



## Fazlur Rahman's Neo-Modernist Thought and the Epistemological Critique of Knowledge Integration in Indonesian Islamic Education

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### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji pemikiran neo-modernis Fazlur Rahman tentang integrasi tradisi dan modernitas serta relevansinya bagi reformasi pendidikan Islam di Indonesia. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada tiga persoalan utama: bagaimana Rahman memahami hubungan antara turats dan modernitas, bagaimana gagasannya tentang rekonstruksi tradisi intelektual dapat digunakan dalam pendidikan Islam, dan sejauh mana kerangka tersebut dapat menilai gerakan integrasi ilmu di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi kepustakaan melalui analisis atas karya-karya utama Rahman dan literatur sekunder yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi tradisi dan modernitas dalam pemikiran Rahman bertumpu pada hermeneutika double movement, pembacaan historis-kritis terhadap tradisi, dan orientasi etis Al-Qur'an. Dalam bidang pendidikan, Rahman menolak model pendidikan yang hanya mentransmisikan warisan keilmuan secara pasif dan menekankan perlunya rekonstruksi tradisi intelektual yang mampu menghubungkan ilmu keagamaan, ilmu modern, dan tanggung jawab moral. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa gerakan integrasi ilmu di Indonesia telah berkembang pada level visi dan kelembagaan, tetapi masih sering berhenti pada integrasi simbolik, seperti penambahan ayat, hadis, atau mata kuliah keislaman. Kontribusi artikel ini terletak pada penggunaan kerangka Rahman sebagai perangkat kritik epistemologis untuk membedakan integrasi ilmu yang bersifat simbolik dari integrasi yang benar-benar merekonstruksi cara berpikir pendidikan Islam.

### Abstract

*This article examines the neo-modernist thought of Fazlur Rahman regarding the integration of tradition and modernity, as well as its relevance to the reform of Islamic education in Indonesia. The study focuses on three main issues: how Rahman understands the relationship between turats and modernity; how his ideas on the reconstruction of intellectual tradition can be applied to Islamic education; and to what extent this framework can be used to assess the knowledge integration movement in Indonesia. This study employs a qualitative approach through library research, analysing Rahman's major works and relevant secondary literature. The findings indicate that the integration of tradition and modernity in Rahman's thought is grounded in the hermeneutics of the 'double movement', a historical-critical reading of tradition, and the ethical orientation of the Qur'an. In the field of education, Rahman rejects*

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*educational models that merely passively transmit scholarly heritage and emphasises the need for a reconstruction of intellectual tradition capable of linking religious knowledge, modern science, and moral responsibility. This study also demonstrates that the knowledge integration movement in Indonesia has developed at the levels of vision and institutional framework, but often remains limited to symbolic integration, such as the inclusion of verses, hadiths, or Islamic studies courses. The contribution of this article lies in the use of Rahman's framework as an epistemological critical tool to distinguish symbolic integration of knowledge from integration that genuinely reconstructs the way of thinking in Islamic education.*

## Introduction

Islamic education in the twenty-first century faces increasingly complex global changes. Developments in science, digital technology, and social problems such as economic inequality, environmental crises, and cultural disruption require Islamic educational institutions not only to maintain their religious identity, but also to produce generations that are critical, adaptive, and capable of contributing to modern life. At the global level, commitment to education is also reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning as the foundation of sustainable development (Artyukhov et al., 2024).

One of the fundamental problems frequently highlighted by scholars of Islamic education is the persistence of the dichotomy of knowledge, namely the division of knowledge into two groups that appear outwardly contradictory, because religious sciences are considered to originate from Islam, whereas general sciences are often claimed to originate from the West (Muna et al., 2024). Religious sciences are taught in a normative-textual manner and separated from social analysis, while general sciences are positioned as technically neutral and value-free knowledge.

