

The Concept of Islamization of Knowledge in the Thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: An Effort to Build a True Islamic Epistemology

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Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan mengkaji konstruksi konseptual *paradigma Islam sejati* menurut Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas serta mengevaluasi relevansi dan kontribusinya terhadap pengembangan epistemologi dan sistem pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) dengan menganalisis 24 artikel ilmiah yang diseleksi dari 100 publikasi jurnal Scopus terbitan tahun 2015-2025. Proses seleksi dilakukan berdasarkan kriteria inklusi yang meliputi jenis artikel jurnal ilmiah, keterkaitan langsung dengan konsep Islamisasi ilmu menurut al-Attas, akses terbuka (*open access*), dan periode publikasi terkini untuk memastikan relevansi dan kredibilitas sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa paradigma Islam sejati dikonstruksikan al-Attas berdasarkan *worldview* tauhid, menempatkan adab sebagai asas epistemologis, serta memposisikan ilmu sebagai instrumen pengenalan diri, Tuhan, dan realitas. Paradigma ini menolak sekularisme epistemologis dan dikotomi ilmu, serta mengintegrasikan dimensi wahyu, akal, intuisi, dan pengalaman dalam kerangka keilmuan Islam yang holistik. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada penegasan hubungan integral antara adab dan struktur pengetahuan sebagai fondasi Islamisasi ilmu yang belum banyak dielaborasi secara sistematis dalam studi-studi sebelumnya. Paradigma ini memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap penguatan epistemologi Islam yang bernilai spiritual sekaligus reformasi sistem pendidikan melalui konsep *ta'dib*, hierarki ilmu, dan integrasi kurikulum berbasis *maqasid al-shari'ah*. Dengan demikian, paradigma Islam sejati tidak hanya menjadi dasar teoritis Islamisasi ilmu, tetapi juga tawaran strategis dalam rekonstruksi sistem pendidikan Islam yang integral dan beradab.

Kata kunci: Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Islamisasi Ilmu, Paradigma Islam Sejati.

Abstrack

This article aims to examine the conceptual construction of the true Islamic paradigm according to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and evaluate its relevance and contribution to the development of contemporary Islamic epistemology and education systems. This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method by analyzing 24 scientific articles selected from 100 Scopus journal publications published between 2015 and 2025. The selection process was based on inclusion criteria that included the type of scientific journal article, direct relevance to the concept of Islamization of knowledge according to al-Attas, open access, and the most recent publication period to ensure the relevance and credibility of the sources. The results of the study show that the true Islamic paradigm constructed by al-Attas is based on the worldview of tawhid, placing adab as the epistemological basis, and positioning science as an instrument for self-knowledge, knowledge of God, and knowledge of reality. This paradigm rejects epistemological

secularism and the dichotomy of science, and integrates the dimensions of revelation, reason, intuition, and experience into a holistic Islamic scientific framework. The uniqueness of this study lies in its affirmation of the integral relationship between adab and the structure of knowledge as the foundation of the Islamization of science, which has not been systematically elaborated in previous studies. This paradigm makes a significant contribution to strengthening Islamic epistemology that has spiritual value as well as reforming the education system through the concepts of ta'dib, the hierarchy of knowledge, and the integration of a curriculum based on maqasid al-shari'ah. Thus, the true Islamic paradigm is not only the theoretical basis for the Islamization of science, but also a strategic offer in the reconstruction of an integral and civilized Islamic education system.

Keyword: Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Islamization of Science, The True Islamic Paradigm

INTRODUCTION

In the discourse of modern Islamic thought, the idea of Islamization of knowledge emerged as an intellectual response to the dominance of secular Western epistemology that began to strengthen in the 19th century, especially after the colonization of the Islamic world (Dangor, 2005; Dzilo, 2012). This concept began to take systematic shape through the thinking of contemporary Muslim scholars such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Hossein Nasr, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. Among the three, al-Attas emerged as the most consistent and philosophical figure in formulating the conceptual foundations of the Islamization of science (Ahmed, 2018; Kosim & Kustati, 2020). He not only criticizes the impact of secularization on the world of education and knowledge, but also offers a true Islamic paradigm as an epistemological basis for rebuilding a system of knowledge rooted in the values of tawhid (Harvey, 2023; Rakhmat, 2023; Sassi, 2020).

