

The Islamic Worldview as the Foundation of Islamic Educational Civilization in the Age of Globalization

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Abstract

Islamic education faces a structural paradox in the era of globalization: many institutions pursue institutional adaptation without commensurate epistemological renewal, thereby modernizing administration but not philosophy, digitizing the classroom but not the knowledge framework, and expanding access but not intellectual goals. Consequently, Islamic educational institutions remain institutionally intact but are conceptually weakened amid pressures from accreditation, global rankings, and the knowledge economy. This conceptual study aims to formulate a paradigm for the reconstruction of Islamic education that addresses the pressures of modernization, globalization, and technological disruption without diluting its epistemological identity and civilizational mission. This research employs a qualitative-conceptual design with a structured narrative review approach of 81 sources selected via a PRISMA-adapted procedure, coded using NVivo 14, cross-checked for inter-coder consistency, and analyzed dialectically based on the principle of immanent critique. Tracy's quality framework is fully adopted to ensure methodological rigor. The analysis demonstrates that *Tajdīd*, the Islamization of knowledge, and the Islamic worldview cannot be treated as additive components but rather as constructs operating at distinct yet interdependent levels: institutional-pedagogical, epistemological, and civilizational. This distinction between operational levels constitutes the primary conceptual contribution that sets this analysis apart from previous syntheses. The article also addresses three substantial internal critiques: dialectical, historiographical, and operational, which are rarely addressed in the supporting literature. The findings yield three empirically testable propositions and three practical priorities for Islamic educational institutions, enabling Islamic education to transition from being a consumer of global paradigms to a producer of intellectual alternatives for 21st-century ethical reconstruction.

Keywords: *Tajdīd*; Islamization of knowledge; epistemological reconstruction; globalization.

Introduction

Islamic education has played a crucial role in the history of Muslim societies in Indonesia, particularly in shaping the modern nation-state.¹ From the colonial era through the post-independence period, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), madrasahs, and Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI) have served not only as centers of religious knowledge. These institutions also fostered leadership, moral values, social solidarity, and anti-colonial movements.²

The 21st century is marked by rapid change, transformative technology, and intensifying global competition.³ Modernization, globalization, digitalization, artificial intelligence, and the knowledge economy are reshaping how the world views education. The focus has shifted to labor market outcomes, innovation capacity, international rankings, and institutional efficiency. Governments in many countries, including Indonesia, are responding by prioritizing governance reforms,⁴ digital infrastructure,⁵ STEAM competencies,⁶ and human resource research and development productivity.⁷ In Indonesia, this priority is outlined in the 2025–2029 National Medium-Term Development Plan and in the Indonesia Emas 2045 vision.⁸

This shift is not merely a technical or managerial issue. Rather, it touches on identity, purpose, and the way we view knowledge.⁹ On the one hand, this transformation opens up opportunities: Islamic institutions can become more inclusive, technologically literate, globally connected, and socially impactful. On the other hand, the same pressures may shift the normative foundation upon which Islamic education stands.¹⁰ Recent

¹ Haidar Putra Daulay and Nurgaya Pasa, *Pendidikan Islam Dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2016).

² Yudi Latief, *Intelegensia Muslim Dan Kuasa: Genealogi Intelegensia Muslim Indonesia Abad Ke-20* (Jakarta: Democracy Project: Yayasan Abad Demokrasi, 2012).

³ Abdullah Sahin, *New Directions in Islamic Education: Pedagogy and Identity Formation* (Kube Publishing Ltd, 2013).

⁴ Azyumardi Azra, “Pesantren: Kontinuitas Dan Perubahan,” in *Bilik-Bilik Pesantren* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997).

⁵ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, “Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN) 2025–2029” (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2024).

⁶ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, “Rancangan Teknokratik Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN) 2025–2029” (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2024).

⁷ Nasional, “Rancangan Teknokratik Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN) 2025–2029.”

⁸ Nasional, “Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN) 2025–2029.”

⁹ John F Haight, *Science and Religion: From Conflict to Conversation* (Paulist Press, 1995).

¹⁰ Nur Jamal, “Model-Model Integrasi Keilmuan Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam,” *KABILAH: Journal of Social Community* 2, no. 1 (2017): 83–101.

empirical research on madrasah reform in Indonesia highlights this tension. Digital governance and quality management do improve administrative indicators, but significant gaps remain in pedagogical depth, teacher capacity, and the alignment of reforms with the substantive goals of Islamic education.¹¹ Accreditation targets, quality assurance, rankings, bureaucratic compliance, and market-oriented governance are increasingly dominant. Consequently, institutions are more preoccupied with procedural performance than with intellectual depth, ethics, and character. Education, too, risks becoming merely an administrative function, rather than a process that shapes human beings.¹²

