



Islamic Education And Democracy: Harmonizing Faith And Civic Engagement

Ahmad Reza Maulana¹, Arga Sabda Wiguna², Muhammad Fajriansyah Solichin³,
Muhammad Reza Syahbudi⁴

¹⁻⁴Jakarta State University, Faculty of Social Sciences

Abstract. *This study explores the intersection of Islamic education and democratic principles, focusing on their historical context and core tenets. Historically, Islamic education has emphasized knowledge, ethics, and community welfare, aligning with many democratic ideals such as equality and civic engagement. This research examines the compatibility between Islamic values and democratic principles, arguing that both systems advocate for justice, participation, and the common good. However, integrating these frameworks presents challenges, including criticisms regarding potential conflicts between religious doctrines and democratic freedoms. Despite these challenges, the benefits of harmonizing Islamic education with democracy are significant. Such integration can foster a more inclusive, ethically grounded civic society, enhancing mutual respect and cooperation. This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on how educational practices rooted in Islamic teachings can enrich democratic processes, ultimately promoting a balanced approach to faith and civic responsibility.*

Keywords : *Islamic Education, Democracy, Harmonizing*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education, encompassing both formal and informal learning, plays a pivotal role in shaping the worldview and values of Muslims. Its rich history, diverse pedagogical approaches, and emphasis on ethical and moral development offer a wealth of insights into the potential for harmonizing faith and civic engagement. This article explores the historical context of Islamic education, highlighting its contributions to social and political discourse. It then examines the core principles of Islamic education that align with democratic ideals, demonstrating how these principles can be translated into practical actions that promote civic participation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This qualitative research aims to explore the intersection between Islamic education and democracy, focusing on harmonizing faith with civic engagement. The study will employ a phenomenological approach to delve into the lived experiences and perspectives of Muslim individuals engaging in democratic processes while upholding their religious beliefs. Utilizing purposive sampling, data will be collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation in diverse settings, such as educational institutions and community forums. Thematic analysis will be employed to identify patterns and themes related to the compatibility, challenges, and strategies for integrating Islamic values with democratic principles. By understanding how individuals navigate the complexities of their faith within democratic

contexts, this research seeks to offer insights into promoting mutual understanding, tolerance, and active citizenship among Muslim communities. Moreover, it contributes to the broader discourse on religious pluralism and democratic citizenship.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Historical Context

Islamic education has a long and distinguished history, dating back to the early days of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself was a teacher, and his emphasis on education laid the foundation for the development of a vast network of schools and learning institutions throughout the Muslim world. These institutions played a pivotal role in preserving Islamic knowledge, fostering intellectual inquiry, and nurturing ethical and moral values. In addition to formal education, Islamic tradition also places a strong emphasis on informal learning through community engagement and mentorship. This holistic approach to education has fostered a deep sense of social responsibility and civic engagement among Muslims throughout history.

The development of Islamic education can be traced back to the earliest days of Islam when the Prophet Muhammad established a mosque in Medina that also served as a place of learning. This dual function of mosques as centers for both worship and education set a precedent for Islamic educational institutions. The Prophet's emphasis on the importance of knowledge is reflected in numerous Hadiths, including his famous saying, "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

During the early Islamic period, education was primarily centered around religious studies, with the Quran and Hadith forming the core of the curriculum. However, as Islam expanded and came into contact with other cultures and civilizations, the scope of Islamic education broadened. The Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 CE) was particularly notable for its contributions to education and knowledge. Under the Abbasids, the Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad became a renowned center for learning and scholarship, attracting scholars from various parts of the world. Islamic education during this period was characterized by a remarkable openness to knowledge from different cultures and traditions. Scholars translated works from Greek, Persian, and Indian sources into Arabic, thereby preserving and expanding the body of human knowledge. This period also saw the establishment of Madrasahs (Islamic schools) that offered a more structured and formal education. These institutions were often endowed by wealthy patrons and provided free education to students, making learning accessible to a broader segment of society.