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas positions the Islamization of knowledge not merely as an ideological purification movement but as an ontological, axiological, and epistemological project. Through his works, such as *Islam and Secularism* and *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, he asserts that the crisis of Islamic scholarship is rooted in the erroneous definition of knowledge and the purpose of its pursuit. The true Islamic paradigm he offers seeks to restore knowledge to its *maqāsid* within the framework of tawhid, with adab as the epistemological basis and akhlak as the goal of education. This concept represents a synthesis of rational, spiritual, and ethical aspects within the framework of authentic Islamic scholarship (Ahmed, 2018).

The urgency of Islamizing science is becoming increasingly prominent amid the global epistemic crisis caused by the dominance of modern science oriented towards a secular worldview. The development of technology and knowledge divorced from spiritual values has led to the fragmentation of science and the alienation of humans from the meaning of life. Al-Attas views that the main problem facing Muslims is not the absence of science, but rather errors in the epistemological foundations and moral orientation of knowledge. He strongly criticizes positivism, moral relativism, and the secularization of epistemology, which reduce science to a mere accumulation of empirical facts without any ethical-transcendental direction (Dzilo, 2012; Harvey, 2023).

The true Islamic paradigm, as developed by al-Attas, is grounded in the Islamic worldview, with tawhid as the highest metaphysical principle. Within this framework, reality is understood as God's creation, full of meaning and purpose. Knowledge is not merely an accumulation of data, but rather a process of self-awareness of the essence of existence, moral responsibility, and the relationship between humans and God, nature, and fellow humans (Cahyana, 2021). Adab, in al-Attas' view, is a central instrument of the Islamization of science, because it represents an intellectual and spiritual order that leads humans to justice and balance in knowledge (Ahmed, 2018).

Unlike other figures, al-Attas' uniqueness lies in his emphasis on language and meaning as carriers of the Islamic worldview. He rejects the uncritical use of Western terms and concepts in Islamic scientific discourse because language is not a neutral tool but a vessel of meaning that shapes how we view reality. Therefore, in his view, the Islamization of science is also a process of purifying meaning, rearranging key concepts such as *'ilm*, *din*, *'adl*, and *hikmah*, so that they are in harmony with the principles of revelation (Idriz, 2020; Reagan, 2017).

Previous studies on al-Attas have discussed many aspects of educational philosophy, the concept of *ta'dib*, and his criticism of secularization. However, most of the research remains descriptive and has not systematically elaborated on the conceptual relationship between the true Islamic paradigm and the reconstruction of Islamic epistemology in the context of integrating modern science. This is where the research gap lies that this study seeks to fill: how the true Islamic paradigm functions as the philosophical foundation of the Islamization of science as well as a conceptual model for building an integral and civilized Islamic knowledge system.

Furthermore, in the context of the globalization of knowledge, al-Attas's thinking is also relevant in responding to the trend of epistemological decolonization. As explained by Laabdi (2024) The Islamization of science can be read as a critique of the hegemonic Western epistemological universalism. Al-Attas offers a conceptual alternative that is particularistic in nature, yet remains open to universal dialogue. His thinking has a distinctive feature in emphasizing the aspects of Islamic adab, language, and cosmology, which distinguishes it from the approaches of other figures such as al-Faruqi, Sardar, and Taha Abderrahmane (Muslih, Khakim, et al., 2024; Rakhmat, 2023).

The true Islamic paradigm is increasingly being adopted in the academic and institutional spheres of Islamic education as the epistemological basis for the development of an integrative curriculum, the strengthening of character based on transcendent values, and the development of a civilized scientific civilization (Hatina, 2006; Sassi, 2020). Rassool (2021) even emphasizes the role of the Islamic paradigmatic approach in the development of holistic Islamic psychology oriented towards the values of tawhid.

Thus, this study attempts to present a conceptual synthesis that not only describes the intellectual contributions of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, but also assesses the relevance

and implemented potential of the true Islamic paradigm in the context of contemporary Islamic education and epistemology. This study is specifically aimed at answering two main questions:

1. How does Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas conceptualize the paradigm of true Islam as the basis for the Islamization of knowledge?
2. What is the relevance and contribution of the paradigm of true Islam to the development of Islamic epistemology and contemporary Islamic education systems?

