

## THE INFLUENCE OF AL-FARABI'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING METHODS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of Al-Farabi's educational philosophy on the development of teaching methods in Islamic religious education and to formulate an actionable pedagogical model based on his thought. Employing a qualitative library-research methodology, this investigation critically reviews primary and secondary sources pertaining to Al-Farabi's educational philosophy and its relevance within a contemporary Islamic educational context. The findings reveal that Al-Farabi's core principles namely the integration of reason and revelation, the concept of felicity (al-sa'ādah), and the vision of the virtuous city (al-madīnah al-faḍīlah) provide a robust foundation for designing an integrated curriculum, positioning the teacher as a philosophical mediator, and cultivating a learning environment conducive to the formation of the insān kāmil (perfect human) and a civilized society. This study further proposes a novel theoretical framework entitled Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah, structured around three pillars: Ta'lim al-Ma'qūl wa al-Manqūl (rational-textual instruction), Tahzīb al-'Aql wa al-Qalb (purification of intellect and heart), and Takwīn al-Mujtama' al-Faḍīl (formation of an exemplary society). In conclusion, Al-Farabi's educational philosophy proves not only theoretically pertinent but also practically applicable in developing holistic and transformative teaching methods for Islamic religious education, thereby addressing the challenges of modern Islamic pedagogy. The proposed model opens avenues for more innovative and contextually relevant educational practices.

**Keywords:** Al-Farabi's educational philosophy, teaching methods, Islamic religious education, Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah, holistic education

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh filsafat pendidikan Al-Farabi terhadap pengembangan metode pengajaran dalam pendidikan agama Islam serta merumuskan model pedagogis yang dapat diterapkan berdasarkan pemikirannya. Menggunakan metodologi penelitian perpustakaan kualitatif, penelitian ini secara kritis meninjau sumber-sumber primer dan sekunder yang berkaitan dengan filsafat pendidikan Al-Farabi dan relevansinya dalam konteks pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa prinsip-prinsip inti Al-Farabi—yakni integrasi akal dan wahyu, konsep kebahagiaan (al-sa'ādah), dan visi kota yang mulia (al-madīnah al-faḍīlah)—menyediakan landasan yang kokoh untuk merancang kurikulum terintegrasi, menempatkan guru sebagai mediator filosofis, dan menumbuhkan lingkungan belajar yang kondusif bagi pembentukan insān kāmil (manusia sempurna) dan masyarakat yang beradab. Penelitian ini juga mengusulkan kerangka teoretis baru berjudul Falsafiyyah

*Tarbawiyah, yang dibangun di sekitar tiga pilar: Ta'lim al-Ma'qul wa al-Manqul (pengajaran rasional dan tekstual), Tahzib al-'Aql wa al-Qalb (pembersihan akal dan hati), dan Takwin al-Mujtama' al-Fadil (pembentukan masyarakat teladan). Kesimpulannya, filsafat pendidikan Al-Farabi terbukti tidak hanya relevan secara teoritis tetapi juga praktis dalam mengembangkan metode pengajaran holistik dan transformatif untuk pendidikan agama Islam, sehingga mengatasi tantangan pedagogi Islam modern. Model yang diusulkan membuka jalan bagi praktik pendidikan yang lebih inovatif dan relevan secara kontekstual.*

**Kata Kunci:** Filsafat pendidikan Al-Farabi, metode pengajaran, pendidikan agama Islam, Falsafiyah Tarbawiyah, pendidikan holistik

## INTRODUCTION

Al-Farabi's philosophy of education is one of the intellectual legacies that has made a significant contribution to the development of Islamic education, but its application in contemporary Islamic religious education teaching methods still requires further study. Contemporary Islamic education faces various complex challenges in the era of globalisation and digitalisation, especially in maintaining the essence of Islamic values while developing relevant and effective teaching methods. The balance between intellectual development and character building is a central issue that has not been fully addressed in the practice of Islamic religious education. Al-Farabi, a Muslim philosopher known as 'Al-Mu'allim Tsani' or the second teacher after Aristotle, has offered a philosophical foundation that synthesises classical Greek thought with Islamic values, creating an integrative and comprehensive educational framework. Al-Farabi's thinking, which successfully reconciles the teachings of philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle with Islamic teachings, demonstrates a model of religious-rational thinking that emphasises the importance of good intentions as the foundation of morality and happiness in the educational process.

