Exploring the Foundations of Islamic Education: An In-depth Analysis of its Principles

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Abstract

This study examines the fundamental aspects of Islamic education, with a focus on the principles of acquiring knowledge and fostering ethical and moral development in humans. The Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) emphasize the importance of educated individuals in Islam, urging Muslims to seek knowledge and approach the process of learning with a reverent respect for Allah. The Islamic educational system goes beyond academic content, prioritizing the development of a person's mindset and conduct to align with Islamic principles. This study utilizes qualitative approaches to examine scholarly literature to comprehend the fundamental tenets of Islamic education. The goal is to examine the Islamic principles of education, which cover various subjects, and aim to foster those who possess a deep comprehension of the religion and commitment to Islamic ethical and moral values while giving priority to the comprehensive development of a person's cognitive and physical well-being.

1.0 Introduction

The quest of knowledge and the development of principles of ethics and morals in people are both focal, which is an essential component of the Islamic faith. In the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), the significance of knowledgeable individuals has been emphasized, and Muslims have been encouraged to pursue knowledge and to fear Allah in their pursuit of education. A person's character and manner are shaped to reflect Islamic ideals and behave as representative of Allah on Earth. This is the goal of the Islamic notion of education, which extends beyond the acquisition of academic material. In Islamic education, the core principles revolve around the belief in the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad (S.A.W). Additionally, there is a fundamental distinction between information that is revealed and knowledge that is acquired. The Islamic

educational system places a strong emphasis on the religious need to acquire knowledge, the importance of lifelong learning, and the essential role that the mind plays in the construction of human nature. In addition, the principles emphasize the significance of providing equal access to educational opportunities, the entire development of an individual's character, and the cultivation of strong moral ideals and virtues. The Islamic educational system is a holy and divine enterprise that places a strong emphasis on the harmonious blending of scientific investigation and faith in Allah. Under the principles of education that are outlined in the Qur'an and put into practice during the early Islamic civilizations, the Islamic ideals of education encompass a wide range of subjects. Islamic education aims to cultivate individuals who have a profound understanding of the religion and who adhere to the moral ideals and ethical standards that Islam recognizes. The principles of Islamic education prioritize the holistic development of an individual, which includes both intellectual and physical development. This study analyses the concept of education and its main principles from an Islamic perspective.

2.0 Concept of Education in Islam

Education in Islam is a comprehensive and profoundly spiritual endeavor that seeks to cultivate the sensitivities of an individual, molding their attitudes, behaviors, and choices under the moral principles of the religion (Saleh & Bustam, 2023). The purpose is not only to gain intellectual information but also to shape the essence and demeanor of an individual so they can embody Islamic principles and act as representatives of Allah on Earth, known as *khalifatullah fi al-ard* (vicegerent of Allāh on the earth) (Fandy, 2023). The ultimate objective is to equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to lead a meaningful existence that covers both the transient earthly realm and the everlasting afterlife that ensues upon death (Mecca, 1977). Islamic academics frequently delineate the term education from an Islamic standpoint using three distinct aspects, each of which is exemplified by certain ideas. *Tarbiyyah* prioritizes the holistic growth of an individual, encompassing both their physical and intellectual development. On the other hand, *Tadib* is centered on cultivating individuals who possess a deep understanding of the faith and adhere to the virtuous principles and ethical standards endorsed by Islam. *Talim*, however, is founded upon the principles of imparting knowledge and acquiring knowledge via instruction. These themes synergistically combine to form a holistic approach to education that embodies the spiritual and ethical principles of Islam (M. Halstead, 2004).

It is crucial to emphasize that the notion of education in Islam should not become a subject of dispute and intellectual hostility among scholars. Instead,

emphasis should be placed on the implementation, approach, and goals of education rather than the particular ideas employed to describe it. Education in Islam can be a potent means of developing individuals who possess a comprehensive understanding of *tarbiyyah*, *talim*, and *tadib*. By considering all aspects of teaching and learning activities that embody these concepts, it is possible to cultivate individuals who are intellectually and spiritually balanced and deeply dedicated to upholding the principles of their faith.

