



FORMULATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT: AN APPROACH AND LITERATURE REVIEW IN ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the models of thought in Islamic education that developed in the course of Islamic intellectual history. Three main approaches are analyzed, namely: (1) the conservative school (al-Muhāfiz) represented by al-Ghazālī, with a focus on text-based education (naqli) and metaphysical dimensions; (2) the religious-rational school (al-Dīniy al-‘Aqlāniy) as depicted in the thoughts of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā which emphasizes the balance between revelation and reason; and (3) the pragmatic school (al-Dzarā’iyy) pioneered by Ibn Khaldūn, which emphasizes the historical and sociological approach in education. The method used is a literature review with a critical examination of relevant primary and secondary sources. The results of the study show that each school has a distinctive epistemological foundation whether based on sacred texts, rationality, or empirical reality which forms a holistic conceptual framework for Islamic education. These findings contribute to the development of contemporary Islamic education curriculum by considering the integration between text, reason, and context.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education currently faces various complex challenges amidst the current of globalization, secularization of knowledge and value crisis in modern society. The phenomenon of declining internalization of spiritual and ethical values in the world of education, both in formal and non-formal institutions, is a serious concern.¹ In many educational institutions, especially in countries with Muslim majorities such as Indonesia, Islamic religious education is still reduced to

¹ Abdul Haris Rasyidi and S Abdul Jalil Al Idrus, “Exploration of PAI Teacher Challenges and Opportunities; Case Study of Implementation The Independent Learning Curriculum, In East Lombok Elementary Schools,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan* 9, no. 1 (2024): 506–14.

mastering cognitive aspects alone, without providing adequate space for the formation of character, spirituality and critical reasoning in students.

In fact, objectively, the study of Islamic religious education does not only discuss cognitive aspects, but more than that, the study of Islamic religious education embraces everything, including aspects of spirituality, emotional intelligence and has a level of values and manners.² This is in line with what was explained by one of the leading thinkers in Islamic education, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, regarding the crisis of education in Islam not in the lack of information, but in the "loss of adab", namely the loss of the value system in understanding knowledge and positioning humans proportionally in the order of the universe. Therefore, the reformulation of Islamic educational thought is not only important, but also urgent to answer the needs of the times without losing the roots of Islamic scientific tradition.

Furthermore, this reformulation must be able to bridge between normative texts in Islam and the ever-changing social reality. Islamic education needs to be developed within an integrative framework that does not only emphasize doctrinal aspects alone, but also accommodates a contextual approach that is responsive to the dynamics of the times. The integration of Islamic knowledge with modern science is a necessity to produce a generation that is not only spiritually pious, but also capable of facing global challenges.³

This requires a transdisciplinary curriculum approach, where religious knowledge and general knowledge are not in conflict, but rather complement each other in shaping the character and competence of students. In the context of Islamic education, it should be able to present learning that is relevant to social realities, such as environmental issues, digital technology, and social justice, so that graduates of Islamic educational institutions are not alienated from the problems of their society. Furthermore, the treasury of Islamic educational thought needs to be addressed proportionally, not simply glorified or adopted raw. An appreciative-critical attitude is needed: accepting, selecting, and developing it constructively. With this approach, the study of the heritage of Islamic thought becomes more objective and able to answer the challenges of the times without being cut off from the continuity of tradition.

Along with the clashes throughout history, Muslims today seem to be a lost generation. Education labeled as Islamic such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas is still considered second-class education. This condition has caused many Muslim scholars to implement reformulation in Islamic education. A concept that wants Islamic education to produce a comprehensive understanding of Islam, which masters religious knowledge as well as general knowledge so that it can compete in the international arena.

Based on the description above, this paper aims to describe three theoretical concepts in the flow of Islamic education which are the paradigm and formulation of Islamic education. Among these streams are the conservative stream, the religious-rational stream and the pragmatic-instrumental stream. These three streams of Islamic education theory will be the material for joint reflection in analyzing the development of Islamic education today and placing conceptual and practical positions in Islamic education

² Sirajun Nasihin, Abdul Haris Rasyidi, and Ulyan Nasri, "Development of Islamic Character Education Through The Naqsyabandiyah Qadiriyyah Order Among The Sasak Wetu Telu Community," *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan* 9, no. 3 (2024): 2265–72.

³ H M Suyudi, Wahyu Hanaf Putra, and M Pd, *Pendidikan Islam: Potret Perubahan Yang Berkelanjutan* (Penerbit Adab, 2024).

SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES

The background to writing this paper is the concern over the scarcity of studies on Islamic educational thought as a socio-cultural phenomenon.⁴ Therefore, a synthetic approach is used to reveal and map the mainstream of Islamic educational thought and its “causal” relationship with the historical determinants that surround it. The author maps the streams of Islamic thought into three types as stated in the introduction above. The mapping is based on the scientific concept that underlies the Islamic school of thought. Interestingly, the scientific concept is indeed recognized as one of the central themes in the spectrum of Islamic intellectual tradition.⁵

The richness of the treasury of Islamic educational thought with all its advantages and disadvantages, according to the author, must be addressed proportionally.⁶ This means that in inheriting it we are required to be able to be appreciative-critical, namely: an attitude of being willing to accept, sort and develop it in a positive-constructive manner. Not the opposite, so that our academic study of the legacy of Islamic educational thought is not too nuanced glorifying, adoptive, normative, and general-theoretical.⁷ With an appreciative-critical attitude, we will be faced with a tough challenge to be able to overcome the problem of “objectivity” and “continuity” of the legacy of Islamic thought (al-turats al-islamiy)⁸ Therefore, the author said, it is inevitable that we always prioritize the “logic of history” (Manthiqu al-Tarikh) and the “logic of reason” (manthiqu al-Aqlu) when studying the legacy of Islamic educational thought so that it is free from the entanglement of blind fanaticism. And this is the meaning of “wisdom” and “purity” that Islam desires.

To carry out a reform that leads to the conformity between Islamic teachings and the development of the times that ultimately revives the glorious civilization of Islam as in the Middle Ages is through education. This was also echoed by one of the modernist thinkers from Pakistan, namely Fazlur Rahman. Fazlur Rahman's awareness of education as the main means of supporting renewal, encouraged him to plunge into criticism of the Islamic education system that developed during the period of decline and at the beginning of renewal or the modern era.⁹

Fazlur Rahman compiled a general work that historically presents the Islamic education system in the Middle Ages, including its main advantages and disadvantages, and the modernization efforts carried out around the last century. Then, Fazlur Rahman developed a thought on Islamic higher education which was called “Islamic intellectualism”.¹⁰ In fact, Islamic education must be modernized, meaning that since the classical period (850 to 1200 M) to the early Middle Ages (1200 to 1800 M), Islam had the glory of science and knowledge.

However, entering the Middle Ages until the end of the 19th century AD, Muslims experienced a decline, especially in the field of education. Then entering the 19th century AD,

⁴ Meriatul Kibtiyah, “Pemikiran Azyumardi Azra Tentang Modernisasi Pendidikan Pesantren,” *CONTEMPLATE: Jurnal Ilmiah Studi Keislaman* 3, no. 01 (2022): 43–67.

⁵ Ummi Mahmudah, “Paradigma Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Relevansinya Di Indonesia,” *Taqorrub: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Dan Dakwah* 4, no. 1 (2023): 14–26.

⁶ Abdul Haris Rasyidi, “Upaya Memperkokoh Landasan Filosofis Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *EDUKASI: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2017): 1–13.

⁷ Kritikan terhadap jenis-jenis pengkajian semacam itu antara lain dilontarkan oleh majid irsan al-Kailani. Untuk lebih jelasnya lihat al-Kailani, *Falsafatu al-Tarbawiyat al-Islamiyyati* (Damaskus: Dar ibnu Katsir, 1987), 21–23.

⁸ Menurut M. Abid al-Jabiri, persoalan utama yang dihadapi oleh pengkaji warisan pemikiran keislaman adalah persoalan obyektivitas dan kontinuitas. Lihat M. Abid al-Jabiri, *al-Turats wa al-Hadatsah: Diraasat wa Munaqasyat*. (Beirut: al-Maarkaz al-Tsaqafi al-Arabi, 1991), 1–33.

⁹ Ghufron A, Mas’adi, *Pemikiran Fazlur Rahman Tentang Metodologi Pembaharuan Hukum Islam*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1997), 23.

¹⁰ Humaira Ahmad, “Mapping Neo-Modern and Postmodern Qur’anic Reformist Discourse in the Intellectual Legacy of Fazlur Rahman and Mohammed Arkoun,” *Religions* 14, no. 5 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14050595>.

Muslims, especially the Indonesian nation, began to be entered by the Islamic renewal movement in the Middle East, especially in Egypt and the city of Mecca, the renewal movement had a great influence on the development of Islamic religious education in Indonesia at that time and in the following period.¹¹ At this time, the ideas of Islamic renewal were the seeds of modernization in the field of Islamic education.