METHODS

The research design used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method (Mengist et al., 2020). SLR is a systematic research method used to collect, critically evaluate, integrate, and present findings from various studies related to specific research questions or topics (Arissona Dia Indah Sari et al., 2023). Using this method, researchers will identify, review, evaluate, and interpret all studies found. In addition, researchers will conduct a structured review, evaluating articles carefully and systematically (Anditiasari et al., 2021).

SLR is conducted through several key steps. First, the research questions and objectives are clearly defined. Then, inclusion and exclusion criteria are established. Finally, a systematic search for relevant studies is conducted. This process allows for a comprehensive analysis of literature published between 2015 and 2025. The SLR in this study focuses on the identification, review, evaluation, and interpretation of articles relevant to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: Realizing the Islamization of Science through the True Islamic Paradigm. A total of 100 articles were collected through a search using specific tools and keywords. The articles were then filtered using inclusion and exclusion criteria; only 24 met the criteria for further analysis.

This method was chosen because it allows researchers to identify common patterns, strengths, and weaknesses in existing research. This method also provides a deeper understanding of the latest developments in the field. Thus, SLR provides significant added value to this research by allowing researchers to explore more comprehensive information and contribute meaningfully to the development of knowledge about the true Islamic paradigm.

The first step is to establish criteria for relevant articles. These criteria will facilitate the search and selection of articles that are suitable for the next stage of the discussion.

Table 1. Eligibility Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Article type	Journal articles	Other than journal articles
Period	Published between 2015 and 2025	Published before 2015
Journal source	Sourced from Scopus	Sourced from Other than Scopus
Open access	Journal can be accessed freely (open access)	Journals are not freely accessible (nonopen access)

Study focus	About the true Islamic paradigm according to Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas	In addition to the true Islamic paradigm, according to Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas
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Journal articles were selected because they undergo peer review, making them a more reliable source for scientific research than other publications, such as books, conference reports, and magazine articles. To ensure that the literature used is relevant to the latest developments in the true Islamic paradigm, particularly in light of the views of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, articles published between 2015 and 2025 were selected. Scopus was chosen because it provides access to high-quality scientific literature, including articles that have undergone rigorous peer review.

To ensure that research is accessible to anyone without cost or subscription barriers, and to support transparency in the research process, only articles that are freely accessible (open access) are included in the criteria. Articles that are only accessible through institutional subscriptions or that are not open access are excluded, as this would limit access to research and reduce transparency. To maintain consistency with the research objectives and focus on aspects of the true Islamic paradigm, articles discussing "Realizing the Islamization of Science Through the True Islamic Paradigm," as articulated by Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, were selected.

After establishing criteria for relevant articles, the next step is to collect articles using Scopus search with predetermined keywords. Keywords are developed based on the research's main concepts.

Table 2. Database Sources, Keywords, and Number of Documents

Database	Keywords	Number of Documents
Scopus	Naquib al-Attas	31
	Islamization of Science	49
	The Paradigm of True Islam	20

The keyword "Naquib al-Attas" was used to search for articles focusing on Naquib al-Attas' views. This keyword was used to emphasize that the Islamic paradigm in this study is based on Naquib al-Attas' views. The keyword "Islamization of Science" refers to Naquib al-Attas' views on the Islamization of Science. The next keyword, "The Paradigm of True Islam," is the core of this study. Scopus article searches were used to ensure article quality, with a focus on international journals. A total of 100 articles were collected based on searches using these keywords.

After collecting articles, the next step is to select articles based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Researchers use the Covidence tool to select and display articles that meet the criteria in the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) diagram. Covidence facilitates the automatic article selection process. This tool identifies articles found during the search and ensures that each article is not counted more than

once. Covidence also supports the screening process, where relevant articles can be selected based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. This feature makes the article selection process more efficient and systematic, reducing manual errors and ensuring consistency in selecting articles for analysis.

The PRISMA diagram illustrates the process of selecting articles from the initial search to the final selection. The first step is identification. Initial articles were collected from the Scopus database, with a total of 100 articles. All articles relevant to the specified keywords were found and recorded. The second step was the removal of duplicate articles. Covidence was used to remove duplicate articles, identifying 7 duplicates among the total. After removal, 93 articles remained for further analysis. The third step was the screening process. The remaining articles were examined to ensure they met the inclusion criteria. At this stage, articles that did not meet the initial criteria were removed. Forty-four articles were excluded from this process because they were not relevant to the research topic. The researchers then conducted a screening of the journal titles and abstracts.