Amid the problems of the dichotomy of knowledge and the stagnation of intellectual tradition, Fazlur Rahman offered an alternative framework. He was a Muslim intellectual deeply rooted in Islamic scholarship while also possessing mastery of the tradition of Western critical thought (Syauqi, 2022). Based on his profound understanding of turats and his academic experience in the West, studies on Rahman seek to integrate tradition and modernity without falling into either apologetic or secularistic tendencies. Fazlur Rahman's thought can serve as an important reference for the reform of Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly in responding to the increasingly complex challenges of globalization and modernization

(Hidayat et al., 2024). Through the hermeneutics of the double movement and his emphasis on Qur'anic ethics as a moral vision, he proposed the reconstruction of intellectual tradition and the renewal of Islamic education in order to make it more responsive to the demands of the age (Rahman, 2024).

Although Rahman was committed to formulating a methodological approach to provide an alternative framework for exploring the ethical-legal content of the Qur'an, he nevertheless considered diverse readings and interpretations of the Qur'an to be important. Postmodern challenges to religion and Islam were not the primary focus of Fazlur Rahman's concern (Ahmad, 2023). Instead, he offered a methodological and epistemological framework for rereading Islamic teachings in a historical-critical manner without losing normative commitment to the Qur'an and Sunnah. This view reflects a fundamental perspective on the Qur'an that became the basis for Rahman in reformulating methods of interpretation or hermeneutics relevant to contemporary contexts (Syauqi, 2022).

Several previous studies have discussed Fazlur Rahman's thought in relation to the renewal of Islamic education, the double movement method, and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education. For example, the study conducted by Nadhila Mastura et al. (2024) specifically examines Fazlur Rahman's thought concerning the double movement method. The article by Mohammad Khatami and Sarah Dina (2024) describes Fazlur Rahman's educational thought and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education by highlighting problems such as the misalignment of educational objectives, the dichotomy within the Islamic education system, the low quality of students, the scarcity of qualified educators, and limitations in the available literature. Hidayat et al. (2024) address a research topic closely related to this study by examining the relationship between Fazlur Rahman's thought and efforts to reform Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly in meeting the need for a more critical and applicable form of education.

Nevertheless, most of these studies still tend to position Rahman merely as a reformist figure in general terms, without employing the integration of tradition and modernity as an epistemological framework for assessing the practice of knowledge integration in Indonesian Islamic education. In addition, studies on the integration of knowledge in Islamic Higher Education Institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam / PTKI) often remain limited to the level of institutional policy, curriculum design, or the inclusion of Islamic elements within courses, yet they have not sufficiently examined whether such integration has addressed the



epistemological mode of thinking that critically connects turats, modern sciences, and the moral vision of the Qur'an. Based on this gap, this article offers a novel contribution by interpreting Fazlur Rahman's neo-modernist thought not merely as a normative reformist idea, but also as an analytical framework for evaluating the depth of knowledge integration in Indonesia. The main contribution of this article lies in its effort to formulate the integration of tradition and modernity as a process of reconstructing the Islamic intellectual tradition that does not stop at the transmission of knowledge, but moves toward the formation of critical, ethical, and contextual reasoning within Islamic education.

## Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using library research. This approach was selected because the primary object of the study is not social behavior in the field, but rather the construction of Fazlur Rahman's thought concerning tradition, modernity, and the reform of Islamic education. Primary data were obtained from Fazlur Rahman's works, particularly *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition, Major Themes of the Qur'an*, and several of Rahman's articles on the renewal of Islamic thought and education. Secondary data were derived from books and scholarly articles discussing Rahman's thought, Islamic education, and the knowledge integration movement in Indonesia.

The selection of sources was based on several criteria. First, primary sources were selected because they contain Fazlur Rahman's direct ideas regarding the transformation of the Islamic intellectual tradition, the hermeneutics of the double movement, Qur'anic ethics, and criticism of the dichotomy of knowledge. Second, secondary sources were selected if they had direct relevance to the themes of Islamic education reform, the integration of knowledge, or studies on Rahman's thought. Third, the sources used primarily originated from academic publications, especially scholarly books and journal articles with clear bibliographic identities. Popular sources, informal repositories, or non-peer-reviewed writings were used only in a limited manner when they provided supporting information and did not constitute the main basis of the argument.

