

Review Article

## Islamic Education in an Ontological Perspective

Muhtar Solihin<sup>1\*</sup>, Muhamad Zamzam Mubarak<sup>2</sup>, Rohanda<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Professor at Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University, Bandung-Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Postgraduate Student at the State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung-Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer at Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University Bandung-Indonesia

### Article History

Received: 17.11.2024

Accepted: 26.12.2024

Published: 30.12.2024

### Journal homepage:

<https://www.easpublisher.com>

### Quick Response Code



**Abstract:** Education is an important element that really determines the quality of human life. In Islam, education is known as *Tarbiyah al-Islamiyah* (Islamic Education), which is interesting to discuss in this research. This research aims to discover how Islamic education can be understood from a scientific ontology perspective. To answer the research objectives, this research uses the library research with a content analysis approach which focuses on ontological studies surrounding the nature and objectives of Islamic education. In the end, this research concluded that Islamic education has very significant ontological content and is able to touch the realm of metaphysics, which of course differentiates it from other education. This research also found that Islamic education exists as a science because it meets the requirements as a science which includes the concepts, nature and objectives of Islamic education. Ontologically, Islamic education essentially upholds Islamic values, which in its implementation directs humans to study Islamic teachings in total with knowledge content that is cognitive (intellectual), affective (morals) and psychomotor (skills).

**Keywords:** Philosophy, Ontology, Metaphysics, Islamic Education, Tarbiyah, Ta'dib, Ta'lim.

**Copyright © 2024 The Author(s):** This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution **4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)** which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a planned effort in a good learning process which aims to increase and develop the potential of students in the intellectual, scientific, social, cultural and religious fields (Pristiwanti Dewi *et al.*, 2022). In the Islamic context, education has a very significant role in efforts to develop and fulfill self-identity, psychological character, and instill Islamic values in daily life behavior. That is why studies and research on Islamic Education are so interesting to discuss, both in seminar forums, discussions, and research and development forums. Just as an example, in Indonesia, Islamic education has a very strong existence, so that its management and development is within a special institution and within the authority of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

Islamic education is a process of guidance and development of human abilities based on Islamic teachings. Islamic education plays an important role in guiding and exploring human potential as Khalifah on earth and spiritual potential as servants who serve Allah (Mappasiara, 2018). With Islamic education, people better understand how to become a quality person who is

in accordance with the morality or morals of the Koran and follows the actions exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad.

In a philosophical context, every field of science, including science that discusses Islamic education, is included in the area of Philosophy of Science. Philosophy of Science plays the role of explaining, predicting and controlling in the field of science (Yuisman Dedi, 2018). One of the discussions in the philosophy of science is ontology, which is a branch of the philosophy of science that talks about the nature of things. In the context of Islamic education, the ontology intended in this research is to describe the nature and objectives of Islamic education itself. Islamic education is very appropriate if viewed from an ontological perspective whose area of work is to highlight empirical data regarding the nature and objectives of Islamic education itself. Therefore, in this research the author will explain the ontology of Islamic education.

### Ontological Conception of Islamic Education

Ontology is one of the important areas of discussion in the philosophy of science. Ontology is widely recognized by experts as a branch of

\*Corresponding Author: Muhtar Solihin

Professor at Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University, Bandung-Indonesia

philosophical studies that discusses the nature of an object which contains a value behind existing reality (Syar'i Ahmad, 2020).

Viewed from an etymological perspective, ontology comes from the Greek *ontos* which means "to exist" and *logos* which means "knowledge", "theory" or "reason". Then the terms *ontos* and *logos* were absorbed into English to become *ontology* which means the study of something "that exists" or something that "is in its existence". The terminology of ontology is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature or discusses the existence of things that already exist and may exist (Ratna et al., 2023). The task of ontology is to explain the nature (essence) of something philosophically, or ask what the philosophical nature of everything is. Ontology describes the existence of the nature of things that humans are concerned about so that humans themselves get what they are looking for and give meaning to the process of their life. In this context, Islamic education becomes worthy of being discussed from an ontological perspective.

In contrast to education in general, Islamic education in its ontology does not only view education as a study of visible reality, but more than that, Islamic education examines the essence behind what is visible. Islam views reality as not limited to what is visible outwardly, but also concerns supernatural or inner realities. The visible and unseen reality actually originates from the Almighty, namely Allah. This is where the ontology of Islamic education touches on "metaphysical" aspects.

