empowerment is not enough to increase pedagogical competence, but must be accompanied by spiritual and intellectual strengthening so that they have wisdom in educating.

Furthermore, the reconstructive paradigm emphasizes strengthening students' spirituality and character through social practices. Islamic education should not stop at the individual level, but must foster social awareness and humanitarian responsibility. Spirituality that does not foster social concern loses its meaning. Fazlur Rahman described ideal Islamic education as ethical education, which instills universal moral values through active involvement in community life (Rahman, 1982). Strengthening character through social practices can be done through community service activities, environmental projects, and social entrepreneurship. Through these activities, students learn to practice values such as empathy, justice, trustworthiness, and responsibility. QS. Al-Ma'un [107]: 1–7 reminds us that true faith must be manifested in concern for the weak and social justice, not merely formal rituals. Thus, social practices become a concrete vehicle for instilling a vibrant spiritual and moral awareness.

The reconstructive paradigm in Islamic education ultimately seeks to create an educational system that not only produces intellectually intelligent individuals but also spiritually and morally mature individuals. Such education rejects the secularization of knowledge but also rejects the rigid fanaticism that stifles creative thinking. It seeks to integrate revelation and reason, faith and science, morality and modernity into a single, meaningful whole. Education within this paradigm not only prepares students for life in the world but also guides them to understand the meaning of life itself. As emphasized by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, true Islamic education must restore humanity to the sacredness of knowledge and an awareness of its ontological relationship with God (Nasr, 1989). With this principle, Islamic education can pave the way for the birth of a civilization rooted in monotheism yet open to progress, forming perfect human beings who think scientifically, possess noble morals, and play an active role in building a more civilized life.

### ***Implications***

The reconstructive paradigm in Islamic education has significant implications for the way of thinking, value systems, and direction of Islamic education development in the modern era. The world of education currently faces an epistemological tension between the need to adapt to advances in science and technology, on the one hand, and the responsibility to uphold spiritual and moral values, on the other. The reconstruction of the Islamic educational paradigm offers a middle ground that balances both, avoiding being trapped in a secularism that denies God, but also avoiding being constrained by dogmatism that rejects renewal. As emphasized by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (Al-Attas, 1993), the crisis in modern education is not a technical crisis, but rather a crisis of meaning: a loss of awareness of the true purpose of knowledge. Therefore, contemporary Islamic education must be reoriented toward a sense of monotheism, in which every form of knowledge is returned to its source, namely Allah SWT.

The first implication of this paradigm is the push for an educational model that fosters a balance between faith and knowledge. In modern educational systems, knowledge is often approached empirically and rationally without considering transcendental values. This has led to the reduction of knowledge to a mere utilitarian tool, rather than a means to understanding divine wisdom. Contemporary Islamic education needs to restore knowledge to the framework of monotheism, connecting rational knowledge and spiritual faith. According to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, the balance between revelation and reason is at the heart of the Islamization of knowledge, as both are God's instruments for guiding humanity toward truth (Al-Faruqi, 1982). Therefore, every discipline, whether science or humanities, must be placed in an ethical and theological relationship with the Creator. This educational model will produce students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess a deep moral and spiritual awareness.

The second implication is that this paradigm becomes the philosophical basis for the development of an integrative curriculum in Islamic education. The curriculum is no longer structured based on a dichotomy between religious and worldly knowledge, but within the framework of a monotheistic epistemology that positions all knowledge as a single, God-oriented entity. This concept aligns with Azyumardi Azra's view, which emphasizes the need for an interdisciplinary integration model in the Islamic education system in Indonesia, an approach that connects religious, social, and modern sciences in a complementary system (Azra, 2019). An integrative curriculum not only teaches the content of knowledge but also guides students in understanding the value and purpose of knowledge itself. In this way, Islamic education can shape individuals who think scientifically without losing their moral orientation, as stated in QS. Al-Mujadalah [58]: 11, that Allah will exalt the status of those who believe and are knowledgeable.

