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**Theology of Education from Ibn Taymiyyah's
Perspective and Its Relevance in Contemporary Times**

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the theology of Ibn Taimiyyah's thoughts and its relevance in the contemporary era. Therefore, this study uses library research with a descriptive analytical approach using comparative and historical methods. This study proves that Ibn Taimiyyah's theology of education is placing Tauhid as the main foundation of the educational component, because from the basis of Tauhid, an educational concept can be built that will produce results and be beneficial for human life, even Ibn Taimiyyah's educational concept is in line with the goals of National education which place faith and have faith in God Almighty as the first point.

Keywords: Contemporary Era, Educational Theology, Ibn Taimiyyah.

PRELIMINARY

Educational theology is crucial (Jaelani, et.al., 2020), not only examining how to plan, organize, actualize, and supervise education, but also all processes undertaken in educational management must be rooted in the aspect of revelation manifested through belief and thought without denying the existence and intervention of Almighty God (Jaelani, et.al., 2020). Therefore, theology is an effort to conceptualize religion into the realm of everyday life. Even in the Islamic context, the word "theology" would be more appropriate and meaningful when associated with the word "Islam," so that the intended meaning of "theology" is a theology that breathes Islam.

Thus, an understanding of the theology of education actually requires the inclusion of educational concepts and/or the derivation of educational concepts within and from the schools of thought of the mutakallimin (Fitriani, et.al., 2021). Arsyad (2013) acknowledged that no matter how simple a society's civilization, an educational process inevitably takes place within it, thus it is often said that education has existed throughout human civilization.

The educational process is a process of developing all human potential. Although in Islam there are several views regarding Islamic education. Qadariyah's understanding views that the process of Islamic education can proceed well if people are serious about trying to instill Islamic values in their lives. Jabariyah understanding views that the educational process has little influence because the success or failure of an educational process will be determined by Allah. Meanwhile, Asy'ariyah views Islamic education as a dynamic process, in the sense that humans, apart from having the basic potential to receive the educational process, also depend on a person's personality.

The emergence and development of traditions and the dynamics of educational thought in the Islamic world are inseparable from the environmental conditions (culture and civilization) that surround them (Nizar, 2013). Therefore, many figures were born from the womb of Islamic education. In this study, one of the Islamic figures is Ibn Taymiyyah. However, according to Kadir, educational theology is that Islamic theological ideas inspire curriculum frameworks, learning designs (teaching and learning processes), institutional development, and teacher professionalism (Sobur, 2016). Even theological

understanding is greatly influenced by variables: age, gender, ethnicity, social organization, level of education, type of education, intensity of receiving actual information and scientific activities (Syam, 2016).

METHOD

This study is a qualitative library research using a descriptive analytical approach using comparative and historical methods (Assingkily, 2021), using primary and secondary references in discovering Ibn Taimiyah's educational thoughts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Ibn Taymiyyah

His full name is Taqiyyuddin Ahmad bin Abd al-Halim bin Taimiyah, born in the city of Harra, Turkey, on Monday, 10 Rabi'ul Awal 661 H. Coinciding with 22 January 1263 AD. And died in Damascus 20 Zulkaidah, 728 Hijriyah, coinciding with 26 September 1328 AD (Islamic Encyclopedia Volume 2, 1994). His father, Shihab ad-Din 'Abd al-Halim Ibn as-Salam (627-672 H.) was a great scholar who had a high position at the Great Mosque of Damascus. Apart from that, he is also a teacher in the field of tafsir and hadith. Another position that Abd al-Halim also held was as Director of Madrasah Dar al-Hadits as-Sukkariyah, one of the most advanced and high-quality Islamic educational institutions of the Hambali school at that time. It was in this educational institution that 'Abd al-Halim, who was known as an orator, first educated Ibn Taimiyah.