The modernization effort is to reconstruct the implementation of Islamic education which does not refer to and anticipate the changing times, but only maintains and preserves all classical heritage.¹² Until the beginning of the 20th century, among the educated Indonesian Muslim community, awareness began to emerge to overcome the condition of Islamic education in Indonesia which was experiencing backwardness as a result of the political explosion of the Dutch colonial government. They realized that educational reform must be the most important agenda in fighting for the fate of Muslims and the Indonesian nation.

Moreover, seeing Islamic education presented to the general public is actually the opposite of the facts. This means that when civilization is developing rapidly, Islamic education is actually more focused on classical learning that is doctrinal. As a result, Islamic education is often isolated, even becoming a second class education. Islamic education until now seems to be late in positioning itself in responding to changes and tendencies in the development of community culture.

When Islamic education tries to offer an integrated learning system (a combination of general and religious material), to fill the gap between general education material and Islamic education material, the policy seems to be a burden for students. Such an education system does not provide flexibility for students to be able to complete several materials with a variety of competency mastery. Finally, students' mastery of competencies in various general science and religious science materials is partial.

Internally, the Islamic education system itself still experiences various obstacles. One of them is the confusion between general material and religious knowledge material. This is the classic reason why the achievement of general material delivered in Islamic educational institutions is less competitive than that of public schools. Conversely, the delivery of religious knowledge material is not as brilliant as that which occurs in Islamic boarding schools. This reality is what at least encourages parents to take other alternatives. Namely, entrusting their children to educational institutions that promise a more promising future. Because, in fact, Madrasahs in providing learning materials are partial and do not touch on the substance.

METHODS

This paper has its own characteristics, because it is discussed and developed through a unique approach, namely a sociological-philosophical approach that explores and develops Islamic educational thought based on historical social forces, the life of Muslims since the beginning. For more details, it will be described below:

Sociological Methodology

Until the late 1970s most sociologists of religion seemed rather confident about their understanding of religious phenomena. We all know that modern societies are undergoing a process of secularization. Of course, this process can take different forms depending on the

¹¹ Faras Puji Azizah et al., "Pembaharuan Islam Di Minangkabau Pada Awal Abad XX," *Rusydiab: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 2 (2022): 212–28.

¹² Noeng Muhajir, *Sistem Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Islam Dalam Persepektif Modern*, al-Ta'dib Forum Kajian Ilmiah Kependidikan Islam, no 1 Bulan Juni tahun 2000, hlm. 38

institutional or cultural order of religion. Of course, very few sociologists of religion are expected to actually emerge. In Islamic studies, intellectuals in particular use a sociological approach in analyzing the development of Islamic studies. Masthu in his book said: "what is meant by a sociological approach is that researchers use sociological logics and theories, both classical and modern theories, to describe socio-religious phenomena and the influence of one phenomenon on another phenomenon."¹³

Sociology is a science that describes the state of society complete with structures, strata and other social phenomena that are interrelated. This approach is carried out by highlighting the perspective of human position which leads to a behavior.¹⁴ Seeing the methods in this book certainly originate from the problems that are increasingly emerging in the midst of societal problems that can be solved by laying at least a conceptual basis for educational streams. So that it can bridge the flow of thought of educational experts and practitioners of Islamic education both from young people, society, and groups.

Philosophical Approach

Conceptually, Muhammad Jawwad Ridla's book also uses a philosophical approach in describing metaphysics and various contributions from the three schools. It can be exemplified when Jawwad made al-Ghazali a driving figure in his school. Likewise with Ikhwan al-Shafa and Ibn Khaldun. Thus, between the methods and approaches there is a meeting point that describes the treasury of the development of the paradigm of Islamic education and of course the discourse on the development of Islamic education in the future.

To find out more about this paper, it is necessary to explain more clearly about the method used in writing this paper. The method used is a literature review with a critical examination of relevant primary and secondary sources. The results of the study show that each school has a distinctive epistemological foundation whether based on sacred texts, rationality, or empirical reality which forms a holistic conceptual framework for Islamic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conservative Stream (*al-Muhafidz*)

This school of thought tends to be purely religious in dealing with educational issues. They interpret knowledge in a narrow sense, namely only encompassing knowledge that is needed now (life in the world) which will clearly bring benefits in the hereafter (al-Thusi in *Adab al-Muta'allim*). The seeker of knowledge must begin his learning with the book of Allah, the Qur'an. He tries to memorize it and is able to interpret it. Ulumul Qur'an, because it is the mother of all knowledge, then continued with learning al-Hadith and ulumul Hadith, Usul, Nahwu and sharaf. (Ibn Jamaah in *tadzkiyat*).¹⁵

