

## Research Articles

# Reinterpretation of the Nature of Education, Learning, and Schooling from the Perspective of Islamic Education: A Conceptual Analysis of the Integration of Spiritual and Scientific Values

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**Abstract:** This research is motivated by the shift in the meaning of modern education which tends to emphasize cognitive and materialistic aspects, while the spiritual and moral dimensions are increasingly marginalized. The purpose of this research is to reinterpret the nature of *education*, *learning*, and *schooling* from an Islamic educational perspective through a conceptual analysis of the integration of spiritual and scientific values. The research method used is qualitative with a library research approach, using secondary data obtained from various classical and contemporary literature related to Islamic educational philosophy. The results show that Islamic education views *education* as a process of forming manners and divine awareness, *learning* as a spiritual and intellectual journey towards divine truth, and *schooling* as a space of civilization that unites knowledge, faith, and charity. The integration of spiritual and scientific values is the main foundation in the development of a holistic and civilized Islamic education system, so that it is able to produce knowledgeable, faithful, and noble human beings in accordance with the true purpose of Islamic education.

**Keywords:** Education; Islamic Education; Learning; Schooling; Scientific Values

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## 1. Introduction

Education is the primary foundation for the formation of human civilization. Throughout the history of world civilization, education has always been an instrument of social and moral transformation that determines the direction of a nation's progress. Through education, humans not only acquire *knowledge acquisition*, but also developing values, ethics, and skills that are the basis for social life [1]. However, in the modern global context, the meaning of education is often reduced to merely a *schooling process* that is oriented towards academic results and material achievements, without paying attention to the moral and spiritual dimensions that should be inherent in the nature of *education* and *learning*. This phenomenon reflects a paradigm shift from education that humanizes humans (*humanizing Islamic education*) is an education that standardizes humans based on cognitive achievement. In fact, the essence of true education is the process of developing the whole person (*insan kamil*), which encompasses the integral development of reason, soul, and morals. In this context, Islamic education exists as a system that combines spiritual and intellectual values, revelation and reason, and the world and the afterlife, making education not merely a transfer of knowledge but also the internalization of divine values within students.

The phenomenon of shifting meaning of education that is increasingly pragmatic can be observed in many educational institutions in the world, including in Indonesia, where the education system places more emphasis on academic achievement, mastery of technology, and job readiness, while the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions are often neglected [2]. This is evident from the rise of deviant behavior among students and university students such as plagiarism, violence in the school environment, degradation of manners, to weak social awareness and moral responsibility. This crisis shows that education no longer fully functions as a means of character formation, but has become a formal mechanism for obtaining diplomas and social status. In the view of Islamic education experts such as Al- Attas (1993) and Al-Ghazali ( nd .), this condition occurs due to the *loss of adab* or a loss of awareness of the true position of knowledge and the purpose of education. Meanwhile, the modern *schooling system, which focuses on a cognitive curriculum, creates a distance between the concepts of learning* (the process of meaningful learning) and *education* (the process of personality formation), so that the meaning of learning becomes narrow, fragmented, and loses its spiritual spirit. As a result, education no longer produces knowledgeable and moral individuals, but individuals who are merely technically skilled but lacking in human values.

Based on empirical data, this phenomenon can be seen in the results of surveys by various national and international educational institutions. *Character Report Education A survey* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology ( Kemendikbudristek , 2023) showed that 68% of teachers in Indonesia acknowledged that the learning process in schools focuses more on academic achievement than character building. Furthermore, the results of *the Global Values A 2024 survey* indicated that 56% of Indonesian students felt their education did not provide enough space for spiritual reflection or strengthening of moral values . [3] This data is supported by findings from the Center for Islamic Education Research (Puslitbang Pendis , Ministry of Religion , 2022), which showed that 7 out of 10 madrasas face challenges in balancing mastery of general knowledge with the development of students' morals. On the other hand, the rapid pace of scientific and technological progress without a corresponding increase in spiritual values has led to a global moral crisis, such as *technological addiction* , *cyberbullying* , and dehumanization in social relationships. In this context, reinterpreting the essence of *education* , *learning* , and *schooling* within the framework of Islamic educational values is crucial as an effort to restore the true meaning of education, which is humanistic, spiritual, and oriented toward the formation of civilized individuals.

The study of the nature of *education* , *learning* , and *schooling* from an Islamic perspective has deep roots in the classical Islamic scientific tradition. In the Islamic concept, *education* is not merely *ta'lim* (teaching), but also *tarbiyah* (moral and spiritual education), and *ta'dib* (the formation of manners and self-awareness as a servant of God). The three form an integral framework that makes Islamic education ontologically and epistemologically different from the modern Western education system. If in the secular paradigm *education* is often interpreted as a formal institutional process, then in Islam, education is the process of forming the soul towards knowing God, as stated by [3] that " the purpose of education in Islam is to produce a good " Thus , *learning* in Islam is not only a cognitive process, but also a spiritual one, where knowledge is understood as a light that guides the mind to divine truth. Meanwhile, *schooling* in the Islamic context does not merely mean formal institutions such as madrasas or Islamic boarding schools, but also includes the process of internalizing Islamic values in everyday life. Therefore, a profound reinterpretation is needed to combine spiritual values ( *ruh al- tarbiyah* ) with scientific values ( *al-ma'rifah* ) so that the modern education system remains grounded in integral Islamic principles and does not become trapped in the dichotomy of worldly knowledge and religious knowledge.