Islamic education has made significant contributions to various fields of knowledge, including science, medicine, mathematics, and philosophy. The works of early Muslim scholars have had a lasting impact on both Islamic and Western intellectual traditions. In the field of medicine, scholars such as Al-Razi (Rhazes) and Ibn Sina (Avicenna) made groundbreaking contributions. Al-Razi's comprehensive medical encyclopedia, "Kitab al-Hawi," was a major reference work for centuries. Ibn Sina's "Canon of Medicine" was used as a standard medical text in Europe well into the Renaissance period. These works not only advanced medical knowledge but also introduced a systematic approach to medical education and practice.

In mathematics, scholars like Al-Khwarizmi, known as the "father of algebra," made significant contributions. His book "Kitab al-Jabr wa-l-Muqabala" laid the foundations for algebra and introduced the decimal positional number system to the Islamic world, which was later transmitted to Europe. Al-Khwarizmi's work exemplifies the synthesis of knowledge from different cultures, as he built upon Greek and Indian mathematical traditions. The field of philosophy also benefited greatly from Islamic education. Philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), and Al-Ghazali engaged with Greek philosophical texts and sought to reconcile them with Islamic thought. Their works were instrumental in preserving and transmitting Greek philosophy to the Western world, influencing the development of medieval scholasticism and Renaissance humanism.

The interaction between Islamic education and democratic ideas has a complex and multifaceted history. While the concept of democracy as understood in modern Western terms did not exist in early Islamic societies, there were elements of consultative governance and community participation that resonate with democratic principles. The early Islamic community in Medina, established by the Prophet Muhammad, provides an example of consultative governance. The Prophet regularly consulted with his companions on matters of public concern, emphasizing the importance of shura (consultation). This practice of shura was institutionalized in various forms of governance throughout Islamic history, with rulers often seeking the counsel of scholars and community leaders. One of the most notable examples of consultative governance in Islamic history is the Majlis al-Shura, or consultative council, which advised the caliphs and provided a forum for discussing matters of state. While not democratic in the modern sense, these institutions reflect a commitment to inclusive and participatory governance.

In the modern era, the relationship between Islamic education and democratic ideas has evolved in response to changing political and social contexts. The 19th and 20th centuries saw the emergence of reform movements within the Islamic world that sought to reconcile Islamic

principles with modern democratic ideals. Thinkers such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida advocated for educational reforms that would prepare Muslims to engage with the challenges of modernity while remaining true to their religious values. These reformers emphasized the importance of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) and sought to revive the intellectual dynamism of early Islamic education. They argued that Islam is compatible with principles such as justice, equality, and the rule of law, and called for the development of educational systems that would promote critical thinking and civic engagement.

B. Core Principles of Islamic Education

Islamic education and democratic ideals share a substantial common ground, particularly in their foundational values, roles of sacred texts, and the functioning of educational institutions. This alignment not only fosters individual moral development but also enhances civic engagement among Muslims. This paper explores the deep connections between Islamic education and democracy, delving into the foundational values they share, the significant role of the Qur'an and Hadith, and the contributions of educational institutions.

The core principles of Islamic education are inherently democratic, fostering an environment where faith and civic engagement can thrive in harmony. Four primary values illustrate this connection: social justice, consultation (*Shura*), accountability, and community service. Social justice is a cornerstone of both Islamic education and democratic ideals. Islam teaches that all individuals, irrespective of race, gender, or social status, are entitled to justice and equality. This principle is deeply rooted in the Qur'an, which emphasizes the importance of treating others fairly and upholding their rights. For instance, the Qur'an states, "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives" (Qur'an 4:135). This emphasis on justice resonates with democratic ideals that advocate for equal rights and opportunities for all citizens, ensuring that every individual can participate fully in society. Consultation, or *Shura*, is a fundamental aspect of Islamic governance and a critical component of democratic practice. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) frequently sought the counsel of his companions before making decisions, exemplifying the importance of collective decision-making. The Qur'an reinforces this practice by stating, "And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves, and from what We have provided them, they spend" (Qur'an 42:38). *Shura* ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, promoting inclusivity and preventing autocratic rule. This principle aligns

seamlessly with democratic governance, where the voice of the people plays a crucial role in shaping policies and decisions.