The figures of this school of thought on education are al-Ghazali, Nasiruddin al-Thusi, Ibn Jama'ah, Sahnun, Ibn Hajar al-Haitami and al-Qubsi, according to this school of thought are classified into: first, knowledge that must be learned by every individual, namely knowledge about the procedures for carrying out obligations that have come their time and knowledge about religious obligations (ulum al-Fara'idl al-Diniyyah). Second, knowledge that is obligatory kifayah to be learned, namely knowledge that is needed for the sake of upholding worldly affairs, such as:

¹³ Masthu, *Metodelogi penelitian Agama*, Jakarta: Raja Grafindo. 2006, 127-128.

¹⁴ Diambil dari makalah pendekatan dalam pengkajian islam, Muhammad syarif al-firjani, *Al- Siyasi Wa al-Dini, (Hubungan Antara Politik dan Agama Dalam Perspektif Islam)*, 8.

¹⁵ Ibnu Jamaah *qadli al-Qudlat* bahrudin al-Kannani al-Hamawi al-Syafi'I lahir di Hamah pada Tahun 639 H dan meninggal dunia pada tahun 733 H. karya tulisnya tentang pendidikan adalah: *Tadzkiarat al-Sami' wa al-Mutakallim fi Adab al-Alim wa al-Muta'allim*.

medical science which is very crucial for maintaining the body, knowledge about cupping (hujamah) and arithmetic. As for knowledge that is neglected by the people of a region, then there will be disharmony in life in that region. The meaning of wajib kifayah is that if some of the people of a society have learned the knowledge, then the obligation to learn it is dropped for other people.

Al-Tusi likened the first type of knowledge to staple food, while the second type of knowledge was likened to medicine that is only consumed when forced. In addition to these two types of knowledge, there is also knowledge whose law of studying it includes fadlilah (virtue, recommendation), such as further study of the details of arithmetic and medicine. Meanwhile, the variety of existing knowledge can also be divided into commendable knowledge and reprehensible knowledge. According to al-Ghazali, branch sciences, tool sciences and complementary sciences, including philosophy, are divided into four fields:

First, geometry and arithmetic. This discipline is allowed to be studied and is prohibited only if it is clearly dangerous for the person concerned because it can lead him to reprehensible knowledge. Second, logic, which is the science that deals with the form of arguments, their conditions, the form of argumentation and their conditions. The basic elements of this science are included in the science of kalam. Third, theology, which is the science that contains the study of the essence of God. Fourth, natural science. Some of this science is contrary to religious law and truth. This is a form of ignorance and not science, some others study the anatomy of the body, details and organs and their changes. This is similar to the views of doctors. It's just that doctors are superior and more needed.

This "conservative" view leads to the concept of a hierarchy of values that structures the various sciences vertically according to their assessment of the superiority of each science. This hierarchy of values reveals the "importance" that they base on each science. After dividing human potential that is manifested into various knowledge based on the principle of religious goals, making its function as a parameter of superiority among the various sciences, Al-Ghazali emphasized that religious sciences, namely knowledge about the path to the afterlife, can only be obtained with the perfection of reason and clarity of intellect. Reason is the most important human trait, because only with reason is man able to receive the mandate from Allah and with it is he able to draw near to him.¹⁶

Ibn Jama'ah further reviewed this matter. According to him, if the study programs are very many and varied, then the priority is the study of the interpretation of the Qur'an, hadith, ushul fiqh, madzhab thought (read Syafi'iyah), then the differences that exist, the science of nahwu or the science of debate (jadal).

Al-Ghazali and Conservative Tendencies in Islamic Educational Thought

The most important thing to note in order to understand al-Ghazali's train of thought is to understand his psychological condition, which among other things gave birth to educational thoughts that were in turn woven with purely religious formulations that made him the main force of conservatism and taqlidism in Islamic thought in general and in Islamic educational thought in particular. Al-Ghazali directly grappled with education in his works *Ihya' ulum al-Din* and *Ayyuh al-Walad*. The important thing to note from these two works is that they were both written after al-Ghazali recovered from a mental crisis. This fact resulted in al-Ghazali's educational thoughts prioritizing "cleansing the soul from moral stains and reprehensible traits. Because, knowledge is a

¹⁶Muhammad Jawwad Ridla, *Tiga Aliran*, 76-77.

form of worship of the heart, the prayer of the conscience and the approach of the soul towards Allah SWT".¹⁷

Al-Ghazali formulated his educational theory in the work *Ayyuh al-Walad*. However, many of the basic principles of education in this work have already been revealed in the work *Ihya'*, so that some of what is in *Ayyuh al-Walad* is only a repetition of what is already in the *Ihya'*. Al-Ghazali's discussion of education in the *Ihya'* revolves around three main things; explanation of the priority of knowledge over ignorance, classification of sciences included in the curriculum program, code of ethics for educators (teachers) and students.

