



Urgency of Theological Values and Modernization in Islamic Education: Perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith

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Abstract

The rapid flux of and the transformations in time marked by technological advances and modernization have a significant impact on the education system, including Islamic education. In the midst of the current of modernity, theological values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith are often marginalized, though both play a fundamental role in shaping learners' character and integrity. This study aimed to analyze the urgency of integrating Islamic theological values in modern education and to identify relevant approaches based on Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives. This study employed a qualitative method with a library research approach and thematic analysis of Qur'anic verses and hadiths related to education, theological values, and the challenges of modernization. The results of the study indicated that theological values such as monotheism, morality, and social responsibility provide strong spiritual resilience in facing moral crises and the decadence of value due to modernization. The integration of these values in the curriculum and practice of Islamic education not only strengthens the foundation of faith, but also cultivates individuals who are religious, critical, and adaptive. The novelty of this study lay in the affirmation of the need for a harmonious synthesis between the theological teachings and the demands of modernity in contemporary Islamic education. The implication is that educational policymakers and practitioners must redesign a pedagogical approach that is responsive to the times without losing its theological roots.

Keywords: Educational Transformation, Theological Values, Islamic Education, Islamic Theology, Modernization

Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi dan modernisasi membawa dampak besar pada sistem pendidikan, termasuk pendidikan Islam. Di tengah arus modernitas, nilai-nilai teologis yang bersumber dari al-Qur'an dan Hadis sering kali terpinggirkan, padahal keduanya memiliki peran fundamental dalam membentuk karakter dan integritas peserta didik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis urgensi integrasi nilai teologi Islam dalam pendidikan modern serta mengidentifikasi pendekatan yang relevan berdasarkan perspektif al-Qur'an dan Hadis. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research) dan analisis tematik terhadap ayat-ayat al-Qur'an serta hadis-hadis yang berkaitan dengan pendidikan, nilai teologis, dan tantangan modernisasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai teologis seperti tauhid,



akhlak, dan tanggung jawab sosial memiliki daya tahan spiritual yang kuat dalam menghadapi krisis moral dan dekadensi nilai akibat modernisasi. Integrasi nilai-nilai ini dalam kurikulum dan praktik pendidikan Islam tidak hanya memperkuat fondasi iman, tetapi juga membentuk manusia modern yang religius, kritis, dan adaptif. Kebaruan dari penelitian ini terletak pada penegasan perlunya sintesis antara ajaran teologis dan tuntutan modernitas secara harmonis dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Implikasinya, pembuat kebijakan pendidikan dan praktisi harus mendesain ulang pendekatan pedagogis yang responsif terhadap zaman, tanpa kehilangan akar teologisnya.

Kata kunci: Modernisasi, Nilai-nilai Teologis, Pendidikan Islam, Teologi Islam, Transformasi Pendidikan

A. INTRODUCTION

Modernization is an inevitable reality in the development of human civilization, bringing significant effects on various aspects of life, including education. As an educational system grounded in divine revelation, Islamic education also faces the challenges of modernization that demand reform in its approaches and implementation. However, efforts to adapt often lead to the neglect of theological values that constitute the spiritual foundation of Islamic education (Azra, 2012), raising concerns regarding a moral vacuum in shaping students' integrity in the modern era. Field evidence shows that many Islamic educational institutions prioritize cognitive development and practical skills while paying insufficient attention to strengthening *tawhid*, ethics (*akhlaq*), and spiritual awareness (Nata, 2019). This condition has triggered a disorientation of the primary objective of Islamic education, which ideally aims to develop *insan kamil*—a holistic personality that is intellectually, spiritually, and socially mature. The gap between the ideal Islamic principles and the reality of contemporary educational practices has therefore become an urgent issue.

This situation is exacerbated by the lack of an integrative curricula capable of balancing modern knowledge with revealed principles from the Qur'an and Hadith. Many Islamic educational institutions tend to emphasize cognitive mastery and technical competence, while theological aspects such as strengthening *tawhid*, internalizing noble conduct, and building spiritual character receive insufficient attention (Nata, 2019). Such an educational model results in a disorientation of Islamic education's vision, which should foster *insan kamil* in intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions (al-Attas, 1980). Consequently, a dichotomy emerges between religious sciences and secular

sciences, hindering the development of a unified scientific paradigm rooted in divine revelation (Hefneir, 2010).