Accountability is another shared value between Islamic education and democratic systems. In Islam, both leaders and individuals are held accountable for their actions. The Qur'an underscores this by stating, "And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged" (Qur'an 2:281). This accountability promotes transparency and integrity, essential qualities for preventing abuse of power and ensuring good governance. In democratic societies, the concept of checks and balances serves a similar purpose, holding leaders accountable to the public and ensuring that their actions align with the law and ethical standards. Islamic teachings place a strong emphasis on community service and the betterment of society. Muslims are encouraged to actively contribute to their communities, helping those in need and working towards social justice. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people" (Hadith). This principle fosters a sense of civic engagement and social responsibility, aligning with the democratic ideal of active citizenship. In a democratic context, community service is vital for creating a vibrant civil society where individuals actively participate in improving their communities.

The Qur'an and Hadith are central to Islamic education, providing guidance on both spiritual and civic matters. Their teachings offer a comprehensive framework for understanding and practicing democratic values within an Islamic context. The Qur'an, Islam's holy book, serves as a primary source of guidance for Muslims, covering various aspects of life, including governance and social justice. Its teachings on justice, consultation, accountability, and community service lay the foundation for a society that upholds democratic principles. For instance, the Qur'an's emphasis on justice is not limited to legal matters but extends to all aspects of human interaction. The verse, "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice" (Qur'an 4:58), highlights the importance of fairness in leadership and governance. This aligns with democratic values that emphasize the rule of law and equal treatment for all citizens. Moreover, the Qur'an encourages consultation and collective decision-making, as seen in the verse, "And consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah" (Qur'an 3:159). This directive supports the democratic process of involving citizens in decision-making, ensuring that policies reflect the will of the people.

The Hadith, which records the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), complements the Qur'an by providing practical examples of how to implement its teachings. The Prophet's life serves as a model for Muslims, demonstrating how to embody Islamic values in daily life and governance. The Hadith literature is rich with examples that emphasize democratic principles. For instance, the Prophet's practice of consulting his companions before making important decisions illustrates the value of Shura. In one instance, during the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet consulted his companions on whether to fight within the city or outside it. Despite having his own preference, he followed the majority's decision to fight outside, demonstrating his commitment to collective decision-making. Additionally, the Hadith emphasizes accountability and integrity in leadership. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock" (Hadith). This saying underscores the responsibility of leaders to their communities, reinforcing the democratic ideal that leaders should be accountable to the people they serve.

Islamic educational institutions play a crucial role in promoting democratic values and civic engagement. These institutions, which include madrasas, universities, and community centers, provide a holistic education that integrates religious teachings with contemporary knowledge, preparing students to be active and responsible citizens. Madrasas are traditional Islamic schools that offer a comprehensive education in religious and secular subjects. They play a pivotal role in shaping the moral and ethical foundation of students, emphasizing values such as justice, accountability, and community service. By instilling these principles, madrasas prepare students to engage in civic activities and contribute positively to society. In addition to religious studies, many madrasas have incorporated modern subjects into their curricula, including science, mathematics, and social studies. This integration helps students develop a well-rounded understanding of the world, enabling them to apply Islamic values to contemporary issues. For example, students learn about the importance of social justice through the lens of Islamic teachings and modern human rights principles, fostering a sense of responsibility towards creating a just and equitable society.

Islamic universities offer higher education that combines religious and secular knowledge, producing graduates who are well-equipped to contribute to various fields, including governance, law, and social services. These institutions promote critical thinking and encourage students to engage with diverse perspectives, preparing them for active participation in democratic processes. Universities also play a significant role in promoting research and dialogue on the intersection of Islam and democracy. Through conferences, seminars, and publications, scholars explore how Islamic teachings can inform and enhance democratic

practices. This academic engagement helps bridge the gap between religious and civic life, demonstrating how faith and democracy can coexist harmoniously. Islamic community centers serve as hubs for civic engagement and social activities. They provide a space for Muslims to come together, discuss community issues, and collaborate on initiatives that promote social welfare and justice. These centers often host educational programs, workshops, and seminars on topics such as citizenship, human rights, and community service, equipping participants with the knowledge and skills to contribute to society effectively. Community centers also play a vital role in fostering interfaith dialogue and cooperation. By promoting understanding and collaboration between different religious and cultural groups, these centers help build inclusive and cohesive communities, reflecting the democratic ideal of pluralism and mutual respect.