At a very young age, Ibn Taimiyah, precisely at the age of seven, had successfully memorized the entire Qur'an. In addition, he also studied with a number of famous teachers, including Syam ad-Din Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Maqdisi (597-682 H), a renowned Islamic jurist (faqih) and the first supreme judge from the Hanbali school of thought in Syria, after Sultan Baybars (1260-1277 H) carried out reforms in the field of justice (Nata, 2000). However, the science that Ibn Taimiyah initially studied was the Qur'an and Hadith. Then Arabic, the science of the Qur'an, the science of Hadith, jurisprudence, the usul of fiqh, history, kalam, logic, philosophy, Sufism, psychology, literature, mathematics and various other disciplines, so that he became a person who had expertise in all branches of science (Nata, 2000), so that his clericism encompassed all Islamic studies and deserved the title of Sheikh of Islam, he was also known as a figure who eradicated heresy.

From the sciences studied by Ibn Taimiyah, it is very clear that the religious understanding adhered to by Ibn Taimiyah is very Qur'anic and Haditsi. In other words, it was from the Al-Qur'an and Hadith that Ibn Taymiyah developed a legal system that thought about all religious rules, both in the form of creeds and in the form of amaliyah. Apart from that, Ibn Taimiyah had the view that it was real problems related to the daily life of the Muslim community that were to be paid attention to, not formalistic scholastic problems. This view shows that Ibn Taimiyah really paid great attention to the problems that arise in society and wanted to overcome them by adhering to the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah, not to customs or something made up by humans. Another impression that is obtained in tracing the flow of Ibn Taymiyah's religious thought is that he appears to be very strict and could be called a "literalist" or textual in understanding the verses of the Qur'an, especially the verses which contain beliefs and worship. However, his thinking on matters of mu'amalah seems very flexible and not rigid.

This is clearly evident in Ibn Taimiyah's works, which cover various fields of knowledge, such as interpretation, hadith, jurisprudence, the principles of jurisprudence, morals, Sufism, philosophy, politics, and others. It is from these writings that we can discern Ibn Taimiyah's thoughts, including his thoughts on education, as will be explained in the following pages.

Ibn Taymiyah's Theology of Education

In the history of Islam, Ibn Taimiyah is a Hanbali scholar who founded the Salafiyah movement in the 7th century, providing a textual understanding of religion and believing in the implicit meanings of religious texts (Sefriyanti & Arif, 2022). Therefore, in his theological thought, Ibn Taimiyah aimed to invite Muslims to return to the foundations of religion in its pure form, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah (Syafrial, 2019). Therefore, it is important to examine Ibn Taimiyah's proposal comprehensively through his theological perspective. This is followed by a comparison with previously established theology. Ibn

Taimiyah's paradigm in education can be divided into the areas of educational philosophy, educational objectives, curriculum, and the relationship between education and culture. All of his educational thinking is based on clear explanations as contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah through a deep, clear, and energetic understanding. This study discusses Ibn Taimiyah's educational philosophy.

Ibn Taymiyyah's Philosophy of Education

The basis or principle used as a reference for Ibn Taimiyah's educational philosophy is knowledge that is beneficial as a foundation for intelligent and superior living. Meanwhile, using this knowledge will ensure the continuity and sustainability of society. Without knowledge, society will fall into a life of error (Nata, 2000). This is what Ibn Taimiyah (Aravik, 2018), explained in the research of Drestiani & Fahmi (2018), using the term *imtaq* method. The *imtaq* method is a learning method modified by researchers based on the Qur'an and Hadith in structural material. This is expected to improve student quality, both IQ, EQ, and SQ.

Starting from this view, according to Ibn Taimiyah, seeking knowledge is worship and understanding it deeply is an attitude of devotion to Allah and studying it is *jihad*, teaching it to people who do not know is *sadaqah* and discussing it is *tasbih*. So that with knowledge one can know Allah, worship, praise and acknowledge Him; and with that knowledge a person can be elevated to become a strong community.