Although his philosophical contributions are invaluable, the concrete application of Al-Farabi's thinking in the development of Islamic religious education teaching methods still requires systematic exploration and study, especially in response to the increasingly complex dynamics of education in the modern era. Studies on Al-Farabi's thinking have received attention from various researchers in the last decade. Mahmud's (2023) research examines Al-Farabi's educational thought in the context of contemporary Islamic education, concluding that Al-Farabi successfully reconciled several philosophical and religious teachings, resulting in a model of rational religious thought that emphasises good intentions as the foundation of morality. Another study by Marzuki and Haq (2024) compares the perspectives of Ibn Khaldun and Al-Farabi on Islamic educational philosophy, emphasising that both figures view education as a means to achieve goals such as social welfare, justice, and truth based on the Hadith and the Qur'an.

Zulkarnain and Khairullah (2024) analysed Islamic philosophy's view of science education through the thoughts of Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi, finding that both thinkers emphasised an integrative approach that not only produced knowledgeable individuals but also individuals with noble morals. Asep et al.'s (2024) research on the concept of

education in the perspective of Islamic philosophy according to Al-Farabi's thoughts found the relevance of Al-Farabi's thoughts in modern education, especially in creating individuals who are moral and active in society amid the negative impacts of globalisation. Wahyu (2019) discusses Al-Farabi's philosophy in Islamic educational practice, explaining that Al-Farabi reconstructed Islamic educational practice to develop an integrality between naturalism and nativism with empiricism. Meanwhile, Fajar (2022) discusses the main ideas of Al-Farabi's philosophy, which cover various fields such as emanation, metaphysics, ontology, demonstrative principles, theology, epistemology, psychology, morals and ethics, prophetic theory, political philosophy, and logic. Recent research by Nurfaizah et al. (2024) links Al-Farabi's thoughts with neuroscience, demonstrating the relevance of his thoughts in the fields of education and other sciences such as philosophy, reason, and the soul.

Although there have been several studies on Al-Farabi's philosophy and its relationship to Islamic education, there are significant gaps in the existing literature. First, the majority of previous studies have focused on the theoretical and conceptual aspects of Al-Farabi's philosophy, but have not explored its practical application in the development of Islamic religious education teaching methods. Second, there has been no comprehensive study that specifically analyses how elements of Al-Farabi's philosophy of education can be transformed into methodological principles in contemporary Islamic religious education teaching. Third, although several studies have examined the relevance of Al-Farabi's thoughts in the context of modern education, none have systematically identified a model for developing teaching methods based on Al-Farabi's philosophy. Fourth, there is still a lack of research linking Al-Farabi's thoughts on the concept of 'the ideal state' (al-madina al-fadhilah) with its implications for the development of an ideal learning environment in the context of Islamic religious education.

This study offers a novel approach in that it explicitly links Al-Farabi's philosophy of education with the development of concrete and applicable teaching methods for Islamic religious education. This study will not only examine the theoretical dimensions, but will also identify operational principles for the development of teaching methods based on Al-Farabi's thinking that can be implemented in the context of contemporary Islamic religious education. This research is based on several fundamental assumptions. First, Al-Farabi's philosophy of education, although formulated in the classical era, has universal principles that can be applied in the context of contemporary Islamic religious education. Second, the integration of moral and spiritual values in the curriculum, as emphasised in Al-Farabi's thinking, is still very relevant to facing the challenges of education in the modern era, particularly in overcoming the negative impacts of globalisation. Third, Al-Farabi's integrative approach, which harmonises the religious and rational dimensions, can be a solid philosophical foundation for the development of comprehensive Islamic religious education teaching methods. Fourth, this study assumes that the concepts of happiness (al-sa'adah) and the ideal state (al-madina al-fadhilah) in Al-Farabi's thought can be translated into applicable methodological principles in the development of an

Islamic religious education learning environment. Fifth, the theory of prophecy and its relationship with fa'al reason in Al-Farabi's philosophy<sup>1</sup> is assumed to have important implications for the development of teaching methods that balance the approaches of revelation and critical reasoning. This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research method.

This method was chosen based on the characteristics of the research, which focuses on analysing Al-Farabi's philosophical thought and its implications for the development of teaching methods for Islamic religious education. The research data will be sourced from primary and secondary literature, including Al-Farabi's works such as *Ara Ahl al-Madina al-Fadilah* (Thoughts of the Citizens of the Ideal State), *Al-Siyasa al-Madaniyya* (Civil Politics), and *Ihsa al-'Ulum* (Classification of Sciences), as well as secondary literature in the form of recent research on Al-Farabi's thoughts in the context of Islamic education. Data analysis will be conducted in several stages. First, identification of key concepts in Al-Farabi's philosophy of education. Second, interpretive analysis of these concepts to understand the educational principles contained therein. Third, comparative analysis with contemporary Islamic religious education teaching methods. Fourth, synthesis to formulate a model for developing Islamic religious education teaching methods based on Al-Farabi's philosophy. The validity of the research will be ensured through triangulation of data sources and peer review by experts in Islamic educational philosophy.

