



Principles of Islamic Education

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Abstrak

History Artikel: *Islamic Education represents a deliberate and structured effort to guide learners in developing their potential holistically as servants of Allah who fulfill the role of khalifah (steward) on earth. Contemporary Islamic education faces fundamental challenges, particularly the dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge and formalism in moral education. This article aims to clarify the philosophical foundations of Islamic education principles, formulate the core principles centered on Tauhid (Islamic monotheism), and systematically classify them into Fundamental, Methodological, and Operational categories. Through philosophical approach and literature review, this study demonstrates that Islamic education principles form an integrated framework where Tauhid serves as the central axis integrating all aspects of education. The findings reveal that sustainable implementation of these principles can overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and address formalism in character development. This systematic classification provides a clear reference framework for educational institutions, policymakers, and educators in implementing Islamic education more effectively, humanely, and in accordance with contemporary developments.*

Kata kunci: *Islamic education; Islamic monotheism (Tauhid); educational principles; integrated knowledge; philosophical foundations*

Introduction

Islamic education constitutes a comprehensive effort directed toward developing human potential in alignment with religious and moral principles rooted in Islamic theology (Lubis, 2013). The fundamental purpose of Islamic education extends beyond knowledge transmission, it aims to cultivate spiritually aware, morally upright, and intellectually competent individuals capable of fulfilling their role as stewards (khalifah) on Earth (Nuraeni & Mujahidin, 2021). Historically, Islamic educational philosophy has emphasized the inseparability of sacred and secular knowledge, creating an integrated learning environment where all disciplines serve to deepen understanding of divine unity (tawhid) (Surikno, Novianty, & Miska, 2022).

Contemporary Islamic education, however, faces significant challenges that threaten its foundational purpose. Research in Islamic educational journals identifies a persistent dichotomy between religious knowledge (naqli) and secular knowledge ('aqli) that undermines curriculum coherence and pedagogical effectiveness (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020). Furthermore, Islamic moral education often emphasizes cognitive religious aspects while neglecting the affective dimension, the practical actualization of Islamic values in daily student behavior (Patimah, 2016). The gap between theoretical principles and practical implementation has resulted in graduates who, while possessing religious knowledge, lack the integrated competence necessary to address contemporary societal challenges and contribute meaningfully to Muslim civilization (rahmatan lil 'alamin) (Rahmawati & Supriyanto, 2023). The formalization of Islamic educational principles without genuine integration into the teaching learning process represents another critical challenge. Educational institutions frequently adopt Islamic principles as mere procedural compliance rather than as living foundations that permeate all aspects of curriculum design and instructional practice (Abd. Mukti, 2017).

To address these challenges, systematic articulation and classification of Islamic educational principles becomes essential. This article advances a comprehensive framework that (1) clarifies the definition and fundamental foundations of Islamic educational principles, (2) identifies the core principles rooted in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Islamic philosophical tradition, and (3) proposes a structured categorization system fundamental, methodological, and operational, designed to facilitate both theoretical understanding and practical educational implementation. Through this integrated classification, educational institutions can develop curricula and pedagogical approaches that authentically embody tawhid centered learning while developing well rounded individuals prepared for contemporary contexts.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research design using thematic analysis as the core method. The design is oriented toward identifying, organizing, and systematizing conceptual themes related to the principles of Islamic education, and synthesizing them into integrated theoretical categories, fundamental, methodological, and operational principles (Braun & Clarke, 2006, Cohen et al., 2007). Because the study is qualitative and literature based, it does not use variables in the quantitative sense. Instead, the central analytic foci are (1) concepts of tawhid, knowledge integration, and philosophical foundations (ontological, epistemological, axiological), (2) formulations of Islamic educational principles, and (3) their functional roles within the Islamic education system as interrelated categories. The setting of this research is a textual and conceptual field rather than a physical institution, as the study is conducted through document based analysis of Islamic education literature. The "participants" in this context are the texts themselves Qur'anic verses and Hadith related to education, classical and contemporary works of Islamic educational philosophy, and accredited journal articles and books that discuss the dichotomy of knowledge, the formalism of moral education, and the integration of Islamic values into curriculum and the formation of insan kamil (Surikno et al., 2022; Qadafi et al., 2024; Ratna et al., 2023). These sources are selected purposively based on their relevance, academic credibility, and direct connection to the themes of Islamic educational principles.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a systematic literature review and textual analysis. The researcher carefully examined each selected source to identify explicit statements and implicit conceptual indications related to (1) the principles of Islamic education; (2) their theological philosophical foundations and (3) their functional interconnections across educational levels and practices (Surikno et al., 2022; Qadafi et al., 2024). The process involved iterative reading, note taking, and extraction of text segments that referred to tawhid, knowledge integration,