Data collection techniques were conducted through literature review, selection of relevant sources, and content documentation. The data obtained were analyzed using the content analysis method. Content analysis was employed to extract Rahman's principal ideas



concerning tradition, modernity, and education. This approach was selected because it is suitable for exploring the conceptual and normative dimensions of Rahman's thought as dispersed across various works. In addition, the interpretation was conducted consistently within Rahman's intellectual framework so that the analysis would not merely remain at the level of literature summary, but would develop into a critical reading of the problems of contemporary Islamic education.

## Results and Discussion

### A. The Integration of Tradition and Modernity in Fazlur Rahman's Neo-Modernist Paradigm

Tradition may be understood as a social heritage transmitted from the past to the present while remaining connected to the life of modern society (Nurdin & Fazal, 2022; Shahira & Hariyadi, 2022). In Islam, tradition does not merely refer to relics of the past, but also to an intellectual heritage that continues to be read, transmitted, and reinterpreted. Therefore, tradition in this article is understood not merely as transmission, but also as a space for transformation

This understanding is consistent with Fazlur Rahman's view that Islamic tradition has never been static. When discussing figures such as al-Ash'ari, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Taymiyyah, Rahman demonstrates that Islamic tradition evolved through conscious and creative intellectual activity (Rahman, 2024). Thus, Islamic tradition is not merely something inherited, but something that must also be revitalized through *ijtihad*. If tradition remains limited to passive transmission, Islamic law and thought will encounter difficulties in responding to modern issues.

Fazlur Rahman is widely recognized as a neo-modernist thinker who sought to bridge the traditional Islamic intellectual heritage (*turats*) with constructive modern demands. He argued that Muslims need to study the history of their religion more objectively, particularly in order to understand how Islam was influenced through interaction with other groups (Rahman, 2020), Fazlur Rahman even emphasized that the most urgent task is to re-examine the Islamic tradition itself (Rahman, 1988). Thus, tradition should not be treated as a collection of final truths, but rather as a record of the *ijtihad* of Muslim scholars that continually requires historical and critical



reinterpretation. However, this does not mean that every tradition considered rigid should simply be abandoned, nor that traditions regarded as good should be frozen and preserved uncritically.

On the other hand, modernity, with all its scientific developments, social institutions, and educational systems, cannot simply be rejected. Modernity refers to a condition characterized by openness to new developments and concern for contemporary realities (Hasanah et al., 2023). In *Islam and Modernity*, Rahman understands modernity as a historical condition shaped by modern ideas, the forces of social change, and the entry of Western institutions into the Muslim world through colonialism and modernization (Rahman, 2024). For this reason, modernity became both a field of dialogue and a challenge for Muslims, with some adopting it while others rejecting it entirely.

One of the main reasons why modernity remains debated among Muslims is the misunderstanding of its meaning. For some, modernity is viewed as a product of Western civilization that is secular in nature and contrary to Islamic values. This perception was reinforced by the experience of colonialism in Muslim regions, where the process of modernization was often imposed without regard for local cultural and spiritual aspects (Hafith & Acim, 2025). Therefore, in response to this situation, Rahman (2024) stated that traditional education had created a “*dualism between the religious and the secular, between this-worldly and that-worldly.*” As a result, the modern Muslim world became trapped in a dualism that sharply separates religious sciences from secular sciences, and traditional education from modern education.

Islam has never viewed knowledge and religion as separate entities (Faruk et al., 2023; Humairah et al., 2024). In its early development, knowledge in Islam was not rigidly divided. A scholar could simultaneously master fiqh, Qur’anic exegesis, logic, philosophy, and even medicine or astronomy. Early Muslim scholars did not recognize a dichotomy of knowledge, nor did they distinguish between general sciences and religious sciences (Muna et al., 2024). However, during the middle and late Abbasid periods, the intellectual sphere experienced the penetration of a dichotomous understanding of knowledge, resulting in the compartmentalization of fields of study (Faruk et al., 2023), the most decisive development over time was the separation

between “religious sciences” (*ulum shariyya*) or “traditional sciences” (*ulum naqliyya*) and “rational or secular sciences” (*ulum ‘aqliyya or ghayr shariyya*) (Rahman, 2024).

