

Exploring Knowledge from the Qur'an: The Concept of Multidisciplinary Education in Islamic Culture

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ABSTRACT

The concept of multidisciplinary education in Islamic culture is rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an which emphasizes the balance between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge. In the history of Islamic civilization, this approach has produced scientists who have mastered various fields of science, such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Al-Kindi. This article explores the concept of multidisciplinary education from the perspective of the Qur'an and how it is applied in classical Islamic culture and its relevance in the world of modern education. With a qualitative approach based on literature studies, this study examines the verses of the Qur'an that support the integration of science and an analysis of the practice of Islamic education in history. The results of the study show that multidisciplinary education in Islam is not only relevant to building an advanced civilization, but is also able to answer the challenges of the times while adhering to Islamic values.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education in Islam has strong roots in the multidisciplinary concept contained in the Qur'an. Islam does not limit knowledge to religious aspects alone, but also includes natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. In many verses, the Qur'an encourages humanity to think, reflect, and explore knowledge from various aspects of life (Uddin Ahmed Khondoker, 2024). This concept is in line with the multidisciplinary approach in modern education that emphasizes the integration of various fields of science to understand a phenomenon comprehensively. Therefore, the study of the concept of multidisciplinary education in Islamic culture is an important step in understanding how Islam develops a holistic and progress-oriented education system. In a social context, the education system in the Islamic world has undergone various changes and

adaptations in accordance with the development of the times (**Faris, 2023**). The tradition of Islamic scholarship from classical to modern times shows that scholars not only mastered religious sciences but also medical science, astronomy, philosophy and other sciences (**Mardiana, Razaq, & Umiarso, 2020**). For example, Ibn Sina is known as a philosopher and doctor, while Al-Khawarizmi is known as a mathematician and astronomer. However, as time goes by, the Islamic education system has experienced fragmentation where religious knowledge and general knowledge are often separated. This raises the question of whether the Islamic education system still maintains the multidisciplinary principle as taught in the Qur'an.

On the other hand, the problem that arises in contemporary Islamic education is the lack of integration between religious knowledge and general knowledge (**Roni Susanto, 2024**). Many Islamic educational institutions tend to specialize only in the study of Islamic sciences without providing enough space for other sciences. In contrast, general educational institutions often ignore the spiritual aspect and Islamic values in their learning. As a result, a gap is created between graduates of Islamic boarding schools who study religion but have minimal skills in science and technology and university graduates who excel in science but lack a deep understanding of religion (**Yahuda, Susanto, Widodo, & Kolis, 2024**). This fragmentation is contrary to the principle of integration of knowledge in Islam which actually emphasizes balance between worldly and spiritual knowledge. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to develop an educational model that is based on multidisciplinary concepts in Islam. One solution that can be offered is the implementation of an integrative curriculum that combines religious knowledge and general science in one education system (**Rahmadi & Hamdan, 2023**). This approach can be implemented at various levels of education, from madrasahs to Islamic universities. For example, at the university level, study programs can be designed to teach religious sciences using modern scientific methods, such as linguistic-based interpretation or hadith studies with historical and anthropological approaches. Thus, students not only understand religion from a traditional perspective, but also have analytical skills that can be applied in various disciplines.

In this study, the method used to examine the concept of multidisciplinary education in Islam is a qualitative study with a literature approach and content analysis (**Huberman & Jhonny, 2014**). The main sources of this research are the Qur'an and hadith that discuss the importance of knowledge, as well as classical and contemporary literature that studies Islamic education. In addition, this study

will also analyze various models of Islamic education in the world that have implemented the concept of multidisciplinary, such as Al-Azhar University in Egypt and the education system in several countries that have successfully integrated religious and general sciences in their curriculum. This analysis is expected to provide an overview of how this concept can be applied in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia and other Muslim countries. This study aims to understand how the concept of multidisciplinary education in Islam is explained in the Qur'an and how it is applied in Islamic educational culture. Specifically, this study aims to identify the main principles in the Qur'an that support a multidisciplinary approach, analyze how the classical Islamic education system applies this concept, and evaluate the implementation of the concept in contemporary Islamic education. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of a more integrative Islamic education model that is relevant to the challenges of the times.