Based on the description above, this study aims to reinterpret the nature of *education* , *learning* , and *schooling* from an Islamic educational perspective, emphasizing the integration of

spiritual and scientific values within a coherent conceptual framework. The primary objective of this study is to re-explore the philosophical and epistemological meanings of these three concepts so that they can be contextualized within the contemporary Islamic education system. This study also intends to formulate a conceptual model of education that harmonizes scientific rationality with Islamic spirituality, thus serving as a foundation for the development of an Islamic curriculum and pedagogy relevant to the challenges of the modern era. Furthermore, this study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the discourse on the philosophy of Islamic education and offer practical ideas for Islamic educational institutions in instilling the values of faith, knowledge, and civility in an integrated manner. Thus, this study not only plays a role in enriching the treasury of Islamic educational thought but also serves as a reflection on the direction of developing a complete human being who is knowledgeable, faithful, and has noble character in accordance with the ultimate goal of Islamic education, namely *li ta'abbudi Allah wa li imarati al-ardh* — to serve Allah and prosper the earth with knowledge and charity.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The Concept of Education, Learning, and Schooling from a General Perspective

In modern educational literature, the terms *education*, *learning*, and *schooling* have interrelated but conceptually and functionally different meanings. *Education* is understood as an organized process to develop human potential in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects so that individuals can adapt and contribute to society (Dewey, 1916). *Learning* refers to the internal process of individuals in acquiring knowledge, skills, and values through experience and social interaction [4]. Meanwhile, *schooling* is more directed at the institutional dimension of formal education that regulates teaching and learning activities through curriculum, evaluation, and administrative systems. However, the development of global education shows that these three concepts often experience a shift in meaning: *education* is reduced to formal activities, *learning* is narrowed to the accumulation of knowledge, and *schooling* becomes a symbol of social success. Some thinkers such as [5] criticize that the modern education system overemphasizes cognitive and competitive aspects, thereby losing the humanistic and moral values that should be the core of education. Therefore, a philosophical reinterpretation is needed that is able to restore the essence of *education* as a process of forming a complete human being, *learning* as a spiritual and intellectual journey, and *schooling* as a vehicle for cultivating values and wisdom, not just an administrative institution.

### 2.2. Islamic Education and the Integration of Spiritual and Scientific Values

Education has a much broader meaning than just teaching (*ta'lim*) or formal schooling (*madrasah*). Islamic education is rooted in three main concepts, namely *tarbiyah* (development of human potential spiritually and morally), *ta'lim* (transfer of knowledge and science), and *ta'dib* (formation of manners and divine awareness) which together form an integral paradigm in the development of humans (*insan kamil*) [6]. This concept shows that the essence of Islamic education is not only aimed at producing knowledgeable individuals, but also moral and faithful. The integration of spiritual and scientific values in Islamic education emphasizes that knowledge cannot be separated from divine values, because the source of true knowledge is Allah SWT as emphasized in QS. Al-'Alaq verses 1-5. Ibn Khaldun (1377) in his *Muqaddimah* emphasized that good education must balance between *naqliyah* (religious knowledge) and *aqliyah* (rational knowledge), so that humans are able to understand the reality of the world without losing their spiritual awareness. This integration also becomes the foundation for modern Islamic education in avoiding the dichotomy of knowledge, where knowledge and religious values complement each other within the framework of *monotheism. worldview* [7]. Thus, the reinterpretation of the concepts of *education*, *learning*, and *schooling* from an Islamic

educational perspective must be directed at returning to the goal of education as a process of purifying the soul, developing reason, and strengthening divine values that are in harmony with the progress of science.

### 3. Method

The research method used in this research is a qualitative approach with a library study research type (research), which focuses on conceptual and interpretative analysis of various relevant literature sources [8]. This research does not involve primary data collection such as interviews, observations, or surveys, but rather uses entirely secondary data obtained from classic and modern books, scientific articles, educational journals, and academic works that discuss the nature of *education*, *learning*, and *schooling* from a general and Islamic perspective [9]. Data analysis techniques are carried out through a process of reduction, categorization, and synthesis of various thoughts of educational figures such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Al-Ghazali, to find the substantive meaning and conceptual relationship between spiritual and scientific values in Islamic education [10]. With this approach, the research seeks to produce a deep understanding of the philosophical reinterpretation of the concept of modern education so that it is in line with the paradigm of Islamic education which is based on monotheism, civility, and balance between science and religious values [11].