balance, continuity, exemplary conduct, compassion, and practical implementation as educational principles (Ratna et al., 2023).

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed standard qualitative thematic analysis procedures. First, all selected texts were read repeatedly to gain familiarity and to identify meaningful segments related to Islamic educational principles (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Second, these segments were given initial codes according to their substantive focus (tawhid, knowledge integration, balance, continuity, exemplary conduct, practice and implementation). Third, similar codes were grouped into broader themes describing the position and function of each principle within the Islamic education system. Fourth, the themes were reorganized into three major categories, fundamental principles as theological philosophical foundations, methodological principles as guidelines for educational implementation processes, and operational principles as practical guidance for daily teaching and learning. Finally, the categories and themes were validated through re-comparison with the literature base to ensure logical consistency, alignment with Islamic texts, and relevance to *contemporary Islamic educational challenges* (Cohen et al., 2007; Qadafi et al., 2024).

Result And Discussion

Islamic educational principles constitute foundational values and guidelines that direct all pedagogical activities toward comprehensive human development in accordance with Islamic theology and ethics (surikno, novianty, & miska, 2022). These principles derive their authority and coherence from the highest Islamic sources the Qur'an and Hadith, which provide the normative foundation for Islamic educational concepts and practices (surikno, novianty, & miska, 2022). The ultimate objective of Islamic education encompasses the holistic development of human potential across spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social dimensions, oriented toward attaining well-being in both worldly and eternal life (Anshory & Muharromah, 2024). The functional purpose of Islamic educational principles is to actualize tawhid (monotheistic consciousness) as a lived reality that permeates all aspects of human experience. Islamic educational philosophy serves as a conceptual framework that explains the foundation, direction, and orientation of education in forming complete human beings aligned with Islamic teachings (Layinah & Syahidin, 2024).

This philosophical framework rests upon three foundational bases. First, the ontological foundation centers on the concept of tawhid, namely the conviction that Allah is the sole source of all existence and knowledge (Qadafi, Aprison, & Akbar, 2024). This conviction necessitates recognizing that all educational endeavors, regardless of discipline, ultimately serve to deepen understanding of divine unity and to strengthen the spiritual relationship with Allah. Second, the epistemological foundation addresses the nature of knowledge, its sources, and the means of acquiring it (Qadafi, Aprison, & Akbar, 2024). Within the Islamic perspective, knowledge originates not only from human reason but also from revelation (wahy) as the ultimate source of truth (Layinah & Syahidin, 2024). Consequently, epistemological principles in Islamic education demand the integration of religious knowledge (fardhu 'ain) and general knowledge (fardhu kifayah) as a unified whole (Ratna, Rama, Mahmud, & Amiruddin, 2023). This integration rejects artificial dichotomies and instead creates epistemological frameworks in which scientific and religious knowledge mutually illuminate one another in service of deepening tawhidic consciousness. Third, the axiological foundation concerns the nature of values and the purposes for which knowledge should be directed (Qadafi, Aprison, & Akbar, 2024). In Islamic education, absolute moral values of divine origin (rabbani) must set the ethical and moral standards for all educational activities (Ratna et al., 2023). The ultimate

orientation is the formation of noble character (*akhlaq mulia*) and the maintenance of balance between worldly and eternal life (dalle & tobroni, 2025).