Similar concerns have emerged on the global stage. Academics highlight the corporatization of higher education, the commodification of knowledge, and the weakening of universities as spaces for independent inquiry.¹³ Fleming argues that contemporary universities are increasingly shaped by managerialism and ranking competition.¹⁴ Nichols highlights the erosion of expert authority in the digital age, when information flows without the ability to filter it.¹⁵ In Islamic education, this crisis gives rise to a more fundamental issue: what is at stake is not merely governance, but the very meaning of knowledge itself.¹⁶

The tradition of Islamic education possesses a distinctive ethos: *turāth*, ethics and discipline, the scholarly lineage of teacher-student transmission, and an integrated approach to learning that unites reason, revelation, spirituality, and public responsibility. Education within this tradition does not end with a degree; it is directed toward *ta'dīb*, *tazkiyah*, and the formation of morally responsible human beings. When Islamic institutions are forced to adapt without a clear intellectual framework, the same dilemma recurs: accepting changes that weaken the normative ethos, or clinging rigidly to the legacy until it is left behind by the times. Recent case studies of major Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia show that this dilemma is not merely theoretical. The way each

¹¹ Hasanuddin Haddade et al., "Madrasah Management Strategies through Madrasah Reform Program: An Evidence from Indonesia," *International Journal of Educational Management* 38, no. 5 (2024): 1289–1304, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-05-2023-0236>.

¹² Tom Nichols, *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign Against Established Knowledge and Why It Matters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

¹³ Kamaluddin M H Pasi, Rasyidin Rasyidin, and Radinal Mukhtar Harahap, "Education System of Modern Islamic Boarding School in The Postmodern Era," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 3 (2020): 311–23.

¹⁴ Peter Fleming, *Dark Academia: How Universities Die* (London: Pluto Books, 2021).

¹⁵ Nichols, *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign Against Established Knowledge and Why It Matters*.

¹⁶ Azyumardi Azyumardi, "Islamic Education and Reintegration of Sciences: Improving Islamic Higher Education," *Media Syari'ah: Wahana Kajian Hukum Islam Dan Pranata Sosial* 15, no. 2 (2017): 257–64.

institution manages tradition and innovation produces different types of adaptation, and the consequences are tangible for its religious identity and educational outcomes.¹⁷ Azra's observation remains relevant: pesantren survive precisely because they can adapt to the times without losing their identity as Islamic and authentic institutions.¹⁸

Beyond institutional adaptation, an unresolved issue remains: the relationship between revealed knowledge and modern science. The philosophy of science often maps this relationship into four models: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration.¹⁹ This typology actually originated from a Christian theological context, with metaphysical assumptions that do not always align with the Islamic intellectual tradition.²⁰ Within Muslim thought itself, answers to the issue of knowledge integration vary. Among them: the program of the Islamization of knowledge formulated by al-Faruqi²¹ and developed by al-Attas, with a framework based on *maqāsid*, an approach rooted in the Islamic worldview,²² And the heart-centered reconstruction proposed by Taha Abdurrahman, as presented by Ihwan Agustono.²³ All these positions agree that contemporary education suffers from epistemological fragmentation, but differ significantly in their solutions.

The program of Islamization of knowledge, in particular, attracts significant intellectual investment and serious academic criticism. Both must be acknowledged. Harvey argues that al-Attas's metaphysical critique of modern science is "*dialectically flawed because it relies on specific, non-publicly verifiable interpretations of revelation and spiritual intuition,*" and proposes a phenomenological foundation through a re-

¹⁷ Zahrotun Hasna Nisak et al., "Navigating the Paradox: Integrating Tradition and Educational Innovation in Indonesian Pesantren," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 19, no. 2 (2025): 448–75, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2025.19.2.448-475>.

¹⁸ Azyumardi Azra, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa: Muslim Schools and National Ideals in Indonesia," *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, 2007, 172–98.

¹⁹ Ian G Barbour, "On Typologies for Relating Science and Religion," *Zygon*® 37, no. 2 (2002): 345–60.

²⁰ Khairudin Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 80, no. 4 (2019): 643–64.

²¹ International Institute of Islamic Thought, International Institute of Islamic Thought Staff, and I R Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989), <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=8eCw0QEACAAJ>.

²² Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam* (Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia Kuala Lumpur, 1980).

²³ Ihwan Agustono, Jarman Arroisi, and Naura Safira Salsabila Zain, "The Qur'anic Concept of Mīthāq in the Critique of Modernity: A Comparative Study of Al-Attas and Taha Abdurrahman," *Afkar* 27, no. 1 (2025): 259–94, <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol27no1.7>.

reading of Husserl's **The Crisis of the European Sciences**.²⁴ Aljunied, from an intellectual history perspective, demonstrates that al-Attas's own understanding of secularism is a complex construction; this demands careful historical reconstruction rather than uncritical adoption.²⁵ Fleming poses the most incisive question: after four decades of programmatic declarations, what are the concrete results of the Islamization of knowledge in Islamic social sciences in the fields of economics, sociology, or political science?²⁶ These critiques are not attacks from the outside. Rather, they come from scholars working within the Islamic tradition itself, and serve as a reminder that the reconstruction of Islamic education must confront the operational, methodological, and dialectical limits of existing integration models, rather than merely reaffirming their normative premises.