This study aims to analyse the influence of Al-Farabi's philosophy of education on the development of teaching methods for Islamic religious education and to formulate an applicable model that can be implemented in the context of contemporary education. Specifically, this study is expected to: First, identify the main principles in Al-Farabi's philosophy of education that are relevant to the development of teaching methods for Islamic religious education. Second, analyse the suitability of the principles of Al-Farabi's educational philosophy with the needs and challenges of contemporary Islamic religious education. Third, formulate a model for the development of Islamic religious education teaching methods based on Al-Farabi's philosophy, covering aspects of curriculum, learning strategies, evaluation, and the creation of a learning environment. Fourth, to produce practical recommendations for the development and implementation of Islamic religious education teaching methods inspired by Al-Farabi's philosophy. The results of this study are expected to contribute significantly to the development of Islamic religious education theory and practice, as well as enrich the discourse on the relevance of classical philosophical thought in responding to contemporary educational challenges.

## **METHODS**

This study utilises an approach based on religious-rational integration theory developed from the ideas of Al-Farabi and modern holistic education theory. Al-Farabi's major works, such as *Ara Ahl al-Madina al-Fadilah* (The Thought of the Citizens of the Ideal State) and *Ihsa al-'Ulum* (Classification of Sciences), form the basis for analysing the relationship between classical educational philosophy and contemporary pedagogical

needs. This theory is supported by the concept of transforming philosophical values into educational practice (Mahmud, 2023) and the integrative learning model (Zulkarnain & Khairullah, 2024), which emphasises the unity between intellectual, moral, and spiritual development. Data analysis was conducted in three theoretical stages: (1) Description: Identifying the key principles of Al-Farabi's philosophy, such as the concepts of al-madina al-fadhilah (the ideal state), al-sa'adah (happiness), and the hierarchy of knowledge. (2) Explanation: Connecting these principles with the challenges of modern Islamic education, such as moral degradation, the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, and the crisis of spiritual identity. (3) Prediction: Formulating the theoretical and practical implications of integrating Al-Farabi's philosophy into teaching methods, including the potential for developing an akhlak-based curriculum and a holistic evaluation system.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Moral and Intellectual Integration in the Curriculum**

Data from Al-Farabi's work shows that the concept of happiness (al-sa'adah) is not only transcendental but also linked to the mastery of knowledge and moral practice. This finding is in line with the research of Marzuki and Haq (2024), which emphasises education as a means of achieving social justice. In the context of developing teaching methods, this principle points to the need for an integrated curriculum that combines: (1) Learning verses from the Qur'an with critical analysis (contextual interpretation). (2) Integration of logic (mantiq) and ethics (akhlak) in religious education materials. (3) Collaborative projects that link Islamic values to global issues such as the environment or social justice.

Example of Implementation: An al-sa'adah-based learning model is proposed, in which students are not only assessed on their memorisation of material but also on their ability to apply spiritual values in solving real problems (e.g. digital zakat management projects).

### **The Role of Teachers as Philosophers-Prophets (Al-Nabi Al-Failasuf)**

An analysis of the concept of al-'aql al-fa'al (active intellect) and Al-Farabi's theory of prophecy reveals that ideal teachers must act as mediators between revelation and rationality. These findings reinforce Wahyu's (2019) research on the reconstruction of Islamic educational practices. In practice, teachers are required to: (1) Master dialectical methods (jadal) to stimulate critical thinking. (2) Integrate the stories of the prophets with contemporary case studies (e.g., linking the story of Prophet Yusuf with modern conflict management). (3) Function as murabbi (character educators) as well as mu'allim (teachers of knowledge). Supporting Data: A review of 15 international journals shows that 73% of research on contemporary Islamic education fails to connect the role of teachers with the philosophical-prophetic dimension (Nurfaizah et al., 2024).

### **Concept-Based Learning Environment Model of the Ideal State**

Al-Farabi's concept of al-madina al-fadhilah (the ideal state) translates into five principles of an ideal learning environment: (1) Unity of purpose: All school stakeholders are committed to the formation of insan kamil (perfect human beings). (2) Integrated hierarchy of knowledge: Religious knowledge is not separated from general knowledge but is arranged hierarchically with tawhid as its pinnacle. (3) Community-school partnership: Involving community leaders in learning projects (e.g., field studies on Islamic economics in traditional markets). (4) Happiness-based evaluation: Using assessment instruments that measure spiritual, intellectual, and social development. (5) Transformative leadership: The headmaster acts as rais al-madina (chief leader of the state) who promotes justice and wisdom.

Comparison with Previous Research: This model complements the research of Asep et al. (2024) by adding the dimensions of leadership and holistic evaluation, which were not addressed in the previous study.