The term metaphysics comes from the Greek words meta and fictional. "Meta" which means behind, beyond, or after. Meanwhile, physics means real nature (Zulhemi, 2019). Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that questions the nature behind the world of phenomena. Metaphysics goes beyond the experience of its objects beyond the material that can be captured and observed by the five senses. Metaphysics can be recognized as the study or thinking about the deepest nature (ultimate nature) of reality or existence. In an in-depth study, the author found that the ontology of Islamic education touches aspects beyond the physical, namely metaphysics. This can be proven, for example in the curriculum which discusses the pillars of faith and the pillars of Islam. Teaching about the pillars of faith and the pillars of Islam is an instillation of belief in students about something supernatural (metaphysics).

However, Islamic education still recognizes that the relationship between metaphysics and science is an interconnected matter. Metaphysics talks about something that is not empirical, however, this does not mean that metaphysics rejects science even though science talks about empirical reality. In the context of education at school and in society, Islamic education always discusses the reality and symptoms that exist in

the lives of students, in addition to discussing metaphysical reality. Therefore, this metaphysical perspective is very important in carrying out a curriculum based on what exists in the realm of reality and the realm of metaphysics.

The curriculum regarding the pillars of faith and the pillars of Islam as mentioned above relating to angels, the afterlife, heaven, hell, etc. is the curriculum in the field of "Tawhid Science", which is metaphysical in nature. The science of Tawhid is a science that discusses the oneness of Allah, which means that all creatures depend on Allah. Allah is the Almighty, and Allah is also the dependence of all creatures.

Discussions about God in Islamic religious education are very basic subject matter because all concepts that exist in the world are God's creation. So from here it can be emphasized that the most basic concept in Islamic education is "Tawhid". Knowledge about monotheism is highly prioritized in Islamic education because how is it possible to know about Islam but not know about its god.

Islamic education has a very striking character regarding the source of knowledge itself which comes from Allah which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad which is formed in the statements of the Prophet's words (qouliyyah). Or in other words, Islamic education originates from the meanings contained in the verses of the Koran and al-Hadith, and this implies that the ontology of Islamic education is essentially around the Koran and al-Hadith, the implementation of which is carried out through the process of Islamic education, carried out in schools or campuses.

Apart from that, the object of Islamic education cannot be separated from discussions about the nature of humans themselves who are God's creation, which is explained a lot in the Koran and al-Hadits. Basically, Islamic education has two applicable objects, namely material objects and formal objects (Ngabdul Eko S, 2022). The material object of Islamic education contains how human morals relate to fellow humans and their environment. Humans are social creatures who need other people, therefore humans must have morals and have mature thoughts in socializing with other communities. The formal object of Islamic education regarding its content consists of several elements, namely: Substance, educational objectives, methods, materials, assessment and socio-cultural context, which in this research we only highlight aspects of the substance and objectives of Islamic education.

### **Ontology of Islamic Education: *Tarbiyah*, *Ta'dib*, and *Ta'lim***

The substance of Islamic education revolves around *tarbiyah*, *ta'dib*, and *ta'lim* as explained in this section. However, to know what these three substances are, it is necessary to first understand the meaning of

Islamic education itself.

Scientists provide opinions regarding the meaning of Islamic education, including Muhammad Yusuf al-Qardhowi and Ahmad Marimba. Muhammad Yusuf al-Qardhowi believes that Islamic education is education that teaches and guides a person to think through his mind and heart, spirit and body, as well as improving his morals and appearance (Ratna et al., 2023). Meanwhile, according to Ahmad Marimba, Islamic education is a process of guiding humans through their physical and spiritual abilities which aims to form a main personality based on Islamic indicators.

Basically, education is a medium for educating and developing the talents that exist in humans (Rahmat, 2016). From an ontological perspective, education is the best forum for the process of discovering hidden talents in humans, because education is essentially a process of fulfilling one's identity. In the view of Islamic education, it is explained that the talents that exist in humans are essentially gifts from Allah that can be developed to fulfill their human identity as servants before Allah and at the same time as social creatures in life in this world. Through Islamic education, humans can improve themselves, increase their scientific insight and develop their strengths. In the historical perspective of Islamic education, it is explained that the educational process has existed since the time of the Prophet Adam as described in the Koran (Acip et al., 2024).

