

Reconstructing Islamic Education Based on Interdisciplinary Integration: A Hermeneutic Analysis of Epistemological Problems

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Abstract: *Islamic Education instruction still often takes a textual approach and fails to connect religious knowledge with scientific developments and the realities of students' lives. This situation gives rise to an epistemological problem in the form of a separation between religious knowledge and general knowledge in teaching practice. This study employed a qualitative approach using an interpretive case study design at SMPN 4 Malang from September to December 2025. Data were collected through nonparticipatory observation, semi-structured interviews with two Islamic Education teachers, one principal, and two students, as well as a document analysis. Data were analyzed using reflective thematic analysis and a hermeneutic approach. This study aims to 1) analyze how teachers and students interpret the integration of disciplines and 2) reconstruct Islamic Education learning through a dialogue between religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' experiences. The results indicate that the integration of disciplines evolves from a symbolic pattern toward a dialogic process that positions religion as a source of values and scientific knowledge as a means of understanding reality. The reconstruction of learning occurs through the contextualization of texts, dialogue among sources of knowledge, and reflection on students' experiences. This approach strengthens Islamic Education learning that is more contextual, reflective, critical, and oriented toward moral responsibility.*

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Interdisciplinary Integration; Hermeneutics; Epistemology; Contextual Learning*

Introduction

Social change, technological advancements, and the increasing complexity of public issues demand that education develop learning methods capable of connecting various fields of knowledge. In this context, Islamic Education is no longer sufficient if it is oriented solely toward the mastery of doctrine, memorization of texts, and ritual compliance. Students also need guidance to understand the connection between Islamic teachings and issues such as health, the environment, artificial intelligence, digital culture, and social life. Such issues cannot be fully

explained through a single discipline because they involve factual, moral, social, and existential dimensions. Recent studies in religious education indicate that these big questions require contributions from various subjects as well as an integrative framework that helps students connect knowledge in meaningful ways ([Asma et al., 2024](#); [Nur'aini & Nurlatifah, 2025](#)).

However, Islamic Education still faces an epistemological problem: the separation between religious knowledge and general knowledge. When religion is treated solely as a collection of normative truths, while science is understood only as value-free empirical explanations, students risk developing a fragmented view of reality. As a result, religious teachings may feel disconnected from current issues, while science and technology lose their ethical orientation. Research on the integration of religion and science in Indonesian Islamic schools indicates that integrative practices can broaden students' perspectives, but these are still heavily influenced by teachers' understanding, instructional design, and the ability to preserve the epistemological character of each discipline ([Husni et al., 2025](#)).

The integration of disciplines, therefore, cannot be reduced to the insertion of Qur'anic verses or hadiths into general subject matter ([Arif Aulia Rizki & Salmi Wati, 2024](#)). Such practices can result in symbolic integration if the relationship between religious texts and scientific knowledge is constructed artificially or merely to secure religious legitimacy. A more productive form of integration must acknowledge that revelation, reason, experience, and empirical evidence have distinct functions, methods, and explanatory limits, yet can still engage in a dialogical interaction ([Hakim et al., 2026](#)). This perspective relates to epistemic literacy, the ability to critically recognize, distinguish, evaluate, and apply various types of knowledge. In Islamic Education instruction, this ability is essential for students to connect beliefs, facts, interpretations, experiences, and moral considerations in a balanced manner.

The hermeneutic perspective provides a relevant framework for explaining how dialogue among sources of knowledge takes place in Islamic Education instruction. Understanding is not viewed as a one-way transfer of meaning from the text to the student, but rather as an interpretive process that brings together the text's horizon, prior knowledge, the reader's experience, and the context of life ([Arif Aulia Rizki & Salmi Wati, 2024](#)). Through this process, verses and hadiths are not merely translated literally but interpreted for their relevance to contemporary issues while maintaining their normative foundations. The hermeneutic approach also enables students to engage in activities such as asking questions, comparing, providing reasons, and reflecting on the implications of a particular understanding. Religious education shifts from the transmission of content toward the formation of meaning that is critical, personal, dialogical, and responsible.