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### 4.1 . The Nature of Education from an Islamic Education Perspective

The essence of *education* from an Islamic perspective is a concept imbued with inseparable spiritual, moral, and intellectual values. Education in Islam serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge, as in the secular paradigm, but also as a process of purifying the soul (*taḥkiyah*) . *al-nafs*), development of human potential (*tathwir al-insaniyah*), and the strengthening of the relationship between humans and their God (*ta'alluq billah*). Etymologically, the term education in Islam is often associated with three basic concepts, namely *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib*. *Tarbiyah* emphasizes the aspect of nurturing and developing human potential towards perfection; *ta'lim* focuses on the process of teaching and knowledge; while *ta'dib* emphasizes the formation of correct manners and morality. These three terms describe the integral dimensions of Islamic education that combine elements of spirituality, intellectuality, and morality. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1980), education in Islam is not just "the acquisition of knowledge" but "the instillation of *adab*," namely the cultivation of *adab* which leads to the recognition and recognition of the position of Allah, nature, and humans in accordance with their essential order [12]. Thus, the essence of *education* in Islam is not only to prepare humans to become efficient social creatures, but to shape them into complete *human beings* who understand their position as servants of Allah as well as caliphs on earth.

Education in Islam has a fundamentally different orientation than the modern Western educational paradigm. In the Western view, education tends to be anthropocentric, placing humans as the center of reality and the measure of truth. Education focuses on developing intellectual potential and practical skills so that individuals can adapt to social and economic systems. Meanwhile, in Islam, education is theocentric, with Allah SWT as the central orientation of all human activity, including the learning process. Al-Attas (1993) emphasized that Islamic education aims to shape *good* human beings. *man*), not just a good citizen (*good citizen*). This means that education in Islam has a much higher goal than simply creating economically productive individuals; education aims to instill moral and spiritual awareness that leads humans to Divine truth [13]. Within this framework, knowledge is seen not as an

end in itself, but as a means to know and draw closer to God. Therefore, Islamic education does not recognize the dichotomy between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge, because all knowledge essentially originates from Allah SWT as stated in QS. Al-'Alaq verses 1-5 and QS. Al-Mujadalah verse 11 which emphasizes the nobility of those who have knowledge. Islamic education guides humans to develop their minds and hearts in a balanced way, so that humans are born who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have high ethical and spiritual awareness.

From an Islamic epistemological perspective, education is also seen as a means to restore human nature. Fitrah here is understood as an innate, pure potential ready to accept the truth. In the Qur'an (QS. Ar-Rum: 30), Allah states that every human being is created on the basis of a righteous fitrah. The task of education in Islam is to maintain, direct, and develop this fitrah so that it does not deviate from the purpose of creation. Thus, education not only functions to teach empirical knowledge, but also plays a role in shaping human existential awareness about the origin, purpose, and responsibility of life. This differs from the modern educational paradigm, which emphasizes intellectual aspects and competence, while moral and spiritual aspects are often sidelined. In Islam, an educator is not simply a *teacher* or *instructor*, but rather a *murabbi* (leader) and *muaddib* (leader) responsible for guiding students toward perfect manners and an understanding of the Creator. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself, in a hadith narrated by Muslim, stated that he was sent to perfect noble morals ( *innama*). *bu'itstu li utammima Makarimal akhlaq* ), which shows that education is an essential moral and spiritual process in shaping human personality. Therefore, the essence of *education* in Islam is always oriented towards the values of monotheism, morality, and the balance between knowledge and good deeds.

In addition to having a theological basis, Islamic education is also based on a strong philosophical foundation. [14] in his work *Ihya' Ulumuddin* states that knowledge and education are the path to happiness in this world and the hereafter. He divides knowledge into two categories, namely *fardhu 'ain* (knowledge that every Muslim must learn, such as religious knowledge) and *fardhu kifayah* (general knowledge that is useful for society). This division emphasizes that education in Islam is not dichotomous, but rather complementary between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge. The essence of education is not only to achieve thinking skills, but to cleanse the heart from reprehensible traits and draw closer to Allah SWT. The ideal education according to him is one that is able to synergize between reason and heart, because reason is a means of understanding the truth, while the heart is a place where divine light descends. This view is in line with Ibn Khaldun (1377) in his *Muqaddimah*, which emphasizes that education must be directed towards forming people who are moral and knowledgeable. He rejected educational approaches that were too rigid and solely oriented towards memorization, as this would stifle students' creativity and freedom of thought. Therefore, Islamic education ideally fosters critical thinking awareness and humility before God's truth [15].

The essence of *education* in Islam is also closely related to the mission of humanity ( *insaniyyah* ). Education is not only aimed at the benefit of the individual, but also at building a civilized society ( *madaniyah* ). The values instilled in Islamic education, such as honesty, responsibility, justice, and social concern, reflect Islamic teachings that emphasize the balance between individual rights and social responsibility. Islamic education is expected to produce a generation that not only masters science and technology but also possesses the moral awareness to use their knowledge for the benefit of the community. This concept aligns with the principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, a pillar of social life in Islam. Therefore, Islamic education cannot be separated from its social context; it must be responsive to humanitarian problems such as poverty, inequality, and the moral crisis plaguing society. True education is not one that distances people from social reality, but one that inspires action for change

toward goodness. In this regard, the essence of education *in* Islam has a transformative role that not only transforms individuals into knowledgeable individuals but also transforms society into a more civilized one.

