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Integration of Science and Religion in Islam

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Abstract

The integration of general knowledge and religious teachings in modern Islamic education has become increasingly important in today's rapidly globalizing and technologically advancing world. The primary issue addressed in this study is the dichotomy between religious teachings and general knowledge, which hinders the development of a holistic Islamic educational system. This study aims to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating these two domains, focusing on philosophical, theological, and practical perspectives. The research employed a literature review method combined with qualitative analysis of relevant texts. The findings indicate that the integration of general knowledge and religious teachings can make Islamic education more responsive to contemporary societal demands, although structural and theoretical challenges remain significant obstacles. The support and collaboration of various stakeholders play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation of this integration.

Keywords: integration; Islamic education; technology

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental pillar in shaping the civilization and identity of a nation. In the Islamic context, education is not merely intended to transfer knowledge but also to cultivate wellrounded individuals who are capable of living their lives based on the values of faith and piety. Historical records indicate that Islamic civilization once reached its peak when Muslim scholars and scientists successfully harmonized religious knowledge and scientific inquiry. However, over time, a dichotomy emerged between religious sciences and general sciences, resulting in their separation within educational systems. This condition has contributed to the emergence of generations that are incomplete in terms of intellectual and spiritual development; on the one hand, some individuals possess strong religious commitment but lack rational and scientific perspectives, while on the other hand, others exhibit intellectual sophistication yet are detached from spiritual values (Humairoh & Mustafidin, 2025).

Education is a conscious and systematic effort to provide guidance in developing the physical and spiritual potential of learners so that they may attain maturity and become capable of fulfilling their responsibilities independently. Throughout human history, particularly within societal development, education has occupied a central position and has consistently received significant attention as a means of improving the quality of future generations in accordance with the demands of the times.

The integration of general knowledge and religious teachings has become a central topic in contemporary Islamic educational discourse. In the context of rapid social transformation and technological advancement, the need to harmonize Islamic sciences with general knowledge has become increasingly urgent. Islamic education no longer functions solely as a medium for religious instruction but also serves as a platform for the

development of knowledge capable of addressing contemporary challenges. This perspective is consistent with Islam's vision as a comprehensive religion encompassing all aspects of life, including education (Fitriyani et al., 2023).

The modernization of Islamic education is frequently confronted with the dilemma of preserving religious traditions while simultaneously responding to the demands of modern scientific knowledge. This challenge has become even more complex with the emergence of globalization, which introduces various values and ideologies that often conflict with Islamic principles (Rizki et al., 2025).

The discussion and development of scientific knowledge cannot stand independently but are inevitably connected to other issues, including religion. Conversely, discussions concerning religion cannot be separated from the influences generated by the advancement of science and technology. Consequently, the integration of science and religion has become an important topic of discussion. Science, which fundamentally seeks to understand nature as it exists, increasingly encounters normative questions concerning morality and religion. For instance, questions arise regarding the purpose of scientific knowledge, the limits of scientific exploration, and the direction in which scientific development should proceed. Such questions have become increasingly important, and in seeking answers, scientists inevitably turn to moral and religious considerations. Therefore, discussions regarding the integration of science and religion are unavoidable (Sarbaini et al., 2022).

Efforts to integrate knowledge and religion have led to initiatives such as the Islamization of knowledge movement, which seeks to address the issue at the point where scientific knowledge is produced and developed. In this regard, higher education institutions are considered the most appropriate environment for realizing the ideals of integration. Universities serve as academic institutions that fulfill scientific responsibilities through the implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education while simultaneously fostering individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character. Furthermore, higher education institutions contribute to the advancement of science, technology, and innovation while ensuring that these developments benefit society, the nation, and humanity through education, research, and community service activities. Therefore, this study focuses on describing the practices of integrating science and religion within higher education institutions (Nugraha, 2020).

Within Islamic higher education, the integration of general knowledge and religious sciences can be achieved through interdisciplinary research approaches. Research that combines religious and scientific perspectives has the potential to generate new findings relevant to the needs of Muslim communities. Integration may also be understood as the process of connecting and unifying two or more ideas, disciplines, or approaches. Consequently, every field of knowledge should strive to connect, relate, and, where possible, unify what has traditionally been categorized as Islamic sciences and general sciences through a trialectical approach (Firdaus, 2019).