Regarding the first matter, al-Ghazali presented a series of naqli and aqli arguments. The naqli arguments he put forward have similarities with the naqli arguments put forward by other Muslim education experts in their works, because they are indeed sourced from the Qur'an, hadith and the opinions of the same experts. As for the aqli arguments he put forward, they are much different from other education experts; his aqli arguments are oriented towards a single goal in the form of directing individuals towards closeness to Allah, for people who indeed make it a tool and means, not a place to live and a goal".¹⁸

Looking at knowledge, he sees that it has an internal value of benefit, so it is sought after because of its internal benefits and it is a means to achieve happiness in the afterlife. In addition, it is also the main "path" that leads someone close to Allah. The most noble of all things is that which can be close to Allah. If knowledge is the most noble thing, then studying knowledge means demanding something that is primary, and teaching it means giving something that is primary. More clearly, the main purpose of our lives, culminates in the scope of religion and the world. The harmony of religion requires the harmony of the "fields" of the afterlife (world) which is a means to Allah for those who use it as a tool and media, not for those who use it as an orientation and goal of life. And worldly affairs can only be organized if there are human efforts and deeds.¹⁹ Meanwhile, in relation to the fardhu 'ain knowledge, he divides it into: Mu'amalah knowledge (empirical-practical); Mukasyafah knowledge.²⁰

Obligations of Students

Students have ten points of obligation, or wadlifah according to al-Ghazali: (1) Prioritize self-purification from reprehensible morals and bad traits, because knowledge is a form of worship of the heart, spiritual prayer and inner approach to Allah. (2) Students protect themselves from worldly activities and should wander far from their place of residence. Because, struggling with worldly activities can divert their concentration on learning, so that the ability to master the knowledge being studied becomes dull. (3) Do not puff up your chest towards a scholar (teacher), but be willing to obey in all matters and be willing to listen to his advice. (4) For novice students of knowledge, they should avoid studying variations of thought and figures, both concerning worldly knowledge and the knowledge of the hereafter. Because, this can confuse the mind, make you confused and break concentration.²¹

Based on the code of ethics above, there are several educational conclusions that form the general pattern of al-Ghazali's thinking in education; (1) The activity of seeking knowledge is oriented towards seeking Allah's pleasure. Therefore, knowledge functions to cleanse the human

¹⁷ Kutipan-kutipan selanjutnya banyak diambil dari kitab *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, juz-1 (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifat, tt.), 4-58.

¹⁸ Lihat Muhammad Jawwad Ridla, *Tiga Aliran*, 120.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 121-122

²⁰ *Ibid.*, hal. 124

²¹ *Ibid.*, 127-128.

soul from low ambitions and goals. Knowledge calls for nobility of soul and spiritual knowledge. (2) The code of ethics strengthens the theory of inspired knowledge which al-Ghazali uses as the basis for his educational theory. In many places he emphasizes that knowledge is light bestowed by Allah into the human heart. (3) The affirmation of religious goals in the activity of seeking knowledge. In fact, religious goals are the ultimate goal of the activity of seeking knowledge. In addition, there is an important point in the form of limiting the term al-ilm' only to knowledge about Allah. Al-Ghazali emphasized, "knowledge is a virtue in itself without conditions. Because, it is an attribute of perfection possessed by Allah and with it the angels and the Prophets become noble".²²

Obligation of Teacher

Al-Ghazali has an "idealistic" view of the teaching profession. The ideal of a teacher, according to him, is a person who is knowledgeable, does good deeds and teaches. A person like this is a picture of a person who is honorable under the sky. From here, al-Ghazali emphasizes the need for integration of knowledge with good deeds. Departing from the idealistic perspective of the teaching profession, al-Ghazali emphasizes that a person who is busy teaching is a person who is "struggling" with something very wigati (important), so he needs to maintain the ethics and code of ethics of his profession.