Several studies have addressed the relationship between religion and science in education, but their focus remains scattered across curriculum design, integration models, interdisciplinary arguments, and the strengthening of epistemic literacy ([Miftakhul Azizah et al., 2025](#); [Ni'mah, 2023](#)). Research on the dialogue between science and religious education highlight the importance of maintaining the distinct nature of claims while creating space for the exchange of perspectives. Other research confirms that interdisciplinary collaboration can help students address complex questions that a single discipline cannot resolve ([Arifa et al., 2026](#); [Saputra et al., 2024](#)). Nevertheless, these studies primarily explain general principles of integration or pedagogical structures. The concrete processes by which teachers and students interpret the relationships between religious texts, scientific

knowledge, and everyday experiences in Islamic Education instruction have yet to receive adequate empirical attention.

This gap is significant because the quality of integration is determined not only by the presence of interdisciplinary material but also by the mechanisms of meaning-making that occur during learning. Teachers need to determine when religious texts serve as sources of values, when science is used to explain phenomena, and how students' experiences provide the context for interpretation. Without such clarity, integration risks devolving into the decorative inclusion of religious tenets, the oversimplification of science, or the normative justification of predetermined conclusions. Furthermore, a lack of attention to students' experiences can cause integration to remain confined to the teacher's design, without understanding how meaning is received, negotiated, or developed.

This study offers a novel perspective by viewing the reconstruction of Islamic Education learning as a three-layered, systematically interrelated integration process. First, the epistemological dimension explains the relationship among revelation, reason, experience, and empirical evidence by examining their respective functions and limitations. Second, the hermeneutical dimension examines how religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' realities are brought together through dialogue to produce contextual understanding. Third, the axiological dimension examines how religious values are used to assess the purposes, benefits, risks, and consequences of applying scientific knowledge. This framework shifts the discussion of integration from merely combining curriculum content to interpretive mechanisms that shape how students know, understand, evaluate, and act in response to contemporary life issues.

Based on this description, this study aims to examine 1) how teachers and students interpret the integration of religious and general knowledge in Islamic Education instruction, and 2) how learning is reconstructed through dialogue between religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' realities. Field research at SMPN 4 Malang was conducted to gain a contextual understanding of pedagogical practices, learning experiences, and interpretive processes occurring in the classroom. Theoretically, this study expands the discourse on interdisciplinary integration through epistemological, hermeneutical, and axiological frameworks. Practically, the findings are expected to support the development of Islamic Education instruction that is reflective, critical, contextual, and responsible.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach, using an interpretive case study design, to gain an in-depth understanding of the reconstruction of Islamic Education learning through interdisciplinary integration in the school context. This design was chosen because the study's focus is not on measuring relationships between variables, but rather on exploring the meanings, experiences, and practices that emerge when religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' realities intersect in the learning process. The units of analysis for this study include pedagogical practices, informant narratives, classroom interactions, and learning documents related to interdisciplinary integration. The case study approach allows the phenomenon to be examined contextually, holistically, and in depth within clearly defined boundaries of location, time, and participants, thereby enabling a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the learning reconstruction process.

The research was conducted at SMPN 4 Malang from September through December 2025. The location was selected purposefully because the school demonstrates Islamic Education teaching practices that explicitly link religious content to issues of health, the environment, technology, social life, and scientific

developments. The four-month timeframe allowed the researcher to engage sufficiently to observe learning patterns, trace the consistency of practices, and compare experiences among informants. The informants consisted of two Islamic Education teachers, one principal, and two students selected based on their direct involvement in the learning process. The selection of informants considered the relevance of their experiences, their ability to provide rich information, and a variety of pedagogical and institutional perspectives, as well as a comprehensive understanding of student learning experiences.

The research data consisted of primary and secondary data used in a complementary manner. Primary data were obtained through observations of Islamic Education lessons and in-depth interviews with two Islamic Education teachers, the school principal, and two students. These data covered interpretations of interdisciplinary integration, strategies for linking verses and hadiths with scientific knowledge, the use of current issues as a learning context, student responses, and changes in the teacher's role during the dialogue process. Secondary data were obtained from teaching modules, presentation materials, assessment tools, lesson notes, and relevant school documents. Literature on interdisciplinary integration, educational hermeneutics, and epistemological issues served as a sensitizing framework to enrich interpretations without supplanting the meanings emerging from the field data.

