



THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

PENTINGNYA ILMU DALAM PERSPEKTIF ISLAM

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Article history :

Received : 03-02-2025

Revised : 05-02-2025

Accepted : 07-02-2025

Published: 09-02-2025

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji pentingnya ilmu pengetahuan (Ilm) dalam Islam, dengan menekankan perannya yang penting dalam pertumbuhan pribadi dan masyarakat. Dengan mengacu pada teks-teks Al-Qur'an dan Hadits, artikel ini menekankan perlunya Islam untuk mengejar ilmu pengetahuan baik dalam bidang keagamaan maupun umum. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka, pembahasan difokuskan pada implikasi etis dari pembelajaran, hubungan antara ilmu pengetahuan dan keimanan, dan kontribusi historis kaum intelektual Muslim terhadap subjek-subjek seperti fisika, filsafat, dan kedokteran. Islam mempromosikan pendekatan komprehensif terhadap pendidikan yang mendorong pertumbuhan pribadi, perilaku etis, dan peningkatan masyarakat dengan menggabungkan kegiatan spiritual dan intelektual. Pendidikan Islam, yang memadukan ilmu spiritual dan fisik, sangat penting dalam membentuk karakter moral dan spiritual. Pendidikan Islam sangat menekankan pembelajaran seumur hidup dan mendorong orang untuk menumbuhkan dasar etika yang kuat dan rasa tanggung jawab moral. Tujuannya adalah untuk menciptakan orang-orang yang berpengetahuan luas dan juga menunjukkan karakteristik seperti disiplin, rasa hormat, dan moralitas. Dengan memastikan bahwa perkembangan intelektual diimbangi dengan tanggung jawab moral dan spiritual, pendekatan yang menyeluruh ini membekali orang untuk menghadapi tantangan masyarakat dan memberikan kontribusi konstruktif bagi komunitas mereka.

Kata kunci: Pentingnya ilmu pengetahuan, perspektif Islam, pendidikan Islam

Abstract

The article examines the significant importance of knowledge (Ilm) in Islam, emphasizing its critical role in personal and societal growth. Drawing on Qur'anic texts and Hadith, it emphasizes the Islamic need to pursue knowledge in both religious and general areas. Using a literature review approach, the discussion focuses on the ethical implications of learning, the relationship between knowledge and faith, and Muslim intellectuals' historical contributions to subjects such as physics, philosophy, and medicine. Islam promotes a comprehensive approach to education that encourages personal growth, ethical behavior, and society improvement by combining spiritual and intellectual activities. Islamic education, which integrates both spiritual and physical knowledge, is essential in forming moral and spiritual character. It places a heavy emphasis on lifelong learning and encourages people to cultivate a solid ethical basis and sense of moral responsibility. The goal is to create well-rounded, knowledgeable people who also exhibit characteristics like discipline, respect, and morality. By ensuring that intellectual development is balanced with moral and spiritual responsibilities, this all-encompassing approach equips people to meet societal challenges and make constructive contributions to their communities.

Key words: Importance of knowledge, Islamic perspective, Islamic education



INTRODUCTION

Islam highly values science, as reflected in numerous Qur'anic verses and hadiths emphasizing knowledge. The first revealed verse commands reading, a key method of acquiring knowledge. Allah says: "Read in the name of your Lord who created; created humans from a clot of blood. Read, and your Lord is the Most Gracious, who teaches by the pen, teaching humans what they did not know." (Al-Alaq: 1-5) (Shamsul *et al.*, 2024). Ilm, meaning knowledge, is a core concept in Islam, emphasizing the pursuit of both worldly and spiritual understanding. Rooted in the first Qur'anic revelation to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it calls for seeking knowledge through reflection on divine and natural signs. This pursuit is essential for humans to fulfill their role as stewards of the Earth, with knowledge meant to benefit society and uphold moral responsibilities (Kulsum, 2020).