Meanwhile, the code of ethics or professional duties that must be adhered to by teachers include eight things: (1) Loving their students, even treating them like the treatment and affection of teachers to their own children. (2) Teachers are willing to seriously follow the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, so that they do not teach to seek wages or to receive awards and honors. However, they teach solely to seek the pleasure of Allah and to draw closer to Him. (3) Teachers must not neglect the task of giving advice to their students. They prohibit students from studying certain stages of knowledge before their time, or studying abstract-philosophical knowledge, before completing concrete-elementary (introductory) scientific studies. (4) Included in the professionalism of teachers is preventing students from falling into reprehensible morals through the most persuasive means possible and through loving means, not through mocking and rude means. (5) The teacher's expertise in a particular scientific specialization does not cause him to look down on other scientific disciplines, for example a teacher who is an expert in linguistics does not look down on the science of Islamic jurisprudence. (6) The teacher delivers his teaching material according to the level of understanding of his students. (7) For students with low abilities, the teacher delivers material that is clear, concrete and according to the level of ability of the students to digest it. (8) The teacher is willing to practice his knowledge, so that what exists is a unification of speech and action.²³

Rational Religious Stream (*al-Diniy al-Aqlaniy*)

The thinking of the Religious-rationalists is not much different from the thinking of the "traditionalist-textualist" (Naqliyyun) circles regarding the relationship between education and religious goals. Ikhwan al-Shafa admits that all knowledge and literature that does not lead its owner to concern for the afterlife, and does not provide meaning as provisions there, will only boomerang for the owner later in the afterlife. However, the Religious-Rational circles seem to have differences when "grappling" with the issue of education, because they tend to be rational-philosophical. This tendency is an entry point for observers who want to study their educational strategies or programs. This rational-philosophical tendency is explicitly revealed in their

²²*Ibid.*, 128-129.

²³ *Ibid.*, 132.

formulation of knowledge and learning which is very different from the formulation of the traditionalist-textualists.²⁴

Ikhwan al-Shafa, one of the representatives of the Religious-Rational school, formulated knowledge as follows: "Know that knowledge is a picture of something known in the mind (soul) of the person who knows. The opposite of knowledge is ignorance, which is the absence of a picture known in the soul. Know that the souls of scientists are actually knowledgeable, while the souls of students are potentially knowledgeable, giving birth to things that are "hidden" in the soul. Such activity for teachers (people with knowledge) is called teaching, and for students it is called learning. In its formulaic formulation, the basics of teaching theory are revealed.

The Al-Shafa Brotherhood group has determined the direction that educational activities should take. They see that the orientation of education should be more directed at children, teenagers and young people, because they are the ones who are the mainstay of hope for the future. Therefore, "it is only natural not to focus on educating old people who have had mistakes since childhood, bad habits and low morals, because that will only burden you, while they will not become good, or if they become a little good, it does not mean much to them. You should be more busy taking care of the young generation who have a good mentality, morals, scientific ethos and are "crazy" about the truth and the afterlife".

Considering that economic, sociological and psychological factors touch every aspect of human life, the methodology of the brothers also covers the whole comprehensively without leaving out a single branch of human knowledge related to the welfare of life on earth and happiness in the hereafter. They explicitly and firmly claim that their school is based on the perspective of all sciences about the reality that exists in this world.

From here it is clear that the study of the methodology (curricular system) of the Ikhwan al-Shafa sciences, is very dependent on the study of the "works-efforts" (al-shana'i) which are placed in the long-term description of the design system of their thinking. We will see that implicitly they pay attention to the soul and reason (ratio) of humans in the description of the various works of human endeavors/professions. They consider teachers to be in the segment of the layer of workers-entrepreneurs (professionals). And perhaps they are the only ones who have such a stance in the history of Islamic education. Some historians see that Rasa'il al-Ikhwan is able to provide a complete description of the works-efforts in the 4th century H.²⁵

Starting from a full awareness of the role of various works-efforts in upholding the foundations of human life, the Ikhwan al-Shafa circle expanded their educational curriculum system to include everything related to productive economic life for society. From here it is understood that their scientific methodology (curricular system) is actually oriented towards professionalism-productivity. Such a phenomenon is considered unique in the span of the history of Islamic educational thought, especially when its curriculum system is compared to the curriculum systems of other schools where their curriculum system provides a place for various disciplines that develop and are beneficial for the progress of humanity, both spiritually and materially.²⁶

The Al-Shafa Brotherhood and its Rational Thought in Education

The Ikhwan al-Shafa group claims to be a non-partisan, objective, expert, lover of truth, intellectual elite and solid-cooperative group. They invite the public to join their group who (by

²⁴Lihat Muhammad Jawwad Ridla *Tiga Aliran*, 7-78.