Data collection was conducted through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Observations focused on interaction patterns, the use of religious texts, connections to scientific knowledge, the nature of teachers' questions, students' responses, and the reflection processes taking place in the classroom. In-depth interviews were conducted using open-ended questions and probing techniques to explore the reasons, experiences, and considerations underlying teaching practices. Documentation analysis was used to assess the consistency between informants' narratives and written evidence in teaching modules, materials, and assessments. All observation findings were recorded in field notes, while interviews were recorded with the informants' consent and transcribed verbatim to ensure an accurate and complete representation of the data.

The researcher served as the primary instrument, actively engaged in data collection, interpretation, and reflection ([Creswell & Poth, 2018](#)). To enhance procedural consistency, interview guidelines, observation sheets, document analysis matrices, analytical memos, and reflective journals were used. The research guidelines were developed with a focus on interpreting the integration of religious studies and general studies, as well as reconstructing learning through dialogue among texts, knowledge, and students' experiences. Before use, questions were reviewed to ensure their clarity, relevance, and suitability for the students' context. Reflexivity was maintained by documenting initial assumptions, methodological decisions, and the potential influence of the researcher's position on the interpretation process, ensuring that the analysis was not only transparent but also open to ongoing critical review.

Data analysis was conducted from the data collection stage onward, using a combination of reflective thematic analysis and hermeneutic interpretation ([Miles & Huberman, 2014](#)). The process began with transcription, repeated reading, note-taking, and the identification of units of meaning. The data were then coded inductively based on emerging patterns and deductively based on the research focus. Similar codes were grouped into categories and developed into main themes. Interpretation was conducted through a hermeneutic circle, moving back and forth

between data segments, the entire case, the school context, and the conceptual framework. Provisional themes were continually tested against observational data, interviews, and documents to identify patterns of consistency, variation, and divergence. This process yielded an interpretation that elucidates the epistemological, hermeneutic, and axiological dimensions of Islamic Education learning.

The validity of the findings was ensured through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and an audit trail. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing the perspectives of Islamic Education teachers, school principals, and students, while methodological triangulation was carried out through cross-confirmation among interviews, observations, and documentation. Summaries of interview results and preliminary interpretations were returned to the informants to verify the accuracy of the meaning and context of their statements. Peer discussions were used to challenge assumptions, clarify categories, and test the coherence of themes. Data that did not fit the dominant pattern were still analyzed to avoid overly simplistic conclusions. All research decisions were systematically documented to ensure accountability regarding the credibility, reliability, confirmability, and traceability of the analysis process.

The research was conducted in accordance with ethical principles, participant protection, and data confidentiality. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained permission from SMPN 4 Malang and explained the objectives, procedures, benefits, data usage, and participant rights to all informants. The involvement of teachers and the principal was voluntary, while student participation was subject to the applicable approvals from the school and the relevant authorities. Informants were given the right to refuse to answer questions or to withdraw from the study without any consequences. Identities were anonymized using the codes W-GPAI, W-KS, and W-SIS. Recordings, transcripts, field notes, and digital documents were securely stored and used solely for academic purposes. Reporting was conducted contextually without disclosing any information that could identify the participants.

Result and Discussion

Result

1. Understanding the Integration of Religious and General Knowledge in Islamic Education

Based on classroom observations, integration occurs not only through the inclusion of Qur'anic verses or hadiths in the curriculum but also through dialogue between religious values and issues related to health, the environment, technology, social life, and scientific developments. Teachers strive to guide Islamic Education instruction so that it does not stop at mastering normative concepts, but rather helps students understand the role of religion in interpreting life's challenges. One Islamic Education teacher explained,

"Religious studies and general studies are not actually separate. Religion provides values and direction, while science helps humans understand life. In the learning process, the two need to be integrated so that students do not view religion merely as a subject about worship." (W-GPAI-1/2026)

In this context, religion and science are not positioned as two conflicting domains, but rather as two perspectives that can enrich one another.