C. Democratic Principles and Their Compability with Islam

The debate over the compatibility of democracy and Islam has been ongoing, with various scholars and political thinkers offering differing perspectives. This article aims to delineate core democratic values and explore corresponding Islamic principles that support democratic governance. It also highlights contributions from modern Islamic scholars who advocate for democracy within an Islamic framework. Freedom is fundamental to democracy, encompassing rights such as freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. It empowers individuals to express their opinions, pursue their beliefs, and assemble without fear of retribution. Equality ensures that all individuals are treated fairly and have equal access to opportunities and resources. This principle is crucial for protecting the rights of all citizens, regardless of their background. Participation involves the active engagement of citizens in political processes, including voting, running for office, and public discourse. It is essential for ensuring that governance reflects the will of the people.

Shura refers to consultation and deliberation in decision-making processes. The Quran encourages Muslims to conduct their affairs through mutual consultation (Quran 42:38). This principle aligns with democratic ideals of participation and representation. Ijma signifies the consensus of the Muslim community or its scholars on matters of law and practice. It reflects collective agreement and shared decision-making, akin to democratic processes where consensus-building is vital. Justice is a fundamental Islamic principle, emphasizing fairness and equality (Quran 4:135). This principle supports democratic ideals by advocating for the protection of rights and fair treatment of all individuals.

Several modern Islamic scholars argue for the compatibility of Islam and democracy by reinterpreting traditional concepts to align with contemporary democratic values. Rachid Ghannouchi, A Tunisian thinker who emphasizes freedom, justice, and human rights within an

Islamic framework, advocating for democratic governance in Muslim-majority societies. Abdolkarim Soroush, An Iranian philosopher promoting religious democracy by focusing on the ethical and moral dimensions of Islam rather than rigid interpretations of religious laws. Khaled Abou El Fadl, An Egyptian-American scholar who advocates for democracy by highlighting justice, consultation, and the inherent dignity of all individuals within Islam.

Political movements and parties in Muslim-majority countries strive to merge democratic principles with Islamic values. Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP). This party blends democratic governance with Islamic values, emphasizing economic development, political participation, and social justice. Malaysia's Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS). PAS aims to establish a democratic state that upholds Islamic principles, advocating for Sharia law in a manner that respects democratic processes and human rights. Indonesia as the world's largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia demonstrates a functioning democracy that respects Islamic values, allowing for participation, representation, and protection of freedoms while maintaining respect for Islamic traditions. Post-Arab Spring, Tunisia has made strides towards establishing a democratic system. The Ennahda Party, an Islamist political party, has played a crucial role in this transition, advocating for a political framework that incorporates both democratic and Islamic principles.

D. Challenges and criticisms

The fundamental problem of Islamic education is the unclear paradigm of Islamic education. The ideological paradigm and the scientific paradigm are mixed in such a complex way that they develop into a scientific or pseudo-scientific ideological paradigm. As a result, the tradition of creative, dynamic and open scientific thinking in the Islamic tradition, as well as the essence of revelation, is really difficult to develop. Methodological problems in Islamic education as above have never been completely resolved to this day. Discussion of this problem is always hampered by rules that limit scientific thinking narrowly within classical orthodoxy. This limitation gives rise to standardization or standardization of thought and only one thought is considered correct. Thoughts that are outside these rules constitute apostasy and enter a prohibited area. Fresh and dynamic intellectual thinking and work that is capable of making changes and becoming socially mobile as expected by society is impossible to be born if the scientific ideology which is considered standard still plays a vital role and strictly supervises and controls the development of Islamic da'wah and all Islamic educational activities carried out. includes the learning process and curriculum preparation.