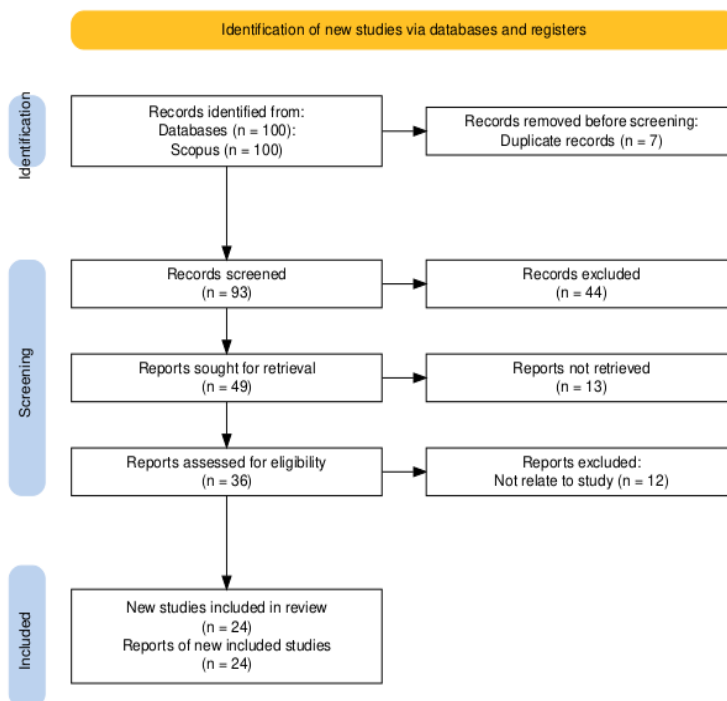


Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart

Fourth, eligibility assessment. Each article was examined based on predetermined eligibility criteria. At this stage, 49 articles were further evaluated to determine whether they met the inclusion or exclusion criteria. Fifth, article production. A total of 13 articles were excluded because they were inaccessible. Sixth, determination of eligible data. Thirty-six articles were examined in depth; 12 articles were excluded because they were irrelevant to the discussion. These steps demonstrate the rigorous selection process used to ensure that the remaining articles fully meet the research objectives. Seventh, articles included in the review:

Finally, 24 articles that passed the selection process were included in the review for further analysis. These articles were considered the most relevant and met the overall research criteria.

After collecting and selecting articles based on relevant criteria, thematic analysis was conducted. The analysis process began with reading and understanding the selected articles. Next, relevant sections of text were manually marked (i.e., encoded) to identify those relevant to the research topic. Each relevant section of text was labeled or coded accordingly, then grouped into categories or themes based on emerging patterns.

This thematic analysis was conducted systematically by identifying the research's main themes. Two main themes found in the selected articles were the conceptual paradigm of true Islam and its relevance and contribution. Data from various articles were compared to identify Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas's views on the true Islamic paradigm and to realize the Islamization of science.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section will explain/answer the Research Question (RQ). A total of 100 articles were targeted in the search process. After the data were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, 49 articles were selected for further study on Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: Realizing the Islamization of Science Through the True Islamic Paradigm, based on their titles, abstracts, and content. Based on the results of the Quality Assessment (QA), 24 relevant journal articles were identified and grouped by development platform and approach used to address the research question. The following articles are eligible to address the Research Question.

Table 3. Mapping of Eligible Data

Name	year	Title	Journal
Farah Ahmed	2018	An Exploration of Naquib Al-Attas' Theory of Islamic Education as Ta'dib as an "Indigenous" Educational Philosophy	Educational Philosophy and Theory
Tamjidnor, Suriagiri, Surawardi, Samdani, Fathul Amal, dan Khuzaini	2025	Transformation of Hadith Teaching as an Effort to Revitalize Islamic Science in Pesantren	Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam
Harda Armayanto, Achmad Reza Hutama Al Faruqi, Naura Safira Salsabila Zain	2023	The Challenges Of Western Thoughts In Indonesia: A Study Of Centre For Islamic And Occidental Studies (CIOS) Role	Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman
Bocca-Aldaqr, Francesca	2023	Islamic psychology: Definition, debates, and the emergence of a new field	Occhiali - Rivista sul Mediterraneo Islamico