Fazlur Rahman did not stop at criticism alone. In his thought, the integration of tradition and modernity revolves around the hermeneutics of the double movement. First, he emphasized that the four fundamental principles of Islamic thought -the Qur’an, Hadith, ijihad, and ijma’- constitute the framework for all Islamic thought (Rahman, 1995). Therefore, all branches of knowledge, including education, must operate through a dialogue with these four principles.

The double hermeneutic encompasses two stages of analysis: first, interpreting the Qur’anic text within the historical context of revelation; second, applying those teachings to modern realities. This approach does not merely focus on textual aspects, but also on practical relevance in everyday life, thereby supporting the development of educational curricula that are more adaptive and responsive to contemporary challenges (Al Munir, 2020). In short, interpretation through this method consists of a double movement: from the present situation to the period of the Qur’an, and then back again to the present.

The integration of tradition and modernity within the framework of the double movement lies in its “back-and-forth trajectory,” rather than at either end alone. The first movement begins by returning to the text/tradition. This relates to tradition as transmission, namely the preservation of turats (the Qur’an, Sunnah, and the experience of the early Muslim community) that must be maintained. Here, Rahman demands that the text be read seriously, followed by the reconstruction of the social context of Mecca and Medina, while distinguishing between Qur’anic responses that were highly specific to historical circumstances and those that embody general principles. At this point, what is preserved is the authority of tradition, in which revelation remains the primary normative source rather than merely conforming to modern preferences. However, the way tradition itself is understood employs modern intellectual tools, such as critical history, social sciences, philosophy, and hermeneutics. In this sense, modernity begins to function as a method for reading tradition, not as a replacement for tradition.

The second movement relates to tradition as transformation, namely returning to modernity by applying the principles derived from the first movement to



contemporary contexts through reinterpretation that effectively reforms practices in accordance with their original spirit and renders them functional within modern civilization. This rejects the assumption that Islam is relevant only to the past. Thus, tradition provides both the material that is transmitted and the intellectual framework that enables transformation through the two-step process (double movement) in hermeneutics.

The integration proposed through Rahman's two-step process is not a superficial compromise between classical texts and contemporary demands, but rather a critical synthesis that positions the moral values of the Qur'an as the primary standard. From this standpoint, he criticizes traditionalism that absolutizes classical fiqh formulations while simultaneously rejecting secular modernism that disregards the authority of revelation. This framework for integrating tradition and modernity does not stop at the level of interpretive theory, but becomes the foundation for Rahman's ideas concerning the reform of Islamic education. Through education, the moral principles of the Qur'an, derived through historical-contextual interpretation, are expected to be realized in the form of curricula and institutional cultures that are responsive to contemporary social problems.

Within the landscape of contemporary Islamic educational thought, Rahman's position can be distinguished from several other figures who also addressed the integration of knowledge. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (1978), for example, placed greater emphasis on the Islamization of knowledge through the reconstruction of the concepts of knowledge, adab, and the Islamic worldview, so that modern sciences would not be detached from a tawhid-oriented framework. Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi likewise developed the project of the Islamization of knowledge by emphasizing the reconstruction of modern disciplines based on the principle of tawhid (International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989). Fazlur Rahman shares common ground with these two projects in rejecting the secularization of knowledge and the dichotomy in education. However, Rahman's distinctive contribution lies in his methodological emphasis on the historical-critical reading of tradition and the extraction of the Qur'an's moral principles through the double movement. Thus, from Rahman's perspective, the integration of knowledge cannot be achieved merely by attaching Islamic labels to modern sciences, but must instead begin with the reconstruction of the Islamic

intellectual tradition and the translation of the Qur'an's ethical values into contemporary issues.

