

## **Reconstructing Islamic Philosophy of Education in Response to Societal Problems in the Era of Globalization**

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### **Abstract**

Globalization and its various challenges require Islamic education to be both adaptive and solution-oriented. This study aims to reconstruct the philosophy of Islamic education in response to social problems in the era of globalization. This qualitative study, conducted as a literature review, employs content analysis of the works of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr. This qualitative study, conducted as a literature review, employs content analysis and critical hermeneutics to examine the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.. The findings indicate that, ontologically, the philosophy of Islamic education requires a shift from a perspective that reduces students to mere human capital toward the concepts of *mithaq* and *insan kamil*. Epistemologically, the application of the concept of the Unity of Knowledge is necessary to overcome the dichotomy between revealed knowledge and rational knowledge. Furthermore, from an axiological perspective, a reorientation is needed from an education that is solely centered on *tarbiyah* toward *ta'dib*. This research contributes to the reconstruction of the philosophy of Islamic education in response to both theoretical and practical problems in Islamic education in the global era

**Keywords:** Islamic Educational Philosophy, Social Problems, Globalization.

### **Abstract**

*Globalisasi dan beragam problematikanya menuntut peran pendidikan Islam untuk dapat adapif sekaligus solutif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merekonstruksi filsafat pendidikan Islam dalam merespons problem sosial di era globalisasi. Penelitian kualitatif dalam bentuk studi pustaka ini menggunakan analisa isi terhadap pemikiran Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, dan Seyyed Hossein Nasr. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan secara ontologis, falsafah pendidikan Islam perlu pergeseran dari pandangan yang mereduksi peserta didik sebagai modal manusia menuju konsep mithaq dan insan kamil. Kemudian secara epistemologis, diperlukan penerapan konsep unity of knowledge untuk mengatasi dikotomi antara ilmu wahyu dan ilmu rasional. Selanjutnya, secara aksiologis, diperlukan reorientasi dari pendidikan yang semata-mata berpusat pada tarbiyah menuju ta'dib. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam menawarkan rekonstruksi filsafat pendidikan Islam dalam merespons problem teoritis maupun praksis pendidikan Islam di era global*

**Kata Kunci:** Filsafat Pendidikan Islam, Problem Sosial, Globalisasi.

## INTRODUCTION

Global education is currently situated within the dominant paradigms of neoliberalism and technocratic pragmatism. Consequently, contemporary educational systems increasingly reduce the essence of humanity to a mere economic instrument or *human capital* designed to satisfy the demands of the industrial marketplace (Al-Attas, 1995, 2014; Syed Naquib al- Attas, 1995). This phenomenon has generated an existential crisis in which the educational process has gradually lost its spiritual essence and become predominantly oriented toward materialistic and cognitive achievements. The crisis has been further exacerbated by the rapid penetration of digital technologies without a corresponding level of philosophical preparedness. The materialistic ontology underpinning modern education has proven incapable of addressing fundamental questions concerning the meaning of life and the purpose of human existence amid the disruptions of globalization (Nasr, 2005, 2025). A tawhid-based critical educational orientation can reconnect spiritual, ethical, and humanitarian values with a critique of secularism and capitalism (Mastori et al., 2026).

This predicament is equally evident within Islamic education, which has often remained trapped in a persistent epistemological dualism. On the one hand, there exists a tendency to emulate Western modernity uncritically; on the other hand, a defensive attachment to static traditionalism frequently suppresses critical reflection (Al-Faruqi, 1998). The underlying problem lies in the inability to integrate revealed knowledge with the demands of contemporary civilization, a failure rooted in a fragile understanding of the philosophical trilogy of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Without a solid foundation in these three interconnected pillars, Islamic education risks becoming nothing more than the repetition of religious dogma devoid of meaningful relevance to contemporary global civilization. Consequently, many educational institutions continue to produce graduates who are technically competent yet ethically underprepared. This situation underscores the urgent need to deconstruct and reconstruct the philosophical foundations of Islamic education in order to restore the dignity of the human being as a transcendent creature. Accordingly, this study seeks to reconstruct the philosophical foundations of Islamic education through its ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions as a response to the challenges posed by globalization. Employing a qualitative library research design, the study adopts a philosophical inquiry combined with critical hermeneutics to examine the intellectual contributions of leading Muslim scholars, particularly Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