Cucu Cahyana, Muhajir	2021	Language Acquisition In Al-Attas' Epistemological Viewpoints	Global Journal Al-Thaqafah
Nora S. Eggen	2016	Universalised versus Particularised Conceptualisations of Islam in Translations of the Qur'an	Journal of Qur'anic Studies
Mohamed Fouz Mohamed Zacky, Md Moniruzzaman	2024	Islamic Epistemology in a Modern Context: Anatomy of an Evolving Debate	Social Epistemology
Azizan Bin Had	2019	The Utopia of Islamization: Between Distant Ideas and Inept Theories	International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change
Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid and Zawawi Ibrahim	2017	The Governance of Religious Diversity in Malaysia: Islam in a Secular State or Secularism in an Islamic State?	The Problem of Religious Diversity: European Challenges, Asian Approaches
Ramon Harvey	2023	Islamic Theology and the Crisis of Contemporary Science: Naquib Al-Attas' "Metaphysical Critique" and a Husserlian Alternative	Theology and Science
Elit Ave Hidayatullah, Syamsuddin Arif	2022	Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Exposition On The Concept Of Ethics	Afkar
Miftachul Huda, Jibrail Bin Yusuf, Kamarul Azmi Jasmi1, dan Gamal Nasir Zakaria	2016	Al-Zarnūjī's Concept of Knowledge ('Ilm)	SAGE Open
Mesut Idriz	2020	Expounding the Concept of Religion in Islam as Understood by Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas'	Poligrafi
Derya Iner dan Mirela Cufurovic	2022	Moving beyond Binary Discourses: Islamic Universalism from an Islamic Revivalist Movement's Point of View'	Religions
Muhammad Kosim, Martin Kustati, Murkilim Murkilim	2020	Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Ideas On The Islamization Of Knowledge And Its Relevance With Islamic Education In Indonesia'	Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman
<u>Mourad Laabdi</u>	2024	Islamization of Knowledge as a "Muslim Question": The Critique of Islamiyyat Al-Ma'rifah Between Universality,	Islamic Studies

			Cultural Locality, and the Rhetoric of the Crisis of Islam		
Mohammad Yuangga K. Haryanto, Musthofa	Muslih, Yahya, Sri Afa A.	2024	Al-Qur'an-Based Paradigm in Science Integration at The Al-Qur'an Science University, Indonesia	HTS Studies / Theological Studies	Teologiese / Theological Studies
Abdur Rafik, Anjar Priyono		2018	A New Insight into Alumni Satisfaction Model for Islamic Higher Education Institutions (IHEI)	Management Research Review	
Aulia Rakhmat		2023	Religion and Reason in Contemporary Islamic Ethics: A Comparative Study of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and Taha Abderrahmane Thought	Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization	
G. Hussein Rassool		2023	Advancing Islāmic Psychology Education: Knowledge Integration, Model, and Application	Taylor and Francis	
G. Hussein Rassol dan Mugheera M. Luqman		2022	Foundations of Islamic Psychology: From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers, Foundations of Islamic Psychology: From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers	Taylor and Francis	
Reagan, Timothy		2017	Non-Western Educational Traditions: Local Approaches to Thought and Practice: Fourth Edition	Taylor and Francis	
Komaruddin Sassi		2020	Principles Of Islamic Education Epistemology Tauhid Paradigm (Analysis of the Thinking of Naquib Al-Attas)	Millah: Journal of Religious Studies	
Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi		2018	Knowledge and Knowing in Islam: A Comparative Study between Nursi and Al-Attas	Global Journal Al-Thaqafah	

RQ1 How does Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas construct the conceptual paradigm of true Islam as the basis for the Islamization of knowledge?

The true Islamic paradigm constructed by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas became a solid philosophical foundation for the idea of Islamizing science. This paradigm is not merely a reaction to the dominance of Western epistemology, but rather a restoration of a knowledge

system rooted in an authentic Islamic worldview, namely *tauhid*. Al-Attas sees that the crisis of knowledge in the Islamic world is not merely at the technical or methodological level but is more profound at the level of worldview, which has been contaminated by the values of secularism, materialism, and dualism originating in modern Western civilization (Harvey, 2023).