This issue is further aggravated by the limited integration within the curriculum capable of balancing scientific and technological advancement with normative religious principles. Curricula are often designed with a pragmatic orientation toward the labor market and economic productivity, thereby neglecting personality formation and transcendental values within learners (Zuhdi, 2015). In the midst of rapid globalization, Islamic education experiences an identity crisis due to its excessive orientation toward formal academic achievement while providing insufficient space for spiritual education rooted in revelation (Rohman, 2021). In fact, the Qur'an explicitly positions the education of *tawhid* and ethics as the primary foundation for building human civilization (Qur'an 31:13–19). Therefore, the absence of theological values in the design of Islamic education is not merely a conceptual problem but also threatens to distort the direction of character formation among future Muslim generations.

The problem becomes even more complex when Islamic educational curricula fail to proportionally integrate theological spirituality with scientific and technological progress. Curriculum design tends to be pragmatic, with a strong emphasis on employability, efficiency, and economic productivity, while holistic personality development and the internalization of transcendental values receive little attention (Zuhdi, 2015). This pattern produces generations of Muslims who are technically competent but spiritually and ethically impoverished. As a result, Islamic education fails to perform its fundamental function as a means of moral transformation and the cultivation of divine consciousness.

The identity crisis in Islamic education is further intensified by the pressures of globalization, which draw educational institutions into the homogenization of secular Western values. Instead of offering solutions to the moral degradation of young generations, many Islamic educational institutions become trapped in formal academic models that focus solely on grades and administrative achievements, neglecting the spiritual essence of learners (Rohman, 2021). On the other hand, the primary sources of Islamic teachings—the Qur'an and Hadith—clearly position theological education as the foundation of human civilization. In Qur'an 31:13–19, Allah illustrates an ideal education

beginning with the teaching of *tawhid*, followed by character formation, discipline, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness. These verses demonstrate that civilizational development in Islam is founded on strong theology and prophetic values that are integrated into the educational system (Nasution, 2020).

Thus, the absence of theological values in the design of contemporary Islamic education is not merely a theoretical deficiency but a paradigmatic error that risks producing generations detached from their spiritual roots. This poses a serious threat to the future of Islamic education, which should serve as a center for developing faithful, knowledgeable, and virtuous individuals. Hence, serious efforts are required to reconstruct the paradigm of Islamic education to balance modern advancement with authentic and contextual divine values.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between Islamic education and modernization. For instance, Syamsuddin (2017) emphasized the need for curriculum reform in Islamic education to make it more adaptive to contemporary demands. Hasan (2020) highlighted the importance of revitalizing character education based on Islamic values to address the moral crisis among young generations. However, neither study specifically discusses the integration of Islamic theological values within the framework of educational modernization using a normative textual approach to the Qur'an and Hadith. This gap indicated an important scholarly void that must be addressed, particularly in establishing a theological foundation relevant to the modern context. This study offered a distinct novelty by examining the urgency of Islamic theological values such as *tawhid*, *rububiyyah*, and prophetic ethics in responding to the challenges of educational modernization through a thematic analysis of Qur'anic verses and Hadith. Thus, this article not only filled a theoretical gap but also provided practical contributions to the development of an Islamic educational paradigm that is responsive to the times without losing its spiritual identity.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the urgency and relevance of Islamic theological values in the context of modern education and to offer an integrative approach between Islamic sources (the Qur'an and Hadith) and contemporary educational challenges. The findings were expected that the results of this study would contribute scientifically to the development of a more holistic and transformative Islamic

education curriculum and to serve as a reference for policymakers and educational practitioners in building an educational system rooted in divine revelation while remaining contextual to current developments.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research model, which focuses on normative analysis of religious texts (the Qur'an and Hadith) as well as scientific literature related to Islamic education, theology, and modernization. This approach was selected because it aligns with the characteristics of the examined object, which is conceptual and normative in nature, and aims to explore the meaning and relevance of theological values within contemporary Islamic education systems (Moleong, 2019).

