

The Integration of Aqidah Values in the Islamic Education Curriculum: A Conceptual and Implementative Analysis

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Abstract: *The background of this research is motivated by concerns about the moral and spiritual crisis affecting students in the era of globalization, characterized by the fading of divine values and moral degradation. In the context of Islamic Education, strengthening aqidah (creed) is considered the primary foundation for shaping a complete Muslim character and personality. This research aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the concept of integrating aqidah values into the structure of the Islamic Education curriculum, examine the forms of its implementation, and identify challenges and strategic solutions. This study uses a qualitative research method with an exploratory-analytical library research approach. Data were collected through a critical review of relevant primary and secondary literature, such as books, scientific journals, and curriculum documents, then analyzed descriptively-qualitatively and thematically. The results show that the integration of aqidah values is not merely an addition of material, but a comprehensive process encompassing the internalization of values in curriculum objectives, material selection, learning methodologies, evaluation systems, and the creation of the school environment. Its implementation can take the form of intra- and inter-subject integration, the development of aqidah-based co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and the cultivation of monotheistic values in school life. The main challenges include a dense curriculum load, diverse teacher competencies, and the influence of secular global culture. The offered solutions include the development of an integrated monotheism-based curriculum, continuous teacher capacity-building programs, and synergistic collaboration between schools, families, and the community. This research concludes that effective and holistic integration of aqidah values is essential to strengthen students' foundation of faith and form a generation with a robust Islamic identity amidst the currents of global change. Recommendations are directed at curriculum policy developers, educational institutions, teachers, and further researchers.*

Keywords: *Aqidah, Curriculum, Islamic Education, Value Integration, Monotheism.*

Introduction

Contemporary education faces multidimensional challenges, not only in relation to the mastery of cognitive competencies and technical skills, but also in the formation of students' character and personality (Lickona, 1991). The phenomenon of moral and spiritual crises—manifested in increasing juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, promiscuity, and the rise of individualistic and materialistic attitudes—serves

as a concrete indicator of education's limited success in instilling fundamental life values, particularly religious values (Hidayat & Wakhidah, 2021). This condition reflects a deeper crisis within the educational paradigm itself, where intellectual achievement often receives greater emphasis than moral and spiritual development.

From an Islamic perspective, such crises originate from a weak understanding and internalization of *aqidah*, which constitutes the primary foundation of a Muslim's worldview and behavioral structure. A strong *aqidah* nurtures total submission (*islam*), firm faith (*iman*), and the embodiment of excellence in conduct (*ihsan*) in daily life (Al-Attas, 1993). Thus, *aqidah* is not merely a theological construct, but a transformative force that shapes thought, attitude, and action.

Islamic Education, whose fundamental mandate is to humanize individuals toward becoming *insan kamil* through the process of *ta'dib*, bears a significant responsibility in responding to this moral and spiritual crisis (Al-Attas, 1991). However, empirical realities in many Islamic educational institutions reveal that the teaching of *aqidah* often remains confined to cognitive-theoretical dimensions. It is frequently delivered as material to be memorized rather than as values to be internalized and practiced in everyday life (Zarkasyi, 2020). As a consequence, a dichotomy emerges between students' religious knowledge and their actual behavior, reflecting a gap between knowing and living Islamic values.

In this context, integrating *aqidah* values into all components of the Islamic Education curriculum becomes both a necessity and an urgent priority. The curriculum, as the heart of the educational process, is not merely a technical learning plan but a reflection of philosophical orientations and educational objectives to be realized (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). Therefore, integrating *aqidah* values should not be understood as the simple addition of religious content into certain subjects. Rather, it must be interpreted as positioning monotheistic values as the paradigm, spirit, and ethical foundation underlying all educational activities—from the formulation of goals, selection and organization of content, and implementation of learning strategies to the evaluation of learning outcomes. This study departs from this urgency and seeks to examine comprehensively both the conceptual framework

and practical implementation of aqidah value integration within the Islamic Education curriculum.

Based on this background, the study seeks to explore three fundamental issues: the conceptual foundation of integrating aqidah values within the Islamic Education curriculum; the forms of implementation of such integration in curriculum components and educational practices; and the challenges encountered in the integration process along with possible strategic solutions.

Accordingly, this research aims to analyze and describe the conceptual framework of aqidah value integration within Islamic Education, examine its practical implementation across curriculum components and educational environments, and identify operational challenges while formulating strategic recommendations for stakeholders.

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of an integrative, value-based curriculum theory in Islamic Education, particularly concerning the positioning of aqidah as the central paradigm. It seeks to enrich scholarly discourse in Islamic education and curriculum studies. Practically, the findings are intended to provide operational guidance for curriculum developers, school principals, and teachers in designing, implementing, and evaluating curricula integrated with aqidah values. Furthermore, the study may serve as a reference for policymakers and educational authorities in formulating more holistic and value-oriented curriculum policies.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library research approach. This approach is considered appropriate because the objective of the study is to construct a deep and comprehensive conceptual understanding of the integration of aqidah values within the Islamic Education curriculum through the exploration and critical analysis of various texts and written documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research is descriptive-analytical in nature, aiming not only to systematically describe the conceptual framework of aqidah value integration but also

to analyze it critically in order to generate synthesis, theoretical clarification, and strategic recommendations.