Al-Attas' concept of the Islamization of knowledge cannot be separated from Islamic epistemology, which places revelation as the highest source of knowledge and reason as a tool that is subordinate to revelation. This is based on the belief that true knowledge (*'ilm*) is not neutral, but value-laden, because its purpose is to lead humans to the recognition and servitude of God (Bocca-Aldaqr, 2023). Therefore, the Islamization of science is not an attempt to Islamize Western science, but to restructure knowledge based on the Islamic worldview, with key concepts such as adab, science, and wisdom as the main foundations. (Bocca-Aldaqr, 2023; Kosim & Kustati, 2020).

One important aspect of al-Attas' paradigm is the concept of adab, which he considers to be the main pillar of Islamic education. Adab, in his view, is the instilling of recognition and acknowledgment of the proper place of everything in the order of existence, which leads to justice (*'adl*) (Hidayatullah & Arif, 2022). Education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but the formation of civilized human beings (*insān adīb*), namely people who know and respect truth, reality, and the purpose of existence. This is where al-Attas emphasizes the concept of *ta'dīb* as the goal of Islamic education, not just tarbiyah or *ta'līm*, which tend to be oriented towards intellectual development or moral upbringing separately (Ahmed, 2018).

The epistemology offered by al-Attas is a hierarchical integration of reason, revelation, intuition (*kashf*), and sensory experience. He rejects epistemological relativism born of the Western positivist paradigm, because he considers that truth is something that can be achieved and originates from God (Fouz Mohamed Zacky & Moniruzzaman, 2024). In this system, science is not merely an accumulation of empirical data, but rather the result of a process of internalizing divine values directed towards the attainment of meaning and wisdom (*hikmah*) (Sassi, 2020).

The true Islamic paradigm, according to al-Attas, also contains a profound critique of secularism and the dualism of knowledge. He rejects the dichotomy between religious and worldly knowledge because in Islam all true knowledge comes from Allah. Thus, the

integration of Islamic sciences and rational-empirical sciences is a necessity in the effort to Islamize science (Had, 2019; Muslih, Yahya, et al., 2024). However, this integration is not merely a combination of curricula but requires the purification of basic concepts used in modern science, such as man, nature, and society, to align with the Islamic worldview (Kosim & Kustati, 2020).

In this context, al-Attas rehabilitates the meanings of key terms in scientific discourse, such as *'ilm*, *din*, *'adl*, and *hikmah*. He shows that many scientific terms in Western tradition have undergone secularization of meaning, and therefore need to be restored to their original meaning within the framework of Islam (Huda et al., 2016; Idriz, 2020). For example, *ilmu* in Islam is not defined as knowledge in the Western sense, but as something that brings the soul to the truth, and therefore has spiritual and moral dimensions (Ahmed, 2018; Zarkasyi, 2018).

Al-Attas' conceptual construction is also closely related to language. He rejects the direct use of Western terms in Islamic language and thought without conceptual filtering, because language is the carrier of worldview. Therefore, the development of scientific language in Islam must be carried out with epistemological caution (Cahyana, 2021). This approach makes the project of Islamizing science not merely academic, but also linguistic and cultural, as it aims to rebuild Islamic civilization from its paradigmatic and conceptual roots (Reagan, 2017).

In practice, al-Attas' idea requires the reconstruction of the Islamic education curriculum, which should not only teach knowledge but also shape the way of thinking, behaving, and being civilized. Education in this paradigm is a process of instilling meaning, not merely transmitting information. The curriculum must be structured based on the hierarchy of knowledge in Islam, where *fardhu 'ain* sciences occupy a central position, and *fardhu kifayah* sciences are directed towards the benefit of the ummah within the framework of *maqasid sharia* (Ahmed, 2018).

The influence of this paradigm also extends to methodological aspects of research. Islamization of science does not mean avoiding Western scientific methods, but rather using them selectively and critically within the framework of Islamic epistemology. This means that the validity of science is not only measured based on logic and empiricism, but also based on its conformity with the values of *tauhid* and *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* (Laabdi, 2024; Rakhmat, 2023).

Al-Attas' paradigm has had a major impact on contemporary Islamic higher education discourse. Several universities and Islamic study centers have begun to adopt this approach in curriculum development, although its implementation still faces challenges such as the dominance of secular education systems and the limited number of human resources who fully understand Islamic epistemology (Armeyanto et al., 2023; Kosim & Kustati, 2020).