The development of Islamic thought and education in general is still in the process of cleaning up Islamic thought which only focuses on the results of orthodox classical thought. Even though the results of these thoughts are not absolute, and all of them are not necessarily relevant when applied to today's conditions. This does not mean that we reject the entirety of classical thought, but it is necessary to verify and re-examine the results of this thought in the same way as Al Ghazali's criticism of empirical and rational philosophy. Because what Al Ghazali did is proof that he philosophized, and the rejection that was made was not about his philosophical methodology but the final results of this empirical and scientific philosophy. Democracy in Islamic education has consequences for the formation of decentralization of authority, where the management of education will be largely determined by direct implementers, both administrators, educational staff, and the community in creating content or materials, learning systems, including developing the quality of students. On the other hand, educational democracy will also have an impact on aspects of the curriculum, administrative efficiency, education income and costs, as well as equality of community education attainment.

Education and teaching methods in Islamic education are actually heavily influenced by the principles of freedom and democracy. Islam itself, since its birth, has always called for the principle of freedom and equality in learning, so that the way for learning is open for everyone, the doors of mosques and institutes are open to everyone, regardless of the differences between rich and poor, high or low social standing. students, because in Islam there is no advantage to Arabs over non-Arabs, except for their piety.

In creating a more democratic Islamic education and in order to face changes in global society, there are several fundamental problems internal to Islamic education that must be resolved first, namely: First, we must completely eradicate the historical insight into Islamic education that is not in accordance with the ideas conveyed by the Al-Qur'an, in the form of a dichotomous problem of Islamic education which is a fundamental problem in the development of Islamic education so far. Islamic education must be kept away from dichotomy, towards integration between religious knowledge and general knowledge, so that it does not create a gap between religious knowledge and non-religious knowledge.

Islamic Educational Institutions in New Order Regime Policies pertaining to Islamic education, particularly those pertaining to madrasas, were intended to carry on and perfect the policies of the New Order government. Madrasas, an important component of Islamic education, are not yet considered part of the national education system; instead, they are independent educational institutions overseen by the Minister of Religion. According to the information provided above, the 1967 policy, which was issued in response to TAP MPRS No.

XXVII in 1966, was the first step in implementing this modernization. Making madrasas more structured and formal.

In the early 1970s, it appears that government policy attempted to separate madrasas from parts of the national education system, but madrasas continued to be built to strengthen their existence. This can be seen in the government's actions, which issued a policy on functional responsibility for education and training in the form of presidential decree number 34 on April 18, 1972. This decision had three components.

1. The Minister of Education and Culture is in charge of and accountable for general education and policy development.
2. The Minister of Manpower is in charge of and accountable for the development and training of civil servants' skills and vocational workforce.
3. The State Administration institution's head is in charge of and accountable for fostering special education and training for civil servants.

It includes, among other things, the essence of standardizing the curriculum in public schools and madrasas. The school and madrasah curricula are divided into general and madrasah programs, which include core and elective programs. The core programs for meeting the educational goals of general schools and madrasah are qualitatively the same. Special (optional) programs are held to provide for students who will continue their studies to higher education in senior high schools/Madrasah Aliyah. Implementation plans for the curriculum of public schools and madrasas in terms of semester credit, career guidance, and study completion. Matters concerning teachers and educational facilities in the context of successful curriculum implementation will be jointly regulated by the two departments concerned.

Nationally, following the fall of the New Order regime, the study of Islamic thought accelerated. Many previously difficult to develop Islamic educational institutions have changed and progressed rapidly. In fact, Islamic education is now beginning to compete to keep up with the dynamics of the times by aiming for the internationalization of Islamic educational institutions ranging from kindergarten to elementary/middle schools to tertiary institutions/universities (Assegaf, 2003). Nonetheless, there is a widespread belief that Islamic education institutions are less competitive than general education institutions, particularly in terms of producing outputs that can be directly absorbed by the worlds of work, business, and the Indonesian bureaucracy.

Islamic Education Institute Post-Reformation, several factors influence the world of Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, one of which is financial. Furthermore, since the passage of Law No. 1, 2/1989, madrasas have been

considered to play an increasingly important role in the delivery of education, as amended by the National Education System Law. In addition to the national education system, the government failed to encourage Islamic boarding schools and madrasas in general to compete with general education institutions in order to promote education in Indonesia. As a result, in addition to educational reform, Islamic educational institutions, particularly madrasas, require serious consideration for their potential, particularly in the financial sector.