Historically, Islamic educational practices have developed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the institutions of *kuttāb* (*study groups*) and *halaqah* (*study groups*) in mosques, and through to the establishment of formal educational institutions such as madrasas during the Abbasid Dynasty. This system demonstrates that Islamic education, from its inception, embodied the principle of integrating knowledge, faith, and good deeds. In mosques, learning activities were not limited to religious subjects but also encompassed medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and philosophy. This tradition demonstrates that Islamic education is inclusive of the development of knowledge, as long as it remains within the framework of the value of monotheism. Thus, the essence of education in Islam is *integrative. education*, namely a system that unites spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions into a unified whole. The crisis of modern education, which tends to be secular, materialistic, and market-oriented, demonstrates the need to return to an integral Islamic educational paradigm. As stated by **Al-Faruqi (1982)**, "The crisis of modern education is not merely intellectual, but civilizational," because education has lost its moral and spiritual direction [16]. Therefore, reinterpretation of the essence of *education* in Islam is important as an effort to restore the function of education as a means of forming civilized and faithful people.

The essence of *education* in Islam also emphasizes the importance of a balance between freedom of thought and the guidance of revelation. Islam does not reject rationality and science, but rather directs their use to remain within the bounds of ethics and divine values. In classical Islamic history, scholars such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Al-Razi demonstrated that the development of knowledge can go hand in hand with profound spirituality. True Islamic education teaches that knowledge without faith can lead to intellectual arrogance, while faith without knowledge can give rise to blind fanaticism. Both must work in harmony to produce balanced (*mizān*) and moderate (*wasathiyah*) individuals. This principle of balance is the hallmark of Islamic education, where the pursuit of knowledge is always linked to moral responsibility and community service. Therefore, the essence of *education* in Islam encompasses not only the dimensions of *knowing* but also *being* and *doing*, connecting knowledge, morality, and practical action.

In the contemporary context, the challenge of Islamic education is how to revitalize the essence of *education* amidst the currents of globalization and modernization, which often erode spiritual values. Modern education tends to measure success based on academic and economic achievements, while Islamic education assesses success by the extent to which humans understand themselves and their God. Therefore, a reformulation of the Islamic educational paradigm is needed that can meet the needs of the times without losing its Islamic spirit. One approach that can be used is the integration of Quranic and Hadith values into all fields of knowledge, so that every academic activity has a moral and spiritual orientation. For example, science teaching can be directed toward fostering ecological awareness and a sense of responsibility for God's creation; economics learning can be linked to the principles of social justice and the welfare of the people. Such Islamic education not only produces competent graduates but also graduates with character and a commitment to universal values of truth and humanity.

Thus, the essence of *education* from an Islamic perspective cannot be understood narrowly as a formal or institutional process alone, but rather as a comprehensive system that shapes the whole person: intellectually, morally, and spiritually. Islamic education positions knowledge as a light that guides humans toward truth and salvation. The ultimate goal is not merely worldly success, but *sa'adah* (true happiness) that encompasses a balance between this

world and the hereafter. Education in Islam is a process of *ta'dib (reformation)* that fosters an awareness of humans' position as servants and caliphs of God on earth. When education loses its spiritual orientation, it becomes a mere tool for reproducing economic and political systems. Therefore, re-understanding the essence of *education* from an Islamic perspective means returning education to its original purpose: to develop knowledgeable, faithful, and civilized individuals capable of balancing intellectual advancement with spiritual depth. In this way, Islamic education can become a moral force that builds a just, civilized, and divinely-value-oriented civilization.

#### 4.2 . The Nature of Learning from an Islamic Education Perspective

The essence of *learning* from an Islamic educational perspective has a much broader meaning than the understanding commonly understood in modern educational theory. In the Western tradition, *learning* is often defined as a psychological or pedagogical process that emphasizes behavioral change or the acquisition of knowledge that can be measured empirically. This approach tends to be behavioristic and cognitivist, where humans are viewed as objects of learning that can be manipulated through stimuli and responses. [17]. However, in the Islamic view, *learning* does not only involve cognitive aspects, but is a spiritual, moral and intellectual process that leads humans to recognize the nature of truth. Learning in Islam is part of worship which originates from the first command in Allah's revelation to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, namely "Iqra'" (read) in the QS. Al-'Alaq verses 1–5. This command does not just mean reading written texts, but also reading the signs of Allah's greatness in the universe (*jay kauniyah*). Thus, learning in Islam includes intellectual and spiritual activities to understand oneself, nature and God. The essence of *learning* in Islam is the process of *tazakkur* (remembering), *tafakkur* (contemplating), and *tadabbur* (understanding the meaning) of the verses of Allah so that humans can achieve divine awareness (*ma'rifatullah*).

