

## SOCIAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Concept of Epistemology in Islamic Education and Its Challenges in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

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The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought significant changes to the field of education, including Islamic education. These changes have given rise to epistemological challenges related to the nature of knowledge, sources of truth, and the role of humans in the learning process. This study aims to examine the concept of epistemology in Islamic education and analyze the challenges and opportunities of integrating Artificial Intelligence within the context of Islamic education. This study employed a qualitative approach using library research. Data were obtained through document studies of books, journal articles, and relevant scientific sources discussing Islamic epistemology and Artificial Intelligence in education. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis and a descriptive-analytical approach to identify the epistemological differences between Islamic education and AI technology. The study results indicate that the epistemology of Islamic education is holistic and integrative, making revelation, reason, and experience the primary sources of knowledge in Islamic education. Meanwhile, Artificial Intelligence operates within a rational-empirical framework that is instrumental and value-free, thus unable to replace the human role in shaping moral and spiritual values. Therefore, the integration of AI in Islamic education must be conducted critically and selectively, while still making Islamic values the main foundation for achieving the goals of Islamic education, namely, forming individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and of noble character.

**Keywords:** Islamic Education Epistemology, Artificial Intelligence, Islamic Education.

## I. Introduction

Islamic education, as a learning system based on Islamic values, has a distinctive epistemological foundation for understanding the nature of knowledge ( Abbas, 2012). Islamic epistemology emphasizes rational and empirical aspects and integrates spiritual and revelatory dimensions as legitimate knowledge sources. In the Islamic scholarly tradition, knowledge is understood holistically, encompassing both worldly knowledge ('ilm ad-dunyawiyah) and hereafter knowledge ('ilm al-ukhrawiyah), both of which originate from Allah SWT through revelation, reason, and sensory experience (Abrar 2025). The concept of Islamic

educational epistemology has experienced dynamic development from the classical to contemporary periods. According to Wahidmurni et al., Nur Arifin (2025) in his book published by Tahta Media Group, Islamic educational epistemology has integrative characteristics that combine the bayani (textual), burhani (rational), and irfani (intuitive) dimensions in the process of acquiring knowledge. The integration of these three epistemological approaches forms a comprehensive Islamic scientific paradigm that differs from Western epistemology, which tends to be secular and positivist. In the context of modern education, Islamic epistemology faces significant challenges, especially with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology, which fundamentally changes the global educational landscape (Mahbubi, 2025). The development of AI in education has created a paradigmatic transformation in the learning process, ranging from personalized curricula and automated evaluation systems to adaptive learning based on machine learning algorithms. Research (Lukman Hakim, S.Sos, 2022) on the role of artificial intelligence in education shows that the integration of AI technology requires an epistemological reconstruction to maintain a balance between technological advancement and Islamic spiritual values.

The AI era presents an epistemological dilemma for Islamic education, particularly regarding the nature of knowledge, sources of truth, and the role of humans as subjects of learning. AI, with its massive computational capabilities, can process data and generate information at speeds beyond human capacity. However, a fundamental question arises: can knowledge produced by AI be equated with knowledge obtained through human cognitive, spiritual, and moral processes from an Islamic perspective? A study (R. Nurhayati et al., 2024) in the Proceedings of the National Seminar of the Faculty of Tarbiyah found that the use of AI in Islamic Religious Education learning should be accompanied by filters of moral values and Islamic educational goals oriented towards the formation of students' holistic personalities.

Another equally important challenge is the potential dehumanization in the educational process due to the dominance of AI technologies. Islamic education traditionally emphasizes the importance of the teacher-student relationship (*ta'lim wa ta'allum*), which is not only about the transfer of knowledge but also about the transmission of values, character, and spirituality. According to Hasmiza (Hasmiza, 2025) in the Research and Development Journal of Education, AI-based learning tends to overlook the humanistic and spiritual aspects that are the essence of Islamic education, making it necessary to develop an integration model that does not eliminate the essence of Islamic education. In addition, AI epistemology based on big data, algorithms, and pattern recognition has fundamental differences from Islamic epistemology, which acknowledges the validity of intuitive knowledge, revelation, and spiritual experience. Research (Neama & Barhoom, 2025) published in the Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization revealed that AI cannot accommodate the transcendent dimension and metaphysical values that characterize Islamic epistemology. Therefore, the use of AI in Islamic education should be limited to instrumental functions without replacing the fundamental role of Islamic values.