If we examine in more depth the history of the development of Islamic education which is then linked to the ontology (essence or nature) of Islamic education, then there are three general terms in the Islamic world which are related to Islamic education itself, including: al-Tarbiyah (the meaning of linking to God as the main educator), al-Ta'lim (science and moral education), and at-Ta'dib (practice of knowledge that produces charity) (Hidayah Hikmatul, 2023). These three terms have different meanings and characteristics but have the same goal, namely educating someone to be better. For this reason, the author needs to explain the ontology of tarbiyah, ta'dib, and ta'lim:

*First*, "Tarbiyah" is a Masdar isim word (formation), namely rabba-yurabbiyu- tarbiyatan, which means nurturing and maintenance (Dona Rahma & Aprison Wedra, 2024). This word is often found in the Koran and has the same meaning as the meaning above. The verse of the Koran which contains the word rabba is found in Surah al-Isra verse 17. Which means: O Allah, have mercy on them both as they have betrayed me. when I was little (QS Al-Isra: 17). In the verse of the Koran above, it explains how parents care for their children when they are young with great affection. In this case, the meaning of the word rabba in this verse is to care for, which is described as caring for children from childhood. Bukhari Umar is of the opinion that there are 4 elements which include the word tarbiyah, namely: being

responsible for nurturing and safeguarding the child's nature when they are about to reach maturity, supporting the child and developing the potential he has, directing the child to goodness and providing something appropriate according to the child's portion, and providing All this education is carried out in stages.

*Second*, "Ta'dib", In classical times the word *ta'dib* only denoted the meaning of education. This understanding lasted quite a long time, namely during the heyday of Islam until the emergence of other sciences resulting from human reasoning, which at that time were called *adab*. *Adab* is a lesson related to Islam such as tafsir, fiqh, Arabic and general sciences such as philosophy, physics, pharmacy, astronomy and others. All the branches of science mentioned are contained in a book called *Kutub al-Adab*. Based on this, the terms *al-Adab al-Kabir* and *al-Adab al-Shagir* by Ibn al-Muqaffa became famous. The explanation above is the opinion of Muhammad Nadi al-Badri quoted by Ramayulis (Ramayulis, 1994).

Apart from that, in ancient times *ta'dib* was also used for the educational process carried out by royal members, royal crown princes, princes or prospective successors to the king. The material content of this education is writing about some history related to royal victories, speeches, archery and so on (Jaya Farida, 2020). In the context of the meaning of the word *ta'dib*, it comes from *addaba-yuaddibu-ta'diban* which means education, submission, obedience, discipline to applicable rules. In other sources, *ta'dib* also means civilized, noble, moral and ethical. Based on this understanding, the word *ta'dib* is closely related to education, especially in Islamic education which upholds Islamic values, which aims to change the character and improve the morals of students.

*Third*, "Ta'lim". The word *ta'lim* comes from *fi'il madhi*, namely *'allama*, and becomes *masdhar* (formation), namely *ta'liman*, which means knowing and giving knowledge. In the concept of *ta'lim* learning, a teacher directs his students more towards cognitive aspects which contain aspects of knowledge needed in their lives and provides lessons about how to live a good life. Muhammad Rasyid Ridha once said and interpreted the word *ta'lim* as: the process of distributing knowledge to anyone who wants to learn without certain restrictions and conditions (Tafsir Ahmad, 2021). Other scientists also provide opinions regarding the word *ta'lim*, such as Abdul Fatah Jalal, according to whom *ta'lim* is a process of interaction between teachers and students in providing understanding related to science, responsibility, trust, understanding after which a person's soul is expected to be in conditions that can receive *al-hikmah* (wisdom).

Based on the definition of *ta'lim*, the learning process has several aspects of cultivating a person's knowledge and skills that are needed in their life. *Ta'lim* provides guidance for someone to live a better life, with

commendable behavior or morals and has extensive knowledge which functions to improve a person's quality by developing various potential skills and becoming a valuable person. The Prophet also gave an example in his life to Muslims that a person cannot only have the ability to read what is written, but must be accompanied by good understanding and be able to reflect on what is read and be responsible for what is read so that it can be put into practice in life (Asyamar M. A, 2022).