## **B. Reconstruction of Intellectual Tradition in Islamic Education**

Integration will be difficult to achieve without a serious reconstruction in the field of education, because education possesses significant power in instilling the doctrine of tawhid in students and society. Historically, Islamic education developed from informal patterns in homes, halaqah, kuttab, pesantren, and madrasah to higher educational institutions. However, Rahman's criticism is not primarily directed at these institutional forms, but rather at the way the intellectual tradition is treated within them. Islamic education becomes problematic when it merely emphasizes textual mastery, memorization, and repetition of information, while failing to develop analytical ability, historical consciousness, and the courage to engage in *ijtihad* in addressing the problems of the age (Nata, 2009; Saifudin et al., 2024).

The concept of Islamic education intended by Rahman in his works is not merely a set of physical or semi-physical teaching instruments, such as textbooks or external institutional structures (Rahman, 2024). Here, Fazlur Rahman rejects the traditional perspective that regards Islamic education simply as the existence of institutions such as pesantren or madrasah with certain books and outwardly religious structures.

Such a definition is overly outward and formalistic, because Islamic education cannot be measured solely by formal appearances. Furthermore, traditional education often emphasizes memorization and repetition of information. Although the values of honesty, diligence, and discipline cultivated in pesantren support the process of Qur'anic memorization, such practices still need to be directed toward learning models that actively construct knowledge and encourage deep reflection (Lubis & Pasaribu, 2024; Suwandi et al., 2024).

Based on Rahman's thought, which consistently emphasizes that the Qur'an must be understood historically and contextually so that its values remain alive within modern society, it remains necessary to question whether those values merely stop at memorization or are instead directed toward the formation of ethical consciousness in real life. Rahman further argued that the true benchmark for assessing the success or

failure of an Islamic educational system is the existence of an authentic, original, and adequate “*Islamic intellectual*” (Rahman, 2024). Thus, memorization and textual mastery remain important, but they must not become the ultimate goal of education. The measure of success is not merely memorization, but whether original and adequate Islamic thought emerges that is capable of responding to the challenges of the age.

The objectives of Islamic education cannot be separated from the primary sources of Islamic teachings, because the Qur’an and the Sunnah, which serve as the principal standards for determining the moral quality of human conduct, contain teachings and guidance for life (Ramadhani & Musyarapah, 2024). In his work, Rahman states that the primary concern of the Qur’an is humanity and human behavior, rather than theological discussion about God (Rahman, 2024; Raḥmān & Moosa, 1980), he believed that, in order to recover the moral principles of the Qur’an, ethical theory must be grounded solely in the Qur’an as interpreted through its own internal framework (Ahmad, 2023), therefore, the objective of education is directed toward shaping how human beings should conduct themselves in accordance with the Qur’anic vision, rather than merely expanding critical knowledge about the Qur’an.

In order to adapt to the development of science and technology, it is necessary to reconstruct the methods and learning models employed in Islamic education (Saifudin et al., 2024), consequently, the integration of traditional and modern Islamic education becomes essential. In the context of Islamic education, this means bridging the educational patterns of pesantren and madrasah, which are oriented toward mastery of turats, with the educational system of Islamic Higher Education Institutions, which is open to modern sciences and critical methodologies.

From Rahman’s perspective, the core issue is not merely the integration of two types of institutions or the addition of several subjects, but rather the reconstruction of the intellectual tradition that constitutes the very spirit of Islamic education itself. This reconstruction is what distinguishes Rahman’s ideas from merely technical-administrative discourse on curriculum integration. In his discussion of Pakistan, Rahman provides a concrete example of how curriculum integration can begin. He did not propose the abolition of madrasah, but instead advocated that existing madrasah should, with the support and goodwill of the state, adjust their curricula and teaching methods so that they could become connected to the general educational system while



also “*preserving their specialist nature*” (Rahman, 2024) such as mastery of classical texts, fiqh, tafsir, and related disciplines.

The expression *specialist nature* signifies that integration does not mean the elimination of tradition, but rather the reconstruction of the way tradition is treated. This involves preserving the function of the madrasah as the guardian of core disciplines such as tafsir, hadith, and fiqh. However, this function must not operate independently of historical context; instead, it must be connected to the social, political, and scientific problems faced by Muslims.