*Learning* is a process of self-perfection that lasts throughout *life learning*). The Qur'an teaches that humans are commanded to continue seeking knowledge from the cradle to the grave, as the Prophet Muhammad said: "Utlubul 'ilma minal mahdi ilal Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave". This hadith shows that learning is not a temporary activity, but rather a continuous, existential process in human life. Learning in Islam does not stop at the accumulation of knowledge, but aims to form a high self-awareness of the greatness of Allah and the responsibility of humans as caliphs on earth. Within this framework, *learning* is an activity that purifies the heart, trains the mind, and deepens faith. A true learner in Islam is not only one who masters many theories, but one who is able to subordinate their knowledge to divine values. Therefore, Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulumuddin* emphasized that knowledge without practice is futile, and practice without knowledge is misguidance. This statement illustrates that in Islam, *learning* is not merely a process of acquiring information, but also a process of self-transformation that leads one from knowledge to wisdom (*hikmah*).

The nature of *learning* in Islam is also closely related to the concepts of *adab* and *wisdom*. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1980), the main goal of Islamic education is not only *the transfer of knowledge*, but *instillation of adab*, namely the cultivation of awareness of the position of humans, nature, and God in the correct cosmic order. Thus, *learning* in Islam cannot be separated from moral and spiritual dimensions. When someone learns, he is not only pursuing scientific truth, but also existential truth that leads him to acknowledge the greatness of God. Learning activity is a form of *ta'abbud*, namely worship carried out with full awareness that knowledge is a trust that must be used for good [18]. This view differs from the secular paradigm, where *learning* is often associated with career achievement or social status. In Islam, the success of learning is not measured by academic degrees or intellectual wealth, but by how far the knowledge leads humans to submission to God and real

contribution to the welfare of the community ( *maslahah 'ammah* ). Thus, *learning in Islam is multidimensional: it combines intellectual ( aql ), emotional ( qalb ), and spiritual ( ruh ) aspects in a harmonious whole.*

The learning process in Islam has a different ontological basis from the Western view. In Islamic epistemology, the source of knowledge comes not only from reason and empirical experience, but also from revelation ( *revelation-based* ). *knowledge* ). Reason functions as a tool for understanding revelation and the universe, while revelation serves as a guide so that humans do not go astray in the use of their reason. This emphasizes that *learning* in Islam is an integration of reason and faith. Learning is not merely a rational activity, but also a spiritual reflection to achieve ' *ilm* ' ( *knowledge* ). *al-yaqin* (certain knowledge), ' *ain al-yaqin* (knowledge based on inner vision), and *haqq Al-Yaqin* (true knowledge). These three levels illustrate the process of improving a learner's spiritual quality in Islam. Someone who learns sincerely will gain inner enlightenment and the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. Therefore, the Qur'an emphasizes that those who possess knowledge have a high rank in the sight of Allah (QS. Al-Mujadalah: 11), but only those who combine knowledge with piety will attain this noble position. Thus, the essence of *learning* in Islam is a spiritual journey from knowledge to wisdom and from wisdom to total submission to Allah SWT.

From a pedagogical perspective, *learning* in Islam also places a crucial importance on the relationship between teacher and student. This relationship is not merely functional, as in modern education systems, but rather a spiritual and moral one based on respect, compassion, and sincerity. A teacher in Islam is not merely a *teacher* or *instructor* , but also a *murabbi* (moral and spiritual mentor) and *mu'allim* ( *giver of knowledge and wisdom* ). *Meanwhile, the student is not merely a recipient of information, but a talib al -'ilm* (leader of knowledge). (knowledge seekers) who have a moral commitment to respect teachers and maintain the blessings of knowledge. In the view of Al- Zarnuji (d. 1243 AD) in *Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim* , etiquette in learning is more important than knowledge itself, because knowledge will not be useful without etiquette [19] . This principle shows that the *learning process* in Islam is not a mechanistic activity , but rather an interaction between the mind, heart, and soul based on pure intentions. Etiquette in learning includes submission to the truth, respect for teachers, sincerity in seeking knowledge, and sincerity in practicing it. Through this approach, learning not only produces knowledge, but also a personality with noble morals and leadership qualities.

Furthermore, the essence of *learning* in Islam has a strong social dimension. Islam views the learning process as a collective activity that connects individuals with society and the universe. Knowledge acquired is not for personal gain, but for the benefit of the community. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "*The best people are those who are most beneficial to others.*" (Narrated by Ahmad). This hadith emphasizes that the results of the learning process must be realized in concrete contributions to society. Therefore, *learning* in Islam does not stop at the cognitive aspect but must be realized in social action and public ethics. In this regard, knowledge and good deeds are two sides of the same coin that cannot be separated. When someone studies economics, they must understand the principles of social justice in Islam; when someone studies science, they must recognize their responsibility to maintain environmental balance as a divine mandate. Thus, *learning* in Islam fosters ecological, social, and moral awareness that aligns with the primary goal of Islamic education, namely to achieve justice and balance ( *adl* ) . *wa tawazun* ) in human life.