Islamic educational principles also represent the essential core teachings of Islamic doctrine that distinguish Islamic educational systems from other educational traditions (Sarah Dalila Fitri et al., 2024). These principles function as normative guidelines and philosophical operational foundations that direct all educational processes toward alignment with the purpose of human creation, worship of Allah and functioning as stewards (*khalifah*) on earth (Sarah Dalila Fitri et al., 2024). The entirety of these principles originates from the concept of *tawhid*, which establishes the central orientation and meaning for all educational activity. (Pendidikan et al. 2025)

Tawhid as the central integrating principle. The principle of *tawhid* (Islamic monotheism) forms the fundamental and central foundation for all Islamic education. Through this principle, all educational processes are directed toward cultivating awareness that knowledge and action cannot be separated (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020).

This principle ensures that every discipline, whether religious or general is understood as a means to recognize divine greatness and to strengthen the spiritual relationship with Allah. At the same time, this principle demands integration of revelation and reason, and of religious and general knowledge, thereby preventing education from being trapped in knowledge fragmentation that separates the spiritual from the rational (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020). Principle of knowledge integration (*wihdat al-ma'rifah*) emphasizes the rejection of knowledge dichotomy, in which religious and general knowledge are viewed as separate domains requiring distinct pedagogical treatment. Instead, all knowledge must be integrated within the *tawhidic* framework as a manifestation of divine unity (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020). This epistemological stance ensures that curriculum design and instructional practice reflect the fundamental unity of all legitimate knowledge sources in their orientation toward truth and divine understanding. Principle of universality states that Islamic education has a comprehensive character, encompassing all dimensions of human life and remaining relevant across all time periods and cultural contexts (Anshory & Muharromah, 2024). This principle ensures that Islamic educational philosophy transcends temporal and spatial limitations, adapting to contemporary needs while maintaining fidelity to its foundational principles.

At the methodological level, Islamic educational principles function as guidelines for implementing the educational process. These principles establish mechanisms and approaches that ensure educational practice remains consistent with fundamental philosophical principles while being responsive to varying contextual realities. Principle of balance (*Al-Tawazun*), the principle of balance underscores the need to establish equilibrium across multiple dimensions, between worldly and eternal concerns, between individual and community development, between intellect and heart, and between theory and practice (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021). This principle ensures that Islamic education does not produce individuals who are spiritually pious but intellectually weak, nor those who are intellectually advanced but morally underdeveloped. Balance thus forms a bridge linking theoretical ideals to practical implementation.

Principle of continuity (*tadarruj*), the principle of continuity affirms that Islamic education extends throughout one's lifetime by implementing the concept of *tadarruj* (gradual progression) articulated by classical Islamic scholars such as al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021). This principle recognizes human development as a continuous process requiring sustained educational engagement across life stages, with gradually increasing levels of complexity and depth. And principle of active learning, requires students to engage actively in constructing their own knowledge, in line with Ibn Khaldun's pedagogical

concept of *tartib* (proper sequencing and arrangement) (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021). This principle opposes passive reception of information and instead promotes learner agency, critical thinking, and authentic engagement with content. Active involvement fosters deeper understanding and more enduring learning outcomes than passive transmission.

And at the operational, Islamic educational principles become concrete guidance for daily pedagogical interactions, directing the specific behaviors, attitudes, and practices of educators and learners. Principle of Exemplary Conduct (*Uswah Hasanah*), holds that educators must embody Islamic values through both speech and action, because education through example is more effective than instruction through words alone (Rohmasnyah et al., 2024). This positions educators as living models whose conduct demonstrates the integration of Islamic knowledge and moral practice that education seeks to cultivate in students.

Principle of Compassion (*Rihm*), emphasizes that educational processes must be grounded in genuine care and attention to student development, constituting a spiritual dimension of Islamic educational leadership (Rohmasnyah et al., 2024). Compassion goes beyond emotional warmth to become a spiritual commitment to students' welfare and holistic growth within Islamic educational frameworks. Principle of Practice and Implementation (*Amal Salih*) stresses that knowledge acquired must be actualized in daily life, in line with Al-Ghazali's teaching that knowledge without action is like a tree without fruit (Asnawati, 2021). This principle ensures that Islamic education produces not only knowledgeable individuals but also morally active agents whose learning translates into righteous action that benefits the community. (Aliah et al. n.d.)