From a scientific perspective, this study has novelty value in several aspects. First, this study provides a more in-depth analysis of the concept of multidisciplinary in the Qur'an and how the principle is applied in the history of Islamic education. Second, this study offers a practical approach to integrating religious and general knowledge in the modern Islamic education system, something that has rarely been studied comprehensively. Third, this study also provides recommendations for Islamic educational institutions to adopt a multidisciplinary approach in their curriculum, so as to produce graduates who excel not only in the field of religion but also in other professional fields. Thus, this study not only has academic relevance but is also applicable in the world of Islamic education. In the current era of globalization, educational challenges are increasingly complex and demand a more holistic approach. By exploring the concept of multidisciplinary education from the Qur'an, it is hoped that the Islamic education system can develop to be more inclusive, adaptive, and oriented to the needs of the times. This is in line with the spirit of Islam as a religion that is *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which teaches its people to always seek knowledge and use it for the benefit of humanity.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach to examine multidisciplinary education in the history of Islamic civilization (Huberman & Jhonny, 2014; Rukajat, 2018; Sugiyono, 2015). The main sources used include the Qur'an and its interpretations, as well as various academic literature that discusses the concept of education from an Islamic perspective.

With this method, the study attempts to gain a deeper understanding of how Islamic education has long accommodated various disciplines in one comprehensive learning system. The analysis in this study was conducted through a thematic approach to the verses of the Qur'an related to science. These verses are examined to find the basic principles of Islam in encouraging the integration of religious and general sciences. In addition, a historical study of Islamic figures who developed the concept of multidisciplinary education is also a main focus. Thinkers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali are analyzed to understand how they combined various fields of science in one holistic education system. In addition to tracing history, this study also compares the relevance of the concept of multidisciplinary education in Islam with the modern education system. The concepts developed by Islamic figures are examined in the context of the current education system, in order to see to what extent these principles can still be applied. Thus, this study not only provides historical insight but also offers a perspective on how Islamic education can contribute to the development of today's education system.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Qur'anic Basis for the Multidisciplinary Approach in Islam

The multidisciplinary approach in Islam has a strong basis in the Qur'an. Islam does not limit knowledge to the realm of religion alone, but rather encourages mastery of various disciplines as a means to understand the greatness of Allah and improve the quality of human life (Akbar & Barni, 2022). This concept is rooted in the first revelation given to the Prophet Muhammad, namely the command to read in QS. Al-Alaq (96:1-5). This verse emphasizes the importance of reading and learning as a path to broader understanding, both in religious and general scientific aspects (Mustofa, 2016). In addition, in QS. Al-Mujadilah (58:11), Allah says that those who believe and have knowledge will be raised in status. This shows that Islam values knowledge without limiting its scope. Religious knowledge and general knowledge must complement each other in creating an advanced and civilized civilization. A multidisciplinary approach is key to understanding and overcoming various life challenges more comprehensively.

Since the beginning, Islam has developed a multidisciplinary approach in the lives of its people (ZA, 2014). Classical Muslim scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Biruni are examples of how Islam encouraged its followers to master not only religious knowledge but also medicine, philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics. They did not see a dichotomy between religious knowledge

and general knowledge, but rather integrated them for the benefit of the community. The multidisciplinary approach is also very relevant in the context of Islamic education today. Islamic-based educational institutions are expected to teach not only Islamic knowledge but also other sciences such as science, technology, economics, and the humanities (**Susanto, Rohmah, Hidayanti, & Sugiyar, 2023**). This is in accordance with Islamic teachings which encourage its followers to think critically and seek knowledge from various sources in order to achieve prosperity in this world and the hereafter.