Historically, the tradition of *learning* in Islam has given birth to a brilliant scientific civilization. Institutions such as the House of Wisdom in Baghdad, the University of al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, and al-Azhar in Cairo are concrete evidence that the learning process in Islam is not limited to religious knowledge, but also encompasses rational and experimental sciences. Muslim scientists such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, Al- Khwarizmi , and Ibn Haytham developed scientific theories that became the foundation for the development of modern



science, yet they still viewed knowledge as a means to understand the greatness of God. This phenomenon shows that in Islam, *learning* does not create a gap between religion and science, but rather brings the two together in dynamic harmony. The classical Islamic scientific tradition demonstrates that learning activities are not only for intellectual satisfaction, but also to uphold the values of justice, humanity, and universal truth. In this context, *learning* becomes a path to *ihsan*, namely the awareness that every learning activity is carried out as if seeing God, or at least the awareness that God always sees His servants. This is the pinnacle of spirituality in the learning process according to Islam: knowledge that fosters piety, not intellectual arrogance.

The essence of *learning* in Islam is also highly relevant to the challenges of education in the modern era. Globalization and digitalization have transformed the way humans acquire and interpret knowledge. Information has become readily accessible, but wisdom has become increasingly scarce. In such a situation, the Islamic approach to *learning* offers a balance between technology and spirituality. Islam teaches that technological advancement must be accompanied by moral responsibility. For example, when students use the internet as a learning medium, they must be aware of digital ethics such as academic honesty, respect for copyright, and responsibility in disseminating information. The principles of *learning in Islam* reject mechanistic and instantaneous learning practices and emphasize the importance of reflection and contemplation. True learning must encourage students to think critically (*tafakkur*), seek meaning (*tadabbur*), and connect knowledge with divine values. Thus, *learning* in Islam is a process of synthesis between rational thinking and spiritual meditation, between intellectual analysis and purification of the heart.

Many Islamic educational institutions face challenges in upholding the true meaning of *learning* as taught in the Qur'an and classical Islamic tradition. Overly exam-oriented learning systems, fragmented curricula, and the pressures of academic competition often lead to learning losing its spiritual spirit. Therefore, a reinterpretation and revitalization of the meaning of *learning* in Islamic education is needed. This reinterpretation involves returning learning to the values of monotheism, adab, and noble morals. Students should be viewed not as passive objects, but as active subjects with the potential for spiritual development. Teachers should act as moral role models, not merely transmitters of material. The curriculum should be designed not only to transfer knowledge but also to instill an awareness of social and spiritual responsibility. In this way, Islamic education will produce a generation that not only *knows how* but also *know why*, namely understanding the meaning behind every learning process as part of worship and the mandate of life.

The essence of *learning* from an Islamic educational perspective can be summarized as a spiritual and intellectual process oriented toward developing knowledgeable, faithful, and noble individuals. Learning is not merely a worldly activity, but rather an act of worship that guides humans toward truth and existential awareness. Every step in the learning process must be based on sincere intentions, accompanied by a search for meaning, and directed toward the benefit of the community. In Islam, there is no dichotomy between studying religious knowledge and worldly knowledge, as both are paths to knowing the Creator. When *learning* is carried out with pure intentions and divine awareness, it becomes a means of self-purification and a contribution to civilization. Amid the global value crisis, the essence of *learning* in Islam offers an alternative paradigm capable of returning education to its true purpose: not merely to enlighten the mind, but to enlighten the heart and humanize humanity. Thus, learning in Islam is not merely a pursuit of knowledge, but a journey toward wisdom and closeness to Allah SWT—a process that transforms humans into knowledgeable, ethical, and spiritually imbued caliphs.

### 4.3 . The Nature of Schooling and the Integration of Spiritual and Scientific Values in Islamic Education

The essence of *schooling* from an Islamic educational perspective cannot be understood simply as the physical presence of students in a classroom or their involvement in a formal schooling system governed by a curriculum, schedule, and graduation standards. In the modern educational tradition, the term *schooling* tends to be reduced to the process of institutionalizing education through schools, madrasas, or universities, with a strong orientation toward mastery of academic content, grade achievement, and competency certification. This perspective fosters the perception that educational success is measured primarily by quantitative indicators such as test scores, grade point averages, or institutional accreditation. Meanwhile, the dimensions of character formation, the instilling of good manners, and the internalization of spiritual values are often relegated to secondary roles, even marginalized by administrative demands and the logic of the job market. From an Islamic educational perspective, *schooling* should be interpreted more broadly as a structured ecosystem for cultivating values, in which all elements of the curriculum, teachers, environment, management, and even the physical layout are designed to guide students to become knowledgeable, noble, and socially responsible servants of God. Thus, *schooling* is not merely a school building, but a socio-spiritual space where revelation, reason, and the reality of life are brought together in a creative and integrated manner.