Over the past several decades, the philosophy of Islamic education has emerged as an increasingly dynamic field of scholarly inquiry. Drawing on her studies of educational modernization in the Muslim world, Rosnani Hashim argues for an integrated curriculum that transcends the persistent dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge (Hashim, 1997; Langgulung, 1998; Wallace, 1998). Likewise, Yusef Waghid explores the contribution of Islamic educational philosophy to the development of democratic and humanistic cosmopolitan citizenship (Davids & Waghid, 2020; Waghid, 2008, 2014). Meanwhile, Abdullah Sahin highlights the significance of transformative pedagogy in

cultivating critical consciousness among Muslim learners within contemporary educational settings (DeCuir, 2019; Sahin, 2013). Collectively, these studies demonstrate sustained efforts to revitalize Islamic education so that it remains socially and politically relevant. An open and multidimensional philosophy of Islamic education can position religious moderation and culture as constitutive ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundations (Bisri et al., 2026).

The discourse on Islamic epistemology has also been enriched by the intellectual contributions of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who critiques modern science and advances the concept of sacred science as an alternative response to contemporary ecological and spiritual crises (Heer & Nasr, 1993; Nasr, 1989; Smith & Nasr, 1984). Within the field of educational management, studies by Memon and colleagues reveal that a coherent educational philosophy contributes directly to effective leadership in Islamic schools operating in Western societies (Nasr, 2015; Niyozov & Memon, 2011; Shakeel, 2018). Furthermore, Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud develops the concept of Ta'dib as the core philosophy of education, emphasizing the cultivation of civilized, morally responsible human beings (Daud, 1998). These scholarly contributions collectively provide a strong theoretical foundation for reaffirming the significance of Islamic intellectual traditions while engaging constructively with the realities of modernity.

Within the axiological dimension, studies by Niyozov and Memon identify the challenges encountered by Muslim educators in implementing Islamic values within multicultural classrooms, where axiological flexibility must be balanced with the preservation of religious identity (Niyozov & Memon, 2011; Nuryanti et al., 2025). Similarly, research conducted by Saada and Magadlah demonstrates how Islamic religious education can contribute to the promotion of social justice and peacebuilding in conflict-affected societies (Faizin, 2016; Muksin & Afandi, 2025). More recently, Halstead argues that foundational Islamic values such as *Ihsan* (moral excellence) and *Amanah* (trustworthiness) constitute essential pillars for character formation amid the growing influence of global individualism (Halstead, 2004, 2007). Taken together, these studies have substantially advanced scholarly understanding of the position and contribution of Islamic education within contemporary global discourse.

Despite these valuable contributions, a significant research gap remains. Most existing studies primarily emphasize pedagogical practices or examine ontology, epistemology, and axiology as separate philosophical domains. Relatively few studies attempt to synthesize these three dimensions into an integrated and dialectical philosophical framework capable of responding comprehensively to the educational crises of the twenty-first century. Furthermore, much of the existing literature remains descriptive and normative, offering limited philosophical responses to emerging challenges such as digital dehumanization and the pervasive influence of radical secularism within educational management.

The state of the art of this study lies in its effort to reposition the philosophical thought of Al-Attas, Al-Faruqi, and Nasr within a comprehensive framework for addressing the contemporary global educational crisis. Whereas previous studies have predominantly

focused on internal reform within Muslim educational contexts, this research extends beyond such boundaries by proposing Islamic philosophy as a viable alternative to the shortcomings of dominant Western educational paradigms. This article argues that the present crisis in educational management is not merely managerial or technical in nature; rather, it originates from a deeper failure of philosophical foundations that must be addressed at the most fundamental epistemic level.

The principal novelty of this article is the introduction of a triadic philosophical framework integrating *mithaq* (ontology), Unity of Knowledge (epistemology), and *ta'dib* (axiology) as a transformative methodology for Islamic education. This study argues that Islamic education should no longer be understood merely as a process of transmitting religious knowledge; instead, it should be reconceptualized as a holistic project of reconstructing the human person (*insan kamil*) through the cultivation of spiritual resilience, intellectual excellence, and ethical integrity. In doing so, the article moves beyond the classical debate over the dichotomy of knowledge and proposes a broader axiological paradigm grounded in Tawhid, offering a foundation for a global ethical framework capable of addressing the challenges of future societal and technological disruptions.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design based on library research, utilizing a philosophical inquiry approach. The study adopts critical hermeneutics as its analytical framework, an interpretive methodology that seeks not only to understand texts in their literal sense but also to uncover the underlying assumptions embedded within them and reconstruct their meanings in response to contemporary educational challenges (Waghid, 2014). The theoretical framework is grounded in three authoritative philosophical traditions that have significantly shaped contemporary Islamic educational thought: Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' theory of *ta'dib* and the decolonization of knowledge, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's concept of the Unity of Knowledge, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr's theomorphic vision of the human being (*insan kamil*). Through this philosophical perspective, classical texts are not treated as static intellectual artifacts but rather as dialogical instruments capable of addressing the contemporary crisis of global education through the interconnected lenses of ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