The third crucial implication is the formation of the perfect human being, a person who thinks critically, has morals, and is socially oriented. In Islam, the ultimate goal of education is not merely to produce intelligent individuals, but civilized individuals capable of balancing their intellectual, spiritual, and moral potential. Al-Ghazali (2005) asserts that knowledge without morals can be a source of destruction, just as morals without knowledge can lead to ignorance. Therefore, contemporary Islamic education must be oriented toward the formation of the perfect human being as its ultimate goal: a person who thinks critically but remains submissive to divine values; a person who is highly knowledgeable but remains humble; and a person with strong faith but active in social change. This concept of the perfect human being represents a perfect synthesis between theocentrism and anthropocentrism, with humans as servants of God and vicegerents on earth. This emphasizes that Islamic education not only shapes individuals with faith but also social agents who bring benefit to the community.

Furthermore, the reconstructive paradigm opens up space for innovation and research in Islamic education. Islamic education often lags behind in innovation due to its reliance on traditional teaching methods that emphasize memorization and dogma. This new paradigm encourages the development of research grounded in Islamic ethics, both in pedagogy, educational psychology, and learning technology. Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1996) emphasized that Islamic education must continue to undergo renewal (*tajdid*) to remain relevant and maintain its spirit amidst changing times. Innovation in this context does not mean abandoning tradition, but rather reviving the spirit of scientific *ijtihad* within the framework of monotheistic values. For example, Islamic education research can be directed at developing learning models that integrate digital technology with spirituality, or examining the effectiveness of a values-based

curriculum in shaping students' character. In this regard, research and innovation are oriented not only toward technical efficiency but also toward developing ethical and social awareness.

Ultimately, the overall implication of the reconstructive paradigm is the creation of an Islamic education system that is relevant, dynamic, and firmly rooted in divine values. Education born from this paradigm is able to respond to the challenges of globalization without losing its spiritual identity. As explained by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Nasr, 1989), education in Islam must be able to restore humanity to a cosmic consciousness that all knowledge and human activity are part of devotion to God. This paradigm also offers an alternative to the values crisis plaguing modern education, by presenting a system that fosters a balance between knowledge and wisdom, between science and ethics, between competence and moral awareness. Contemporary Islamic education, if built on this reconstructive foundation, will produce not only Muslim scientists and professionals, but also civilized individuals who will serve as guardians of human and divine values amidst modern civilization.

## CONCLUSION

Reconstructing the Islamic education paradigm is an urgent need amidst the values crisis and epistemological disorientation of modern education. The theocentric paradigm, which emphasizes the divine, often closes off space for rational exploration, while the anthropocentric paradigm, which deifies humans, marginalizes the spiritual dimension. Paradigm reconstruction seeks to harmonize the two by placing God as the center of values and humans as the subjects seeking meaning. Islamic education is essentially a process of *ta'dib* (religious guidance), the instilling of *adab* (ethics) that integrates knowledge, faith, and good deeds into a unified divine value.

This new paradigm is based on the principles of integration between revelation and reason, balance between knowledge and faith, and unity between morality and rationality. Reconstructive Islamic education must shape individuals who think critically while remaining rooted in divine values. The Islamization of knowledge is not a rejection of modern science, but rather a reorientation of knowledge to the values of monotheism, ensuring it is not separated from ethical and spiritual dimensions. Thus, this paradigm is a synthesis of Islamic intellectual tradition and the spirit of modern science.

In educational practice, the reconstructive paradigm encourages the realization of an integrative curriculum that combines religious and scientific knowledge, a value and experience-based learning approach, and the empowerment of teachers as *murabbi* and *mujaddid*. The ultimate goal is the birth of human beings with knowledge, faith and noble character - who are able to actualize Islamic values in social life. Knowledge without morals is a source of destruction, while morals without knowledge loses the direction of transformation.

Philosophically, the reconstructive paradigm returns Islamic education to its primary function: to shape human beings who are aware of the two dimensions of their existence as servants and caliphs of Allah. True Islamic education is an effort to restore humanity to an awareness of the sacredness of knowledge and its ontological connection with God. With this paradigm, Islamic education can become a moral and intellectual force that unites faith and knowledge, spirituality and rationality, thus producing a civilized and transformative generation for civilization.

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