Another study conducted by Pratama (2025) in the Proceedings of the International Conference on Islamic Boarding School shows that the integration of digital technology into the pesantren curriculum faces challenges such as limited infrastructure, low teacher readiness, and a lack of an integrated curriculum. However, on the other hand, AI technology also opens strategic opportunities such as the digitization of classical Islamic texts, adaptive learning, and the expansion of more inclusive access to Islamic education. However, if managed wisely, AI can also open up new opportunities for the development of Islamic education. As stated by Darwis (2025) in *Kreatif: Journal of Islamic Education Thought*, AI technology can be utilized to enhance learning efficiency, provide wider access to education, and develop more effective learning methods. However, this requires a clear epistemological framework to ensure that the integration of AI in Islamic education does not conflict with the core principles of Islam and remains focused on the goals of Islamic education, which are to create individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and possess noble character.

Given the complexity of these issues, this study aims to thoroughly examine the concept of epistemology in Islamic education and analyze its challenges in the era of Artificial Intelligence. This study is

important for providing a theoretical and practical foundation for the development of Islamic education that maintains its epistemological identity while adapting to the inevitable advancements of AI technology.

## II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1. Epistemology in Islamic Education

The epistemology of Islamic education is a philosophical study that discusses the nature, sources, methods, and validity of knowledge from an Islamic perspective. In the tradition of Islamic scholarship, epistemology is understood rationally and empirically and derives from revelation (the Qur'an and Sunnah), reason, and sensory experience, integrated with spiritual and moral dimensions. According to Chandra (2025), Islamic epistemology positions knowledge as a means to draw closer to Allah SWT and as an instrument to achieve the well-being of humanity holistically. The concept of Islamic epistemology is theocentric, meaning that it regards Allah SWT as the main source of all knowledge. Knowledge is not neutral or value-free but is always tied to ethical and spiritual purposes. (Abrar 2025) emphasizes that in Islam, there is no dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, because both are manifestations of Allah SWT's qauliyyah and kauniyyah signs. Therefore, Islamic education aims to shape individuals who are knowledgeable, faithful, and possess noble character. In a methodological context, Islamic epistemology is known for three main approaches: bayānī, burhānī, and irfānī. (Muh. Fadel As'ad et al. (2025) explain that the bayani approach emphasizes textual understanding of the nash, burhani prioritizes rationality and logic, and irfani focuses on intuition and spiritual experience. The integration of these three approaches creates a comprehensive Islamic knowledge paradigm that is adaptive to contemporary development without losing its theological foundation.

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to education systems, including Islamic education. The digitalization of learning, use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), and utilization of Internet-based technology have changed the way teachers and students interact with knowledge. (Rustandi et al., 2025) state that digital transformation requires Islamic education to make methodological adaptations without sacrificing the fundamental values that form its identity. Nevertheless, technological transformation in Islamic education cannot be separated from epistemological issues. The integration of technology must be understood as a means (wasilah) and not an end (ghayah). Islamic education should be oriented towards the development of students' character, spirituality, and moral awareness. (Darwis 2025) shows that the utilization of digital technology in Islamic educational institutions, particularly in pesantren, still faces structural and cultural challenges, such as the preparedness of human resources and the integration of a curriculum based on Islamic values.

### 2.2. Artificial Intelligence in the Perspective of Education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a technology that enables machines to imitate human cognitive abilities, such as learning, thinking, and decision-making. In the field of education, AI is used for personalized learning, automatic assessment, learning behavior analysis, and adaptive learning development. (Lukman Hakim, S.Sos, 2022) emphasized that AI has great potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process. Nevertheless, the use of AI in education raises philosophical questions related to the nature of knowledge and the role of humans as learning subjects in the learning process. AI operates based on algorithms, big data, and pattern recognition; therefore, the knowledge it produces is instrumental and functional. From an Islamic perspective, knowledge is not only measured by cognitive aspects but also by its value, meaning, and impact on the formation of human character (Kennedy, 2023). In addition to epistemological issues, the application of Artificial Intelligence in education raises significant ethical and

pedagogical implications. Excessive reliance on AI systems has the potential to shift the role of educators from character-building facilitators to mere technical supervisors. In the context of Islamic education, teachers not only serve as conveyors of material but also as murabbi, mu'allim, and uswah hasanah who guide students intellectually, morally, and spiritually. (Rifky, 2024) Therefore, the use of AI must be applied proportionally so as not to eliminate the dimension of exemplary behavior, humanistic interaction, and moral development that form the essence of Islamic education.