2.1 The Tarbiyyah

Tarbiyyah, a term that originated in the Arab world during the latter half of the twentieth century, is a modern concept in Islamic education that evolved as a component of educational reform. Education is a broad term that includes several elements such as raising, reforming, instilling good ethical and moral behavior, discipline, purification, and guiding (Saleh & Bustam, 2023). Tarbiyyah is derived from the Arabic word al-Rabb, which refers to "the Lord," signifying the process of nurturing all creation by Allah. Tarbiyyah, in Islamic education, is a pedagogical approach that prioritizes the holistic growth of individuals, encompassing both their physical and intellectual development. It aims to cultivate individuals with a robust moral character (Yasin & Jani, 2013).

In Islamic education, classical thinkers emphasized the need to instill ethical and moral behavior in individuals from a young age. The term Tarbiyyah, mentioned in the Qur'an, refers to the comprehensive development and training of individuals in numerous aspects. Tarbiyyah is a process that entails meeting the physical, educational, moral, and spiritual needs of children to facilitate their growth and development into productive individuals within society (Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUṯaimīn et al., 1997). In contemporary society, the term Tarbiyyah has come to denote education in the Muslim world, and numerous Arab nations have included the term in the title of their Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, despite the extensive usage of the term, the Muslim community has yet to properly incorporate the concept of Tarbiyyah into the process of designing educational curricula and syllabi for various educational levels (Yasin & Jani, 2013). Hence, it is imperative to underscore the significance of Tarbiyyah in Islamic education and guarantee its incorporation into the educational framework.

2.2 The Talim

The concept of Talim in Islamic education is firmly grounded in the quest for knowledge, with its basis in the Arabic term 'ilm, denoting knowledge. Scholars have historically used it to refer to the process of teaching and learning, with a specific focus on the cognitive development of individuals through the sharing of knowledge (Sudan, 2017). Talim refers to the process of imparting and spreading

knowledge using instructional techniques. This principle is reaffirmed throughout the Qur'an when Allah dispatched Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to educate mankind by directing them to consult the Qur'an for illumination. The Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) also commends individuals involved in the act of imparting knowledge and acquiring knowledge, highlighting the importance of understanding the Qur'an as the most valuable type of knowledge (Tahira & Saadi, 2022). In contemporary society, Talim involves not only the dissemination of knowledge but also incorporates elements such as knowledge delivery platforms, techniques, and evaluation processes (Yasin & Jani, 2013). While Talim primarily stresses cognitive development, it is important to acknowledge that holistic education in Islam encompasses both Tarbiyyah, which encompasses physical, emotional, and intellectual growth, and Talim, which specifically concentrates on cognitive components (J. M. Halstead, 2004). To fully capture the all-encompassing philosophy of education in Islam, contemporary academics have suggested the term Ta'dib as a means of conveying a more comprehensive and holistic approach to education.

2.3 The Tadib

The notion of Tadib in Islamic Education, as emphasized by contemporary Muslim scholar Syed Naquib al-Attas, prioritizes the cultivation of adab to foster the development of a virtuous individual. According to Al-Attas, the purpose of education is to impart adab, which includes both the spiritual and material dimensions of life, to foster moral excellence (Al-Attas, 1980). Adab encompasses the desirable attributes necessary for cultivating a comprehensive and balanced individual. Al-Attas emphasizes that education, as demonstrated in tradition, is a form of adab, with the Prophet Muhammad serving as the perfect example of an ideal education. A person who exemplifies adab is known as "a man of adab," distinguished by a profound feeling of accountability towards God, oneself, and the community, while actively pursuing personal growth and excellence (Bagheri & Khosravi, 2006). This approach diverges from a secular emphasis on generating competent citizens or employees, highlighting the significance of prioritizing the cultivation of virtuous individuals. Al-Attas emphasizes that a virtuous man will naturally be a responsible member of society, emphasizing the importance of personal responsibility in Islam and the primary goal of ethics being the individual (Zarkasyi et al., 2019). Tadib is a comprehensive educational idea that covers information, instruction, and good breeding. It takes into account several aspects of education, such as human upbringing, teaching and learning methods, and self-discipline. This thorough analysis of tadib forms the basis for Islamic education to foster the development

of the Ideal Individual (Yasin & Jani, 2013). It calls for a transformation in educational systems to correspond with this goal by incorporating divine revelation into all areas of knowledge.