This pattern reveals the paradox of Islamic education today: many institutions pursue structural adaptation without a corresponding epistemological renewal. They modernize administration, not philosophy; digitize classrooms, not knowledge frameworks; expand access, not intellectual goals. Consequently, Islamic education may remain institutionally intact but grow conceptually weaker. The existing literature has provided many insights into educational reform, curriculum integration, and globalization in the Muslim world. Works by Jackson and Parker,²⁷ Azra,²⁸ Hidayat and Arifin,²⁹ Tolchah and Mu'ammam,³⁰ Akrim,³¹ and others enrich this field. Recent writings by Malkawi³² and Sardar³³ advance the discussion by mapping the intellectual genealogy of

²⁴ Ramon Harvey, "Islamic Theology and the Crisis of Contemporary Science: Naquib Al-Attas' 'Metaphysical Critique' and a Husserlian Alternative," *Theology and Science* 21, no. 3 (2023): 404–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14746700.2023.2230429>.

²⁵ Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular."

²⁶ Fleming, *Dark Academia: How Universities Die*.

²⁷ Elisabeth Jackson and Lyn Parker, "'Enriched with Knowledge': Modernisation, Islamisation and the Future of Islamic Education in Indonesia," *RIMA: Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 42, no. 1 (2008): 21–53.

²⁸ Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of Al-Manar's Reformism to the Malay-Indonesian World: The Cases of Al-Imam and Al-Munir," *Studia Islamika* 6, no. 3 (1999).

²⁹ Moch Charis Hidayat and Sokhibul Arifin, "Integration Science Technology with Islamic Values: Empowering Education Model," 2020, 966–70.

³⁰ Moch Tolchah and Muhammad Arfan Mu'ammam, "Islamic Education in the Globalization Era," *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* 7, no. 4 (2019): 1031–37.

³¹ Akrim Akrim, "A New Direction of Islamic Education in Indonesia: Opportunities and Challenges in the Industrial Revolution Era 4.0," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 01 (2022): 35–48.

³² Fathi Hasan Malkawi, *Epistemological Integration: Essentials of an Islamic Methodology* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2014).

³³ Ziauddin Sardar, "From Islamization to Integration of Knowledge," in *Rethinking Reform in Higher Education: From Islamization to Integration of Knowledge* (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2018), 12–18.

integration projects and offering a methodological foundation for epistemological reform. Nevertheless, three analytical gaps remain. *First*, modernization, knowledge integration, and globalization are often seen as interrelated, but they are frequently discussed in overly abstract terms. How these three operate at different institutional levels and how the tensions among them can be managed are rarely discussed. *Second*, this discourse largely takes place among supporters themselves, and substantive critiques such as those raised by Harvey, Aljunied, and Chande are rarely addressed. *Third*, many programmatic visions have been formulated, but operational specifications at the levels of curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional design remain limited.

Based on this diagnosis, this article argues that Islamic education in the modern era requires not merely institutional continuity but demands adaptation grounded in a paradigm built upon three interrelated pillars: *Tajdīd*, the Islamization of knowledge, and the Islamic worldview. *Tajdīd* is understood not as a theological revision, but as a renewal of methods, institutions, and pedagogy that remains faithful to foundational principles. The Islamization of knowledge is understood as a critical engagement with modern science that reorients concepts, objectives, and assumptions within the framework of *tawhīd*, while also accounting for the methodological and dialectical critiques outlined above. The Islamic worldview provides an ontological, ethical, and civilizational horizon that determines the purpose of knowledge, the kind of human being to be formed, and the social order to be achieved. These three pillars are not merely numbered components, but elements operating at different yet interdependent levels: *Tajdīd* at the institutional and pedagogical levels, the Islamization of knowledge at the epistemological level, and the Islamic worldview at the civilizational level. It is this differentiation of levels that distinguishes this analysis from previous formulations, which tended to merge the three without examining their structural relationships.

The central question of this article is: how does Islamic education respond to modernization, globalization, and technological disruption without losing its epistemological identity and civilizational mission? Three subsidiary questions guide the analysis. *First*, how can *Tajdīd*, understood as principled renewal, reorganize institutional and pedagogical reforms without dissolving its normative foundations? *Second*, how can the Islamization of knowledge engage substantively, *rather than merely rhetorically*, with *modern science* by seriously weighing both its epistemological promises and its

operational critiques? *Third*, how does the Islamic worldview function as a civilizational horizon that supports the engagement of pluralist Muslims in global modernity, rather than positioning Islamic education as the opponent of a monolithic “modern”? Answering these questions concerns the sustainability of Islamic educational institutions and Islam’s contribution to the moral and intellectual direction of the 21st century.