In the social aspect, Islam also teaches the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in solving social problems. QS. Al-Baqarah (2:164) invites humans to reflect on the signs of Allah's greatness found in the universe, which means that natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities need to be studied together to understand the phenomena of life more deeply (**Agustina et al., 2022**). The multidisciplinary approach is also seen in the practice of Islamic economics. The concepts of zakat, waqf, and muamalah in Islam are not only understood from a theological aspect, but also from an economic and social perspective. Islamic scholars, economists, and public policy experts must work together to formulate an Islamic economic system that is able to answer the challenges of the times.

In the field of law, Islam also applies a multidisciplinary approach by combining aspects of theology, philosophy and social sciences in the *ijtihad* process. Ulama use various methods such as *qiyas*, *istihsan*, and *maslahah murlah* to answer new problems that are not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith (**Mardiah & Sabda, 2022**). This approach shows that Islam is a dynamic and adaptive religion to the changing times. In addition, in the field of health and medicine, Islam also teaches the importance of understanding medical science as part of worship. QS. Al-Ma'idah (5:32) states that saving one life is the same as saving all of humanity. This principle emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary approach between religious science and medical science in providing health services that are in accordance with Islamic values.

A multidisciplinary approach can also be applied in efforts to protect the environment. Islam teaches the concept of *khalifah fil ardh* (leader on earth) which requires humans to be responsible for the balance of the ecosystem. Theology, ecology, and environmental technology need to be combined in designing policies that support environmental sustainability (**Hasan, 2023**). This overall understanding shows that the multidisciplinary approach in Islam is not something new, but rather an integral part of the teachings of Islam itself. By

combining various disciplines, Muslims can be more optimal in carrying out their role as caliphs on earth, creating a more advanced civilization, and maintaining a balance between the world and the hereafter.

History of Integration of Science in Islamic Education

Islamic history records that the integration of science in education has been practiced since classical times. This concept is rooted in Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of science as part of worship and devotion to Allah (**Assegaf, Zainiyah, & Fahmi, 2022**). The Qur'an and hadith contain many encouragements to seek knowledge, both religious and worldly knowledge. In Islam, knowledge is seen as a means to understand the greatness of Allah and to build an advanced and balanced civilization. Therefore, since the beginning of the development of Islam, Muslim scholars and intellectuals did not distinguish between religious knowledge and general knowledge, but integrated the two in one education system. During the golden age of Islam, education based on the integration of knowledge developed rapidly, especially in madrasas and other educational institutions. One example is the Baitul Hikmah, which was founded in Baghdad in the 9th century by Caliph Al-Ma'mun of the Abbasid Dynasty. The Baitul Hikmah became a center for the translation and development of knowledge from various civilizations, such as Greece, Persia, and India. In this place, Muslim scientists studied various disciplines, including theology, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and art. The integration of knowledge carried out in the Baitul Hikmah shows that Islam encourages the pursuit of knowledge without ideological or sectarian barriers.

In addition to Baitul Hikmah, madrasas also played an important role in integrating science into Islamic education. One of the famous madrasas was Madrasah Nizamiyah which was founded by Nizam al-Mulk in the 11th century (**Solahuddin, 2014**). These madrasas taught various branches of knowledge, from interpretation, hadith, fiqh, to mathematics and astronomy. The scholars who taught at these madrasas were not only experts in religious knowledge but also had expertise in general knowledge. For example, Imam Al-Ghazali, a great Islamic philosopher and theologian, also wrote about psychology, logic, and education. In the Islamic world, many Muslim scientists are living proof of the success of the education system based on the integration of knowledge. Ibn Sina (Avicenna), for example, was not only an expert in fiqh and a philosopher but also a doctor who wrote *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, a medical encyclopedia that has been a reference in the Western world for centuries. Likewise, Al-Farabi, a Muslim philosopher who also studied music, logic, and science. These Muslim

scientists developed various disciplines without seeing them as something separate from Islamic teachings.