In Islam, seeking knowledge (Ilm) is a fundamental duty for every Muslim, encompassing both religious and worldly realms. The Qur'an and Hadith emphasize learning as essential for spiritual growth and societal contribution. Knowledge deepens one's faith and ethics while empowering individuals to actively contribute to their communities through education and innovation, thus linking personal development with collective progress (Yasin *et al.*, 2023). According to Sullivan and Davis (2012), knowledge in Islam is not just for personal growth but is vital for societal well-being. The Qur'an encourages reflection and learning, urging Muslims to use their knowledge to improve society, address social issues, promote justice, and contribute positively to their communities. This integration of religious values with scientific understanding empowers individuals to make meaningful contributions.

There is one evidence from the hadith of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam about knowledge in Islam:

عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَعَلَّمُوا الْعِلْمَ وَعَلِّمُوهُ النَّاسَ تَعَلَّمُوا الْفَرَائِضَ وَعَلِّمُوهُ النَّاسَ تَعَلَّمُوا الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلِّمُوهُ النَّاسَ فَإِنْ يِ امْرُؤٌ مَقْبُوضٌ وَالْعِلْمُ سَيِّئْتَقْصُ وَتَطْهَرُ الْفِتْنُ حَتَّى يَخْتَلِفَ اثْنَانِ فِي فَرِيضَةٍ لَا يَجِدَانِ أَحَدًا يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمَا

Ibn Mas'ud narrated, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'Seek knowledge and teach it to others. Study inheritance and teach it to others. Study the Qur'an and teach it to others. I am going to die. Knowledge will decrease and trials will increase, so that when two people disagree about an obligation, they will find no one who can resolve it.'" (HR. Ad-Darimi, Ad-Daruquthni, and Al-Baihaqi). This Hadith emphasizes the importance of studying knowledge, especially religious knowledge such as inheritance and the Qur'an, and teaching it to others. The Prophet warned that knowledge will decrease over time, while fitnah and dissent will increase. Therefore, it is important for Muslims to continue learning and spreading knowledge in order to face challenges and maintain the integrity of society.

In Islam, seeking knowledge is a fundamental duty for every Muslim, encompassing both religious and worldly realms (Djamdjuri, Thoyib, Retnowati, Furqan, & Holifah, 2023). The Qur'an and Hadith emphasize learning as essential for spiritual growth and societal contribution. Knowledge deepens one's faith and ethics while empowering individuals to actively contribute to their communities through education and innovation, thus linking personal development with



collective progress (Arshad, Rozali and Kamaruzzaman, 2012). And according to Hapter and Umbard (2001), The development of Islamic civilization has been deeply rooted in the pursuit of knowledge, which played a pivotal role in shaping its golden age. Muslim scholars made groundbreaking contributions across various fields such as science, philosophy, and medicine, blending religious principles with intellectual inquiry. This tradition of knowledge not only fostered innovation and progress within the Islamic world but also significantly influenced global civilizations, demonstrating the transformative power of *Ilm* in advancing both spiritual and worldly understanding.

The article aims to explore the significance of knowledge in Islam and its impact on individuals and Muslim society. It highlights the religious and worldly importance of seeking and sharing knowledge, as emphasized in the Qur'an and Hadith. The article underscores how knowledge deepens faith, enhances ethics, and contributes to societal progress. It also discusses the role of knowledge in the development of Islamic civilization, demonstrating its influence on both spiritual growth and global advancements.

The article will provide a comprehensive overview of key topics, including the definition of knowledge in Islam, the obligation to seek knowledge, and the relationship between knowledge and faith. It will also discuss the ethical dimensions of acquiring and applying knowledge, the role of education in Islam, and the importance of knowledge in daily life.

DISCUSSION

In this discussion, we will look at some key aspects of knowledge in Islam, starting with its definition of knowledge in Islam, the obligation to seek knowledge, the relationship between knowledge and faith, ethics in the pursuit and practice of knowledge, finally, the role of education in Islam and the importance of knowledge in everyday life are also examined, showing how knowledge serves as the foundation for personal and societal growth.