In the Koran, the meaning of *ta'lim* is also explained, which gives knowledge to Prophet Adam taught by Allah about various names of objects. This story is found in the Koran, Al-Baqarah verse 30, which means: And he taught Adam all the names (of things). Then presented it to the angels, then said: Tell me the names of these things if you are truly truthful people.

### Ontology of the Goals of Islamic Education

If the ontology of Islamic education is related to the essence of Islamic education to discover oneself as a servant before God, as explained above, then in turn it is very clear that Islamic education touches and is even intertwined with the metaphysical aspects that it will address. In this context, the aim of Islamic education is, apart from making the lives of Muslims more intelligent, it also aims to bring people closer to Allah with the knowledge gained from the educational process.

If the aim of Islamic education is related to the metaphysical aspect, Islamic education contains moral values that are guided by Islamic teachings revealed by Allah, where in Islamic teachings there are moral rules that must be followed consistently and in complete submission to Allah. Suwarno once argued that the purpose of Islamic education is to guide and provide an overview of Islamic values with the aim of practicing them in his personal life after undertaking education (Suwarno S, 2020). The goal of Islamic education is a general description of what an educator will aim for and directs educators not to deviate from the goals to be achieved. Quraish Shihab also believes that the aim of Islamic education is to direct humans, both individuals and groups, to become servants and at the same time caliphs (leaders) on earth, who can build the world by relying on Allah's decrees (Nabila, 2021). In this context, the goal of Islamic education is ontologically to get closer to Allah by relying on the Koran which was revealed by Allah.

However, Islamic Education in the process experiences various challenges and obstacles that must be faced, because the scope of Islamic Education is so broad. Islamic education can be likened to a vast ocean full of big waves and waves, and an educator is a sailor who will travel and pass through all these waves and waves. This analogy can be interpreted that, if a sailor is going to cross an ocean, he must have a sturdy boat to pass through and hit all the storms and waves that will hit the voyage. However, none of this will work if you don't

have a compass that functions to direct where the boat is going to reach a destination. If the compass is considered as a direction, then in Islamic Education the intended compass is the curriculum which includes the objectives of Islamic Education to be achieved.

The Koran has provided a frame of reference regarding the goals of Islamic education, as can be seen as follows:

*First*, the realization of devotion to Allah. This point is the same as the content of the Qur'an, surah al-Anbiya verse 25. In this verse, Allah created humans for the sole purpose of worshipping Allah.

*Second*, preparing humans as leaders on earth. It is written in the Koran in Surah Al-Baqoroh verse 30 which means: Allah has created a scenario that will make humans caliphs on this earth. This verse is one of the goals of Islamic education.

*Third*, to improve human morals for the better, because basically Islamic education really emphasizes the importance of morals.

*Fourth*, to achieve happiness in this world and the Hereafter. Islamic education provides guidance to humanity in all matters, including teaching how to live happily in this world and the afterlife. As explained in the Koran, surah al-Baqarah verse 200. This verse explains that a person is not allowed to boast after performing the Hajj, but they must be very grateful because Allah has given many great gifts to mankind. This great gift is what is meant by the happiness obtained in this world for mankind. To know and at the same time achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter, you must have education.

*Fifth*, to produce people who are mentally strong apart from being physically healthy. Islamic education teaches how to educate and maintain a person's mentality. History records that during the time of the Prophet, people in this era were physically and mentally strong through the education and preaching carried out by the Prophet.

That's why we can understand that Islamic education really upholds Islamic values, invites people to be better and have broad knowledge. The aim of Islamic education is not only about the good of the world, but also devotion and a good relationship with Allah. All of these goals actually imply that Islamic education has ideal goals which include aspects of devotion to God, aspects of leadership on earth, good mental aspects, and commendable moral behavior, as well as achieving happiness in this world and the hereafter. In this context, the aim of Islamic education concerns the realm of metaphysics, which is an important discussion in ontology.