3.0 The Principles of Islamic Education

The foundation of Islamic education is the unification of knowledge, the Prophetic model, and Tawhid (the Oneness of Allah). Islamic education is based on the principles of creating noble morals, preparing for life in this world and the hereafter, and connecting oneself to Allah. The fundamental principles of Islamic education are covered in this study below.

3.1 Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (S.A.W)

Islamic education is firmly grounded in the core premise of belief in the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad S.A.W. This conviction serves as the fundamental principle of Iman, as highlighted in the Qur'an, "And he who is bestowed with wisdom truly receives an abundant benefit" (Al-Baqarah:269). For a Muslim, the fundamental principles of Islam, such as the belief in the unity of Allah, the prophethood of Muhammad S.A.W., and the Last Day of Judgment, are absolute and cannot be compromised. The importance of studying the Quran as the foundation of Islamic education. By attaining a profound comprehension of the teachings of God, an individual's faith is strengthened, empowering them to traverse the intricacies of the world with a resolute spiritual foundation (Ashraf, 1994). This is consistent with the Hadith of the Prophet, which emphasizes the significance of acquiring knowledge about Allah right from the beginning of one's learning journey. Through prioritizing these principles, Islamic education not only transmits knowledge but also fosters a deep connection to faith, leading individuals toward a life filled with spiritual enlightenment and comprehension.

3.2 Revealed Knowledge and Acquired Knowledge

The Principles of Islamic Education are based on a fundamental differentiation between two categories of knowledge: *Fardhu Ain*, which refers to information that is revealed, and *Fardu Kifayah*, which refers to knowledge that is acquired. Revealed Knowledge is obtained from the Qur'an, the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W, Shariah, as well as *ilm al-ladunniyah* and hikmah (Azila et al., 2015). The Qur'an and Sunnah are the main sources of Revealed Knowledge, offering the fundamental moral and ethical principles for Islamic education. Shariah is a set of rules and guidelines derived from the Quran and Sunnah that provide practical instructions for daily living. On the other hand, *ilm al-ladunniyah* and hikmah refer to spiritual knowledge and wisdom that are acquired by devotion and moral uprightness (Ebrahimi, 2017). Acquired information, often

referred to as Unrevealed Knowledge, is acquired via practical experience, experiments, observation, and investigation. It includes scientific information and other types of knowledge that are not expressly mentioned in Islamic text. The amalgamation of these two types of knowledge has played a crucial role in developing the ideals of Islamic education and fostering the magnificent era of Islamic Civilization. The development of this civilization can be credited to its strong focus on regarding the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the primary and all-encompassing sources of knowledge and education. This approach to learning incorporates both spiritual and practical knowledge, resulting in a complete educational experience.

3.3 Religious Obligation

The third concept of Islamic education highlights the religious duty of acquiring information, as articulated by the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. in the Surah Al-Alaq, which instructs Muslims to engage in reading and actively pursue knowledge. The teachings of the Prophet emphasize the significance of acquiring, examining, researching, exploring, interpreting, and implementing knowledge as acts of devotion to Allah. The Hadith narrated by Anas emphasizes the importance of acquiring knowledge as a religious obligation, while the Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in Muslim, Abu Daud, Tarmidzi, and Nasaei emphasizes the long-lasting advantages of knowledge, such as engaging in charitable acts and having pious descendants who pray for the deceased. Islamic education serves as more than just an intellectual endeavor; it is a way to worship Allah and achieve the ultimate goal of human existence (Essabane et al., 2023). The primary objective of education in Islam is to equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure their well-being in both the present life and the afterlife. Islamic education is not restricted solely to religious studies but rather comprises a wide range of knowledge domains that have the potential to bring benefits to both individuals and society as a whole. Seeking knowledge is a form of devotion, and it is crucial to have the aim of seeking Allah's favor and approval (Shah et al., 2015). Thus, Islamic education is a religious duty, a method of worshiping Allah, and a preparation for the afterlife.