The data sources were classified into two principal categories: primary and secondary sources. The primary sources comprised seminal works that constitute the intellectual foundations of contemporary Islamic educational philosophy, including *The Concept of Education in Islam* by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islamization of Knowledge* by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, and *Knowledge and the Sacred* by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Al-Attas, 1995, 2014; Syed Naquib al- Attas, 1995). The secondary sources consisted of peer-reviewed articles published in internationally indexed journals (Scopus and Web of Science), as well as Indonesian SINTA 1 and SINTA 2 accredited journals published within the last ten years, focusing on the application of Islamic philosophy in educational management and policy. The literature was selected through purposive literature sampling, based on three inclusion criteria: the novelty of the arguments presented, the scholarly

authority of the authors in the field of philosophy, and the relevance of the findings to the issue of educational dehumanization.

Operationally, the research was conducted through four systematic stages. The first stage involved heuristic inquiry, consisting of the identification, collection, and mapping of literature related to the key concepts of ontology, epistemology, and axiology in Islamic education. The second stage comprised source verification and critical evaluation, during which each selected work was assessed for the validity of its arguments and its contribution to the existing state of the art (Wan Yusoff et al., 2022). The third stage involved interpretation, whereby the selected texts were subjected to in-depth symbolic and conceptual analysis to identify the philosophical continuity between classical Islamic thought and contemporary educational challenges. The final stage consisted of historiographical synthesis, in which the analytical findings were integrated into a Triadic Framework, proposed as a comprehensive philosophical model for addressing the contemporary crisis of global educational management. Data were analyzed using qualitative philosophical content analysis, involving systematic processes of data reduction, thematic categorization, conceptual interpretation, and logical inference. This analytical strategy enabled the reconstruction of a coherent philosophical framework that synthesizes ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions into an integrated paradigm for contemporary Islamic education.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Ontological Reformulation: Moving Beyond Human Capital Toward the Perfect Human Being**

The ontological crisis in modern education is rooted in the paradigms of materialism and neoliberalism, which reduce human nature to nothing more than an economic instrument or human capital. From a secular ontological perspective, human existence is judged based on productivity and technocratic contributions to the labor market, which, according to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, has led to spiritual death in the pedagogical process (Heer & Nasr, 1993; Nasr, 1989). This phenomenon has given rise to what is known as the dehumanization of education, in which students lose their existential meaning and become trapped in a hollow pragmatism. In response, the Islamic ontological reconstruction offers a renewed recognition of human dignity not merely as biological organisms, but as transcendental beings whose purpose extends beyond materialistic boundaries.

The ontological foundation proposed in this study is based on the concepts of *mithaq* (primordial covenant) and *fitrah*. In Islam, human beings are viewed as theomorphic beings who carry a divine spark within their souls an existential contract that precedes their physical existence in the world (Al-Attas, 1995, 2014; Syed Naquib al- Attas, 1995). This implies that education is not merely a process of imparting cognitive knowledge, but rather an effort at remembrance (*tadzkir*) to actualize the divine potential within human beings. By placing the Mithaq as its foundation, Islamic educational management has a moral mandate to treat students as spiritual beings who must be guided toward awareness of their Creator, not merely as objects of industrial training.

The ultimate goal of this ontological reformulation is the attainment of the state of *insan kamil* (the Perfect Human). This concept, as elaborated by Al-Attas, positions human beings as a microcosm that reflects the order of the macrocosm, in which the balance between the external and internal dimensions is the key factor (Al-Attas, 1980). In the era of digital disruption and artificial intelligence (AI), the vision of *insan kamil* is becoming increasingly relevant as an antithesis to the model of a robot-like human who is technically proficient but ethically paralyzed (Aziz et al., 2025; Sholikhah et al., 2025). Education must be aimed at producing individuals who are not only intellectually competent but also possess strong spiritual resilience, so that they are able to navigate the complexities of the modern world without losing their sense of humanity.

