

## Epistemology of Islamic Education in the View of Muhammad Sholeh Darat

**Wahid Arbani**

Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surakarta  
[arbaniwahid@gmail.com](mailto:arbaniwahid@gmail.com)

**Khoiruddin Nasution**

Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surakarta  
[knasut@gmail.com](mailto:knasut@gmail.com)

**Dardiri Hasyim**

Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surakarta  
[adardirihayim@gmail.com](mailto:adardirihayim@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *The method used to know the epistemology of Muhammad Sholeh's educational thought is carried out through three main elements, namely: riyadhob (spiritual practice), maqamat (stages of Sufistic ascent), and ahwal (Sufism experience). Riyadhob is an exercise of the soul in truth and sincerity in the context of istiqomah in worshipping Allah SWT. The mental training carried out in this guidance process is as exemplified and carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. There are three forms of riyadhob that can be done by a student to get to know Allah SWT through three activities, namely; seeking knowledge, being consistent with the practice of the sunnah, and always maintaining time.*

**Keywords:** *Muhammad Sholeh Darat, Islamic Education, Epistemology*

### INTRODUCTION

In philosophical discourse, epistemology is known as part of a philosophical system. In addition to epistemology, philosophical systems also include ontology and axiology. Epistemology is a theory of knowledge that discusses how to obtain knowledge from the object being thought of. While ontology is a theory of "being", where the object of thought is what is thought. While axiology is a theory of value that discusses the benefits, functions, and uses of the object being thought of.

These three sub-systems of philosophy are often mentioned sequentially, starting from ontology, epistemology, and then axiology. In simple terms, the sub-system of philosophy can be explained with a scheme that there is something that needs to be thought about (ontology), then explore how to think about it (epistemology), then come up with ideas that can provide benefits or uses (axiology) (Qomar, 2005). Epistemologically, the development of Islamic education is absolutely necessary. This development is both textual and contextual. Whether it is realized or not globally, Western education has influenced Islamic education from various lines, from the system to the theory and learning technology.

At least we can see that the reality of our education turns out to be not a few that produce corrupt humans, love to fight, and are addicted to wealth. So that Islamic education can at least be a way out of the education system that has been heavily contaminated by the Western world. By seeing the big role of Islamic education in shaping the personality of students, in this article the author wants to try to explore the Islamic education system, especially in the view of Muhammad Sholeh Darat.

Muhammad Sholeh Darat is known as an archipelago cleric who has succeeded in producing students who have also become famous scholars in the national and world arenas. Its success in educating students cannot be separated from the depth of knowledge it has and also because of its teaching methods that are easily accepted by all circles. There are at least three educational activities carried out by Muhammad Sholeh as simultaneous activities to participate in educating the Muslim community in Indonesia. The three educational activities are; The first is to transfer knowledge through Islamic boarding schools, the second is to carry out da'wah and recitation activities, and thirdly, through the preparation of intellectual works in the form of compiling books. The three educational activities carried out are not independent of each other, but are educational activities that complement each other and are related to one another.

The three educational activities are no doubt factual proof that Muhammad Sholeh was very concerned about the importance of education. It is only through the educational process that the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next can be achieved as expected.

The hope is that by understanding and implementing educational values in Muhammad Sholeh Darat's view, the education that has taken place will become more meaningful, not capitalized and only material-oriented, but far from being oriented towards the afterlife. Departing from the above review, it is hoped that whatever knowledge is learned as long as it does not conflict with Islamic teachings can make its owner better and of course, it is hoped that it can change the face of the Indonesian nation into a developed country free from corruption, there will be no disputes because the citizens believe that what is being done in this world will be held accountable in the hereafter.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is included in the category of descriptive-explanatory research, namely the author tries to describe first how the basic construction of Islamic education epistemology, how the context and situation that became Muhammad Sholeh Darat's background. Furthermore, the author will carry out construction based on the thoughts of these figures, especially in the field of Islamic Religious Education.

The approach that the author uses in this research is historical-critical-philosophical, namely by tracing the historical roots critically about the epistemology idea of Muhammad Sholeh's Islamic education, what is the background, then looking for the fundamental structure of the idea.

In this study, the author will use documentary sources to reveal problems by conducting research and tracing the work of the manuscripts that have been compiled by Muhammad Sholeh as well as various writings about Muhammad Sholeh that have been written by other researchers. Thus there will be two points of view to be studied, namely the individual point of view and the point of view of educational thought.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Understanding the Epistemology of Islamic Education**

Epistemology etymologically comes from the word episteme which means knowledge and logos which means words, thoughts, science, theory (Fadholi & Purwanto, 2019). Episteme itself in Greek comes from the verb epistemic, which means to sit, place, or put. Literally, episteme means knowledge as an intellectual effort to put something in its place (Zaprul Khan, 2019). It can also be stated that epistemology is a science that discusses knowledge and how to get it.