The research design was descriptive-analytical, aiming to describe the phenomenon of theological value disintegration within Islamic education systems and subsequently analyzed it in depth based on relevant Qur'anic verses and Hadith. Research instruments within the scope of library study included primary sources such as the Qur'anic mushaf and authentic Hadith collections (particularly Sahih Bukhari and Muslim), as well as secondary sources including books, scientific journal articles, and dissertations related to the themes of integrating theological values and Islamic educational modernization.

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and textual study. The data were obtained from Qur'anic verses and Hadith discussing education, tawhid values, morality (*akhlaq*), social responsibility, as well as other Islamic themes related to character formation. In addition, data were collected from academic literature examining the challenges of Islamic education in facing globalization and modernization.

Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, namely by comparing the interpretation of verses and Hadith using several authoritative exegeses (such as Tafsir Ibn Kathir and Al-Misbah) and opinions of contemporary Islamic educational scholars (Gunawan, 2021). The collected data were analyzed using a thematic content analysis technique. Qur'anic verses and Hadith were coded based on main themes such as *tawhid*, ethics, *rububiyyah*, and social piety, then analyzed

deductively to determine their relevance to modern educational challenges. The analytical procedure was conducted in multiple stages, beginning with theme identification, data classification, content interpretation, and conceptual synthesis (Creswell, 2014). Validity testing was carried out through prolonged engagement and member checking, particularly by referring interpretations to authoritative *tafsir* sources.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presented the findings of the library research conducted using a qualitative approach and thematic analysis of primary sources—namely Qur'anic verses and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)—as well as academic literature on Islamic education and modernization. The main focus of this study was to identify the extent to which theological values, such as *tawhid*, morality (*akhlaq*), and spiritual responsibility, have been integrated or remain neglected in contemporary Islamic education practices. All findings had undergone a systematic interpretative and synthesizing process to illustrate the urgency of theological values in responding to the challenges of educational modernity.

1. The Dominance of Cognitive Orientation in Modern Islamic Education

The literature review indicates a strong tendency within many Islamic educational institutions to prioritize cognitive and technical skill development, while theological dimensions—such as the internalization of *tawhid*, *rububiyyah* (awareness of God's sovereignty), and prophetic ethics—receive insufficient attention (Nata, 2019; Zuhdi, 2015). This tendency aligns with global pressures that emphasize education's role in producing economically competitive graduates, yet those who lack existential and transcendental depth.

This finding was reinforced by the evaluation of curriculum structures and pedagogical practices across various Islamic educational institutions, which primarily emphasize formal academic assessment and labor market readiness, while leaving little space for spiritual development (Hefner, 2010). This suggests a misorientation in

contemporary Islamic education, which ideally aims to shape the concept of *insan kamil* (the perfect human being) (Al-Attas, 1980).

2. Theological Values in the Qur'an and Hadith as Foundations of Education

The analysis of the Qur'an and Hadith revealed that theological values are not supplementary but constitute the core foundation of Islamic education. For instance, in Surah Luqman (31:13–19), Allah commands the teaching of *tawhid*, followed by ethics toward parents, discipline, and social responsibility. This demonstrated that Islamic theology places spiritual education as a fundamental basis for shaping human personality comprehensively (Nasution, 2020).

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) equally affirmed this priority. His well-known statement, "Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character" (HR. Ahmad), provides theological grounding that ethical and spiritual dimensions constitute the central mission of Islamic education. Values such as honesty, patience, compassion, and social responsibility are manifestations of *tawhid* in social actions.

3. Islamic Theology as a Filter against the Negative Impacts of Modernization

The findings indicated that Islamic theological values, particularly *tawhid* and ethical principles, served as critical filters against the negative effects of modernity, including identity crises, extreme individualism, and moral relativism (Azra, 2012). Islamic theology is not passive or static; rather, it functioned as an adaptive ethical framework capable of responding constructively to contemporary change when applied through dynamic prophetic values.

These values provide spiritual resistance to moral degradation often accompanied technological advancement. For example, in digital education contexts that encourage instant consumption of information, the Islamic value of *tadabbur* (deep contemplation) plays a crucial role in shaping critical and reflective individuals (Syamsuddin, 2017).

4. The Urgency of Integrating Theological Values in Islamic Education Curricula

The study also revealed a pressing need to integrate theological values into the structure of curricula and learning approaches in Islamic education. Curricula that merely adopt secular-modern values without incorporating principles of revelation tend to

produce intellectually competent graduates, yet spiritually fragile individuals (Rohman, 2021).