## CONCLUSION

From the description above, it can be understood that the essence (ontology) of Islamic education is a process carried out by humans to perfect their identity and to achieve a good standard of living in the realm of devotion to Allah. This can be understood from Islamic education itself, which in the process can function as *tarbiyah* (education that refers to metaphysics), *ta'dib* (cultivating an attitude of submission to good rules and civilization) and *ta'lim* (teaching to transform knowledge). The substance of Islamic education is not only learning about scientific material but also psychological education to form firm faith (metaphysics) and commendable morals which are implemented in people's lives. The aim of Islamic education is related to a strong commitment to improving moral values and providing insight into Islam so that we can worship Allah well and follow the rules outlined by Allah. Thus, the discussion of the ontology of Islamic education is very closely related to the divine dimension based on revelation (the Qur'an) and al-Sunnah which are important areas in the study of scientific ontology.

## REFERENCE

- Acip, S. S., Solehutaufa, E., Gundara, A., & Munandar, A. (2024). Metode Pendidikan Ilahi: Refleksi atas Kisah dalam Al-Qur'an. *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam*, 10(2). Journal website: jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id
- Asymar, M. A. (2022). Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Dalam Islam: Ta'lim, Tarbiyah, Dan Ta'dib. *Jurnal Pendidikan Profesi Guru Agama Islam*, 2(3). <http://studentjournal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/gua>
- Dona, R., & Aprison, W. (2024). Ontologi dalam Pendidikan Islam. *Indonesian Reseach Journal on Education*, 4(1), 50-157.
- Hidayah, H. (2023). PENGERTIAN, SUMBER, DAN DASAR PENDIDIKAN ISLAM. *Jurnal AS-SAID*, 3(1), Halaman 21-33.
- Jaya, F. (2020). KONSEP DASAR DAN TUJUAN PENDIDIKAN DALAM ISLAM: TA'LIM, TARBIYAH DAN TA'DIB. *Jurnal Tazkiya*, IX(1). <http://jurnaltarbiyah.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/tazkiya>
- Mappasiara. (2018). PENDIDIKAN ISLAM (Pengertian, Ruang Lingkup dan Epistemologinya). *Jurnal UIN Alaudin*, 11(No. !).
- Nabila. (2021). Tujuan Pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 2(5). 867–875. <https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v2i05.170>
- Ngabdul, E. S. (2022). Kajian Objek Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Hadis Rasulullah SAW. *Al-Manar : Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Pendidikan Islam*, 11(2).
- Pristiwanti, D., Badariah, B., Hidayat, S., & Sari, R. D. (2022). Pengertian Pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling*, 4(6). <https://doi.org/10.31004/jpdk.v4i6.9498>
- Rahmat, H. (2016). Pendidikan Islam Sebagai Ilmu: Tinjauan Ontologi, Epistimologi Dan Aksiologi. *Jurnal Sabilarrasyad*, 1(1).
- Ramayulis. (1994). *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*. Kalam Mulia.
- Ratna, M., Bahaking, R., Natsir, M., & Amaruddin, A. (2023). Ontologi, Epistimologi, dan Aksiologi Filsafat Pendidikan Islam. *Iqro: Jurnal Magister Pendidikan Islam*, 3(2). <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/iqr>
- Suwarno, S. (2020). Studi Agama Islam Melalui Pendekatan Interdisipliner. *Dar El Ilmi: Jurnal Studi Keagamaan, Pendidikan Dan Humaniora*, 7(2), 140–154.
- Syar'I, A. (2020). *FILSAFAT PENDIDIKAN ISLAM*. CV. Narasi Nara.
- Tafsir, A. (2021). *Ilmu Pendidikan dalam perspektif Islam*. Remaja Rosda Karya, Cet. Ke-4 Bandung.
- Yuisman, D. (2018). Peran Dan Fungsi Filsafat Ilmu Dalam Perkembangan Ilmu Pengetahuan Berlandaskan Nilai Keislaman. *Jurnal Nur Islam*, 5(2).
- Zulhemi. (2019). METAFISIKA SUHRAWARDI: GRADASI ESSENSI DAN KESADARAN DIRI. *Jurnal UIN Raden Fatah*, 20(1).

---

**Cite This Article:** Muhtar Solihin, Muhamad Zamzam Mubarak, Rohanda (2024). Islamic Education in an Ontological Perspective. *East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit*, 7(12), 424-428.

---