### **Educational Neuroscience in Al-Farabi's Perspective**

An unexpected finding from this study is the relevance of Al-Farabi's thinking about al-nafs (soul) to modern neuroscience. Al-Farabi's classification of the soul (nafs nabatiyah, hayawaniyah, insaniyah) is in line with the triune brain theory (reptilian brain, limbic brain, neocortex) in neuroscience. Implications: Islamic education teaching methods need to consider: (1) Stimulation of the limbic brain through an aesthetic approach (calligraphy, reading Islamic poetry). (2) Strengthening the neocortex through philosophical debates on contemporary issues (e.g., cloning from a fiqh perspective). (3) Balancing the reptilian brain with consistent worship discipline.

### **New Theory Recommendation: Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah Model**

Based on the above findings, this study proposes a new theory called Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah (Philosophical Education Model), which has three pillars: (1) Ta'lim al-Ma'qul wa al-Manqul (Rational-Textual Learning). (2) Tahdzib al-Aql wa al-Qalb (Purification of the Mind and Heart). (3) Takwin al-Mujtama' al-Fadhil (Formation of a Virtuous Society). Ta'lim al-Ma'qul wa al-Manqul (Rational-Textual Learning). This pillar emphasises a balance between rational understanding (ma'qul) and revelatory texts (manqul). Learning does not only focus on memorising religious texts, but also on developing critical and logical thinking skills, so that students are able to interpret and apply religious teachings contextually and rationally.

Tahdzib al-Aql wa al-Qalb (Purification of the Mind and Heart). This pillar prioritises the process of purification and harmonisation between the mind and heart. Education is directed not only towards intellectual development, but also character building and spirituality, so that a balance between reason and deep moral values is created within students. Takwin al-Mujtama' al-Fadhil (Formation of an Ideal Society). This pillar focuses on the ultimate goal of education, namely the formation of an ideal society that

is civilised and virtuous in accordance with Al-Farabi's concept of al-madina al-fadhilah. Education is directed at producing individuals who are able to contribute to the creation of a harmonious, just, and prosperous social order. Overall, Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah offers a holistic educational model, integrating rational, spiritual, and social aspects to address the challenges of Islamic education in the modern era. This theory addresses the gap in previous research by providing an operational framework for translating classical philosophy into pedagogical practice, while also predicting the potential for further development in the fields of educational neuroscience and integrative curriculum management.

### **Practical Implications**

1. For Teachers: Adopt the hiwar falsafi (philosophical dialogue) method in teaching faith and morals.
2. For the Curriculum: Develop a syllabus that includes Al-Farabi's works as critical analysis material for advanced students.
3. For Policy: Forming an education policy council based on Al-Farabi's concept of ahl al-hall wa al-'aqd (consultative council) at the school level.

These findings prove that Al-Farabi's educational philosophy is not only relevant but also capable of providing innovative solutions to the challenges of Islamic education in the 21st century.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on an in-depth analysis of Al-Farabi's philosophy of education and its application in the context of developing Islamic education teaching methods, it can be concluded that Al-Farabi's thinking offers a highly relevant and applicable philosophical framework for addressing the challenges of contemporary Islamic education. Key concepts such as the integration of reason and revelation, the balance between intellectual and moral development, and the vision of the state as the ideal educational environment, form a strong foundation for formulating a holistic and transformative learning model. The findings of this study reinforce the assumption that Al-Farabi's educational principles are not only theoretical but can be implemented concretely through the development of an integrated curriculum, the role of teachers as philosophical mediators, and the creation of a learning environment that supports the formation of perfect individuals and a civilised society.

Furthermore, this study successfully proposes a new theory called Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah, which integrates rational and textual learning, purification of the mind and heart, and the formation of a civilised society as the main pillars of education. This model makes a significant contribution to enriching the discourse on Islamic education with a comprehensive philosophical approach that is relevant to the needs of the times. Thus, this study not only answers questions about the influence of Al-Farabi's educational

philosophy on teaching methods but also opens up opportunities for the development of more innovative and contextual theories and practices of Islamic religious education.

As a suggestion, further research could expand this study by conducting empirical studies to test the effectiveness of applying the Falsafiyyah Tarbawiyyah model in various levels of Islamic religious education. In addition, interdisciplinary exploration, such as the integration of neuroscience and educational technology, could enrich the understanding and implementation of Al-Farabi's educational philosophy in greater depth. The development of teacher training modules based on this model is also highly recommended so that the role of teachers as philosopher-prophets can be optimally realised. Thus, it is hoped that classical philosophical ideas can continue to live and develop in modern Islamic educational practices that are dynamic and responsive to changing times.

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