3.4 Lifetime Process

The fourth tenet of Islamic education underscores the significance of continuous learning throughout one's entire lifespan, spanning from birth to death (Karim et al., 2021). This idea is founded on the teachings of the Prophet, who highlighted the significance of education in equipping individuals to act as representatives (Khalifah) of Allah on earth. Their purpose is to contribute to the rebuilding and advancement of society, with the ultimate goal of attaining prosperity in both the

present life and the afterlife (Hasan, 2020). This notion emphasizes the significance of ongoing learning and individual development, as opposed to accepting a basic level of knowledge.

3.5 Aql (mind)

The centrality of the mind, or "aql," in human nature—a crucial factor that sets people apart from animals—is emphasized in the fifth principle of Islamic education (Kader, 2021). Reasoning, which is a vital source of information about the cosmos and people in particular, is based on the mind. The ability of the human mind to alter and enhance human life is highlighted by the socio-psychological classification of the mind's reasoning capacity into multiple levels, including imitation, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, assessment, and creativity (Merry, 2006). Human knowledge has proven its strength by enabling humans to tame and defeat even the largest and fiercest beasts via the use of reason. This is among the explanations for Allah's selection of people to be the *Khalifatul-Ardh*, or earth stewards. Without the capacity for reason and creation possessed by the human mind, the world could not have evolved and advanced. If the world had been left in the hands of animals, who have no thought, desire, or drive to grow, it would have been destroyed. In contrast, angels who participate in formal worship would not have been able to reach this degree of development. Since using one's mind to reason and create is an essential part of being human and is necessary for advancement, this makes up the fifth principle of Islamic education. This idea emphasizes how important education is for fostering the use of reason and creativity to improve human life and fulfill the duty of humans as stewards of the planet, as well as for growing the potential of the mind (Safrianto et al., 2023).

3.6 Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational opportunity for all members of society is a key principle of Islamic education, rooted in the Islamic faith (Sudan, 2017). This notion is derived from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, who proclaimed that education is a religious duty that applies to all individuals, irrespective of their gender. In Islam, the significance of women's education is underscored, recognizing women as an essential component of community existence. Although there may be instances where women are mandated to undergo military training, the educational ideas and system for women should align with the teachings of Islam. This involves providing women with the information and abilities required to fulfill their duties as caregivers and nurturers of the family and household. Moreover, it is imperative to ensure that every individual within a community, regardless of their color or ethnicity, has access to the same educational

possibilities. Discrimination rooted in variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, geography, and socio-economic status is not only unjust but also has the potential to foster prejudice, negativity, and conflict. Nevertheless, an equitable allocation of opportunities does not necessarily imply a rigid adherence to meritocracy, as this approach may lead to unfavorable conditions. Instead, the application of the education principle should be more permissive and adaptable, considering the specific circumstances and requirements of each student. This method is more inclined to lead to a society that is both harmonious and productive (Abukari, 2014). The Qur'an and Hadith explicitly outline the rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims. As stewards of the earth, it is incumbent upon us to fulfill these duties with prudence, enthusiasm, and effectiveness. It is crucial to guarantee that every member of society has equitable access to high-quality education, as this is fundamental for the advancement of individuals and communities. By advocating for equal access to education, we can contribute to the establishment of a fair and impartial society where every person has the chance to achieve their maximum capabilities (Castelli & Trevathan, 2008).

3.7 Sacred and Divine

The seventh pillar of Islamic education highlights its comprehensive basis and viewpoint, grounded in the conviction that all knowledge is sacred and divine. This principle is founded on the concept that the acquisition of knowledge should be undertaken in the name of Allah and for His sake, as explicitly mentioned in Surah Al-Alaq (Dzilo, 2012). While it is acknowledged that humans are limited in their ability to fully comprehend all of Allah's characteristics, the significance of the sacred in human existence is emphasized. The fragmentation in contemporary human existence is ascribed to the absence of a profound sense of the sacred, resulting in sensations of estrangement.