Observations show that teachers connect the topic of human creation with concepts of biological development, discussions of hygiene with health, and the concept of khalifah with environmental issues. An Islamic Education teacher explained,

"When discussing human creation, Islamic Education teachers do not merely explain the verses but also connect them to the biological knowledge students have already learned. The goal is for them to see that religion and science can be understood side by side." (W-KS/2026)

In teaching practice, it was found that the integration process occurs through the intersection of religious texts and students' real-life experiences. Teachers use verses and hadiths as sources of values, then encourage students to interpret their relevance to contemporary issues. In a lesson on tabayyun, for example, the teacher connects the verse's content to the phenomenon of fake news spreading on social media. Students are not only asked to understand the textual meaning but also to discuss its implications in digital life. One teacher explained,

"It is not enough to simply read and translate a verse. Students need guidance to understand how that verse relates to the issues they face. That way, religious teachings do not feel distant from their lives." (W-GPAI-2/2026)

From the students' perspective, the integration of religious studies and general subjects is seen as an effort to make Islamic Education lessons more relevant to real life. Students stated that Islamic Education material is easier to understand when linked to health, the environment, technological advancements, and social issues. These connections help students see that religion is not only about formal worship but also provides principles for living life. One student said,

"Before, I thought Islamic Education was mostly about worship and memorization. After the material was linked to the environment, health, and technology, I began to understand that religion is also related to the problems we face every day." (W-SIS-1/2026)

Students' understanding also deepened when teachers used current issues as a learning context. In discussions about social media use, for example, students were encouraged to explore the connections between technology, freedom of expression, verification (tabayyun), honesty, and responsibility. This approach helped students realize that science and technology are not value-neutral. The application of knowledge is always tied to ethical considerations and social consequences. One student explained,

"I used to think technology was only related to computer class. After discussing it in Islamic Education, I realized that using technology also comes with responsibilities. We should not spread unverified information or use social media to harm others." (W-SIS-2/2026)

Contextual learning experiences allow students to integrate their prior understanding with new knowledge gained during the learning process. From a hermeneutic perspective, this process demonstrates the convergence of horizons between religious texts, scientific explanations, and students' life experiences. Understanding is not passively received but develops through dialogue, discussion, and reflection. Teachers serve as mediators who help students understand the relationship between religious values and scientific knowledge without diminishing the distinct nature of each.

2. Islamic Education Through Dialogue Between Religious Texts, Science, and Students' Realities

The reconstruction of Islamic education is taking place through a shift from a textual approach toward dialogic and contextual learning. Teachers no longer merely emphasize the memorization of verses, hadiths, and religious concepts, but connect them to scientific developments and issues relevant to students' lives. Lessons generally begin with current events, after which students are guided to understand these issues through the lens of Islamic teachings. An Islamic Education teacher explains,

"Lessons now do not just start with definitions and religious texts. We often begin with problems students face, then guide them to understand how the Qur'an and hadiths provide guidance on those issues." (W-GPAI-01, 2026)

In the communication ethics unit, for example, the concept of *tabayyun* is linked to the spread of fake news, the use of social media, and the responsibility in receiving information. Students not only understand the content of the verses but also use them to evaluate digital behavior. The integration of academic disciplines is not merely achieved through the symbolic inclusion of verses. Teachers establish connections between scientific explanations, religious values, and moral responsibility. Science is used to understand facts and reality, while religion guides the use of knowledge. An Islamic Education teacher stated,

"Integration is not merely about finding a verse for every topic. Science helps students understand reality, while religion provides guidance so that science is used responsibly." (W-GPAI-02, 2026)

The dialogue between religious texts and science becomes more meaningful when connected to students' experiences. Issues such as social media, artificial intelligence, the environment, tolerance, and cyberbullying are used as discussion topics. Students are asked to understand the issues, analyze information, find relevant values in the Qur'an and hadith, and develop appropriate attitudes. One student explained,

"In the past, Islamic Education lessons were mostly about memorization. Now we often discuss issues happening around us. I have come to understand that the verses we study relate to how we should behave and make decisions." (W-SIS-01, 2026)

This restructuring of learning has also transformed the teacher's role from the sole source of knowledge to a facilitator of dialogue. Teachers continue to guide students toward an accurate understanding of religion, but

they also give students space to ask questions, interpret, and connect the material to their lives. The principal stated,

“We encourage our teachers not to explain the content of the textbook merely. Students need to be given space to understand the meaning of religious teachings in their lives, while still being guided by sound scholarly foundations.” (W-KS-01, 2026)

The reconstruction of Islamic Education learning is built through the contextualization of religious texts, dialogue with the sciences, and reflection on students’ realities. This approach transforms learning from a process of conveying material into a process of meaning-making. Religious texts serve as a source of values, science helps explain reality, while students’ experiences provide a space for application. Through this framework, Islamic Education instruction fosters the development of a religious understanding that is reflective, open, contextual, and responsible.