The data used in this research consist entirely of secondary sources. The primary literature includes authoritative books and scholarly articles that directly discuss aqidah, Islamic Education curriculum theory, and value integration written by recognized experts in the field. Secondary literature comprises relevant academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, seminar proceedings, and theses or dissertations that support, expand, and contextualize the analysis of the primary sources. In addition, official curriculum documents are examined, including Content Standards, Graduate Competency Standards, and representative syllabi for Islamic Religious Education and general subjects at various levels of Islamic education. These documents are analyzed to understand how aqidah values are formally positioned within curricular frameworks.

Data collection is conducted through documentary study. This technique involves systematically searching for, collecting, recording, classifying, and organizing written materials relevant to the research focus (Bowen, 2009). Literature searches are carried out through online academic databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and ERIC, as well as library catalogs and institutional repositories. The keywords used in the search process include “aqidah integration,” “Islamic curriculum,” “value-based education,” and “tauhid in education.” The selected documents are screened based on relevance, credibility, and contribution to the research objectives.

The collected data are analyzed using qualitative content analysis combined with thematic analysis. The analytical process follows three interconnected stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Data reduction involves selecting and focusing on information that is directly relevant to the research questions. Data display is conducted by organizing the findings into systematic narrative descriptions and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions are drawn by identifying patterns, conceptual relationships, and dominant themes emerging from the data, followed by verification through continuous comparison with theoretical frameworks and supporting

literature. The analysis is conducted iteratively, moving back and forth between data, theoretical constructs, and researcher interpretation to ensure depth, coherence, and analytical rigor.

Result and Discussion

Conceptual Foundation of Aqidah Value Integration in the Islamic Education Curriculum

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of aqidah values within the Islamic Education curriculum must be positioned as a philosophical and pedagogical framework that places tauhid (monotheism) as the central axis of educational orientation. This concept is rooted in the Islamic worldview, which rejects the dichotomy between religious sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-naqliyyah*) and rational or empirical sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-‘aqliyyah*). From a monotheistic perspective, all authentic knowledge ultimately originates from Allah SWT and leads to the recognition of His greatness (*ma‘rifatullāh*) (Al-Attas, 1993). Thus, knowledge is not value-neutral; rather, it carries metaphysical and ethical implications.

The Qur’anic affirmation, “Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds” (Q.S. Al-An‘ām: 162–163), reflects the principle of total integration of life under tauhid. Likewise, the verse, “We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves...” (Q.S. Fuṣṣilat: 53), underscores that natural and social phenomena studied in various disciplines are manifestations of divine signs (*āyātullāh*). Therefore, integration does not merely mean inserting Qur’anic verses or hadith into subject matter superficially. Rather, it involves constructing a paradigm in which scientific inquiry becomes a pathway to strengthening faith and deepening spiritual awareness (Muhaimin & Ali, 2018).

This integrative paradigm must permeate all curriculum components. In the formulation of objectives, learning outcomes should not be restricted to cognitive mastery and technical skills but must explicitly include affective-spiritual dimensions, such as belief, attitudes, and value commitment (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964). For instance, biology lessons on ecosystems should cultivate ecological responsibility

grounded in the concept of humans as khalīfatullāh. The prophetic teaching, “A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe” (H.R. Al-Bukhari), reinforces that faith manifests in ethical responsibility.

In the selection and organization of content, knowledge must be filtered through the lens of aqidah. Ideas contrary to monotheistic principles may be critically examined but not presented as normative truths. Conversely, scientific concepts can be linked to divine wisdom and order, as illustrated in “Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you whatever is on the earth...” (Q.S. Al-Ḥajj: 65).

Learning strategies should also facilitate reflection (*tadabbur*), contemplation (*tafakkur*), and spiritual awareness alongside intellectual inquiry. Dialogical and reflective methods exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, including the explanation of *ihsan*—“to worship Allah as if you see Him...” (H.R. Al-Bukhari and Muslim)—demonstrate the integration of cognition and spirituality. Evaluation systems must likewise be comprehensive, assessing not only knowledge but also value internalization and behavioral embodiment (Khoiron & Malihah, 2020), in line with the Qur’anic reminder of accountability (Q.S. Al-Ḥijr: 92–93).

Practical Implementation of Aqidah Integration in Educational Settings

The research findings reveal that the implementation of aqidah integration operates in interconnected domains: intracurricular learning, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and school culture as a hidden curriculum.