Furthermore, the dominance of AI in the learning process has the potential to reduce the meaning of learning to a mechanistic activity that focuses on cognitive achievement and time efficiency. In contrast, from the perspective of Islamic education, the process of seeking knowledge is an act of worship imbued with spiritual values, etiquette and transcendental awareness. AI lacks moral and spiritual consciousness and therefore cannot instill values such as sincerity, responsibility, and righteous intention in the learning process. Therefore, the integration of AI in Islamic education must be accompanied by a clear framework of values and epistemology, so that technology serves as a supportive learning tool without displacing the primary goal of Islamic education, which is the formation of individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and morally virtuous. (Muhammad 'Ainul Yaqin, 2025)

### 2.3. Epistemological Challenges of Islamic Education in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

The integration of AI into Islamic education presents complex epistemological challenges. One of the main challenges is the shift in knowledge authority from humans to machines. Masuroh and Mardani (2025) emphasize that the use of AI in Islamic Religious Education learning has the potential to reduce the role of teachers as murabbi and moral exemplars if not controlled according to Islamic value principles. Furthermore, AI cannot accommodate the transcendental and spiritual dimensions that are the main characteristics of Islamic epistemology. (Rifky, 2024) emphasizes that AI operates only within the empirical and rational realms and therefore cannot replace the role of revelation and spiritual intuition in the process of seeking truth. Consequently, AI should be positioned as a learning aid rather than a source of epistemological truth.

Another challenge is the potential dehumanization of education itself. Darwis (2025) revealed that AI-based learning tends to reduce emotional and spiritual interactions between teachers and students. In Islamic education, however, this relationship is the primary medium for transmitting values, morals, and etiquette to the child. If not anticipated, the dominance of AI could shift the orientation of Islamic education from the development of a complete human being (*insan kamil*) to merely achieving technical competence. Conversely, AI also opens up strategic opportunities for the development of Islamic education. Darwis stated that AI technology can be utilized for the digitization of Islamic literature, development of adaptive learning, and expansion of more inclusive access to Islamic education. With a clear epistemological framework, AI can serve as a means to strengthen the learning process without eliminating Islamic values. Therefore, a reconstruction of the epistemology of Islamic education is needed, one that can critically, selectively, and value-orientedly integrate AI technology (Darwis 2025). This integration must assert that revelation remains the primary source of knowledge, while AI functions as a supporting tool in achieving the goals of Islamic education, which are to cultivate individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable and morally virtuous.

## III. Research Method

This study used a qualitative approach with library research (Sugiyono, 2017). This approach was chosen because the research aims to conceptually examine and analyze the epistemology of Islamic education and the challenges faced in the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), without involving field data collection. The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data include books and scientific journal articles discussing Islamic epistemology, Islamic educational philosophy, and Artificial

Intelligence in education. Secondary data consist of supporting documents, seminar proceedings, research reports, and other relevant literature related to the research topic.

Data were collected through a documentation study, which involved tracing, reviewing, and systematically classifying relevant literature. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis with a descriptive-analytical approach to identify concepts, patterns of thought, and experts' arguments related to Islamic education epistemology and AI. Furthermore, a critical-comparative analysis was conducted to compare Islamic epistemology with AI technology epistemology and its implications for Islamic education (Milya Sari. Asmendri, 2020). The validity of the data was maintained through source triangulation by comparing various scientific references from different perspectives. The analysis results are systematically and argumentatively arranged to produce a comprehensive conclusion regarding the position and challenges of Islamic education epistemology in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

## IV. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Analysis Result

The findings indicate that Islamic educational epistemology has holistic and integrative characteristics that distinguish it from modern educational epistemology based on positivism. From an Islamic perspective, the sources of knowledge are not limited to reason and empirical experience but also include revelation and spiritual intuition. Knowledge is understood as a means to shape faith, morals, and social responsibility rather than merely an instrument for mastering technology or achieving cognitive gains. This epistemological framework emphasizes that Islamic education is oriented toward the development of the whole person (*Insan kāmil*). The study's findings also revealed that the development of Artificial Intelligence has brought significant transformations to the education system, particularly in terms of learning efficiency, material personalization, and data-based evaluation systems. AI enables the analysis of learners' behavior quickly and accurately, allowing the learning process to be tailored to individual needs. However, AI operates within a rational-empirical epistemological framework that treats knowledge as the result of data processing and algorithm development.

The research results indicate a fundamental difference between the epistemology of Islamic education and that of AI. AI-generated knowledge produced by AI is instrumental, functional, and value-free, whereas Islamic epistemology emphasizes ethical, spiritual, and moral dimensions. AI lacks awareness of intention, meaning, and moral responsibility; therefore, it cannot replace the role of humans as learning subjects who possess spiritual and humanistic dimensions. This study also found that excessive AI use has the potential to shift the role of teachers in Islamic education. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering information but also for serving as spiritual guides and moral exemplars. Dependence on technology can reduce humanistic interaction and the internalization of values that are central to Islamic education.

