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## Redefining Epistemology: Exploring a New Paradigma in Islamic Education Research

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### ABSTRACT

This study showed epistemological renewal that integrates the values of the Qur'an and As-Sunnah as the main foundation. The Epistemology of Islamic education pays attention to cognition as well as the development of spirituality and the character of students. This is very important because the goal of Islamic education is to produce students who not only have cognitive intelligence but also have high moral and social awareness. The spread of a more materialistic and secular Western educational paradigm is a major problem. Therefore, this study investigated new methods in the epistemology of Islamic education, including empirical, scientific, philosophical, and religious methods. This method created a broader and integrative education system that can produce the ideal human being (*insān Kamil*), which is in line with the goals of Islamic education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an urgent topic that cannot be separated from human life because in principle the entire life process is education. In this case, education is very important for anyone and everyone has the right to get a proper education (Bahori, 2017). The law has regulated and provided opportunities for every citizen to have the right to get a proper education, especially in studying religious education. Every student in each educational unit has the right to receive religious education following the religion he adheres to and is taught by educators of the same religion (Nafisah *et al.*, 2021).

Islamic epistemology creates a solid foundation for gaining knowledge through the Qur'an and Hadith as the primary sources incorporating understanding and action in daily life (Julhamdani *et al.*, 2023). Islamic education must be built and developed based on epistemology to create a quality and highly competitive Islamic education to be able to survive and lead (Nasir *et al.*, 2023). Efforts to excavate, discover, and develop Islamic education can be effective and efficient if it is based on the epistemology of Islamic education (Muhtifah *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the world of education related to the Epistemology of Islamic investigation, cannot be separated from the world of Islamic education, because the meaning of epistemology itself is a theory of science. Thus, the epistemology of Islamic education is an in-depth study of the sources, methods, and validity of science in the context of Islamic values.

Based on the above theory, we conducted research at an Islamic boarding school to expose a new paradigm in the world of Islamic education by considering the need for reform in the education system that can answer the challenges of the times. By collaborating traditional values with relevance and context for students, and through an in-depth analysis of the epithelium of Islamic education, this research is expected to provide benefits and good contributions in the future for the development of theory and continued practice in the daily world.

## 2. METHODS

This research was done by conducting a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to export the subjective experiences of Islamic boarding school (madrasah) heads, teachers, and students at Madrasah Stanawiyah Al-Hasan, Bandung, Indonesia related to the implementation of Islamic education epistemology. In this case, the research population was 57 people from the elements of the community in the madrasah environment, 1 head of madrasah, 1 teacher of grade 3, 6 teachers of subject 6, and 47 students. The data collection technique was carried out by direct interviews, direct observations, and strengthened by documentation, from these three components. Thus, we could dig up more in-depth information about the importance of epistemology in Islamic education and the need for direct practice in the learning environment. Then, we collected data from the above results by re-analyzing it. Thus, it can provide comprehensive insights into how the epistemology of Islamic education is redefined and applied in the context of madrasahs, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced in the process of developing more relevant and contextual theories and practices of Islamic education in Indonesia.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education is a conscious effort of human beings to realize and shape a complete human person. Furthermore, education is a process of creating a human person who is useful for

society, religion, and the State (Abbas *et al.*, 2021). Just as humans who initially do not know become aware this is due to the existence of education which, in human life, will not be separated from education. From the beginning before we were born into this world, education has been instilled by our mothers in our womb. The first education we know is education in the family environment. Thus, the essence of education is to humanize humans.

In Islam, education occupies a significant position because morality and human civilization are highly determined by the quality of education. Thus, Islam emphasizes the need for human beings to achieve the highest and widest possible education (Putri *et al.*, 2024). In this case, Islamic education is very important in daily life, especially in today's era if Islamic education is lacking in educating human morals, morals, and faith, humans will deviate from their teachings. Especially in schools, Islamic schools need to continue to improve related to Islamic science.

The education system is a series of sub-systems or educational elements that are interrelated in realizing its success. There are goals, curriculum, materials, methods, educators, students, facilities, tools, approaches, and so on. The existence of one element requires the existence of another, without the existence of one of these elements, the educational process is hindered. Thus, it fails (Tiara, 2023). However, the madrasah has applied several basic principles related to epistemology in the process and even their practice, especially among students. However, madrasah face in implementing this new paradigm. Thus, there were several findings during the research with interview methods and observations around directly at the school, including:

- (i) Understanding the epistemology of Islamic education, the teachers showed a good understanding of the basic concepts of epistemology, but there are still limitations in the application of practices in the daily learning process, especially with classmates.
- (ii) The integration of technology is not optimal in the use of the learning process. Thus, understanding in finding a new paradigm is difficult, although some teachers have started to use digital media, many still rely on traditional methods that are less attractive to students.
- (iii) Student involvement in the learning process still needs to be improved, in this case, many students feel less motivated and actively involved in learning, which has an impact on their learning outcomes.
- (iv) The lack of training for teachers in the madrasah is because, in the process of providing new knowledge, teachers need to improve their knowledge where they continue to follow existing training. This is the responsibility of Madrasah in preparing a forum to provide training to teachers, one of the training needed to support teachers is a pedagogic approach and the use of technology in teaching to increase the effectiveness of learning.
- (v) Participation of Parents and the Community, if, incidentally, the school is built in the middle of a settlement, it is also necessary to collaborate. Thus, participation, especially parents and the community, in the educational process. This, the involvement of the surroundings greatly influences students in accepting the new paradigm.