Thus, the conceptual construction of the true Islamic paradigm according to al-Attas is a comprehensive structure that integrates metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and education into a single, complete Islamic system of thought. This paradigm not only repositions science in the context of Islam but also builds a new awareness that science must lead humans to the recognition of their true selves, God, and their purpose in life. It is in this context that the Islamization of science becomes not merely an intellectual project, but also a spiritual and civilizational path (Bocca-Aldaqr, 2023; Rassool & Luqman, 2022).

RQ2 What is the relevance and contribution of the true Islamic paradigm to the development of Islamic epistemology and contemporary Islamic education systems?

The true Islamic paradigm offered by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is not only conceptual but also contributes significantly to the development of Islamic epistemology and contemporary Islamic education systems. This paradigm contains a fundamental critique of the dominance of modern Western epistemology, which is seen as having divorced science from spiritual and moral values. Within this framework, al-Attas seeks to rebuild the foundations of Islamic epistemology based on tawhid as an integral worldview, with adab as a central element in the process of forming a whole human being (Bocca-Aldaqr, 2023).

The contribution of this paradigm to Islamic epistemology can be seen in its efforts to reconstruct the conceptual framework of knowledge ('ilm) in Islam. Al-Attas rejects the epistemological relativism that underlies many modern scientific approaches, and asserts that truth is objective because it originates from God (Fouz Mohamed Zacky & Moniruzzaman, 2024). In this view, science is not neutral and value-free, but rather meaningful because it leads humans to the recognition of reality, truth, and the purpose of existence (Rakhmat, 2023). True knowledge in Islam is not merely the result of empirical observation, but rather a combination of revelation, reason, intuition, and experience, with revelation as the highest source (Sassi, 2020).

Furthermore, al-Attas proposed an integrative concept between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge, which in contemporary discourse is referred to as “integration-interconnection” (Kosim & Kustati, 2020). He rejected the dichotomy between Islamic sciences and rational-empirical sciences that developed in the Western education system. According to him, all valid knowledge originates from Allah and has interconnected spiritual dimensions. This forms the basis of his criticism of the secular system that characterizes modern educational institutions in the Muslim world (Harvey, 2023). Therefore, the contribution of the true Islamic paradigm to Islamic epistemology includes efforts to reunite knowledge, faith, and practice into a single, comprehensive system.

The relevance of this paradigm becomes even more apparent when applied to the reform of the contemporary Islamic education system. Al-Attas offers an education model oriented towards the formation of *insan adīb*, namely individuals who possess manners, knowledge, and wisdom (Ahmed, 2018; Hidayatullah & Arif, 2022). This selection is based on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which places benefit as the main goal of education. Thus, al-Attas' contribution is not only conceptual but also applicable in the context of Islamic higher education in various countries, including Indonesia (Armeyanto et al., 2023).

One of the advantages of this paradigm is its effort to filter scientific terms and concepts originating from the West to fit within the Islamic framework. Language is not considered neutral, but rather carries a certain worldview (Cahyana, 2021). Therefore, the Islamization of science requires a careful linguistic approach to avoid distortion of meaning in the use of foreign terms such as “freedom,” “democracy,” or “science,” which are not always in line with Islamic principles (Eggen, 2016; Idriz, 2020).

The implications of al-Attas' approach can also be felt in the field of Islamic psychology. The ideas of *insan kamil* and the concept of *adab* have provided the basis for the development of Islamic Psychology, which is based on transcendental values (Bocca-Aldaqr, 2023; Rassool, 2023). This is relevant in the face of the dominance of Western psychology, which is rooted in positivism and secularism. The true Islamic paradigm helps build a psychological framework that is not only behavior-oriented but also focused on spirituality and the relationship between humans and God.

In addition, the true Islamic paradigm creates space for epistemological dialogue among civilizations. Islamization of science does not mean closing oneself off from modern scientific

developments, but rather filtering, adapting, and integrating positive elements from the West into the Islamic knowledge system (Laabdi, 2024; Muslih, Yahya, et al., 2024). Al-Attas offers an alternative approach to modernity that is not imitative, but creative and critical. This is important for the Muslim world, which is often caught between two extremes: rejecting modernity altogether or accepting it blindly (Had, 2019).

In the Indonesian context, al-Attas' ideas are highly relevant to strengthening Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and Islamic higher education. Efforts to integrate religious and general knowledge in pesantren education, as studied by Amal (2025), show that the *ta'dīb* approach can strengthen the scientific character and spirituality of santri. Even in studies of alumni of Islamic educational institutions, it was found that educational success is not solely assessed based on mastery of material, but also on the satisfaction and depth of character of graduates (Rafik & Priyono, 2018).