In the digital era, challenges such as misinformation, moral crises, and climate change require holistic and valuebased approaches. Integrative Islamic education offers a potential solution by developing individuals who are not only intellectually competent but also possess strong moral character. Efforts to integrate religious sciences and modern sciences also represent a response to the weaknesses of modern educational systems, which often adopt secular perspectives and neglect spiritual dimensions. Through such integration, Islamic education can cultivate balanced individuals (insan kamil) who possess intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence in a comprehensive manner. Furthermore, this approach aligns with Islam's vision as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy to all creation), which views knowledge as a means of understanding and drawing closer to the Creator rather than merely as a tool for mastering the material world.

Therefore, this study examines the urgency, fundamental concepts, and implementation models of integrating religious sciences and modern sciences within contemporary Islamic education. The objective is to contribute to the development of an Islamic educational system that is more relevant, adaptive, and responsive to contemporary challenges while maintaining its identity as a revelationbased educational framework.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. This method was selected because it aims to provide an indepth understanding of the phenomenon of integrating science and religion from an Islamic perspective, particularly within the context of modern education. The qualitative approach enables researchers to explore meanings, concepts, and values embedded in the integration process in a comprehensive and contextual manner. Rather than focusing on statistical data, this study emphasizes a deep understanding of the phenomenon through the examination of various relevant sources.

Data collection was conducted through several stages: (1) a literature review involving the examination of books, scientific journals, and scholarly articles related to the integration of science and religion; (2) document collection consisting of written references supporting the analysis; and (3) a review of theoretical concepts relevant to the research topic. Through these procedures, the researcher sought to obtain valid and academically reliable data.

Data analysis was carried out through three main stages: (1) data reduction, involving the selection, focusing, and simplification of data relevant to the research objectives; (2) data presentation, involving the systematic organization of data in descriptive narrative form to facilitate understanding; and (3) conclusion drawing, involving the interpretation of analyzed data to derive meaningful findings relevant to the research focus. Through these stages, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and indepth understanding of the integration of science and religion in Islam and its relevance to contemporary educational contexts.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

The concept of integration can be understood as wholeness and comprehensiveness, referring to a process of combining elements that were previously separated. In the context of education, integration involves bringing together religious knowledge and scientific knowledge in a manner that provides normative guidance for human life. More specifically, integration represents an effort to harmonize perspectives, ways of thinking, and patterns of action among religious sciences, science, and technology. Integration may also be defined as a process of social interaction in which individuals interact dynamically and systematically to reconcile existing differences in order to achieve shared objectives. In practice, integration seeks to transform diversity into unity across various domains, including economics, politics, society, culture, and scientific disciplines (Saiful, et al., 2023).

Within Islam, science and technology maintain a harmonious and dynamic relationship that is integrated into a comprehensive system known as Dinul Islam. One of the primary objectives of Islam is to provide guidance that enables humanity to achieve a more advanced and prosperous standard of living. Islam does not discourage engagement

with modern technology or scientific advancement; rather, it encourages intellectual development, professionalism, constructive thinking, and responsiveness to contemporary challenges. Modern civilization is the result of remarkable achievements in science and technology, attained through centuries of rigorous research and experimentation. Consequently, it is appropriate for humanity to utilize these discoveries to improve the quality of life. Technological progress has generated benefits that are widely enjoyed by society in ways unimaginable even to rulers of earlier eras. It is anticipated that future generations will achieve even greater levels of prosperity and convenience. Therefore, Islam does not hinder scientific and technological advancement, nor does it oppose technological products from the past, present, or future (Sarbaini et al., 2022).

Science may be defined as knowledge systematically accumulated through scientific methods. It represents a structured body of knowledge developed through observation and experimentation. In other words, scientific knowledge can only emerge through deliberate efforts to discover, construct, and expand understanding. Knowledge does not develop passively. As commonly stated in scientific discourse, "without research, scientific knowledge cannot progress." Research therefore serves as the foundation for the advancement and development of knowledge.