Epistemology is an intellectual act or effort to investigate and decide true and untrue knowledge and can sit knowledge within the real one. In a fundamental philosophical understanding, epistemology is a function of the way of being human. Through it, humans are encouraged to always question their knowledge. One can also question the criteria for certainty and validity of knowledge (Sahin, 2018).

Epistemology is an exploration of the origins of knowledge or the theory of knowledge in short. A philosopher can and is very urgent if it is revealed how he obtains his knowledge. Starting to know the sources of knowledge, it is very easy to know and understand his thoughts (Jandrić *et al.*, 2021). In the context of Islamic education, epistemology plays a very important role in shaping the perspective of knowledge and how that knowledge is taught to the students. In the Qur'an, there are many verses that encourage mankind to seek knowledge and understand the universe as part of the search for truth.

One of the verses that emphasizes to all of us in continuing to seek knowledge is.

Allah said:

فَتَعَلَّىٰ اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقَّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

"And say, O my Lord, give me knowledge." (QS. Taha:114).

This verse shows people that the search for knowledge has become an obligation for every Muslim. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions need to develop an epistemological approach that is by Islamic values.

The new paradigm in Islamic education must be able to answer the challenges of the times and the needs of today's students. In this case, this school needs to make an approach that includes:

- (i) Research-based learning in the surrounding environment, methods like this will encourage students to actively engage themselves, in groups or individually.
- (ii) Information technology integration, namely in the use of technology, information, and communication in learning. This can provide increased student engagement by providing facilities.
- (iii) A holistic approach, education in madrassas must pay attention to the spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects of students simultaneously to create a balanced individual.
- (iv) Collaboration, madrasas are obliged to build partnerships with parents and the surrounding community. Thus, in the learning process, they will continue to support important steps in creating a conducive learning environment.
- (v) Professional development of teachers, by looking at the existing limitations, training for teachers is one of the solutions and this is indispensable for all teachers in this case teachers can adopt an innovative and effective pedagogical approach.

In general, the Philosophy of Science has been able to develop science, and science can advance technology, technology is a means used by humans socially and individually to meet their needs (Safri, 2021).

The important point is the aspect of education in the Islamic view and the breadth of the scope of the Qur'an in describing and explaining (al-Bayan) various life phenomena and solving human problems, especially in the aspects of education and science. Thus, it can be used to lead people to the truth (al-Haq) and enter the peak of humanity (caliph fi al-Ardhi) (Nasihin *et al.*, 2023).

Thus, in striving to provide the best to teachers and students, the head of the madrasah or the foundation is the main determinant of success in learning the new paradigm. This implementation is a systematic change in education management. The first step is curriculum information that must be adapted to the needs of students and the development of the times. Thus, the material taught is relevant and interesting. Second, there is a need for continuous

training for teachers which will be a top priority. Thus, they can adopt innovative and effective teaching methods, including the use of information and communication technology in the teaching and learning process.

The change in the educational paradigm from the old paradigm to the new paradigm, there are various fundamental aspects of the change efforts, namely: First, the old paradigm sees that educational efforts tend to be more centralistic; policies are more top-down, the orientation of education development is more partial, education is designed for the economic growth sector, political stability, security, and assembly technology. The role of the government is very dominant in education policy and the weak role of educational institutions and non-school institutions. Second, the new paradigm, the orientation of education in: centralistic, education policy is bottom-up, and the orientation of education development is more holistic. Education emphasizes the development of awareness to unite in cultural pluralism, plurality of thinking, upholding moral, humanitarian, and religious values, creative and productive awareness, and legal awareness. Qualitative and quantitative community participation in efforts to develop education, and empower community institutions, such as families, NGOs, Islamic boarding schools, the business world, work institutions, and training, in efforts to manage and develop education, which is oriented towards the formation of a quality and critical Indonesian society (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2020).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this study, the importance of redefining epistemology in the context of Islamic education has been discussed. The findings show that despite a basic understanding of epistemology, its implementation still faces various challenges such as technological limitations, low student participation, and the need for training for teachers. The new paradigm in Islamic education must be able to answer the challenges of the times with a holistic approach that involves all relevant stakeholders. By implementing these recommendations, Islamic boarding schools can improve the quality of their education and create a better learning environment for students.

#### 5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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