From a managerial perspective, this ontological shift demands a radical change in the definition of indicators of educational success. The success of educational institutions should no longer be measured solely by employment rates or standardized academic scores, but must also address aspects of character transformation and spiritual integrity. As J. Mark Halstead has pointed out, ontological values such as *fitrah* must be the guiding principle behind every curriculum policy and the organizational culture of the school. (Halstead, 2007). Thus, the ontological reconstruction of human capital toward the *Insan Kamil* provides a strong philosophical framework for Islamic education to address the challenges of global dehumanization by offering a more noble and holistic vision of humanity. Accordingly, the quality of graduates from madrasahs and pesantren cannot be assessed solely on the basis of academic achievement; it must also encompass religious character, social skills, digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and readiness to face global change (Rahmawati, 2026).

### **Epistemological Transformation: Resolving Dualism through the Unity of Knowledge**

The main epistemological problem facing the Islamic world today is the dichotomy that separates modern (secular) science from religious (traditional) knowledge. This dualism not only creates fragmentation in the curriculum but also leads to a split personality among students, in which religion is understood as a private, emotional realm and science as a public, rational realm (Hashim, 1997; Wallace, 1998). Ismail Raji al-Faruqi identified that the crisis of Muslim civilization stems from this epistemological ailment, which has caused science to lose its anchor in *tawhid*. Therefore, an epistemological transformation through the integration of science is imperative to restore Islam's intellectual sovereignty amid the dominance of the Western positivist paradigm.

The Unity of Knowledge framework, based on the principle of *tawhid*, is the primary methodological tool for resolving this dualism. From this perspective, revelatory truth (*naqli*) and rational-empirical truth (*aqli*) originate from the same source—God—and thus no fundamental contradiction can exist between them (Al-Faruqi, 1998; Aziz, 2026; Aziz et al., 2026). This transformation calls for a process of Islamization of knowledge that is not merely an attempt to apply Qur'anic verses to science, but rather a deconstruction of the secular assumptions underlying modern science. Al-Attas emphasizes the importance of decolonizing science to purge elements of materialism, secularism, and skepticism from the

body of knowledge before integrating it into the Islamic worldview. (Al-Attas, 1995, 2014; Syed Naquib al- Attas, 1995).

The implementation of this epistemological transformation in the context of curriculum management must be holistic and interdisciplinary. Islamic education must no longer treat science as a foreign entity, but rather as a manifestation of God's cosmic signs that must be studied with a spirit of worship. As noted in Abdullah Sahin's research, this integration enables students to develop critical thinking accompanied by deep faith (Sahin, 2013, 2018). Islamic epistemology offers a model of purposeful knowledge, in which every scientific activity is oriented toward the welfare of humanity and the preservation of nature as a trust from the Creator, rather than merely for the accumulation of technocratic power. At the pedagogical level, a contextual-transformative approach must holistically optimize cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects while integrating humanistic, social, and modern values (Anamisari et al., 2026).

Furthermore, this transformation requires the active involvement of educators and educational institution administrators in formulating dialogic learning methodologies. The discourse on critical Islamic epistemology proposed by Yusef Waghid is relevant for bridging the gap between traditional authority and the demands of modern inquiry (Waghid, 2008, 2014; Waghid et al., 2020). By breaking down the walls of dualism, Islamic education can produce graduates who possess the intellectual flexibility to respond to advances in science and technology without becoming trapped in secularism. Ultimately, the Unity of Knowledge is not merely an abstract concept, but a strategy for survival and growth for Islamic educational institutions in a global competition that is increasingly based on knowledge.

### **Axiological Reorientation: *Ta'dib* as an Ethical Anchor in the Age of Disruption**

The axiology of Islamic education in the 21st century requires a profound reorientation from merely Tarbiyah (physical and social upbringing) toward the more substantial concept of Ta'dib. Ta'dib, as popularized by Al-Attas, defines education as the instillation of *adab* that is, the recognition of the proper place for everything within the order of creation (Al-Attas, 1980). Amid the moral disruption and relativism of values brought about by globalization, the concept of *adab* serves as a crucial ethical anchor. *Adab* is not merely outward etiquette, but rather a manifestation of justice within an individual one who is able to distinguish between right and wrong, and who is capable of prioritizing spiritual authority over fleeting material interests.