Discussion

Understanding the Integration of Religious Studies and General Studies in Islamic Education

Research findings indicate that the integration of religious and general knowledge in Islamic Education instruction is no longer understood as a mere juxtaposition of religious verses and scientific concepts, but rather as an interpretive process that brings together normative, empirical, and contextual dimensions. Religion serves as a source of values, moral orientation, and a framework for determining meaning, while science helps explain life’s phenomena through rational procedures and empirical evidence. This pattern marks a shift from symbolic integration toward epistemological integration ([Usvim Varadila et al., 2025](#)). This finding is significant because the history of Islamic education shows that religious and scientific knowledge were not originally positioned as mutually exclusive. Therefore, integration in Islamic Education must be understood as an effort to restore a dialogical relationship between revelation, reason, experience, and reality.

These findings also demonstrate that integration does not require the blurring of boundaries between fields of knowledge. Scientific explanations continue to be used to understand biological processes, health, the environment, technology, and social phenomena, while religious texts provide a horizon of meaning and ethical considerations. The relationship between religion and science is built on a complementary basis, not through the claim that every scientific concept must have direct textual justification. This pattern aligns with other research showing that structured dialogue can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between religion and science without blurring their distinct characteristics ([Toedien & Dewi, 2025](#)). The findings of this study extend that argument to Islamic Education by positioning integration as a process of understanding the boundaries, functions, and contributions of each source of knowledge.

Linking the concept of tabayyun to fake news, the value of khalifah to the environmental crisis, and moral responsibility to the use of technology demonstrates the contextualization of religious texts ([Arif Aulia Rizki & Salmi Wati, 2024](#)). From a hermeneutic perspective, meaning is not merely transferred from the text to the students but is shaped through a dialogue between the text’s horizon,

prior knowledge, experience, and contemporary issues ([Sumiyati et al., 2026](#)). This process allows religious teachings to be understood in a contemporary context without diminishing their normative depth. This finding aligns with other research affirming that a hermeneutic approach in religious education must integrate disciplinary knowledge practices with personal and spiritual engagement ([Arifuddin Jalil et al., 2025](#)). Islamic Education learning shifts from the transmission of content toward an interpretive process that demands critical reading, reflection, and accountability for the meanings produced.

From the students' perspective, interdisciplinary integration enhances the relevance of learning because Islamic Education material is connected to experiences they actually encounter. When social media, health, the environment, and technology are used as learning contexts, religion is no longer perceived merely as a set of worship rules but as an ethical framework for interpreting issues and determining actions. This change indicates a shift from passive knowledge reception toward interpretive engagement. These findings relate to the concept of epistemic literacy the ability to critically recognize, distinguish, and apply various types of knowledge. Religious education must help students understand their relationship with diverse forms of knowledge ([Ramadina et al., 2025](#)). In the context of this study, this ability develops through a dialogue between religious principles, scientific evidence, personal experiences, and moral consequences.

The research findings also underscore the importance of the axiological dimension in interdisciplinary integration. Science helps students explain how a phenomenon occurs, while religion guides them to consider the purpose for which knowledge is used and the moral consequences it may entail. Therefore, integration not only broadens the scope of Islamic Education curriculum but also fosters the ability to make ethical judgments regarding scientific and technological advancements. These results support the idea that integrative Islamic Education learning must be contextual, scientific, spiritual, reflective, and argumentative. However, the contribution of this study lies in its assertion that religious values are not presented as an afterthought to scientific explanations but rather as an axiological framework engaged from the very beginning of problem identification and information interpretation, all the way through to students' decision-making.