If we examine the history of Islamic civilization, the essence of *schooling* is clearly evident in educational practices in mosques, kuttab ( Islamic boarding schools), madrasas, and classical scholarly institutions. Mosques, for example, are not merely places of ritual worship, but also centers for learning, discussion, scientific development, and community development. It was in these spaces that the Companions and Tabi'in acquired knowledge of the Quran , hadith, fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), morals, and even rational sciences such as mathematics and astronomy, taught in an atmosphere full of spiritual example. This tradition reflects that *schooling* in Islam has, from its inception, functioned as a space for integration between spiritual and scientific values, not a space for separation. Later madrasas, such as the Nizamiyah in Baghdad and other major institutions, continued this pattern by allowing religious and general knowledge to coexist. This *schooling pattern emphasizes that Islamic education does not recognize a sharp dichotomy between 'ulum' ( Islamic scholars) and 'ulama' (scholars). al -din and ulum al-dunya . Both are seen as manifestations of a single reality of knowledge originating from God, whose classification is more functional than ideological. From this, it is clear that the essence of schooling in Islam is not a process of confining students to classrooms, but rather framing the entire life of the institution as a learning space that honors knowledge and its possessors.*

The essence of *schooling* in Islamic education is also very closely related to the concept of adab. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas explained that the fundamental goal of Islamic education is “ *to produce a good man* ” , not just a technically intelligent and work-ready individual. This quote implies that *schooling* in Islam should not stop at mastering content, but must be realized as a comprehensive process of cultivating adab (morality). Adab here includes recognizing and placing things in their proper place: placing God as the center of truth, knowledge as a trust, teachers as revered figures, fellow human beings as brothers, and nature as God's verses that must be protected. If *schooling* is separated from the mission of adab, it will turn into a machine for producing a workforce that may be intellectually capable, but morally and spiritually fragile. In this perspective, the school structure, rules, and institutional culture, from the way teachers speak, the system of rewards and punishments, to the way conflicts are resolved, are all part of the “hidden curriculum” that determines whether *schooling* truly becomes a process of civilization or instead produces a generation alienated from divine values.

The integration of spiritual and scientific values in Islamic *schooling* presupposes the existence of a monotheistic paradigm that serves as the foundation of the entire educational process. The monotheistic paradigm views all knowledge, both textual (based on revelation) and contextual (based on experience and research), ultimately leads to the recognition of the oneness of God, the wisdom of His creation, and the responsibility of humans as caliphs on earth. Within this framework, science lessons do not stand neutral and separate from values, but are presented as a window to see the order, precision, and greatness of God's creation. Social-humanities lessons do not merely discuss theories of society, but are directed to foster a sense of justice, concern for the weak, and an awareness of the mandate of power. Mathematics lessons not only train logic, but also orderly and consistent thinking patterns that reflect the sunnatullah in the structure of nature. Thus, the integration of spiritual and scientific values does not mean forcing every subject to be filled with evidence, but places each science within a monotheistic horizon of meaning : knowledge that guides humans to understand the world without severing their connection with the Creator of the world [20] .

This integration requires curriculum and learning design that consciously weaves a connection between revelation and empirical reality. An Islamic curriculum goes beyond simply adding religious subjects to the schedule, but rather directs each subject to contribute to the primary goal of Islamic education: the formation of faithful, knowledgeable, and righteous individuals. This means that in Islamic *schooling* , a situation should not arise where religious knowledge is confined to specific hours, while outside of that time students are taught to think as if God is absent from science, technology, economics, and other fields. Physics teachers, for example, can encourage students to reflect on the regularity of natural laws as a sign of God's wisdom, without turning physics lessons into religious lectures. Economics teachers can link market theory to the values of justice, zakat, and the prohibition of usury. Language teachers can guide students to understand how words can be a means of preaching and strengthening brotherhood, while also being a source of slander if not guarded. In this way, the integration of spiritual and scientific values feels alive, contextual, and not forced.

The essence of *schooling* in Islamic education also demands serious attention to the figure and role of the teacher. Teachers are the primary determinants of whether spiritual values are truly integrated into the learning process or merely confined to the curriculum. From an Islamic perspective, teachers are seen as inheritors of the prophetic mission, namely to convey knowledge, improve morals, and guide people toward truth. Therefore, Islamic *schooling* cannot exist without teachers who possess spiritual integrity, scientific depth, and pedagogical sensitivity. Teachers who only master the material but lack exemplary behavior will hinder the integration of knowledge and values, because students perceive messages not only from words but also from attitudes and behavior. The famous Prophetic hadith "*innama*" (*innama*) *bu'itstu li utammima Makarimal " Akhlaq "* is the foundation that education, and thus *schooling* , is essentially a mission to perfect morals. Teachers who recognize this will see the classroom not merely as a place to transfer theory, but as a space where they present living examples of honesty, patience, humility , and responsibility.

The physical and social environment of a school is also a substantial part of the essence of *schooling* in Islam. An Islamic environment is not synonymous with religious symbols such as calligraphy or uniforms, but is reflected in an atmosphere of mutual respect, cleanliness, discipline, and social awareness. Schools that integrate spiritual and scientific values will pay attention to, for example, time management, the regularity of activities, and how the institution responds to violations. If violations are addressed only with formal punishment without a process of value awareness, *schooling* tends to foster pseudo-compliance, not moral maturity. Conversely, when rule enforcement is accompanied by spiritual reflection and dialogue, students learn that every action has ethical implications before God and their fellow

human beings. This environment allows the integration of spiritual and scientific values not only to occur in the classroom but also to permeate the daily rhythms of the institution: from how students greet teachers, dispose of trash, utilize technology, to how the institution makes strategic decisions.