Teaching someone knowledge is a form of charity for the Prophets. Those who fail to put their knowledge into practice are considered cursed by Allah. Ibn Taimiyah further stated that beneficial knowledge based on the principles of a true and fundamental life is knowledge that leads to a good life, directed toward connecting with God, the reality of creation, and strengthening humanity. He believes this can be built on the foundation of *Tawhid*. This is because *Tawhid* is the first knowledge a Muslim must learn. Therefore, *Tawhid* is one of the fundamental teachings of Islam. The knowledge of *Tawhid* relates to the essence of God, His Names and Attributes, and is a means for a servant to meet Him. Therefore, *Tawhid*, according to Ibn Taimiyah, is a very important thing that must be based on the educational philosophy of *at-tawhid*, namely by declaring the two sentences of the *Shahadah* as the main foundation of Islamic teachings: testifying that there is no God but Allah and testifying that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). As His messenger (Nata, 2000). This is the *Shahada*, the key to embracing Islam. Ibn Taimiyah further stated that the word "Islam" implies surrender, steadfastness, and sincerity. It is the essence of the statement that there is no god but Allah.

From the statement above, it is clear that Ibn Taymiyyah established *Tawhid* as the primary foundation of education, and from this foundation, educational concepts can be built, including objectives, curriculum, systems, and development. This type of education will yield beneficial results for human life. Therefore, according to the author, Ibn Taymiyyah laid the foundation for education on a theological and philosophical level, prioritizing the concept of *Tawhid*. Therefore, the author wishes to discuss two sections: the worldview of *Tawhid* and *Tawhid* as a paradigm for Islamic education.

Monotheistic Worldview

When someone declares their belief in Allah alone (*lailaha illa Allah*), they must deny all other beliefs while affirming their belief that there is only one, namely Allah. This belief must fill their consciousness when they declare themselves Muslims (submission and obedience to Allah). Thus, *Tawhid* means a person's commitment to Allah as the focus and center of orientation, the center of life, and the sole source of values (Mastuki, 1999).

For Muslims, belief in *Tawhid* is both the foundation and the goal of their entire lives. All activities must exist and remain within the framework of *Tawhid*, not just filling the "empty spaces" of a Muslim's consciousness, but their entire consciousness. The concept of God, known in Arabic as Allah, embedded in the concept of *Tawhid* permeates every aspect of life. Therefore, for Muslims, *Tawhid* is the only value (Sardar & Merry, 1992). Within this framework, all social life of Muslims must be based on a "*Tawhid* worldview."

Mastuki HS further stated that *Tawhid* and belief in *Tawhid* are not only limited to God and mental activity. *Tawhid* also means action, therefore, the best way to understand *Tawhid*, according to Hasan Hanafi, is to interpret it as "unification." When the concept of *Tawhid* is returned to the divine

aspect, it will mean "the oneness of God." However, because Islam also encompasses worldly, mental, and divine aspects, Tawhid does not stop at the realm of divinity. Because the affirmation (affirmation) of the unity of God is not only a verbal statement (taqrirun bi al-lisan), but also a justification in the heart (tasdiq bi al-qalb) which is then manifested in concrete actions ('amal bi al-Jawarih). In other words, Tawhid is not just a statement and belief in the oneness of God. Tawhid is involvement, a principle of action that inspires all of human life.

From the above description of the Tawhid worldview, it not only affirms the oneness of God but also believes in the unity of creation, the unity of humanity, the unity of the destiny of life, and the unity of life's purpose, all of which are derived from the unity of divinity. Therefore, the Tawhid worldview presented above is very relevant to what Ibn Taimiyah proposed. However, according to Ibn Taimiyah, Tawhid will not achieve perfect development of its tendencies except through teaching and education.