Hasan's research (2020) emphasized that character education revitalization must be substantively grounded in Islamic teachings. However, the findings of this study highlighted that the required integration is not merely the addition of religious content, but rather a holistic reconstruction of educational paradigms—an integrative approach between revelation and contemporary science, which Al-Attas (1980) referred to as the "Islamization of knowledge."

5. Islamic Education and the Epistemological Challenges of Modernity

The findings further showed that modernization affects not only the technical aspects of education but also introduced epistemological challenges to sources and authority of knowledge in Islam. Modern Islamic education often falls into a dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. This indicates an epistemic crisis characterized by the separation of revelation and reason as two sources of knowledge (Hefner, 2010).

This study found that the Qur'an and Hadith support the integration of revelation and intellect, as reflected in Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1–5), which emphasizes the interconnectedness of reading (*iqra'*), knowledge, and divine revelation. Thus, in the Islamic paradigm, modern science should not be detached from spiritual values.

6. Conceptual Findings: Transformative Education Based on Revelation

This study ultimately identified a conceptual model of Islamic education rooted in theological values to answer the challenges of modernity. The model consists of three core components:

- a. *Tawhid* Foundation: Establishing divine consciousness as the central axis of all educational activities.
- b. Integration of Knowledge and Ethics: Asserting that knowledge is value-laden, and therefore must be directed towards the cultivation of morality and social responsibility.
- c. Contextual Adaptation: Understanding modernization as both a challenge and an opportunity to revitalize Islamic teachings creatively and contextually.

This model is not only conceptual but also normative, as reflected in many foundational principles of the Qur'an and Hadith. By applying this approach, Islamic education can produce generations who are intellectually excellent and firmly rooted in divine values.

Discussion

1. The Relevance of Theology in Contemporary Islamic Education

QS. *Al-Baqarah* [2]:2 states: "This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah." This verse indicates that divine revelation is the primary source of guidance, including in the field of education. When transcendental values are no longer a foundational basis, education loses its moral and spiritual orientation. Hence, the integration of theological values into Islamic education cannot be implemented superficially. The integration in question is not merely the addition of religious subjects, but rather a fundamental shift in the educational paradigm.

Rohman (2021) emphasized that a curriculum solely oriented toward the job market produces graduates who may be skillful but morally fragile. Hasan (2020) likewise stressed the importance of Islamic teachings as a substantive basis for character education. Al-Attas (1980) proposed the concept of the Islamization of knowledge, which seeks to integrate revelation with modern science without compromising Islamic values. This approach necessitates a new epistemological framework in designing curricula.

The essence of Islamic education is the formation of *insan kamil*—a complete human being who is not only intellectually competent but also morally grounded and spiritually mature. However, in the midst of globalization and modernization that emphasize productivity and efficiency, education is often reduced to merely cognitive and technical processes. In contrast, from the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith, education is not simply the transmission of knowledge but a spiritual transformation in which theological values serve as the primary foundation.

This is clearly demonstrated in QS. *Luqman* [31]:13–14, where Luqman instills the value of *tawhid* in his son as the first and most fundamental lesson. The instruction "Do not associate anything with Allah" shows that education must begin with the establishment of a theological orientation rather than cognitive skill-building. The verse

positions *tawhid* as the core of personality formation, followed by ethical values such as honoring one's parents. Thus, the Qur'an implicitly outlines a curricular structure: theology as the foundation, ethics as reinforcement, and knowledge as a complement. If modern education prioritizes cognitive development while neglecting the foundation of *tawhid* exemplified in this verse, then human development becomes imbalanced. The result is a generation that may excel technologically yet lacks moral depth and spiritual awareness. Therefore, QS. *Luqman* is not merely a normative reference but also a direct critique of contemporary Islamic education, which often becomes trapped in a purely cognitive orientation. The verse underscores the urgency of theology as the core direction and purpose of Islamic education today.

The Prophet Muhammad's Hadith also stated: *"Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character."* (HR. Ahmad) This Hadith affirms that spiritual and ethical dimensions constitute the central mission of prophet hood and, consequently, should be the primary objective of Islamic education.