Within intracurricular practices, every subject teacher shares responsibility for connecting disciplinary knowledge with monotheistic values. History lessons, for example, can highlight divine patterns (*sunanullāh*) in social change, as emphasized in “Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves” (Q.S. Al-Anfāl: 53). Thematic interdisciplinary models also provide fertile ground for integration. A theme such as water can be explored scientifically, socially, legally, and spiritually, culminating in reflection on the Qur’anic affirmation, “And We made from water every living thing” (Q.S. Al-Anbiyā’: 30). This approach strengthens conceptual coherence while reinforcing faith-based interpretation.

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities function as practical laboratories for aqidah internalization. Programs such as spiritual retreats, mentoring, Qur'anic recitation, congregational prayer, and social service cultivate habituation (*al-muwāḏabah 'alā al-'amal al-ṣāliḥ*) (Suyudi, 2017). The Prophet SAW emphasized consistency in righteous deeds: “Allah does not tire [of giving reward] until you tire [of doing good deeds]” (H.R. Al-Bukhari and Muslim). Through sustained practice, values transition from theoretical understanding to lived experience.

School culture, or the hidden curriculum, exerts the most subtle yet profound influence. Exemplary conduct (*al-uswah al-ḥasanah*) by educators, justice-oriented policies, Islamic social interaction, and spiritually meaningful physical environments collectively create a faith-based ecosystem (Hasan, 2018). Such an environment continuously reinforces aqidah beyond formal instruction.

The holistic impact of this integration is evident in character formation (*tahdhīb al-akhlāq*), strengthening of faith (*taqwīyatu al-īmān*), and transformation of religious-social behavior. Faith-based character traits such as sincerity, honesty, responsibility, humility, and patience emerge from internalized belief (Al-Ghazali, *Ihya*). The Prophet SAW stated, “The most perfect of the believers in faith are those with the best character” (H.R. Al-Tirmidhi). Moreover, knowledge-based faith cultivates deeper reverence, as affirmed in “Only those fear Allah from among His servants who have knowledge” (Q.S. *Fāṭir*: 28). Consequently, students are expected to develop into balanced individuals—intellectually competent, morally upright, and spiritually grounded.

Challenges and Strategic Responses in Aqidah Value Integration

Despite its conceptual strength, the implementation of aqidah integration faces structural, pedagogical, and socio-cultural challenges. At the policy level, curriculum density and exam-oriented systems often prioritize cognitive outcomes, leaving limited space for reflective and value-based learning. The dualism between national and Islamic curricula may also perpetuate practical dichotomies if not guided by a unified paradigm (Zarkasyi, 2020).

At the teacher level, disparities in aqidah mastery and integrative pedagogical competence hinder effective implementation. Many educators perceive value integration as the sole responsibility of religious subject teachers, while general subject teachers may lack confidence or methodological skills (Muhaimin, 2004). Furthermore, the global digital environment exposes students to secular and relativistic narratives that challenge Islamic beliefs (Hidayat & Wakhidah, 2021).

Addressing these challenges requires systemic and collaborative strategies. First, the development of operational integrative curriculum models is necessary to guide schools practically and contextually. Second, sustainable teacher capacity-building programs should strengthen both theological understanding and integrative pedagogical skills, alongside spiritual development. Third, synergy among school, family, and community must be reinforced to create a coherent educational environment (*al-bī'ah al-tarbawiyah al-mutajānisah*) (Suyudi, 2017). Finally, strengthening digital literacy and producing creative Islamic content can equip students with intellectual-spiritual resilience (*al-manā'ah al-fikriyyah wa al-rūḥiyyah*) in navigating global culture (Hasan, 2018).

Conclusion

The integration of aqidah values within the Islamic Education curriculum constitutes a philosophical and pedagogical necessity. It represents a comprehensive effort to position monotheistic values as the paradigm, guiding spirit, and ethical foundation of all curriculum components—encompassing objectives, content, methods, evaluation systems, and the broader school environment. Its implementation requires a multi-layered strategy, including integration within and across subjects, the development of faith-oriented school programs, and the cultivation of a supportive school culture as a living ecosystem of values. Although challenges such as curriculum density, limited teacher competence, and the pressures of globalization persist, these can be addressed through the development of operational integrative curriculum models, sustained teacher capacity building, strengthened collaboration among school, family, and community, and the enhancement of Islamic digital literacy. Ultimately, effective integration is expected

to nurture students who are intellectually capable, firm in their aqidah, noble in character, and responsible as servants and vicegerents of Allah on earth.

This study recommends that educational institutions and policymakers actively facilitate the formulation of monotheism-based integrative curriculum guidelines and incorporate affective-spiritual indicators into evaluation systems. Teachers and educational staff are encouraged to strengthen their commitment, deepen their religious understanding, and continuously develop integrative pedagogical competencies through professional learning communities. Future research should expand into field-based studies to examine the practical effectiveness of aqidah integration models and to develop valid instruments for measuring their impact on students' character formation and spiritual resilience, particularly in the context of the digital era.

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