The growth and development of science fundamentally require continuous research activities. Research constitutes an effort to formulate problems, pose questions, discover facts, and provide accurate interpretations. More importantly, research serves an innovative function by continuously revising accepted conclusions and theories in light of newly discovered evidence. In relation to Islamic religious sciences, important questions arise regarding whether religious knowledge can continue to develop without systematic research and whether research is an essential requirement for the advancement of Islamic scholarship. These questions highlight the significance of research as a central component in both scientific and religious knowledge development (Daulay et al., 2020).

The opportunities for integrating general knowledge and religious teachings within modern Islamic education are substantial. Advances in information technology, for example, provide broad access to various sources of knowledge, both religious and secular. At the same time, the increasing development of interdisciplinary studies has created opportunities for dialogue among different academic disciplines in pursuit of harmonious integration. This integrative perspective has also gained support from numerous Islamic education scholars who emphasize the importance of constructing holistic and transformative curricular frameworks. At the policy level, several Muslimmajority countries have begun adopting integrative approaches within their educational systems. Malaysia, for instance, has promoted the concept of the Islamization of knowledge, while Indonesia has advanced the concept of Islamic moderation through education. Both approaches aim to cultivate Muslim generations capable of integrating religious values with modern knowledge in their daily lives (Rizki et al., 2025).

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that integration should be understood as a holistic process of unification rather than a simple mechanical combination of different disciplines. Integration represents an organic synthesis of perspectives, modes of thinking, and patterns of action. Etymologically, the term integration originates from the Latin word integrare, meaning "to make whole." Within social and scientific contexts, integration refers to efforts to unite previously separate elements into a functional and harmonious whole (Saiful, 2023). In the context of Islamic education, integration involves bringing together religious sciences, scientific knowledge, and technology within a unified framework in which each component complements and strengthens the others. This process

is inherently active and dynamic, requiring continuous dialogue among various disciplines to address contemporary challenges while preserving the fundamental values of Islam.

The findings further demonstrate that Islam should not be perceived as an obstacle to scientific and technological advancement but rather as a normative framework that provides ethical direction for knowledge development. (Sarbaini et al., 2022). emphasize that Islam does not oppose technological progress or modern scientific inquiry; instead, it encourages individuals to think critically, conduct research, and continuously improve their quality of life. This perspective suggests that scientific and technological advancement can serve as instruments for realizing the broader objectives of Islam, particularly the promotion of human welfare and societal benefit.

Another significant finding concerns the central role of research in the advancement of knowledge. The results reveal that neither scientific knowledge nor religious knowledge can develop without sustained efforts involving observation, experimentation, critical inquiry, and scholarly investigation. (Daulay et al., 2020) explicitly argue that scientific progress is impossible without research and that this principle applies equally to Islamic religious sciences. Consequently, the integration of science and religion requires the cultivation of a strong research culture within Islamic educational institutions. Such a culture encourages learners and scholars not only to acquire knowledge but also to critically examine, refine, and expand it through systematic inquiry.

The study also highlights the growing opportunities for implementing integration within contemporary educational systems. Rapid developments in information technology have expanded access to diverse forms of knowledge, facilitating interaction between religious and scientific perspectives. Furthermore, the emergence of interdisciplinary approaches has created new possibilities for collaboration among different fields of study. These developments support the construction of educational models that are more comprehensive, adaptive, and responsive to societal needs. As noted by (Rizki et al., 2025), several Muslimmajority countries have already begun implementing integrative educational policies. Malaysia's Islamization of knowledge initiative and Indonesia's emphasis on Islamic moderation in education represent practical examples of efforts to bridge the gap between religious values and modern scientific knowledge.

Moreover, the integration of science and religion offers a promising response to contemporary educational challenges. Modern educational systems are often criticized for emphasizing intellectual achievement while neglecting moral and spiritual development. As a result, educational outcomes may produce individuals who are academically competent yet lack ethical awareness and social responsibility. Integrative Islamic education seeks to overcome this limitation by fostering balanced individuals (insan kamil) who possess intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual competencies. Through this approach, education becomes not merely a means of transmitting knowledge but also a process of character formation and moral development.