This paradigm is also important in responding to the challenges of globalization and secularism in education. As global education systems are increasingly driven by liberal values, individualism, and materialism, the true Islamic paradigm acts as a bastion of values that preserves the integrity and identity of Muslims (Hamid & Ibrahim, 2017; Iner & Cufurovic, 2022). Al-Attas emphasizes that education must be directed towards instilling an authentic Islamic identity and worldview, not towards producing humans as tools of global capitalism.

Philosophically, this paradigm makes an important contribution to the development of a distinctive and systematic Islamic epistemology. Al-Attas' efforts in compiling the basic categories of Islamic knowledge such as *nafs*, *'ilm*, *din*, *hikmah*, and *'adl* provide a strong foundation for the development of science within the Islamic framework (Zarkasyi, 2018). This contribution also serves as an important reference in the discourse on the Islamization of contemporary disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, economics, and education (Reagan, 2017; Sassi, 2020).

Thus, the true Islamic paradigm, as constructed by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, has great relevance and a significant contribution to building an integral Islamic epistemology and a civilized Islamic education system. This paradigm not only criticizes the Western knowledge system but also offers a solution through the development of concepts, methodologies, and value systems drawn from revelation and the Islamic intellectual tradition.

In an era of disruption and a global crisis of values, this paradigm serves as an important guide for rebuilding an Islamic civilization rooted in *tauhid, adab, and hikmah*.

CONCLUSION

The true Islamic paradigm formulated by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is an integral conceptual construct that not only critiques secular Western epistemology but also develops a new foundation for Islamic epistemology and the contemporary Islamic education system. This paradigm is rooted in the worldview of tawhid and makes adab the core of the process of knowledge and human formation. Through this approach, al-Attas revives the close relationship between knowledge, faith, and action that has long been neglected in modern education systems.

In epistemology, al-Attas asserts that truth is objective because it originates from revelation. Knowledge in Islam is not neutral or value-free, but rather serves to lead humans to an understanding of reality and God. Thus, the process of seeking knowledge must include spiritual and ethical dimensions. Al-Attas also rejects the dichotomy between religious knowledge and worldly knowledge. All valid knowledge originates from Allah and must be organized into a single system of knowledge based on tawhid, thereby giving rise to an integration of knowledge that is neither secular nor fragmentary.

This paradigm is highly relevant to the reform of the Islamic education system. Al-Attas proposes a *ta'dīb* education model oriented towards the formation of *insan adīb*—civilized human beings who are knowledgeable and capable of putting things in their proper place. Education should not only transmit technical knowledge, but also shape a complete Islamic personality. In al-Attas' view, the curriculum is structured based on the hierarchy of knowledge and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, prioritizing *fardhu 'ain* knowledge as the basis for character and faith formation.

Al-Attas' contribution is also evident in his linguistic approach to scientific terminology. He emphasizes the importance of filtering language and concepts from Western civilization to avoid obscuring the original meaning of Islam. This is an important step in the process of Islamizing science, which does not stop at scientific substance but also extends to the terminology and narratives used.

The true Islamic paradigm has had a broad impact on the development of contemporary disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, education, and sociology. The concepts of *nafs*, *hikmah*, and *insan kamil* have provided a new foundation for building Islamic Psychology that is not only empirical but also spiritual and theocentric. This paradigm also opens up space for epistemological dialogue between Islam and Western civilization, not in the spirit of imitation, but critically and selectively.

In the Indonesian context, al-Attas's thinking is highly relevant to the strengthening of Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and Islamic universities. The integration of religious and general knowledge, as pursued in the national Islamic education system, finds its philosophical and methodological basis in the concepts of *ta'dīb* and the Islamization of knowledge. This paradigm also serves as an ideological and value-based bulwark against the currents of globalization, secularism, and materialism that erode the identity and scholarly ethos of the Muslim community.

Overall, al-Attas's paradigm of true Islam not only provides a conceptual framework for the Islamization of science but also directs Muslims to rebuild a just, knowledgeable, and civilized civilization. Amidst a global crisis of values and knowledge, this paradigm offers an important solution for the renewal of Islamic science and education systems that are firmly rooted in revelation, Islamic intellectual tradition, and a comprehensive vision of tawhid.

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