The comprehensive nature of Islamic education is exemplified in the pursuit of essential information that is mandatory for individual Muslims to acquire and implement, referred to as Fardhu Ain. This encompasses knowledge about the Six Pillars of Faith (Rukun Iman) and the Five Pillars of Islam (Rukun Islam). The Rukun Iman comprises the tenets of believing in Allah, Malaikats (angels), Rasul Allah (messengers of Allah), the Day of Qiamah (Judgment Day), and Qadha and Qadar (divine decree and predestination). The Rukun Islam consists of the proclamation of Shahadah, the mandatory observance of prayer five times a day, fasting during the month of Ramadhan, giving Zakat, and undertaking the Haj pilgrimage. Hence, individual Muslims must acquire and implement comprehensive information regarding both Rukuns (Ahmad Tijani, 2019). This principle emphasizes the significance of a thorough comprehension of

Islam, which includes not only religious rituals but also moral and ethical principles. It highlights the interdependence of all facets of knowledge and the necessity for a comprehensive approach to education. Islamic education seeks to produce an integrated and balanced individual who can positively contribute to society by incorporating religious ideas and practices into their daily lives. In summary, this concept emphasizes the need for a sacred worldview in creating the fundamental beliefs and viewpoints of Islamic education.

3.8 Science and Faith in Allah

Islamic education prioritizes the seamless integration of information obtained from both scientific inquiry and belief in Allah. The Quran emphasizes the interdependence of scientific facts and spiritual beliefs. The Quranic verses mentioned highlight the deep connection between the complex creations of Allah and the steadfast belief in His presence. Islamic education distinguishes itself from the exclusively religious or secular methods of other civilizations by incorporating a harmonious combination of both domains (Ansari, 2001). The Quran and Sunnah teachings underscore that education in Islam is intended to attain satisfaction in both the present life and the afterlife. The tradition of the Prophet emphasizes the significance of endeavoring to achieve success in both material and spiritual endeavors. The Quranic passages provide more evidence of the divine beginnings of humanity and the precise equilibrium of existence under Allah's omniscience and authority. The issue occurs when trying to harmonize religious and secular teachings, as they frequently give competing perspectives on the world (Junaidi et al., 2023). Neglecting to incorporate these varied viewpoints can result in doubt about religion and straying from the correct course. Hence, incorporating religious education alongside secular study is imperative to offer a comprehensive and significant educational experience in Islamic teachings.

3.9 Dealing Individuals

The ninth principle of Islamic education prioritizes the comprehensive growth of an individual's character, embracing cognitive, spiritual, psychological, physical, and social dimensions. Islamic education aims to prepare individuals to become righteous and morally upright (al-insan al-salih). This is accomplished by integrating the complete collection of human existence, encompassing the physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, household, and social dimensions (Ahdar et al., 2020). The ultimate objective is to enhance, govern, and refine human existence in alignment with the authentic principles of human nature. The all-encompassing nature of Islamic education fosters the holistic development of individuals, including their physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. It encompasses both their material and spiritual lives, as well as all their

earthly endeavors. This approach aligns with the inherent nature (fitrah) that Allah has bestowed upon humanity without disregarding any aspect of this nature or imposing any additional elements that were not originally there in its composition (Karimullah, 2023). This principle is vital in ensuring that education goes beyond simply acquiring knowledge and also includes the cultivation of moral and spiritual values. These values are necessary for the formation of a well-rounded individual who can make constructive contributions to society.

3.10 Akhlaq and Virtue

Islamic education prioritizes the development of strong moral values and qualities in students. The objective of Islamic education is to imbue individuals with virtues such as integrity, accountability, intelligence, honesty, and sincerity. Students are urged to have pure attitudes, strong determination, and a predilection for righteous deeds (*mahmudah*) rather than bad influences (*mazmumah*). Akhlaq, comparable to the fruit of a tree, represents the fundamental nature of a person's character; similar to how a tree without fruit becomes insignificant, individuals lacking moral principles are at risk of losing their fundamental nature (Hasanah et al., 2022). Within the realm of global education, there is growing apprehension regarding the decline in discipline and academic standards and the increase in social problems such as drug misuse and adolescent pregnancy. As a result, there is a demand for a renewed emphasis on moral development. Although certain societies assign the responsibility of moral education to households and religious establishments, there is an increasing acknowledgment of the school's duty to actively promote moral development. Teachers inherently shape moral development through their behavior and instruction, underscoring the importance of aligning educational objectives with concepts of moral education (Hasanah et al., 2022). The significance of cultivating affection for akhlaq and religion is promoting a comprehensive approach that incorporates faith, worship, moral behavior, and a profound attachment to Islamic principles.