The identification and organization of these principles require systematic categorization to facilitate both theoretical understanding and practical application. The three-category framework fundamental, methodological, and operational represents the principles according to their functional level within Islamic educational systems. Fundamental principles provide the theological and philosophical underpinnings of Islamic education. The principle of *tawhid* integrates all dimensions of Islamic education, since all knowledge originates from Allah and must be oriented toward recognizing and serving Him (Sassi, 2020). The principle of knowledge in Aetegration explicitly rejects the dichotomy of knowledge by integrating religious knowledge (*naqli*) and general knowledge (*'aqli*) within the *tawhidic* framework as a manifestation of divine unity (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020). The principle of universality ensures that Islamic education remains comprehensive, covering all dimensions of life and retaining relevance across time and contexts (Anshory & Muharromah, 2024).

Methodological principles establish procedures and approaches that keep educational processes aligned with fundamental philosophical principles while adapting to contextual realities. The principle of balance calls for equilibrium across worldl eternal, individual community, intellect heart, and theory practice dimensions (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021). The principle of continuity maintains that Islamic education is lifelong and employs gradual progression (*tadarruj*) as described by Al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021). The principle of active learning encourages learners to construct knowledge actively, consistent with Ibn Khaldun's *tartib* concept (Sodikin & Ma'arif, 2021).

Operational principles provide direct guidance for daily interactions between educators and learners. The principle of exemplary conduct requires educators to embody Islamic values in word and deed, with example surpassing advice as an educational tool. The principle of compassion emphasizes genuine care and attention to learners' development as a key spiritual aspect of educational leadership (Rohmasnyah et al., 2024). The principle of practice and

implementation ensures that knowledge is translated into daily action, echoing Al-Ghazali's reminder that knowledge without practice is fruitless (Asnawati, 2021).

Taken together, this threetiered classification shows that Islamic educational principles form an integrated system operating from philosophical foundations through methodological procedures to concrete operational guidelines. The functional relationships among these categories ensure that fundamental theological commitments shape methodological approaches, which in turn guide daily pedagogical practice, thus preventing the fragmentation and superficiality that often accompany formalized but unimplemented educational principles.

CONCLUSIONS

The systematic examination of Islamic educational principles reveals a coherent and comprehensive philosophical system deeply rooted in Islamic theology and epistemology (Surikno, Novianty, & Miska, 2022). Tawhid establishes the central organizing principle that infuses all educational dimensions with unified purpose and meaning (Sassi, 2020). The fundamental prohibition against knowledge dichotomy, grounded in tawhidic consciousness, provides the essential epistemological framework for integrating religious and secular knowledge into an authentic intellectual and spiritual synthesis (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020).

The proposed three category classification system fundamental, methodological, and operational. Demonstrates that Islamic educational principles operate as an interconnected framework rather than as isolated prescriptions. Fundamental principles provide the theological foundation, methodological principles establish implementation mechanisms, and operational principles guide daily practice (Abd. Mukti, 2017). This systematic organization addresses the contemporary challenge of principle formalization without genuine integration by demonstrating how abstract philosophical commitments translate into concrete educational practices.

The framework acknowledges that contemporary Islamic education faces significant challenges persistent knowledge dichotomy (Chanifudin & Nuriyati, 2020), formalization of moral education without behavioral integration (Patimah, 2016), and disconnect between institutional policies and classroom realities. This proposed classification system provides educational institutions with a coherent theoretical and practical structure for overcoming these limitations. By consistently applying this principle framework, Islamic educational institutions can develop curricula and pedagogical approaches that authentically embody tawhid-centered learning. The transformative potential of this integrated approach lies in its capacity to produce graduates who represent *insan kamil*, fully developed human beings possessing balanced spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social competence (Fadillah & Maragustam, 2024). Such individuals become capable of fulfilling the role of *khalifah* (steward) in contemporary contexts, contributing meaningfully to Muslim civilization (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) while maintaining fidelity to Islamic foundational principles (Dalle & Tobroni, 2025).

Future educational practice should emphasize consistent implementation of this principle framework across all educational levels and contexts, ensuring that Islamic educational philosophy transcends formality to become the living foundation of genuine educational transformation. The success of this endeavor depends on educator commitment, institutional consistency, and the recognition that authentic Islamic education represents not merely a set of techniques but a comprehensive worldview directing all human development toward spiritual enlightenment, moral excellence, and service to humanity (Rahmawati & Supriyanto, 2023).

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