Terminologically, there is an understanding of the epistemology of the characters. According to Harold Titus in his book entitled *The Living Issues in Philosophy an Introductory* as quoted by M. Fadholi, Epistemology is the branch of philosophy which investigates the origins, structure, methods, and validity of knowledge” (Fadholi & Purwanto, 2019)

Education is basically a cultural process carried out to shape character in order to improve the dignity, worth, and quality of human life for the better throughout life. The process of activities and character building that is carried out continues and never stops. As a never-ending process, through this education, the character formation process will be carried out according to a predetermined plan (Hussain & Ashraf, 1979).

The success of the educational process carried out will be the foundation for a nation towards a glorious future. Education is a thing that is universal in nature and takes place continuously without breaking which is carried out from one generation to the next anywhere. Efforts to humanize humans through the educational process are carried out in accordance with the culture or view of the life of each society. The foundation and purpose of education which is motivated by the view of the life of the local community itself are normative philosophical in nature.

On the basis of these different perspectives, education is then formulated based on the desired basis, concepts, goals, and education system. In this position we will be able to know for sure, what is the nature of education itself. Therefore, the view of life or philosophy of life of religion or nation which is placed as the foundation and basis for the preparation of the education system will affect the entire structure of the fundamental building of education that is aspired to. It can be said that there is not a single nation that does not have a philosophy of life and through this philosophy of life will be reflected in how the nation views the future of its life through the educational process carried out.

In order to provide a clearer picture, the following author conveys several things related to the definition of Islamic education. There are three general terms used in Islamic education, namely al-Tarbiyah, al-Ta'dib, and al-Ta'lim. Al-Tarbiyah, comes from the verb Rabba, al-Ta'dib comes from the word addaba, and al-Ta'lim comes from the verb Allama. These three terms will be briefly discussed one by one as follows:

### **Al-Tarbiyah**

The word tarbiyah is the mashdar form of rabba, yurabbiy, tarbiyahan. In the Qur'an it is explained:

وَإِخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا

"And humble yourself towards them both with love and say, "O my Lord, have mercy on them both, as they both taught me when I was little." (Surat al-Isra ': 24).

The word tarbiyah in the translation is used to describe the process of education through the care that people give to their children when they are small. The meaning of tarbiyah according to Bukhari Umar includes 4 elements, namely: maintaining and maintaining the chastity of children before puberty, developing their potential, directing their nature to goodness, and carrying out the educational process in stages.

### **Al-Ta'dib**

Ramayulis argued that in classical times, to show educational activities, people only knew the word ta'dib. Throughout the heyday of Islam which was marked by the emergence of various sciences produced by the human mind at that time, the meaning used to mention it was the word adab (Ramayulis, 2018). The word adab is used to refer to various types of knowledge, such as fiqh, interpretation, monotheism, linguistics, physics, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, pharmacy, and others. In fact, all products of intellectual work that contain various works of science are called poles of al-adab. One of them is the books of al-Adab al-Kabir and al-Adab al-Shaghir written by Ibn al-Muqaffa (d. 760 AD), an educator at that time known as Mu'addib.

Judging from the conceptual structure, the word ta'dib already includes various elements of education. The elements are; elements of knowledge (ilm), teaching (ta'lim), and good parenting (tarbiyah). In this context, the word ta'dib is more fully referred to as a term that describes the actual process of Islamic education. Through the process of knowledge, teaching, and good parenting, it is hoped that people with character, intelligence, and skills will be born.

### **Al-Ta'lim**

Derived from the word Allama which means to tell or give knowledge. In this word it does not contain the meaning of personality development, it only means telling it (Kamrani Buseri, 2014: 71). The root of this sentence is taken from QS. Al-Baqarah: 31, which tells about God's teaching to the prophet Adam about the names of objects. Based on this explanation, it can be stated that Al-ta'lim is a small part of al-tarbiyah al-

aqliyah which aims to acquire knowledge and thinking skills, which are related to the cognitive domain (Jani, 2013).