Methodology Research

This study employs a qualitative-conceptual design through a structured narrative review. Unlike a systematic review, this approach does not aggregate empirical findings but rather constructs a conceptual synthesis and intellectual arguments across the literature that address historical, multidisciplinary, and philosophical questions. The answers lie in the depths of interpretation. Three considerations underpin this choice: (1) questions regarding the relationship between *Tajdīd*, the Islamization of knowledge, and the Islamic worldview span theological, philosophical, historical, and educational discourses; (2) relevant academic discourse encompasses classical and contemporary sources that require interpretive methods with a broad scope.³⁴ And (3) the targeted conceptual integration can only be achieved through arguments grounded in close readings of primary sources, not through statistical synthesis.³⁵

This article posits normative assumptions; therefore, the author’s position must be stated. The author was educated at Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia and is actively engaged in the traditions under examination, which provides access to primary sources in Arabic and Indonesian. The risk of confirmation bias is mitigated in two ways: (1) the analytical framework incorporates substantive critiques of each tradition under examination, including critiques of al-Attas’s metaphysics, Aljunied’s construction of secularism, and the operational outcomes of the Islamization of knowledge program; and (2) each critique is read in its strongest formulation (*steel-manning*) before being evaluated.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were formulated before the source search, covering five dimensions (Table 1).

³⁴ Javeed Sukhera, “Narrative Reviews: Flexible, Rigorous, and Practical,” *Journal of Graduate Medical Education* 14, no. 4 (2022): 414–17, <https://doi.org/10.4300/JGME-D-22-00480.1>.

³⁵ Trisha Greenhalgh, Sally Thorne, and Kirsti Malterud, “Time to Challenge the Spurious Hierarchy of Systematic over Narrative Reviews?,” *European Journal of Clinical Investigation* 48, no. 6 (2018): e12931, <https://doi.org/10.1111/eci.12931>.

Table 1.
Inclusion and exclusion criteria for sources.

Dimension	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Time frame	Classical sources without restriction; contemporary literature 2010–2025.	Sources before 2010, except for canonical references (al-Faruqi 1982; al-Attas 1980, 1995).
Languages	Arabic, English, Indonesian.	Persian, Turkish, and Urdu sources without critical translations.
Publication types	Academic books, articles indexed in Scopus/WoS/Sinta 1–2, chapters in <i>edited volumes</i> , and published dissertations.	Media opinions, blogs, <i>non-peer-reviewed</i> proceedings, and sources without author identification.
Thematic relevance	Sources discussing <i>Tajdīd</i> , the Islamization of knowledge, the Islamic worldview, reforms in higher education/madrasahs/pesantren, or epistemological critiques of Islamic education.	Sources that mention key themes tangentially or exclusively in a doctrinal-normative manner without academic engagement.
Dialectical balance	Deliberate inclusion of substantive critiques (Harvey, Aljunied, Chande, etc.) to ensure argumentative symmetry.	Sources that function as rhetorical repetition without new conceptual contributions.

Source selection was conducted in 4 stages, adapting the PRISMA principles for narrative reviews (Table 2).

Table 2.
Source selection process.

Stage	Procedure	Results
1	Search on Scopus, WoS, JSTOR, Google Scholar, Sinta, Garuda, and the IIIT/ISTAC repository using the keywords: " <i>Islamization of knowledge</i> ," " <i>Tajdīd</i> ," " <i>Islamic worldview</i> ," " <i>madrasah reform</i> ," " <i>pesantren modernization</i> ," " <i>Islamic higher education</i> ," and their Arabic/Indonesian equivalents.	287 sources identified
2	Screening of titles and abstracts based on thematic relevance and publication type.	134 sources (153 eliminated: tangential, non-academic, or duplicates)
3	Full-text reading with qualitative assessment; foundational classical sources were purposively re-included.	Final corpus: 81 sources
4	Verification of category balance: proportion of critical studies $\geq 25\%$; no category exceeding 30%.	Dialectical symmetry confirmed

The final corpus comprises 81 sources, categorized by methodological function (Table 3). The proportion of critical studies was intentionally increased to 25% to address *the confirmation bias* commonly found in the conceptual literature on Islamic education.

Table 3.
Composition of the final corpus (n = 81).