Tauhid as a Paradigm of Islamic Education

According to Ulum (2013), the goal of Islamic Education, it can be concluded that Abdullah (servant of Allah) in carrying out his duties is passive, while Khalifatullah (representative of Allah) is active and dynamic. The idea that Tauhid needs to be used as a paradigm of Islamic education is not without basis and logical reasons because as explained above, Tauhid as a worldview contains fundamental values that can be used as the basis for building Islamic education with this divine tauhid education model built on four things, namely: First, the concept of science is referred to QS. Fushilat verse 53. Where science is divided into three, namely al-afaq is the natural sciences (natural sciences), anfas is the sciences of human phenomena (social sciences and humanities), and al-haq is the science of religiosity (sciences about tauhid). Second, the goal of Islamic education is to produce spiritual greatness, emotional stability, intellectual height, and professional stability. Third, developing the potential of students' as-sam'a, al-abshar, and al-af'idat in the learning process. Fourth, teachers are required to be professional (Tambak & Sukenti, 2017).

From this perspective, it can be formulated that the function of Tawhid is to transform every individual who believes into a "tawhid person" who possesses noble qualities that free him from every shackle that would confine him to a despicable, inhuman situation. Among the various attributes of a Tawhid person expected to emerge from the womb of education are: First, having a complete commitment to his Lord. Second, rejecting life guidelines that do not come from God. Third, being progressive by always assessing the quality of his life, traditions, and his understanding of life. Fourth, his purpose in life is very clear. His worship, his hard work, his life and death are all for God alone. This is what he declares repeatedly in every prayer (Inna shalati, wa nusuki wa mahyaya wa mamati li Alahi Rabb al-'Alamin). As a result, he will never be entangled in false values and things without value, so that worldly attributes: wealth, power, and pleasures of life are not his life's goals. These things are merely means to achieve God's pleasure. Fifth, Manuisa Tauhid has a clear vision and mission regarding a harmonious life between humans and their God, with their God, with their environment, with their fellow humans, and with themselves. In turn, this vision drives them to transform the rigid and polytheistic order into a new order that is more humane, progressive, just, and democratic (Rais, 1989).

As its embodiment, Islamic education is directed toward two dimensions: vertical submission and horizontal dialectical. In the first dimension, education should foster an understanding of concrete life, namely human life in relation to nature or its social environment. In this dimension, humans must be able to overcome the challenges and obstacles of the world, concretely through the development of science and technology. Meanwhile, in the second dimension, namely vertical submission, science and technology education, in addition to being a tool for utilizing, maintaining, and preserving natural resources, also serves as a bridge to understanding the phenomena and mysteries of life in order to achieve an eternal relationship with the Almighty Creator. In this dimension, science and technology education must be accompanied by education of the heart (Saefuddin, 1987).

In other words, Islamic education within the framework of Tawhid must simultaneously address two strategic imperatives. First, education is directed at fostering awareness and developing an understanding of the origins and purpose of human life and maintaining harmony to achieve eternal life in relation to God (the theological aspect). Second, it develops an understanding of concrete life, namely human life in relation to nature and the social environment.

Thus, the concept of Tawhid not only touches on the divine aspect but also touches on the human aspect, as well as with nature. This is very much in line with the concept of Tawhid Ibn Taimiyah by trying to provide a description of the concept of a knowledgeable person, the purpose of education, curriculum (science, and so on. Based on this Tawhid, a knowledgeable person is someone who testifies to the divinity of Allah and then impresses it. This is in line with the word of Allah which means: "Allah declares that there is no god but Him (Allah). The angels and those who have knowledge hold fast to Him" (QS. Ali'Imran: 18).

CONCLUSION

From the description above, it can be concluded that the educational concept that Ibn Taimiyah wanted was to place Tauhid as the main foundation of education, for all components of education, because from the basis of Tauhid, an educational concept can be built that will produce results and be beneficial for human life, even Ibn Taimiyah's educational concept is in line with the goals of National education which place faith and piety in God Almighty as the first point.

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