The integration of science in Islamic education is also seen in the education system in the Muslim world during the Ottoman Empire, the Mughal Dynasty, and in the Malay world. In Islamic boarding schools in the archipelago, for example, the education system teaches classical Islamic books that also cover aspects of logic, traditional medicine, and astronomy. Nusantara scholars such as Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani wrote books that not only discuss spiritual aspects but also scientific studies of social life. This shows that Islamic education systems in various parts of the world have similarities in their integrative approach to science (**Suyadi, Nuryana, Sutrisno, & Baidi, 2022**). However, during the colonial period, the Islamic education system underwent major changes. Many Islamic educational institutions began to be marginalized, and the Western education system that separated religious knowledge from general knowledge increasingly dominated. As a result, a dichotomy was born between religious knowledge and general knowledge, which continued into the modern era. This caused some Muslims to consider religious knowledge as the only valid knowledge, while general knowledge was often seen as less valuable in the context of Islam.

In the modern era, many efforts have been made to restore the concept of integrating science into Islamic education (**Fahyuni, Wasis, Bandono, & Arifin, 2020**). Several Islamic universities in the world, such as Al-Azhar in Egypt and the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), have begun to develop an approach that harmonizes religious and general knowledge. The concept of the Islamization of knowledge, popularized by thinkers such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, is one approach that seeks to eliminate the dichotomy of knowledge in Islamic education. In Indonesia, the model of integration of knowledge has also begun to be applied in various Islamic educational institutions, both in Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and Islamic universities. State Islamic Universities (UIN) in various regions have developed a curriculum that combines Islamic studies with science, social sciences, and the humanities. This approach aims to create a generation of Muslim intellectuals who not only understand religion well but are also able to contribute to the advancement of science and technology.

The integration of science in Islamic education not only has academic benefits but also has an impact on the development of a more harmonious and welfare-oriented society (**Naim, Aziz, & Teguh, 2022**). By eliminating the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, Muslims can be better prepared to

face the challenges of the times without losing their Islamic identity. This approach also allows for the birth of innovations based on Islamic values, so that science and technology can develop while still considering moral and ethical aspects. In conclusion, the integration of knowledge in Islamic education has been an important part of the history of Islamic civilization. From the classical era to the modern era, Islamic education has always emphasized that religious knowledge and general knowledge must go hand in hand and support each other. Efforts to restore this concept in the current Islamic education system are very important so that Muslims can continue to develop and contribute to various fields of science and global civilization.

The Relevance of Multidisciplinary Education in Modern Context

In the era of globalization which is marked by the rapid development of science and technology, the education system, including Islamic education, faces major challenges in adapting to the dynamics of the times (**Rizadiliyawati, 2024**). Education that only focuses on one discipline without considering integration with other fields will have difficulty in preparing individuals who are ready to face the complexities of modern life. Therefore, a multidisciplinary approach is a necessity so that education can produce individuals who not only have academic skills, but also have a balance between knowledge, skills, and high morals and spirituality. A multidisciplinary approach in education refers to the integration of various fields of science to create a more holistic understanding. In the context of Islamic education, this approach means combining religious knowledge with science, technology, and the humanities so that students have broader insights and are not limited to religious aspects alone (**Susanto, Widodo, & Kolis, 2023**). In this way, they not only understand religious teachings textually, but can also apply them in real life by considering relevant scientific and social aspects.