²⁵Al-Duri, *Tarikh al-Iraq al-Istiqshad fi al-Qarn al-Rabi' al-Hijri*, (Bagdad: tp, 1948), 86.

²⁶ Riyadliyat (matematik) secara etimologis berasal dari *riyadlat al-Nafs wa al-Aql*, yakni pelatihan dan "penggemblengan" jiwa dan akal.

joining) will become members of a group of noble, honest, objective, prophetic morals and lofty ideals. The Ikhwan group, according to them, is not an association of Satan's followers who only aim to gain material benefits. Therefore, "O my brothers! Be a group of believers who work together to enjoin good and forbid evil."²⁷

The purpose of education according to the Ikhwan al-Shafa is a logical consequence, if the basic characteristics of the Ikhwan al-Shafa's thinking are reflected in their educational views. Starting their study by formulating individual and social goals that they want to realize through educational activities. In reality, they give more portion to social goals than individual goals. The Ikhwan criticized the spread of destructive thoughts that were widely held by the majority of society at that time.²⁸

Ikhwan believes that the most dangerous scientists are those who, when asked about things that have become commonplace and established in the wider community, cannot provide good and critical answers or solutions, but instead are lost in their mistakes, deviations and stupidity, and are enthusiastic about writing "manipulative" works that attack experts (ulama') and philosophers. This is like supporting the opinion that logic and physics are forms of disbelief and experts in these fields are considered atheists. Then, these kinds of damaging opinions are packaged with "scientific" arguments and written on the pages of books.

Starting from this framework, Ikhwan al-Shafa conceptualizes knowledge not as something that contains a goal in itself. As has been conceptualized by several groups. According to Ikhwan al-Shafa, knowledge continues to function to serve the noble goal of education, namely self-knowledge. Ikhwan al-Shafa introduces the psychological basis for cognition (intellectual knowledge). They assume that when the power of imagination (al-quwwah al-mutakhayyilah) delivers the form of something absorbed by the senses (imperis sensual) to the power of thought after going through sensory absorption and being perceived, then the form settles in the cognition of the soul in a psychological pattern.²⁹

Pragmatic Stream (*al-Dzara'i'y*)

The figure of the pragmatic school is Ibn Khaldun. According to Ibn Khaldun, knowledge and learning are tabi'i (innate) of humans because of the ability to think. Education is not only aimed at gaining knowledge but also to gain worldly and hereafter skills, both of which must provide benefits, because for him education is a way to obtain sustenance.³⁰

He classified science based on its functional purpose, namely: (a) Science that has intrinsic value. For example: religious sciences, ontology and theology. (b) Science that has extrinsic-instrumental value for intrinsic science. For example: Arabic for sharia science, and logic for philosophy.

Based on its source, knowledge can be divided into two, namely: (a) 'aqliyah (intellectual) knowledge, namely knowledge obtained by humans from rational thought, namely the science of Mantiq (logic), natural science, Theology and Mathematics. (b) Naqliyah knowledge, namely knowledge obtained by humans from the results of transmission from previous people, namely the science of Hadith, the science of Fiqh, the science of Arabic language, and others.

According to Ibn Khaldun, human thinking power is a special "creation" that has been designed by God. Humans are basically ignorant (don't know), they become 'alim (know) because

²⁷Lihat Muhammad Jawwad Ridla, *Tiga*, 145.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 167.

³⁰ Burhan Nudin et al., "Learning Method of Ibnu Khaldun," *KnE Social Sciences* 2022 (2022): 69–85, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v7i10.11346>.

humans learn. Ibn Khaldun makes nature one of the sources of rational knowledge. He frees the ratio from the constraints of naql (dogma, tradition) and makes it an autonomous source of knowledge.³¹ At this point Ibn Khaldun places the most important and complex thing of the educational problem, namely the role of language in the development of thought and learning in general. It would be very useful if we briefly look at the thoughts of two great figures of classical civilization that are in line with the thoughts put forward by Ibn Khaldun. It can be concluded that the pragmatic school rolled out by Ibn Khaldun is a new discourse in Islamic educational thought.