3.11 Thematic Dimensions of Education

The Islamic ideals of education span a diverse array of subjects, as delineated in the Qur'an and implemented during the early Islamic civilizations. The subjects encompassed in this list are astronomy, veterinary medicine, agronomy, geography, philosophy, psychology, natural sciences and mathematics, history, and the Five Pillars of Islam (Bahroni, 2014). The Qur'an emphasizes the significance of knowledge and insight in all parts of life, highlighting numerous areas of topic expertise. During the Umayyah, Abbasiyyah (750-1258), and Othmaniyyah periods (1299-1923), the Islamic civilization placed great importance on various aspects of education, including astronomy, veterinary

medicine, agronomy, and geography (Stimpson & Calvert, 2021). The Qur'an asserts that Allah created the sun and moon in astronomy with specified functions, including timekeeping and illumination. This emphasizes the significance of comprehending the natural world and its manifestations. The Qur'an highlights the significance of animals in human life and stresses the necessity of their proper care in the field of veterinary medicine. The field of agronomy acknowledges the significance of the planet and its resources, as highlighted in the Qur'an. It emphasizes the necessity of adopting sustainable methods and recognizing the divine presence in nature. Geographically, the Qur'an portrays the globe as expansive and abundant with diverse vegetation, emphasizing the need to comprehend the natural world and its resources (Rahman, 2024). Furthermore, the Qur'an highlights the significance of the soul and psychology, promoting introspection and the acquisition of knowledge regarding oneself and others. The Qur'an underscores the significance of science and mathematics, emphasizing the interdependence of these fields and their tangible relevance in daily existence. The Qur'an underscores the significance of history, promoting the conservation and examination of cultural heritage, as well as the comprehension of the ascent and decline of civilizations (Surajudeen & Mat, 2013).

In general, the ideas of Islamic education prioritize the significance of information and comprehension in every facet of life, promoting the study of both spiritual and practical knowledge. The Qur'an emphasizes many areas of topic specialization, and these theme features of education were strongly implemented during the early Islamic civilizations. These concepts remain applicable in the present day, highlighting the significance of education and the quest for knowledge for the improvement of people and society as a whole.

4.0 Conclusion

In the end, we can say that Islamic education is an undertaking that is both holistic and spiritual. It places a strong emphasis on the acquisition of information, particularly the understanding of Allah's qualities, as a way of increasing human status and earning Allah's bounties in both this world and in the hereafter. A comprehensive approach to education that spans both intellectual and moral development is based on the foundations of Islamic education, which include the Oneness of Allah, the prophethood of Muhammad (S.A.W), and the separation between revealed and acquired knowledge. These concepts serve as the foundation for providing a omprehensive education. To instill an Islamic spirit in pupils and mold their attitudes, behaviors, and choices under Islamic principles, the role of instructors as architects of Islamic education is of the utmost importance. It is the ultimate goal of Islamic education to provide individuals with

the knowledge and abilities that are necessary to lead a meaningful life that is under Islamic values and serve as representatives of Allah on Earth. Islamic education is comprised of several fundamental components, including the incorporation of scientific knowledge and faith in Allah, the provision of equitable educational opportunities to all members of society, and the emphasis placed on the development of strong moral values and traits. The thematic dimensions of Islamic education, which are outlined in the Qur'an and were implemented during the early generations of Islamic civilizations, offer a wide range of subjects that contribute to the overall development of an individual's character. These subjects encompass cognitive, spiritual, psychological, physical, and social dimensions.

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