Definition of knowledge in Islam

At its core, the Arabic term '*ilm*' translates to "knowledge." However, its meaning extends beyond this simple definition. Depending on the context, '*ilm*' can also refer to "religious knowledge," "learning," or "sciences." When used in its plural form, '*ulum*', it often denotes a broader scope of disciplines, encompassing various fields of study (Furlow, 2020). The concept of knowledge in Islam encompasses both worldly and spiritual dimensions. Islamic knowledge is deeply rooted in the teachings and revelations found in the Qur'an, Hadith, and the broader Islamic canon. It is not merely about the accumulation of secular knowledge but also involves understanding and implementing spiritual and ethical principles (Sayyid, 2006).

According to Embong (2016), in English, knowledge typically refers to facts, information, skills, and attitudes acquired by a person. In Islamic terminology, it is referred to as *al-'ilm*, which means understanding (*fahm*) and gnosis (*ma'rifah*). Scholars define *al-'ilm* differently, but Al-Jurjānī (1978) describes it as "absolute certainty aligned with reality," representing the highest level of perception, *al-yaqīn*, where no doubt exists. There are four levels of perception: the lowest is *al-wahm* (false perception), followed by *al-shak* (doubtful perception), then *al-zann* (likely perception with some doubt), and finally *al-yaqīn* (certain and doubt-free perception).



Islamic epistemology identifies several key sources of knowledge such as:

1. The Qur'an and Sunnah, which encompass the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad, serve as the fundamental sources in Islam. They offer definitive truths that shape human comprehension and guide ethical behavior (Yasin *et al.*, 2023).
2. Human reasoning plays a crucial role in understanding the signs of God present in the universe. This process involves rational thinking and deep reflection, utilizing both empirical observation and logical deduction as legitimate means of acquiring knowledge (Embong, 2016).
3. Knowledge can also arise from personal experiences and scientific exploration, though this form is often considered less definitive than knowledge obtained through divine revelation (Yasin *et al.*, 2023).

In Islam, knowledge is categorized into revealed and derived types. Revealed knowledge includes instinctive understanding and divine revelations through prophets, such as the Quran and Hadith. Derived knowledge is gained through human intellect, observation, and reasoning, all within the bounds of Islamic teachings. This dual approach integrates spiritual wisdom with intellectual inquiry, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the world (Azram, 2012).

Acquiring knowledge in Islam is viewed not just as a means of obtaining information, but also as an act of worship. It is considered a personal obligation (*fardhu 'ain*) for all Muslims, regardless of gender. This pursuit is essential for understanding God's creation and fulfilling one's purpose in life (Yasin *et al.*, 2023). Also based on Embong (2016), Islam promotes a holistic view of knowledge, rejecting the separation between secular and religious fields. It teaches that all knowledge comes from God, the ultimate source of truth. Therefore, Islamic education seeks to unify different areas—science, philosophy, and religion—into a coherent system that reflects this unity.

The Obligation to Seek Knowledge.

Pursuing knowledge is regarded as a religious obligation (*fard*) required of every Muslim, regardless of gender. This duty is highlighted in various Hadiths, stressing its importance in Islamic life and practice (Yasin *et al.*, 2023). As stated in the hadith of Rasullullah:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ

Anas ibn Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.”

According to Solihatul Ulya, Nadrotin Mawaddah and Masyhuri Masyhuri (2022), this duty goes beyond just religious studies, encouraging Muslims to explore various areas of science and technology. They are urged to seek knowledge in different fields, understanding that real wisdom comes from combining different types of understanding.

There are benefits and rewards in the obligation to study, which based on Solihatul Ulya, Nadrotin Mawaddah and Masyhuri Masyhuri (2022), pursuing knowledge offers numerous advantages. It not only deepens one's understanding of Islamic teachings but also plays a crucial role in personal development and societal advancement. Furthermore, it brings great rewards from Allah, raising believers to higher levels both in this life and the hereafter. And by sincerely fulfilling



this duty, Muslims show their dedication to both intellectual exploration and spiritual growth, in harmony with the core principle of Tawhid (the oneness of Allah) (Yasin *et al.*, 2023).

The Relationship between Knowledge and Faith

In Islam, knowledge and faith are deeply intertwined, each enhancing the other. Knowledge strengthens faith by providing deeper understanding of God's creation, while faith motivates the pursuit of knowledge. This harmonious relationship ensures a balanced development, where intellect is guided by spiritual values, and faith is enriched through understanding, ultimately leading to a life that glorifies God and benefits society (Philip Suciadi Chia, 2009).