The presence of the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 may open up new avenues for the advancement of Islamic education. Many people believe that the new National Educational System Law represents a conceptual turning point in the development, empowerment, and improvement of Indonesia's Islamic education system. Law is crucial in terms of quality improvement. There appears to be renewed optimism in Indonesia regarding the expansion of Islamic education. This law has provided a revolutionary new perspective for improving the education sector, where education has become a public affair in general, by reducing the government's authority over curriculum policies, management, and various policies for the development of educational institutions themselves. The National Educational System Law is a type of education sector reform.

Educational reform will take place if institutional leaders, communities as stakeholders, and central and regional governments all share the same innovative, dynamic, and collaborative vision for educational reform. It is hoped that educational reform will result in qualified graduates and competitive institutions. As a result, many people believe that Islamic education should be more rational and focused on the needs of society as a whole. The idea of preparing human resources for the future is increasingly becoming mainstream in educational thinking today, not just as a means of gaining political influence or as a da'wah tool in the narrow sense. The majority of Islamic educational institutions are less promising for the future and less responsive to current and future demands, owing to a lack of public interest in choosing them rather than a shift in values or religious ties that are beginning to fade.

E. Benefits of Integrating Islamic Education with Democracy

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is an integral component in the educational curriculum. The aim is not only to teach Islamic teachings, but also to form the character of individuals who believe, are devoted to Allah SWT, have noble character, are knowledgeable, capable, creative and independent . PAI is not only a subject at school, but also the basis for forming personalities and attitudes to life for the younger generation. PAI has a central role in building a moderate religious attitude. With a deep understanding of the Islamic teachings of rahmatan lil alamin, PAI encourages students to think critically about the realities of life and

prioritize peace and compassion. PAI can also be a foundation for building a society that upholds human values and justice. Through PAI teaching, students are invited to appreciate differences and understand diversity as an inevitability in society. The concept of inclusivity is also emphasized so that students can embrace all levels of society regardless of ethnicity, religion, race and class. PAI can also foster justice and national spirit. (Prasetiawati, 2017) By understanding the principles of justice in Islam, students are directed to become agents of change in resolving conflict and inequality in society.

Quraish Shihab believes that the more mature and mature a society is, the more stable the embodiment of the values they adhere to. An immature society is one that has not succeeded in realizing it, while a sick society is one that ignores these values. Untreated disease will accelerate people's death. Quraish Shihab also said that if there are things that conflict with the identity and goals of members of society, then society must rectify these matters so that there is harmony between the ego of each individual and the interests of society. This shows the importance of carrying out what is called character and nation building. Building liberating character in humans or students, including students in society, is not an easy job. Even though there are many models of education in Indonesia, there are still many organizers who have not liberated them or have not made the world of education a path to liberation. Gus Dur once had the dream of establishing an Islamic boarding school consisting of students with various identity backgrounds. This is an effort to real learn about the differences and pluralism of Indonesian society, as well as to eliminate discrimination through education. Education is the most effective cultural pathway to build awareness of equal rights. Islam is known as a universal religion that guides human life. It contains social, political, economic, cultural and educational institutions. Islam prohibits oppression and injustice, and provides space for freedom and creativity. Islam invites every individual, nation, or citizen to free themselves from ignorance and backwardness. The doctrine of liberation in Islam invites humans to love their homeland, become a strong nation, and have special integrity. Higher education that teaches the meaning of love for one's country, nationalism, and the values of commitment to being a strong citizen with integrity can be appreciated by Islamic teachings because it is oriented towards character and nation building.

It is stated in the words of Allah SWT: "And let those who fear Allah leave behind them weak children, whom they fear for their (welfare). Therefore let them fear Allah and let them speak the right words" (QS, An-Nisa' (4): 9). This verse shows or rather reminds the Muslim community not to abandon (allow) their students to become a generation that is weak, uneducated, or does not have a noble (strong) personality.