Category	Description	n	%
Classical and fundamental sources	Al-Attas, al-Faruqi, Fazlur Rahman, Iqbal, and al-Ghazālī in their original languages or critical translations.	18	22%
Contemporary Muslim scholars	<i>Peer-reviewed</i> works published after 2010 that elaborate on or operationalize the three pillars (Sardar, Malkawi, Wan Daud, Zarkasyi, Sahin, etc.).	22	27
Critical and dialogical studies	Substantive critiques of Islamization programs and metaphysical claims in Islamic education (Harvey, Aljunied, Chande, Agustono et al.).	20	25
Comparative and contextual literature	Empirical and conceptual studies on Islamic education reform in Indonesia and abroad, as well as Western literature on higher education governance and the philosophy of education.	21	26
Total		81	100

The analysis was conducted in three stages. *First*, thematic mapping: the sources were coded in NVivo 14 using a three-pillar framework: *Tajdīd*, Islamization of knowledge, and Islamic worldview within a two-level hierarchical *node* structure. NVivo was chosen for its ability to handle Arabic and Indonesian texts in parallel, its *coding stripes* feature for detecting overlaps between pillars, and its support for coding consistency checks. Coding consistency was assessed by independently coding a 20% sample of the data by both authors, with a target Cohen's $\kappa \geq 0.75$; discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus.

Second, dialectical analysis: each pillar was examined by contrasting the strongest formulations of its proponents with the substantive critiques of its opponents, following the principle of immanent criticism, that is, a tradition is evaluated based on its own commitments, not on standards foreign to it.

Third, conceptual synthesis: the three pillars are treated as constructs operating at different levels: institutional-pedagogical (*Tajdīd*), epistemological (Islamization of knowledge), and civilizational (Islamic worldview). It is this difference in levels that constitutes the article's argument and its conceptual contribution. Three principles guide all stages: sensitivity to tradition, dialectical engagement, and operational specificity.

Since this study does not pursue statistical generalizations, quality is assessed using Tracy's eight criteria: worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics, and meaningful coherence. Each criterion is fully adopted, with the

note that the *ethical* dimension is applied only to a limited extent because this study does not involve human subjects or primary institutional data.

Three limitations must be acknowledged. First, the conceptual nature of this study means its claims are evaluated based on argumentative coherence rather than tested against institutional empirical data; the resulting three-pillar paradigm contains propositions that can be tested in future research. Second, the corpus reflects the authors' linguistic scope; sources in Persian, Turkish, Urdu, and Sub-Saharan African contexts are underrepresented. Third, although critical studies constitute 25% of the work, the analytical center of gravity remains within the tawhīd tradition it seeks to reconstruct; this argument operates within and through that tradition, not outside it.

Reconstructing Islamic Education Through the Islamization of Knowledge

Behind the issue of institutional modernization lies a deeper problem: how religious knowledge and modern science relate to one another. In many Muslim societies, schools and universities are judged by their ability to produce graduates who are scientifically literate and competitive in the job market. In Indonesia in the late 20th century, Islamic education was often criticized for being too preoccupied with teaching rituals and not emphasizing general knowledge enough.³⁶ Similar criticism has since targeted Islamic universities, which are seen as defining Islamic studies too narrowly and as failing to compete in a market-oriented academic system.³⁷ This pressure is now compounded by globalization, technological disruption, and international rankings. Islamic education is required not only to preserve identity but also to prove its relevance.³⁸ The question is: is the answer simply adding secular disciplines to existing institutions, or is what is needed a change in the epistemological foundation upon which knowledge is built?

In the context of the Islamic scholarly tradition, Malkawi notes that the idea of integrating knowledge is not a new project.³⁹ The classical Islamic intellectual tradition did not recognize a rigid separation between “religious knowledge” and “worldly knowledge”; that separation only emerged through colonial and secular educational

³⁶ Abdin Chande, “Global Politics of Knowledge Production: The Challenges of Islamization of Knowledge in The Light of Tradition Vs Secular Modernity Debate,” *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2023): 271–89, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i2.3502>.

³⁷ Azyumardi Azra, “Islamic Education and Reintegration of Sciences: Improving Islamic Higher Education,” *Media Syari'ah: Wahana Kajian Hukum Islam Dan Pranata Sosial* 15, no. 2 (2013): 257–64.

³⁸ Tolchah and Mu'ammam, “Islamic Education in the Globalization Era.”

³⁹ Malkawi, *Epistemological Integration: Essentials of an Islamic Methodology*.

systems.⁴⁰ ‘Ilm is understood as a comprehensive search for truth that connects God, humanity, and the natural world within the framework of *tawhīd*. This unity did not emerge without debate. Historians of Islamic science document serious internal polemics regarding the status of falsafa, the boundaries of kalām, and the legitimacy of *‘ulūm aqliyya* compared to *‘ulūm naqliyya*; some scholars even considered certain rational sciences to be religiously dubious.⁴¹ This complexity must be acknowledged so that contemporary integration projects stand on their own merits, not on an idealized vision of the past. What remains historically true is that revelation fostered literacy and empirical inquiry and that the Abbasid era produced one of the greatest translation movements in history, which absorbed the Greek, Persian, and Indian legacies into a coherent synthesis of civilization.⁴²

The fragmentation of knowledge in many Muslim societies today is not an inherent feature of Islam, but rather the accumulation of a series of historical events: the restructuring of colonial education, the decline of Muslim scientific institutions after the peak of the Middle Ages, and the shift in patronage following the fall of al-Andalus.⁴³ In Indonesia, colonialism institutionalized a dual education system: state schools that opened up social mobility and religious education confined to the private sphere.⁴⁴ This legacy created a persistent hierarchy in which Islamic education is viewed as less modern and less competitive. Today’s discourse on integration, therefore, is not merely a curricular innovation; it is an effort to heal an epistemological rift rooted in history.