Ibn Khaldun and the Pragmatic Tendency in Islamic Educational Thought

The unique background of Ibn Khaldun gave rise to special educational thinking, coupled with the many practical experiences he had, further maturing the educational ideas he produced towards a new horizon of Islamic educational thinking.³² This is reflected in Ibn Khaldun's appreciation of the variety of knowledge that can be a means of fulfilling human needs, both spiritual and material. Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking is based on the basic assumption that humans are basically "ignorant" (jahil), they become knowledgeable (alim) by learning. This means that humans are a type of animal, only Allah has given them the privilege of reason, so that they can act regularly and in a planned manner, namely in the form of a "separating" reason (al-Aql al-Tamyizi); or also making them able to conceptualize empirical and non-empirical reality, namely in the form of critical reason. However, Ibn Khaldun quickly moved from this basic assumption to prioritizing cultural character (culture oriented) for knowledge and teaching. Because, reason is a means for humans to obtain life, cooperation between each other and a cohesive society. From such an orientation of reason, science and innovative creations will be produced a lot.³³

Ibn Khaldun's thoughts on learning (teaching) as a professional activity are similar to the ideas of the Ikhwan al-Shafa who highly appreciate professional activities no less than pure intellectual (thinking) activities, such as philosophy, logic and linguistics. This will clearly change the way society views (academic) knowledge and professions as parameters of social status. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun makes professions one of the sources of human intellectual development, because with them, humans will gain theoretical skills; in-depth experimental experience is very useful for intellectual development, and a perfect civilization as a representation of various professions is also very useful for him.³⁴

Ibn Khaldun's Learning Method

In relation to the learning method, Ibn Khaldun's thoughts are revealed through his four relative attitudes towards the style of educators (teachers) in his time in four basic educational issues. The first thing about the educational habits that he criticized was their "indoctrination" method towards students: educators started with basic scientific problems to be taught to students without considering their readiness to accept and master them. The second thing, where Ibn Khaldun had different thoughts from the developing trend of thought was regarding the necessity of "separating" between sciences that have intrinsic value such as: between religious, natural and divine sciences, with instrumental sciences such as: Arabic language and arithmetic which are needed by religious sciences, and logic which is needed by philosophy.³⁵

³¹ Ibnu Khaldun, *al-Muqaddimah*, (Kairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijariyah). Hlm. 536

³² Mohamad Yudiyanto et al., "Ibn Khaldun's Material Religious Pragmatic Ideas Are Relevant To The Goals Of Today's Education," *Risalah, Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 10, no. 2 (2024): 881–89.

³³*Ibid.*, 984.

³⁴Lihat Muhammad Jawwad Ridla, *Tiga Aliran*, 145.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 193.

The third thing, from Ibn Khaldun's thoughts that differed from the trend of thought in his time was related to the problem of requiring students to memorize/study "useless" things in a fairly long period of time and busying themselves with a lot of terminology from the learning material. The fourth thing from Ibn Khaldun's thoughts that went against the trend of thought in his time was related to the strategy of interacting with students that was "militaristic" and harsh: students must be like this and that. Ibn Khaldun reminded us not to let there be any wrong issues in learning which in turn could have a bad impact on students in the form of the emergence of psychological disorders and naughty behavior.³⁶ It is clear that Ibn Khaldun's thinking is so clear and formulaic regarding the theory that scientific (learning) institutions, besides being able to produce educational output that is slave-minded and cunning, are also able to produce output that is free, independent and consistent.

CONCLUSION

The three models of Islamic educational thought namely conservative (al-Muhafidz) represented by al-Ghazali, rational-religious (al-Diniy al-Aqlaniy) as offered by Ikhwan As-Shafa, and the pragmatic model can be used as a conceptual foundation in designing and developing an Islamic education system in Indonesia. Each model was born from the results of contemplation and deep understanding of the figures regarding the nature of knowledge and the educational process from an Islamic perspective.

Al-Ghazali, through his conservative approach, emphasized that the main goal of education is to achieve Allah's pleasure, with a primary focus on religious knowledge, especially knowledge about Allah SWT. This thought places a strong emphasis on the spiritual and moral dimensions in seeking knowledge. Meanwhile, the thinking of Ikhwan As-Shafa views knowledge as the result of an active learning process, where the senses and reason become the main tools for understanding the reality of nature and its contents. This view integrates religious and rational aspects, and places knowledge in the context of strong moral and social values.

The pragmatic school emphasizes that humans gain knowledge through experience and the active use of reason. This model emphasizes the importance of balance between worldly and hereafter knowledge, and places education as a process that continues to develop following the needs of the times and the realities of life. These three schools, although having different approaches, have made significant contributions to the development of Islamic education from the classical era to the present. However, it is important to realize that not all of these models are fully responsive to the dynamics of modern education. Therefore, there needs to be a creative and critical effort in integrating the values of the three models so that Islamic education in Indonesia is able to answer the challenges of the times without losing its Islamic identity.

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³⁶Ibid., 194.

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