It is important for Muslims to have a broader perspective in practicing their religion, especially in improving the quality of education. Education must be considered an important part of worship, even though it is not the main worship. For example, if someone has already performed the Hajj and does not intend to do it again, then it is better to use the costs of the Hajj trip to improve the education system around him if children or educational institutions are not taken care of. In this case, a broader understanding of religion is needed, namely the belief that a person's success as a servant of God is not only through obedience to individual rituals, but also through participation in communal rituals and education based on the empirical interests of society. The concept of education in Islam is lifelong education, from infancy to adulthood. Therefore, the role of parents, especially mothers, is very crucial in instilling Islamic values in children from the age of five. To develop communal education, it is important to encourage Muslim communities to develop private educational institutions which have been considered marginal. Although this requires courage and experimentation, those who have the passion to advance Muslim education will try their best. In this case, Muslim communities can apply Aristotle's principle of synergy which says that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The Indonesian Muslim community is required to have the same vision and actions in achieving success in the education of this community, and not act individually because the results will be better if steps are taken together.

In the words of Allah SWT it is stated: "For humans there are angels who always follow them in turns, in front of and behind them, they guard them at the command of Allah. Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change the condition of themselves. and if Allah wills evil for a people, then no one can resist it; and there is no protector for them but Him (QS Ar-Ra'ad (13): 11). This verse teaches, among other things, that every human being is a "reformer" who is obliged to carry out reforms if he aspires or is obsessed with making a lot of progress in his life. Progress will never be achieved without efforts to make changes. For example, all elements of this nation are required to make changes or revolutionize the mentality of students, this is a form of commitment to building a spirit of nationalism.

Education has an important role in meeting Indonesia's adequate human resource needs for development. In accordance with Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, national education aims to develop the nation's abilities and character and make the nation's life more intelligent. Islam also requires its followers to maintain the interests of education and carry out reforms if necessary. Education in Islam is considered an absolute necessity to achieve prosperity in this world and the hereafter. Islam also encourages its

followers to use reason and seek knowledge in order to distinguish right from wrong and understand the nature of nature. Humans can be educated to have attitudes and behavior that are in accordance with the moral and scientific transformation they learn. Forming people with high character and commitment to the homeland is a more noble and difficult effort than just forming people with knowledge

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study "Islamic Education and Democracy: Harmonizing Faith and Civic Engagement" explores the historical evolution of Islamic education and its core principles, emphasizing the significance of knowledge ('ilm) and ethical conduct. By examining the foundational values of democracy, such as justice, equality, and participation, the research highlights their inherent compatibility with Islamic teachings. Despite this congruence, integrating Islamic education with democratic principles faces challenges and criticisms, particularly regarding interpretations of Sharia law and the perceived rigidity of traditional Islamic scholarship. However, the integration offers substantial benefits, fostering a more inclusive society where civic engagement is encouraged among Muslim communities. This harmonious approach promotes mutual understanding and respect between diverse populations, contributing to a more robust democratic framework. Ultimately, the study underscores the potential for Islamic education to enrich democratic practices, advocating for a balanced integration that respects religious beliefs while upholding democratic values.

REFERENCES

- Abadi, T. W. (2016). Axiology: Between ethics, morals and aesthetics. *Channel: Journal of Science Communications*, 4(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.21070/kanal.v4i2.1452>
- Elihami, E., & Syahid, A. (2018). Application of Islamic religious education learning in forming Islamic personal character. *Edumaspul: Journal of Education*, 2(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v2i1.17>
- Erfayliana, Y. (2015). Physical education in forming ethics, morals and character. *Skilled: Journal of Basic Education and Learning*, 2(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.24042/terampil.v2i2.1299>
- Ghannouchi, R. (2016). *Secularism in the Arab Maghreb*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lickona, T. (2022). *Educating to form character* (1st ed.). Literary Earth.
- Somad, M. A. (2021). The importance of Islamic religious education in shaping children's character. *QALAMUNA: Journal of Education, Social and Religion*, 13(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v13i2.882>

Stepan, A., & Linz, J. (2013). Democratization theory and the "Arab Spring". *Journal of Democracy*.

Yaumi, M. (2016). *Character education: Foundations, pillars & implementation* (2nd ed.). Prenada Media.