Ethics in the Pursuit and Practice of Knowledge

According to Huda *et al.* (2019), in Islamic education, *adab* (ethical conduct) is crucial, emphasizing respect, discipline, and moral character alongside knowledge acquisition. It fosters virtues like humility and sincerity, aligning intellectual growth with spiritual and ethical development. *Adab* ensures that learning contributes to personal and societal harmony, shaping well-rounded, ethically conscious individuals (Djamdjuri, Mujahidin, Retnowati, & Halim, 2022).

Based on Rahim (2013) also there's the Islamic ethical framework, known as *akhlaq*, emphasizes character development and the moral responsibilities of individuals. Rooted in the Quran and Sunnah, it guides human behavior in all aspects of life, ensuring a balance between spiritual, social, and personal dimensions. Islamic ethics focus on fostering virtues such as justice, truthfulness, and piety, while discouraging vices. It integrates with various fields like law, economics, and politics, promoting justice, fairness, and integrity. This framework aims to cultivate a morally conscious society, aligning human actions with divine principles for holistic well-being.

In summary, in Islamic education, *adab* (ethical conduct) and *akhlaq* (character development) are integral, emphasizing respect, discipline, and moral character alongside knowledge acquisition. These ethical frameworks, rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, foster virtues like humility, sincerity, justice, and truthfulness, guiding behavior across all life aspects. They ensure that intellectual growth aligns with spiritual and ethical development, promoting personal and societal harmony while integrating ethics into fields like law, economics, and politics for a morally conscious and just society.

The Role of Education in Islam

Islamic education plays a vital role in shaping moral and spiritual character by integrating both physical and spiritual knowledge. It emphasizes lifelong learning, encouraging individuals to develop a strong ethical foundation and moral responsibility (Djamdjuri & Meileni, 2021). The aim is to produce well-rounded individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also embody virtues such as respect, discipline, and righteousness. This holistic approach prepares individuals to face societal challenges while contributing positively to their communities, ensuring that intellectual growth is balanced with moral and spiritual obligations (Huda *et al.*, 2022). Islamic education in Indonesia not only nurtures personal moral values but also strengthens the national character, contributing to the overarching goals of unity and peace in the nation's multicultural society (Idris *et al.*, 2023).



The importance of knowledge in daily life

Knowledge is essential in everyday life because it helps people make good decisions and solve problems. By learning and researching, individuals gain valuable insights that make it easier to handle challenges in their personal, work, and community lives. This ongoing quest for understanding not only helps with current issues but also supports personal growth and the betterment of society, ensuring that choices are made based on solid information and clear thinking (Islam, 2023). Cited from the same journal, knowledge drives societal progress by fostering research and innovation, which boost economic development, advance technology, and improve healthcare. Historically, research has led to significant discoveries that improve quality of life and tackle global issues like disease outbreaks and environmental challenges.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, knowledge (Ilm) holds a central role in Islam, serving as both a spiritual and practical guide for individuals and society. The pursuit of knowledge is not merely encouraged but mandated, fostering intellectual and ethical growth. This dedication to learning has historically propelled Islamic civilization to remarkable heights, contributing significantly to global advancements in science, philosophy, and medicine. By integrating religious and worldly knowledge, Islam emphasizes a holistic approach to education that promotes personal development, social responsibility, and spiritual fulfillment. Ultimately, knowledge in Islam is a catalyst for both individual enlightenment and societal progress, underscoring its enduring importance in shaping a just and harmonious world.

Islamic education is important in forming moral and spiritual character since it integrates both physical and spiritual knowledge. It stresses lifelong learning and encourages people to have a strong ethical basis and take moral responsibility. The goal is to raise well-rounded persons who are not only knowledgeable but also exemplify characteristics like respect, discipline, and righteousness. This comprehensive approach equips people to meet societal difficulties while also positively contributing to their communities, ensuring that intellectual development is balanced with moral and spiritual commitments.

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