One of the main reasons for the importance of multidisciplinary education is to answer the increasingly complex challenges of the times. In the modern world, the problems faced by society cannot be solved with a single approach. For example, environmental, economic, and social issues require understanding from various fields of science in order to find effective and sustainable solutions. Islamic education that adopts a multidisciplinary approach will be able to produce graduates who not only understand Islamic law normatively, but are also able to apply it in economic, political, and ecological contexts wisely (**Susanto & Nuhaa, 2024**). In addition, multidisciplinary-based education also contributes to forming critical and analytical mindsets. Students who are accustomed to this approach will be more open to various points of view and

better able to face changes that occur in the world. For example, by combining the science of interpretation with social studies and information technology, students can understand how Islam responds to the phenomenon of digitalization and how Islamic ethics are applied in the use of modern technology.

Another advantage of the multidisciplinary approach in Islamic education is its ability to form individuals who are balanced between academic competence and spiritual values. Islamic education that only emphasizes theological and legal aspects without paying attention to other aspects tends to produce individuals who think exclusively and are less adaptive to the development of the times (**Hamid, Pangestu, & Muhammad, 2022**). On the other hand, education that integrates religious knowledge with science and technology will form individuals who not only understand Islamic concepts in depth but are also able to apply them in everyday life more relevantly. The application of multidisciplinary education in the curriculum can also increase the competitiveness of graduates in the world of work. Currently, many industrial sectors require workers with cross-disciplinary skills. A graduate of an Islamic boarding school or Islamic college who has an understanding of Islamic economics, digital technology, and social sciences will be able to adapt more easily to the needs of the world of work compared to those who only master one particular field. Thus, Islamic education based on multidisciplinary can bridge the gap between the academic world and the professional world.

In addition, multidisciplinary education also plays a role in strengthening individual character. By understanding various fields of science, a person will find it easier to align the aspects of rationality and spirituality in his life. Education that only focuses on one aspect tends to produce individuals who are less balanced, both emotionally and intellectually. For example, someone who only studies science without understanding ethical and religious values can fall into a materialistic and utilitarian attitude. Conversely, someone who only studies religion without understanding scientific aspects can be trapped in narrow and less contextual thinking (**Suja, 2022**). Furthermore, multidisciplinary education can also encourage innovation in various fields. By combining religious knowledge and science, students can develop new solutions that are more effective in dealing with societal problems. For example, in the field of Islamic economics, an understanding of financial technology (fintech) can be used to develop a more inclusive banking system that is in accordance with Islamic principles. Likewise in the health sector, the integration of modern

medical science with the principles of thibbun nabawi can produce more holistic treatment methods. In order for multidisciplinary education to be implemented effectively, there needs to be a change in the curriculum structure and learning methods (Wahyu, Susanto, & Nur, 2023). Islamic universities and educational institutions must start designing a curriculum that is more flexible and open to the integration of various disciplines. In addition, teaching methods also need to be adjusted to be more interactive and problem-solving based, so that students do not only memorize theories but are also able to apply them in real situations. In conclusion, multidisciplinary education is a must in facing the challenges of globalization and technological developments. By integrating religious knowledge, science, technology, and the humanities, Islamic education can produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also have a high spiritual and moral balance. This approach not only increases the competitiveness of graduates in the world of work, but also contributes to building a more inclusive, innovative, and highly competitive society in the modern era.

4. CONCLUSION

Multidisciplinary education in Islamic culture is rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an that integrates religious and worldly knowledge. This approach has produced many Muslim scientists who have mastered various scientific fields, showing that Islam encourages the exploration of knowledge without dichotomy. However, the development of modern Islamic education often separates religious and general knowledge, resulting in a lack of balance in the education system. To overcome this challenge, an educational model is needed that is able to integrate various disciplines in one harmonious system. In the modern context, a multidisciplinary approach is relevant to face the challenges of globalization and technological development. By integrating religious knowledge, science, and the humanities, Islamic education can produce individuals who have a balance between intellectual and spiritual intelligence. The implementation of a multidisciplinary-based curriculum will increase the competitiveness of graduates, while strengthening the role of Islam in answering social, economic, and technological problems holistically. Therefore, the Islamic education system needs to adopt a more open and adaptive approach so that it can continue to be relevant to the demands of the times.

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