In this digital age, fraught with ethical challenges such as hoaxes, moral degradation on social media, and value ambiguity, the axiology of Ta'dib offers a robust filter. Islamic education must be able to transform normative values such as *Ihsan* (perfection/excellence) and *Amanah* (integrity) into operational competencies in students' digital behavior. Research by Anwar and Faizin shows that a responsive Islamic axiology can foster an inclusive humanistic ethics that remains rooted in religious identity (Anwar et al., 2023; Aziz et al., 2024; Faizin, 2016; Sholikah & Aziz, 2024). This means that Islamic education administrators must prioritize the creation of an educational environment that is not only excellent in terms of facilities but also rich in moral examples

(*uswah hasanah*).

The axiological transition toward *Ta'dib* also has serious implications for leadership models and the management of educational organizations. Islamic educational management must not be trapped in a cold and dry “managerialism,” but rather must be guided by the values of justice and compassion. Niyozov & Memon emphasize that leadership in Islamic educational institutions must reflect prophetic values that emphasize service (*khidmah*) and responsibility before God (Niyozov & Memon, 2011). Dengan demikian, aksiologi pendidikan Islam menyediakan fondasi etis bagi tata kelola lembaga yang transparan, akuntabel, dan berorientasi pada pengembangan potensi kemanusiaan secara bermartabat, bukan sekadar mengejar profitabilitas. At the institutional level, this reconstruction must be supported by the integration of the national curriculum and the pesantren curriculum, the improvement of educators’ competencies, the enhancement of human resource performance, the modernization of facilities, and the fostering of an internal culture of quality (Erifsany et al., 2026).

To conclude this discussion, the trilogy of ontology, epistemology, and axiology constitutes an inseparable, systemic whole in responding to global crises. Ontological reconstruction provides a vision of who human beings truly are (*insan kamil*); epistemological transformation provides a way to understand reality in its entirety (Unity of Knowledge); and axiological reorientation provides guidance on how human beings should act ethically (*Ta'dib*). Sebagaimana diamati oleh Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, keterpaduan ketiga aspek filsafat ini dalam praktik pendidikan akan menghasilkan peradaban yang beradab dan berkelanjutan (Daud, 1998). This is the tangible contribution of Islamic educational philosophy to global civilization: an educational model that humanizes people amid the turmoil of future disruption. The synthesis presented in the table above demonstrates that the philosophical reconstruction of Islamic education is not merely an isolated theoretical undertaking, but rather a systemic response to the global educational crisis. As emphasized in the preceding discussion, the failure of modern educational management is rooted in the fragility of its metaphysical foundations. By integrating the concepts of *mīthāq* (ontology), the Unity of Knowledge (epistemology), and *ta'dib* (axiology), Islamic educational institutions possess a distinctive advantage in developing individuals who combine moral resilience with intellectual sophistication. This synthesis also confirms that the ideas of Al-Attas, Al-Faruqi, and Nasr remain highly relevant when critically brought into dialogue with contemporary research published in reputable journals, including the works developed by Halstead and Waghid.

## CONCLUSION

The discussion of this study concludes that reconstructing the philosophical foundations of Islamic education through the trilogy of ontology, epistemology, and axiology constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for responding to the global educational crisis driven by neoliberal and technocratic-pragmatic paradigms. From an ontological perspective, Islamic education must return to the consciousness of the *mithaq* (Primordial Covenant) to transform learners from mere *human capital* into *insan kamil* (the holistic or perfected human being) endowed with transcendental consciousness. Epistemologically,

this transformation is realized through the Unity of Knowledge framework, which dismantles the dualistic divide between revealed knowledge and rational sciences, thereby fostering an integrative and holistic curriculum. Axiologically, the reorientation from *tarbiyah* to *ta'dib* provides a robust ethical anchor grounded in *adab* (ethical refinement and proper conduct), enabling learners to navigate the moral disruptions of the digital age with profound spiritual integrity.

This study contributes to the assertion that the effectiveness of Islamic educational institution management cannot be separated from the clarity of the underlying Islamic worldview. In practical terms, administrators of Islamic educational institutions need to reform their curriculum policies, leadership models, and organizational culture to align them with reconstructed ontological and epistemological values. The management of Islamic education must no longer be confined to purely administrative and procedural matters but must be guided by the values of *ihsan* and *amanah* as manifestations of the *ta'dib* axiology in global competition. The limitations of this study remain conceptual and theoretical in nature, based on a literature review. Therefore, this study recommends that future researchers conduct field studies or action research to test the effectiveness of applying this ontological, epistemological, and axiological framework in the management practices of schools or madrasahs.

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