The Islamic intellectual tradition, therefore, is revitalized as a continuous process of *ijtihad*, rather than as a rigid legacy merely quoted without criticism. If the ideas discussed above are connected, the ideal objective of education according to Fazlur Rahman can be summarized into two inseparable dimensions: the intellectual and the moral-spiritual. On the one hand, Islamic education must be capable of developing Islamic thought that is original, critical, and adequate in responding to the challenges of the age, rather than passively inheriting tradition merely at the level of understanding. Yet it does not stop there; education must also cultivate strong moral character.

Therefore, the curriculum of Islamic education should be directed not merely toward the accumulation of religious and general subjects, but toward the formation of an interconnected network of disciplines operating within the framework of Qur’anic ethics. The integration of religious sciences, social sciences, and natural sciences should enable students to develop analytical and *ijtihad*-based capacities that are sensitive to social realities. In institutions such as pesantren, madrasah, and especially Islamic Higher Education Institutions, such a curricular orientation becomes essential for the reconstruction of the Islamic intellectual tradition, one that produces not only devout worshippers or modern technocrats, but also Muslim scholars who are critical, morally grounded, and capable of understanding the realities of their time.

### **C. The Knowledge Integration Movement in Indonesia from Fazlur Rahman’s Perspective: Evaluation of Opportunities and Limitations**

Islamic Higher Education Institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam / PTKI) were selected as the primary context because these institutions are considered to hold a highly important position as the spearhead in formulating educational models

that unite the traditions of religious scholarship and modern scientific traditions, which are distinct yet complementary (Anurogo & Napitupulu, 2023). This strategic position is aligned with the function of higher education as the final stage of formal education that equips students with intellectual abilities, skills, and professional attitudes in order to prepare them to adapt to society and remain competitive in the workforce (Sukinem et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, the discourse on the integration of knowledge between religion and science has emerged as one of the policy orientations of Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI). At various State Islamic Universities (UIN), the integration of knowledge has become attached to institutional identity, such as the concept of integrating three fields of knowledge (religion, science, and humanities) at UIN Suska Riau, as reflected in the university's logo and strategic documents (Sari, 2024). At the micro level, the development of academic frameworks for knowledge integration, such as *"The Circle of Wasathiyah Knowledge"* at UIN Salatiga, demonstrates that the integration of knowledge has been institutionalized through official documents and implemented through strategies in learning, research, and community service (Hanun, 2023).

The study conducted by Suprpto and Sumarni (2022) demonstrates that the integration of knowledge in PTKI has been implemented through curriculum policies, course distribution, and the incorporation of Islamic values into the learning process. In several UIN and IAIN, integration is not always presented as a separate course, but is instead embedded within relevant subjects through the association of course materials with Qur'anic verses, hadith, or Islamic theories. These findings indicate that, at the institutional level, the integration of knowledge has become an important orientation within Islamic higher education.

At the instructional level, the integration of knowledge has begun to appear in students' learning experiences. Rawanita (2024), for example, demonstrates that students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, in Islamic economics courses, not only study economic theories but also relate them to the principle of justice in Islam. This example illustrates that the integration of knowledge has started to be experienced in the classroom, particularly when general sciences are taught not merely as technical knowledge, but also in relation to Islamic moral values. Nevertheless, such experiences

still need to be examined critically. The extent to which the practice of linking economic theory with Islamic principles has been accompanied by a historical-critical reading of the fiqh tradition and the application of Rahman's double movement still requires further investigation.

On the other hand, the implementation of the integration of knowledge still faces various limitations. Suprpto and Sumarni (2022) demonstrate that integration is often hindered by the uneven capacity of lecturers and students to master two domains of knowledge simultaneously, namely religious sciences and general sciences. In addition, the socialization and training related to knowledge integration remain limited, such that some integration practices stop merely at the quotation of Qur'anic verses or hadiths without adequate epistemological analysis.