The findings also suggest that integration requires sustained dialogue among disciplines. Such dialogue is essential to prevent fragmentation and conflict between different branches of knowledge while promoting productive synergy. Through continuous interaction among religious scholars, scientists, educators, and policymakers, Islamic education can remain relevant to contemporary developments without compromising its foundational principles. This interdisciplinary engagement provides a constructive response to the tensions often associated with modernity and globalization.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the integration of science and religion represents a strategic approach for enhancing the quality of Islamic education in the contemporary era. By combining ethical and spiritual foundations with scientific and technological advancement, integration contributes to the development of educational systems that are both academically rigorous and morally grounded. Consequently, the

integration of knowledge offers significant potential for addressing the complex challenges of modern society while preserving the essential values of Islam.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall findings of this study, it can be concluded that integration within the context of Islamic education represents a holistic, comprehensive, and dynamic process of unification. Integration should not be understood merely as a simple or mechanical combination of various disciplines; rather, it constitutes an organic synthesis of perspectives, modes of thinking, and patterns of action within a unified framework. In this sense, integration seeks to eliminate the dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences by establishing a complementary relationship in which both domains mutually reinforce and guide one another.

Within this framework, Islamic education no longer positions religious knowledge, science, and technology as separate entities. Instead, they are viewed as components of an integrated system of knowledge. Religious sciences provide ethical foundations, moral values, and life purposes, while science and technology function as instruments for understanding, managing, and utilizing the natural world for the benefit of humanity. This integration is increasingly important in responding to the challenges of globalization and rapid social transformation, which require individuals not only to possess intellectual competence but also to demonstrate strong moral and spiritual integrity.

Furthermore, Islam should not be regarded as a barrier to scientific and technological advancement. On the contrary, Islamic teachings encourage believers to think critically, conduct research, and continuously develop knowledge as part of their responsibility as servants of Allah and stewards (khalifah) on Earth. Islam provides a clear normative framework that directs scientific development toward the welfare of humanity and ensures that knowledge remains aligned with ethical and moral principles. Consequently, scientific and technological progress, from an Islamic perspective, should not be viewed as an end in itself but as a means of achieving broader social benefit and human prosperity.

Research and knowledge development constitute essential components of the integration process. Knowledge cannot progress without active efforts involving observation, experimentation, critical analysis, and continuous innovation. Therefore, integration requires the cultivation of a strong scientific culture within Islamic educational institutions, where learning extends beyond the passive reception of information to include critical inquiry, reflection, and the continuous expansion of knowledge. Both religious and general sciences should be approached as dynamic fields that can be advanced through systematic scholarly investigation.

In addition, integration emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue. Such dialogue is necessary to prevent the separation and conflict of knowledge domains while promoting productive synergy among them. Through continuous engagement among different disciplines, Islamic education can adapt to contemporary developments without losing its distinctive identity. This approach offers a constructive response to the challenges of modernity, which often create tensions between traditional values and scientific advancement.

At the practical level, the concept of integration has begun to be implemented in various educational policies and practices throughout the Muslim world. Examples include Malaysia’s Islamization of knowledge initiative and Indonesia’s promotion of Islamic moderation in education, both of which seek to harmonize religious values with contemporary scientific developments. These initiatives demonstrate that integration is not

merely a theoretical concept but also a practical strategy for developing educational systems that are relevant, adaptive, and globally competitive.

Ultimately, the integration of science and religion in Islamic education serves a highly strategic purpose: to establish a balance between faith, knowledge, and action. Through this approach, Islamic education is expected to produce generations who excel intellectually while also possessing spiritual depth, moral integrity, and the capacity to contribute positively to society. Such individuals will be better equipped to address global challenges wisely, utilize technological advancements responsibly, and remain firmly committed to Islamic values.

In conclusion, the integration of Islamic education is not solely concerned with unifying bodies of knowledge but also with nurturing the development of the complete human being (insan kamil). By strengthening the relationship between faith, science, and ethical responsibility, Islamic education possesses significant potential to address the complexities of modern life while contributing to the formation of knowledgeable, faithful, and morally upright societies.

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