Modernization is inevitable; however, without theology as its moral compass, modernization becomes an instrument that shapes human beings into materialistic, pragmatic, and individualistic beings. Islamic theology provides resistance through values of *tawhid* and prophetic ethics, as demonstrated in this study, in responding to identity crises and moral relativism emerging alongside modernity.

2. Theology as the Foundation of Education

Theological values in the Qur'an and Hadith are not supplementary; rather, they serve as the fundamental basis for holistic human formation. QS. *Luqman* [31]:13–19 outlines lessons on *tawhid*, filial ethics, discipline, and responsibility: *"And [mention] when Luqman said to his son while he was instructing him, 'O my son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, associating (others with Him) is a great injustice.'"*

The Prophet's Hadith affirms: *"Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character."* (HR. Ahmad). This underscores that spiritual education is the core mission of Islam.

Nasution (2020) shows that the Qur'anic educational model—as demonstrated in Luqman's counsel—represents an integrative approach encompassing values, knowledge, and action. Thus, Islamic education that neglects theological dimensions, in essence, deviates from the foundation of revelation. This finding aligns with Al-Attas

(1980), who stresses the Islamization of knowledge as a response to the secularization of education. According to Al-Attas, knowledge must be integrated with revelatory values to prevent epistemological crises. This is consistent with recent studies showing that contemporary Islamic education remains trapped in the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences.

Modernization brings both benefits and challenges—including identity crises and extreme individualism. Under such circumstances, Islamic theological values such as *tawhid* and ethics serve as critical filters against destructive tendencies. Azra (2012) argues that Islamic theological values are dynamic and adaptive as long as they remain framed by prophetic principles. QS. *Al-Isra* [17]:36 emphasizes: “And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—about all those [one] will be questioned.” Syamsuddin (2017) highlights the importance of *tadabbur* as a critical tool for navigating the rapid flow of digital information. This is particularly relevant in contemporary technological education, ensuring that students are not merely consumers of information but thoughtful and spiritually aware individuals.

The findings of this study presented a revelation-based educational model comprising three main components: *tawhid* as the central pillar, integration of knowledge and ethics, and contextual adaptation to modernity. This model is rooted in the normative principles of the Qur’an and Hadith and is designed to address contemporary challenges without neglecting spiritual values. It aligns with Al-Attas’ (1980) vision of *insan kamil*—humans who are intellectually and spiritually excellent. As a transformative effort, this approach also resonates with integrative education models developed in recent contemporary research (Zuhdi, 2015; Hasan, 2020).

D. CONCLUSION

Theological values such as *tawhid*, ethics, and spiritual responsibility are not merely complementary elements, but rather constitute the fundamental foundation of Islamic education. The findings revealed a dominant tendency in contemporary Islamic education to prioritize cognitive aspects and labor-market orientation while neglecting

spiritual and moral dimensions. This results in the emergence of a generation that was technically proficient yet existentially fragile.

The Qur'an and Hadith provide a strong basis for the principle that education must begin with the formation of *tawhid* and ethical character, as reflected in QS. *Luqman* [31]:13–19 and the Prophet Muhammad's statement regarding the perfection of noble character. These theological values also function as a critical filter against the negative impacts of modernization, such as identity crises, extreme individualism, and moral relativism.

The integration of Islamic theology is therefore required in educational curricula in a holistic and epistemologically grounded manner, rather than merely as the addition of religious subjects. This entails a reconstruction of educational paradigms through a revelation–rational approach, as articulated in Al-Attas' concept of the "Islamization of knowledge." A transformative, revelation-based educational model—one that positions *tawhid* as its core, integrates knowledge and ethics, and remains contextually adaptive to contemporary challenges—is proposed as a solution to the challenges posed by modernity. Thus, the urgency of theological values in Islamic education is not only to preserve spiritual heritage but also as a strategic effort to cultivate *insan kamil* who are capable of navigating modern life without losing their transcendental roots.

This study still possessed limitations, particularly in the lack of extensive empirical investigation across various types of Islamic educational institutions and diverse socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, future research should develop comparative studies among institutions, evaluate the effectiveness of theological integration within curricula, and formulate operational indicators to measure the success of internalizing *tawhid* and ethical values in educational processes.

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