In these findings, the teacher's role shifts from that of a conveyor of knowledge to an epistemological mediator who brings together religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' experiences. Teachers do not merely explain the content of verses; rather, they help students identify issues, evaluate information, compare perspectives, and reflect on moral implications. This role requires mastery of religious material, literacy regarding scientific developments, and the ability to manage dialogue in an open and focused manner. Without these competencies, integration risks reverting to the decorative inclusion of verses or overly simplistic cause-and-effect relationships ([Habibatul Imamah, 2025](#)). These findings underscore the importance of teachers' epistemic literacy, as the quality of dialogue among sources of knowledge depends heavily on teachers' ability to distinguish between facts, interpretations, beliefs, experiences, and ethical judgments.

Theoretically, this study produces a three-layered framework for integration in Islamic Education instruction. First, epistemological integration acknowledges that revelation, reason, experience, and empirical evidence operate differently and have distinct domains of explanation, yet can interact productively. Second, hermeneutic integration describes the process by which religious texts, scientific knowledge, and student experiences converge to generate new, contextualized understandings. Third, axiological integration positions religious values as the basis for evaluating the goals, benefits, and consequences of using science. These three layers demonstrate that the reconstruction of learning is not achieved by erasing

disciplinary identities but rather through a balanced dialogue. This framework expands previous studies on integration, which primarily focused on curriculum or conceptual formulations, toward the mechanisms of meaning-making that occur in classroom practice.

Religious texts serve as a source of values and an interpretive horizon; science provides rational and empirical explanations; while students' experiences become a space for testing the relevance and application of meaning. The interaction of these three elements results in learning that does not stop at mastering concepts but develops the ability to interpret, evaluate evidence, consider moral consequences, and make responsible decisions. The practical implications include the need to develop interdisciplinary modules, strengthen teachers' epistemic competencies, and design learning experiences based on real-world problems. These findings confirm that the relevance of Islamic Education is determined by its ability to connect revelation, knowledge, and life without reducing any of them.

Islamic Education through Dialogue Among Religious Texts, Science, and Students' Realities

The reconstruction of Islamic education is not merely a change in methodology, but a shift in how religious knowledge is produced, understood, and applied in the classroom. When learning begins with real-world issues, religious texts no longer serve as objects of memorization, but as a normative framework for interpreting reality. At the same time, science provides empirical explanations that enrich students' understanding of the issue's context ([Remanita et al., 2025](#); [Remanita & Kholis, 2023](#)). This relationship does not merge revelation and science into a single method but rather places them in a mutually corrective and complementary dialogue. The integration of scientific knowledge into Islamic Education is best understood as an epistemological reconstruction that connects ways of knowing, ways of making meaning, and ways of acting ([Ali et al., 2026](#)).

The primary mechanism of this reconstruction lies in contextualizing texts through the encounter between the horizons of religious teachings and students' experiences. Linking the concept of *tabayyun* to fake news, for example, demonstrates that the meaning of a verse is not applied mechanically but is reinterpreted within the context of digital communication, which possesses new structures, risks, and consequences ([Muhammad Zaki, 2025](#)). Within a hermeneutic framework, understanding emerges through a back-and-forth movement between the parts and the whole, the text and the context, and tradition and the reader's experience ([Harsono et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, Islamic Education instruction does not merely ask "what does the verse mean," but also "how does the verse guide judgment regarding current issues." This process interprets an intellectual, moral, and spiritual activity that demands argumentation and responsibility.

This finding also rejects concordist models of integration, that is, the tendency to seek out verses to justify every scientific finding. Such models risk reducing the complexity of religious texts while disregarding the tentative and methodological nature of science. Teachers' practices that distinguish between the function of religion as a source of value orientation and that of science as a means of explaining phenomena indicate a growing awareness of each discipline's epistemological limits. This awareness is crucial because the dialogue between religion and science does not require the harmonization of claims but rather the ability to determine which questions each discipline can answer. Mature integration

is characterized by interdisciplinary openness, the appropriate use of sources, and epistemological humility when facing issues that cannot be resolved through a single perspective alone ([Nashihin & Wahyu Hidayati, 2025](#)).

From the students' perspective, the interconnection among texts, scientific knowledge, and everyday experiences expands the role of Islamic Education from content mastery to the development of epistemic literacy. Students not only learn to accept a claim but also to recognize the origins of knowledge, distinguish between facts, interpretations, beliefs, and moral judgments, and then weigh the relationships among them. These skills are crucial when students encounter digital information that blends data, opinions, religious authority, and social interests within a single space. These findings indicate that the relevance of Islamic Education cannot be measured solely by the proximity of its themes to students' lives, but rather by its ability to shape students' critical navigation of the plurality of knowledge ([Azurah & Siallagan, 2025](#)). At this point, interdisciplinary integration serves as practice in understanding knowledge responsibly.