The Islamization of knowledge emerges as a programmatic response. Properly understood, this does not mean rejecting science or grafting verses onto modern disciplines, but rather a critical reordering of knowledge from an Islamic perspective so that scientific inquiry operates within a vision of reality grounded in the ethics of *tawhīd*.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Miftahuddin Miftahuddin, “Dikotomi Kurikulum Sebagai Propaganda Politik Kolonial Terhadap Pendidikan Islam Indonesia,” *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 01 (2023).

⁴¹ Robert Wisnovsky, “The Nature and Scope of Arabic Philosophical Commentary in Post-Classical (ca. 1100–1900 AD) Islamic Intellectual History,” in *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, ed. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, and M W F Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2004), 149–91.

⁴² Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought in Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ‘Abbasid Society (2nd-4th/8th-10th Centuries)* (London: Routledge, 1988).

⁴³ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: The Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982).

⁴⁴ Abd. Halim Soebahar, *Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam Dari Ordonansi Guru Sampai UU Sisdiknas* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2013).

⁴⁵ Syed Muhammad Al-Naquib al-Attas, “Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education,” 1979.

While *Tajdīd* renews institutions and methods, Islamization renews its intellectual architecture by questioning what counts as knowledge, for what purposes science is used, and what assumptions are embedded in modern disciplines regarding humanity, nature, and truth.

Three Substantial Challenges

Developing Islamization as a paradigm of reconstruction requires more than merely reiterating its founding aspirations. Since al-Faruqi's General Principles and Workplan and al-Attas's Concept of Education in Islam, three major lines of critique have emerged over the past four decades within the Islamic tradition itself.

The dialectical challenge. Harvey argues that al-Attas's metaphysical critique of science, however rich it may be internally, is "dialectically flawed because it relies on specific interpretations of revelation and spiritual intuition that cannot be publicly verified." The issue is methodological, not theological: a critique grounded in premises that are unverifiable to the public cannot engage in dialogue with those who do not share them. Harvey proposes Husserl's phenomenology as an alternative critique grounded in the structure of conscious experience accessible to anyone. The implication is that Islamization cannot be content with internal coherence within the framework of *tawhīd* if it wishes to influence broader intellectual discourse.⁴⁶

Historiographical challenges. Aljunied points out that the "secularism" pitted against Islamization is actually a complex historical construction, not a singular entity. What is presented as a monolithic secular enemy, upon closer examination, is a heterogeneous collection of intellectual positions, each with its own debates. The binary framework of "Islamic worldview vs. monolithic secular modernity" needs to be replaced with a more careful reading of the diversity of modern traditions.⁴⁷

Operational challenges. Chande poses the most incisive question: what, in concrete terms, has Islamization produced? Is there any substantial Islamic social science in the fields of economics, sociology, or political science? Has this program succeeded in bringing together fuqahā and experts in modern disciplines to address contemporary

⁴⁶ Harvey, "Islamic Theology and the Crisis of Contemporary Science: Naquib Al-Attas' 'Metaphysical Critique' and a Husserlian Alternative."

⁴⁷ Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular."

issues? The gap between vision and results remains the program's greatest internal weakness.⁴⁸

Pseudo-Integration and Substantive Responses

The most obvious operational challenge in integration is the formalistic tendency to equate integration with inserting verses or hadiths into scientific discourse.⁴⁹ This approach is sometimes called the "scripturalization" of science, which reduces revelation to decorative legitimization. Scientific methodology remains unchanged; Islamic content becomes merely a rhetorical embellishment. Several Islamic universities in Indonesia are attempting a more serious response through the interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary models proposed by Amin Abdullah.⁵⁰ the "Tree of Knowledge" concept by Suprayogo,⁵¹ and "*Wahdat al-'Ulūm*" proposed by Harahap.⁵² This initiative is important because it demonstrates that PTKI can produce an original paradigm. However, recent empirical assessments indicate that even within this framework, the gap between integration as a vision and integration as a practice in the classroom and research remains quite wide.

Taking into account the three criticisms above, substantive Islamization, in Malkawi's view, must address four layers simultaneously: concepts, assumptions, objectives, and methods.⁵³ An economy detached from justice, environmental science detached from responsibility, and psychology detached from spirituality reveal what happens when knowledge is severed from transcendence. Islamization does not eliminate disciplinary expertise; it humanizes it and redirects it toward truth, justice, and accountability before Allah. This work must also be understandable to dialogue partners who do not share Islam's metaphysical premises, by relying on the shared structure of human thought and empirically verifiable consequences. It must move beyond declarations to concrete demonstrations of how integration transforms inquiry.