Thinkers like Ibn Khaldun emphasized that the goals of education cannot be separated from the overall objectives of sharia. In *the Muqaddimah (Prologue)*, he criticized harsh and monotonous teaching methods, believing they stifle creativity and diminish the joy of learning. He emphasized the need for a gradual, compassionate approach that aligns with the psychological development of students. His view demonstrates that Islamic *schooling* must address the humanity of students, rather than simply enforce academic standards. This integration of spiritual and scientific values also touches on methodological aspects: teaching methods, evaluation methods, and guidance methods. Education that solely pursues curriculum objectives without addressing students' inner experiences risks producing a generation that is intelligent but tired, knowledgeable but devoid of meaning. Meanwhile, *schooling* from an Islamic perspective requires a learning experience that combines intellectual acuity with inner peace.

Many Islamic educational institutions face a paradox between ideals and reality. On the one hand, their visions and missions often affirm a commitment to the integration of faith, knowledge, and good deeds. On the other hand, daily *schooling practices* are remarkably similar to those of secular public schools: exam-oriented learning, excessive academic competition, and assessments of success based almost exclusively on numbers. The integration of spiritual values often stops at ritualistic routines such as communal prayer and incidental religious activities, without deeply addressing the curriculum structure and learning culture. This necessitates a reinterpretation of the nature of *schooling* in Islamic education: institutions must boldly review whether all policies, from curriculum planning to classroom management, truly support the formation of a monotheistic individual, or whether they are instead trapped by administrative logic and market demands. This reinterpretation is not intended to reject modernity or academic achievement, but rather to place them within a framework of higher values.

The essence of *schooling* and the integration of spiritual and scientific values in Islamic education can be summarized as an effort to make educational institutions into spaces of civilization, where revelation, reason, and social reality are harmoniously united. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi once warned that the crisis of knowledge in the Muslim world is not merely a crisis of information, but a crisis of orientation, so that education needs to be redirected to a complete vision of monotheism; this is the essence of his idea of the Islamization of knowledge. His quote, often summarized as a critique that the educational crisis is "civilizational," suggests that educational reform is not sufficient simply to improve methods or add facilities, but must also touch on how we interpret *schooling* itself: is it merely a factory for diplomas, or a field of devotion to God. If *schooling* in Islamic education is able to demonstrate a true integration of spiritual and scientific values through a monotheistic curriculum, civilized teachers, an environment that fosters morality, and a meaningful learning culture, then educational institutions will not only produce outstanding graduates, but also a generation ready to shoulder the mandate as caliphs on earth. Thus, *schooling* is no longer understood as an administrative obligation, but rather as a long path to forming civilized individuals who illuminate civilization with their knowledge and morals.

## 5. Comparison

The results of this study indicate that the reinterpretation of the nature of *education*, *learning*, and *schooling* from an Islamic educational perspective emphasizes the importance of integrating spiritual and scientific values as the foundation for the formation of a civilized

human being (*insan kamil*), which is philosophically and methodologically different from the modern educational system which tends to be secular and pragmatic. This finding is in line with research conducted by [21] which emphasizes that the goal of Islamic education is to instill *a sense of* awareness of the position of humans, knowledge, and God so that knowledge is not only studied for worldly interests, but also to draw closer to Allah SWT. However, the results of this study have a more applicative focus than previous research by Al-Faruqi (1982), which emphasized the Islamization of knowledge as a response to the dichotomy of religious knowledge and general knowledge. In this study, the integration of spiritual and scientific values is not only understood conceptually, but also contextualized within the framework of a modern *schooling system that is capable of forming a taubidic- based learning culture. worldview* . Meanwhile, compared to research [22] which emphasizes more on moral aspects and purification of the soul in the educational process, this research provides a new dimension by connecting the principles of *ta'dib* and *tarbiyah* in the curriculum design and management of Islamic educational institutions, thus producing a more comprehensive understanding of the role of schools as a space for integrating knowledge and divine values.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the overall results and discussion, it can be concluded that the reinterpretation of the nature of *education* , *learning* , and *schooling* from the perspective of Islamic education shows that true education is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but rather a spiritual and intellectual journey that guides humans towards the perfection of manners, balance of mind and heart, and awareness of their responsibilities as servants and caliphs of Allah on earth. Islamic education places knowledge not as an end in itself, but as a path to knowing God and upholding noble human values, by rejecting the dichotomy between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge. The integration of spiritual and scientific values is key in forming a holistic and civilized education system , where *education* instills the value of monotheism, *learning* becomes a process of purification and self-development, and *schooling* functions as a space of civilization that connects revelation, reason, and social reality. Therefore, it is recommended that modern Islamic educational institutions reformulate their curriculum, learning methods, and school culture based on the monotheistic paradigm that combines intellectual intelligence with spirituality and morality, so as to be able to produce a generation that is knowledgeable, faithful, and has noble morals that are relevant to the challenges of the times without losing the divine values that are the core of Islamic education.

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**Data Availability Statement:** All data used in this study are sourced from publicly available literature reviews, scientific books, journal articles, and academic works. No primary data was generated from interviews or field observations. Additional data or supporting references can be obtained from the corresponding author, Desy Utari, upon reasonable request for academic purposes and scientific verification.

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