Other obstacles emerge at the ideological and institutional levels. Some groups remain concerned that the integration of general sciences may reduce attention to religious sciences, while others view excessive emphasis on religious sciences as potentially hindering the mastery of modern sciences. Furthermore, the lack of external support from the government and institutions, whether in the form of funding or research collaboration, has also impeded these integration efforts (Rawanita, 2024).

These limitations indicate that the issue of knowledge integration is not merely technical-curricular in nature, but also epistemological. The knowledge integration movement in Indonesia has indeed demonstrated an initial alignment with Rahman's ideas at the level of general vision; however, it is still often understood symbolically, for example through the addition of Qur'anic verses, hadiths, Islamic terminology, or religious courses into modern curricula. The weakness of an integration model that remains at the symbolic level is that it easily creates the impression that knowledge has been Islamized, while the underlying structure of thought remains separated. In the perspective of this article, epistemological integration requires transformation in the way knowledge is understood, produced, and utilized, so that modern sciences are not merely granted religious legitimacy, but are critically examined in relation to moral objectives, social responsibility, and the Qur'anic vision of humanity.

As an illustration, the integration of knowledge in Islamic economics courses is insufficient if it is carried out merely by adding verses concerning the prohibition of

riba or the obligation of zakat into discussions of economic theory. Within Rahman's framework, lecturers need to guide students in exploring the socio-historical context of economic verses, identifying the moral principles underlying them, such as justice, balance, protection of vulnerable groups, and social responsibility, and then relating these principles to modern economic issues such as structural poverty, digital capitalism, online lending, distributive inequality, and business ethics.

A similar pattern may be applied in the fields of science and the environment. Verses concerning nature should not merely be positioned as evidence that the Qur'an supports science, but should instead be interpreted as an ethical foundation for developing ecological responsibility, such as concern for climate crises, pollution, and the exploitation of natural resources. In this way, the integration of knowledge does not stop at the attachment of scriptural proofs, but becomes a process of critical analysis that connects text, tradition, and contemporary realities.

## **Conclusion**

This article confirms that Fazlur Rahman's thought provides an important normative and epistemological foundation for restructuring Islamic education amid the demands of modernity. The integration of tradition and modernity that he proposes through a historical-contextual reading of turats, an emphasis on the moral values of the Qur'an, and the ethos of *ijtihad* as an intellectual culture directs Islamic education not merely toward the preservation of religious identity, but toward the formation of Muslim individuals who are critical, ethical, and capable of participating in social transformation. From this perspective, tradition is not understood as a rigid legacy that is merely transmitted, but as an intellectual resource that must be creatively reconstructed in order to remain relevant to contemporary issues.

The analysis of the knowledge integration movement in Indonesia demonstrates that, at the levels of vision and institutional framework, many initiatives within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) have moved in directions consistent with Rahman's ideas. Nevertheless, such integration still faces limitations at the levels of epistemology, curriculum design, lecturer preparedness, and academic culture. Integration practices that stop at the addition of religious courses, the insertion of Qur'anic verses and hadiths, or the use of Islamic symbols are insufficient to address the problem of the dichotomy of knowledge. Within

Rahman's framework, the integration of knowledge must move further by constructing a critical relationship between revelation, the Islamic intellectual tradition, modern sciences, and social realities through processes of historical interpretation and the translation of the Qur'an's moral values into the context of contemporary education.

The implications of this study indicate the need for curriculum reform within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) that not only combines religious and general courses, but also develops problem-based interdisciplinary learning designs. Lecturers need to be equipped with the ability to read texts through a historical-critical approach while simultaneously understanding developments in modern sciences so that the integration of knowledge does not remain merely at the normative level. Furthermore, Islamic educational institutions need to cultivate an academic culture that encourages interdisciplinary dialogue, collaborative research, and reflective pedagogy. Future studies may expand upon this research through field studies at specific PTKI in order to examine the extent to which the principles of integrating tradition and modernity are implemented in curricula, learning processes, research, and community service.

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