Students' engagement in discussing artificial intelligence, the environment, tolerance, and cyberbullying also demonstrates that Islamic Education instruction serves existential and axiological functions. These issues require not only answers about how things work but also about their purpose, limits, benefits, and moral consequences. Religion, therefore, is not positioned as an ethical add-on after scientific explanations are complete, but rather as an evaluative framework present from the very beginning, from formulating the problem to determining a course of action ([Wahyuningsih, 2025](#)). This approach expands learning from cognitive achievement toward the development of moral judgment. Students are encouraged to connect knowledge with responsibility, freedom with consequences, and technological capabilities with the common good. This reconceptualization makes Islamic Education a space for ethical deliberation that is relevant to contemporary life.

The shift in the teacher's role to that of a facilitator of dialogue does not mean undermining the teacher's scholarly authority. On the contrary, authority is reconstructed, shifting from the position of the sole holder of answers to that of a trusted authority capable of guiding the interpretive process in an open, focused, and responsible manner ([Arken, 2025](#)). Teachers are tasked with ensuring the accurate use of texts, clarifying the distinction between evidence and opinion, and preventing simplistic interpretations. At the same time, teachers provide space for students' questions, experiences, and possible interpretations ([Mawlein, 2023](#)). This role demands dual competencies: mastery of Islamic traditions and literacy regarding scientific developments and social contexts. Without these competencies, dialogue risks becoming relativistic, while textual learning risks reverting to dogmatism and closing itself off to the complexities of reality.

Theoretically, the findings of this study propose a model for the reconstruction of Islamic Education that operates through three interrelated and recursive layers. The epistemological layer governs the relationship between revelation, reason, experience, and empirical evidence based on their respective functions and limitations. The hermeneutical layer explains how meaning is formed through dialogue between the text, scientific knowledge, and students' experiences. The axiological layer directs the outcomes of understanding toward ethical judgment and responsible action. These three layers do not operate linearly, as moral considerations can raise new questions about the text, while scientific knowledge can alter how students understand the context. The novelty of these findings lies in the explanation that scientific integration is not merely a curricular structure but a dynamic process of meaning-making that continually evolves within learning practices.

The pedagogical implication is that Islamic Education learning needs to be designed as an interpretive cycle that begins with an authentic problem, continues with an examination of religious and scientific sources, and concludes with reflection and the adoption of an ethical stance. This design requires tasks that ask students to explain the foundations of knowledge, compare perspectives, test the relevance of arguments, and justify their decisions. Collaboration between Islamic Education teachers and teachers of other subjects is also important to prevent scientific errors and artificial integrative connections. However, these findings should not be interpreted as evidence that all Islamic Education material must always be integrated with science. Integration should be used selectively when issues genuinely demand interdisciplinary dialogue, so that both the depth of religious understanding and the accuracy of scientific knowledge are preserved.

Conclusion

This study shows that Islamic Education instruction will be more meaningful when it does not stop at the rote memorization of verses, hadiths, and religious concepts. Instruction needs to provide space for students to connect Islamic teachings with scientific knowledge and the issues they encounter in their daily lives. In this process, teachers are no longer merely conveyors of material but also mentors who help students interpret reality through religious values. The connection between religious texts, scientific knowledge, and students' experiences makes Islamic Education learning feel more accessible, relevant, and reflective. This approach also helps students develop critical, ethical, and responsible ways of thinking amid the changing times we live in.

The research findings also show that the integration of scientific knowledge into Islamic Education instruction occurs through three mutually reinforcing elements: the way knowledge sources are understood, the process of interpreting meaning, and the responsible application of knowledge. Therefore, schools need to support teachers in developing problem-based learning centered on real-world issues, strengthening dialogic skills, and fostering opportunities for collaboration with teachers of other subjects. These efforts are crucial to ensure that integration does not stop at the symbolic inclusion of verses. Future research could involve more schools and participants to enable comparison, deeper exploration, and the development of a broader Islamic Education learning model that meets the needs of today's Indonesian students.

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