However, research results indicate that AI has strategic potential if used proportionally and based on values. AI can be utilized for the digitization of Islamic literature, development of adaptive learning, and expansion of access to more inclusive Islamic education, especially in areas with limited resources. Overall, the research results affirm that the integration of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic education should be placed within a clear and value-oriented epistemological framework. Revelation and Islamic values must remain the primary sources of knowledge, while AI serves as a supportive tool that aids in achieving the goals of Islamic education, namely, to shape individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and morally virtuous.

### 4.2. Discussion



Research findings indicating that the epistemology of Islamic education is holistic and integrative align with the views of classical and contemporary Islamic education thinkers. Al-Ghazali emphasized that knowledge should lead humans to an understanding of Allah SWT and the cultivation of noble character, not merely the mastery of rationality. This concept is reinforced by modern Islamic epistemological thought, which positions revelation, reason, and experience as complementary sources of knowledge. Thus, the orientation towards values and transcendental goals becomes the main distinction of Islamic education epistemology compared to the positivistic epistemology that dominates the development of Artificial Intelligence technology.

The research findings that AI operates within a rational-empirical and instrumental epistemological framework are in line with the analysis of Darwis (2025), who stated that artificial intelligence was developed to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of learning processes. However, when linked to Islamic epistemology, the instrumental nature of AI shows a fundamental limitation in understanding meaning, intention, and moral values. This reinforces Nada's findings, which concluded that AI cannot accommodate the metaphysical and spiritual dimensions central to Islamic epistemology (Nada et al., 2025). The epistemological tension between Islamic education and AI found in this study is also in line with the findings of Chandra, who asserts that the use of AI in Islamic Religious Education learning must be limited and guided so as not to shift the goal of character formation. From the perspective of Islamic education theory, knowledge that is valuable is not only that which is rationally true, but also that which has ethical and spiritual impact on learners. Therefore, the dominance of AI has the potential to diminish the meaning of Islamic education if it is not balanced with a humanistic and spiritual approach to education. (Widyawati Chandra, 2025)

Findings regarding the potential shift in teachers' roles due to AI dominance are also relevant to Islamic humanistic education theory, which positions teachers as murabbi and uswah hasanah. Hasmiza emphasizes that technology-based learning tends to reduce emotional and spiritual interactions in the educational process. The results of this study reinforce this view by showing that the teacher-student relationship is the primary medium for the internalization of values and morals that cannot be replaced by technology. (Hasmiza, 2025) On the other hand, findings on the strategic opportunities of AI in Islamic education support Darwis's research results, which emphasize the importance of selectively utilizing digital technology. The integration of AI for the digitization of Islamic literature, adaptive learning, and the expansion of educational access can strengthen the quality of Islamic education if it is within a clear and value-oriented framework. (Darwis, 2025) Thus, this discussion emphasizes that the integration of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic education requires a critical and contextual epistemological reconstruction. Islamic education cannot reject technological developments, but it must not lose its epistemological identity. AI should be positioned as a pedagogical tool that supports the learning process, while revelation, reason, and Islamic values remain the main foundations for achieving the goals of Islamic education.

## V. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study and the discussion, it can be concluded that the epistemology of Islamic education has holistic and integrative characteristics, making revelation, reason, and experience the primary sources of knowledge. Islamic education is not only oriented towards mastery of cognitive aspects but also emphasizes the formation of faith, morality, and the overall personality of students. This epistemological framework serves as the main foundation for facing technological developments, including Artificial Intelligence. This study shows that Artificial Intelligence brings both opportunities and challenges to Islamic education. On the one hand, AI can enhance learning efficiency, expand access to education, and support adaptive learning. Conversely, AI operates within a rational-empirical epistemological framework that is instrumental and value-free; thus, it cannot replace the role of humans in shaping values, morality, and spirituality. The integration of AI in Islamic education has the potential to create epistemological and

pedagogical issues if used predominantly without value-based controls. Excessive reliance on technology can shift the role of teachers as moral and spiritual guides and reduce the humanistic interaction that is the soul of Islamic education. Therefore, AI should be positioned as a learning aid, not as a source of truth or a replacement for educators.

Thus, the integration of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic education requires a clear, critical, and value-oriented epistemological framework. Islamic education must adopt technology selectively and contextually, while still emphasizing that the primary goal of Islamic education is to shape individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and morally virtuous. This conclusion is expected to serve as a theoretical foundation for the development of policies and practices in Islamic education in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

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