⁴⁸ Chande, "Global Politics of Knowledge Production: The Challenges of Islamization of Knowledge in The Light of Tradition Vs Secular Modernity Debate."

⁴⁹ Sardar, "From Islamization to Integration of Knowledge."

⁵⁰ Muhammad Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies Di Perguruan Tinggi: Pendekatan Integratif-Interkoneksi* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2006).

⁵¹ Imam Suprayogo, "Membangun Integrasi Ilmu Dan Agama: Pengalaman UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang," *Proceeding IAIN Batusangkar* 1, no. 1 (2017): 27–46.

⁵² Syahrin Harahap et al., *Wahdatul 'Ulum: Paradigma Integrasi Keilmuan Dan Karakter Lulusan Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sumatera Utara Medan* (Medan: IAIN Press, 2019).

⁵³ Malkawi, *Epistemological Integration: Essentials of an Islamic Methodology*.

As a concrete example, in designing the Islamic Educational Management curriculum at PTKI, substantive Islamization does not mean adding quotations from the Qur'an to the syllabus of mainstream management literature. What is done is: (1) re-examining the foundational assumptions of educational management regarding human motivation, organizational rationality, and measures of success through the concepts of *amānah*, *'adālah*, and *ta'dīb*; (2) engaging in a dialectical dialogue with mainstream theories such as transformational leadership and TQM, discerning which empirical claims can be adopted and which ethical assumptions need to be reoriented; (3) developing case studies from pesantren and madrasah, rather than from Anglo-American schools; and (4) measuring learning outcomes not only through technical competencies but also through the ability to make ethical decisions in the face of uncertainty. The same logic applies to economics, psychology, environmental science, and other disciplines.

When knowledge loses its sense of propriety, severed from its ethical foundation, it retains its technical capabilities while losing its normative direction. The concrete consequences are that such progress widens social gaps, degrades the environment, and systematically creates alienation. The global academic system faces the same dynamics: the dominance of positivism, materialism, and competitive metrics. Universities are judged by the volume of output, not wisdom; by rankings, not relevance. Islamic institutions are caught in a dilemma: conforming to global standards and risking the loss of identity, or defending their position and risking marginalization.⁵⁴ A critically reconstructed Islamization offers a third way: participating while contributing normatively. As Malkawi states, when epistemology becomes the center of educational reform, Muslim scholars can shift from being consumers of the dominant paradigm to producers of alternative paradigms.

Toward an adaptive paradigm

The future of Islamic education cannot be secured through isolated reforms. Institutional modernization without epistemological reconstruction results in institutions that are efficient but secular. Epistemological integration without organizational renewal yields an intellectually sound but not operational system. Without both, moral discourse becomes mere rhetoric. Therefore, *Tajdīd*, the Islamization of knowledge, and the Islamic

⁵⁴ H Babun Suharto, *Marketing Pendidikan; Menata Ulang PTKI Menghadapi Pasar Bebas ASEAN* (Yogyakarta: LKIS Pelangi Aksara, 2015).

worldview must not be treated as competing agendas, but rather as interdependent dimensions operating at different levels. This distinction of levels constitutes the primary conceptual contribution of this paper.

Tajdīd operates at the institutional and pedagogical levels: governance, curriculum, teaching methods, leadership, and organization. The question is: How is Islamic education implemented? Without *Tajdīd*, even the most sophisticated epistemological vision will not work in practice. The Islamization of knowledge operates at the epistemological level: the assumptions, categories, methods, and goals that shape how a discipline defines reality. The question is: What is taught, and how is that content shaped into knowledge? Without Islamization, institutional modernization merely reinforces the very epistemological assumptions it seeks to challenge. The Islamic worldview operates at the civilizational and ontological levels: the ultimate goals of education, the kind of human being we seek to shape, and the social order it serves. The question is: why does Islamic education exist, and where is it headed? Without a worldview, *Tajdīd* and Islamization can be hijacked for purposes foreign to the vision that drives them.

The three are analytically distinct but operationally interdependent. Reform at one level without renewal at another produces predictable distortions: institutional modernization without epistemological renewal yields efficient secularization; epistemological reconstruction without institutional implementation yields unrealized theory; civilizational discourse without operational specification yields inspiring but sterile rhetoric. This distinction serves as a diagnostic framework for identifying which level an initiative addresses, which level is neglected, and how the three can be integrated.

Three Internal Tensions

One attitude that Islamic educational institutions should demonstrate is acknowledging their internal tensions rather than denying them. Some of these tensions include: *First, Tajdīd* versus *traditionalism*. *Tajdīd* demands flexibility to renew institutions in response to changing circumstances; the traditionalist worldview demands stability to maintain core commitments. An overemphasis on renewal accompanies secularization; an overemphasis on inherited forms results in rigid traditionalism, precisely what *Tajdīd* seeks to counter. This tension can only be managed through

continuous evaluation, which Daud describes as a balance between dynamism and stabilization.⁵⁵

Second, engagement vs. distinctiveness. Islamization demands engagement with global academic disciplines; the worldview affirms a distinctive metaphysical and ethical horizon. Engagement requires a shared discursive space with partners who do not share Islamic premises, which implies that these premises may need to be set aside during dialogue. What is required is dialectical sophistication as demanded by Harvey: the ability to engage without dissolving and to assert without isolating.

Third, the universal versus the particular. This framework is positioned as a cross-contextual Muslim paradigm. Yet, its implementation varies significantly across social, political, and intellectual conditions: pesantren in Indonesia, madrasah in Malaysia, universities in Egypt, and institutions in Saudi Arabia. This framework provides conceptual tools that can be applied locally, but it does not predetermine what *Tajdīd* looks like in Javanese pesantren, Acehnese madrasahs, or urban universities. This locality is a methodological feature, not a shortcoming.

Testable propositions

This paradigm is conceptual, not empirical. However, it generates several propositions that can be tested against real institutional cases. *Proposition 1* (Institutional-Epistemological Binding). Islamic educational institutions undertaking *Tajdīd-level* reforms without epistemological reform will, within 10–15 years, shift toward a secular institutional culture despite their formal Islamic identity.

Proposition 2 (Worldview to Operational). The ability of Islamic educational institutions to preserve the uniqueness of their civilization amid global academic competition is determined more by the concreteness of their epistemological reforms than by the strength of their normative declarations. *Proposition 3* (false integration). Integration patterns that merely add verses to disciplinary content without changing assumptions, methods, or research questions can be empirically distinguished from substantive integration through analysis of the curriculum, faculty research output, and student learning outcomes.

⁵⁵ Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *Peranan University: Pengislaman Ilmu Semasa, Penafibaratan Dan Penafijajahan* (Kuala Lumpur: CASIS-HAKIM, 2017).

These propositions are open to empirical refutation. This framework does not claim to be true; rather, it defines the form of empirical discourse that can be conducted productively.

Practical Implications

Three priorities emerge for institutions wishing to apply this paradigm. First, integrated reform requires diagnostic clarity regarding which level an initiative is actually addressing; many efforts fail not because they are misdirected, but because they assume that reform at one level will automatically spread to others. Second, it requires capacity at all three levels: administrative leadership for *Tajdīd*, academic capacity for Islamization, and reflective wisdom for the formation of a worldview. Third, it requires a long-term commitment measured in decades, not in accreditation cycles.

The real challenge facing Islamic education is not merely survival, but building the institutional, intellectual, and civilizational capacities demanded by this reconstruction. Islamic education, at this juncture, is not merely about surviving in modernity, imitating it, or opposing it. It exists to make a distinctive contribution to the ongoing intellectual and ethical reconstruction.

Conclusion

This article argues that isolated reforms cannot save Islamic education in the era of globalization. Institutional modernization without epistemological reconstruction produces efficient but normatively eroded institutions. Epistemological integration without organizational renewal is theoretically appealing but does not function in practice. Discourse on civilization without practical specifications will remain mere rhetoric. This diagnosis demands a paradigm built upon three interdependent pillars: *Tajdīd*, the Islamization of knowledge, and the Islamic worldview.

The main conceptual contribution of this article is the operational differentiation of the three pillars of the formulation, distinguishing it from previous syntheses that tended to merge the three additively. *Tajdīd* operates at the institutional-pedagogical level and addresses the implementation of Islamic education. The Islamization of knowledge operates at the epistemological level and addresses the question of what is considered knowledge. The Islamic worldview operates at the civilizational- ontological level and

addresses the question of why Islamic education exists. Reform at one level without renewal at another results in predictable distortions.

Unlike previous literature, which has largely addressed its own supporters, this article responds to three internal critiques that have emerged over four decades: Harvey's dialectical challenge, Aljunied's historiographical challenge, and Chande's operational challenge. Substantive Islamization demands engagement across four dimensions: concepts, assumptions, goals, and methods, not merely the insertion of scriptural quotations, which this article terms "pseudo-integration." This article also acknowledges three internal tensions that cannot be eliminated, only managed: renewal versus fidelity, engagement versus uniqueness, and the universal versus the particular.

As a conceptual study, this article does not offer empirical findings but rather presents three propositions that can be tested in future research: institutional-epistemological binding, the translation of worldviews into operational specifications, and the detection of pseudo-integration through analysis of curricula and learning outcomes. For institutional practice, this framework yields three priorities: diagnostic clarity about the level of reform, simultaneous capacity building at all three levels, and a long-term commitment measured in decades rather than accreditation cycles.

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