From the origin of the words al-Tarbiyah, al-Ta'dib, and al-Ta'lim in Islamic education, several opinions of experts regarding the definition of Islamic education were born, such as Prof. Dr. Omar Mohammad At-Toumi Asy-Syaibany as quoted by Rahmad Hidayat, defines Islamic education as a process of changing individual behavior in personal life, society, and the natural surroundings, through various teaching as a basic activity and profession among basic professions in the community (Hidayat, 2016)

Meanwhile, Jalaluddin explained that Islamic education is a conscious effort carried out as an effort to optimally foster and develop human potential according to their status, guided by Islamic law conveyed by Allah's Apostle so that humans can act as faithful servants of Allah with all their activities in order to create Islamic living conditions that are ideal, safe, secure, prosperous, and of high quality. And get a guarantee (welfare) to live in the world and a guarantee for a good life in the hereafter (Jalaluddin, 2011).

### **Basic Islamic Education**

The basis of Islamic education referred to here is a view of life which is the basis and foundation of all educational activities. As something that is fundamental in nature and is related to ideal and fundamental problems, Islamic education must have a solid, comprehensive basis, and not easily change. According to Abduddin Nata, the main sources as the fundamental basis in Islamic education are the Qur'an and al-Hadith. Al-Qur'an and al-Hadith contain absolute truth (absolute), transcendental, universal, and eternal (eternal). Through these two sources, human needs for problem-solving will be fulfilled (Nata, 2015).

The placement of the Qur'an and al-Hadith is the basis of Islamic education because it has a function, as in the Qur'an and al-Hadith it is stated that various things are the basis of our life activities in the form of: 1) The basis of monotheism, where all Islamic educational activities are imbued with divine norms as a manifestation of worship to Allah SWT. 2) Basic Humanity, namely the existence of an acknowledgment of the nature, dignity, and worth of human beings. The rights of every individual must be respected and protected, meanwhile, to realize these rights it is not justified to violate the rights of others. 3) The basis of Unity, which is a view that considers that the various differences between human beings are a gift that must be preserved and be grateful for its blessings. 4) Basic Balance, which is a view between the affairs of the world and the hereafter, physical and spiritual, individual and social, science and charity, and others as a fundamental entity that is interconnected, requires and maintains harmony.

The basis of Rahmatan Lil Alamin is a view that sees that the educational process carried out in Islam is oriented to giving mercy to the entire universe. Grace means providing value for benefits and benefits not only for individuals who are

educated with Ansich, but the impact of this education will also be felt by society, the environment, and even the universe.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The focus of the study in this article is an epistemological study of Muhammad Sholeh's Islamic educational thought, which will discuss; the substance of the structure of education for humans, sources of Islamic education, and methods of Islamic education according to Muhammad Sholeh.

### **Human Substance in the View of Muhammad Sholeh Darat**

According to Muhammad Sholeh, in the book *Syarah al-Hikam*, states that the process of human creation comes from nuthfah which is stored firmly in the womb, then becomes 'alaqah, after that it becomes mudghah and is wrapped with bones, then the spirit is breathed in. Muhammad Sholeh says don't you think until then Allah wills to reveal you by His own will, not by your request. Allah revealed you by His own will through the ribs of your parents, then Allah transferred in your mother's womb, starting from a clot of blood for 40 days, then becoming a clot of blood for 40 days, then Allah formed you into male or female for 40 days, and gave him a spirit so that it became a fetus that needed to eat and drink. Then Allah made menstrual blood food and drink for the fetus, then Allah decreed death, sustenance, trials, and blessings for him as well as luck and calamity or failure. Then Allah took you out of your mother's stomach, you also wanted to eat and drink, at that time you were weak and powerless to chew (S. ibn U. Al-Samarani, 1347)

According to Muhammad Sholeh, humans consist of two components, namely material components and immaterial components. The material component in humans is jism or bodies in the form of physical. Meanwhile, the immaterial component consists of the heart (qolbu), spirit (ruh), the power of desire or soul (nafs), and reason (aql). As a unit, the unity is not only between the material and immaterial components but all the elements in the immaterial components support each other and are related to one another. However, each dimension has different characteristics and functions (M. S. ibnu U. Al-Samarani, 1422)

### **Islamic Education Resources**

In the view of Islam, at least science refers to and consists of three main aspects, namely; metaphysics, humanities, and materials. Metaphysics is something that comes from revelation, reveals the great reality so that in the end it will understand its God. While the humanities and the studies that surround it are all things that include discussions about human life, its relationship to the dimensions of space and time, psychology, sociology, economics, and so on. Meanwhile, the material is all things that include the study of the universe that is deliberately intended for humans.

Starting from the existence of three aspects as the scope of this knowledge, the sources of knowledge in Islam come from five main sources, namely; senses, reason, intuition, inspiration, and revelation (Faisar A.A, Syafrudin Syam, and Muhammad

S.A.N, 2016: 18). The knowledge that comes from the senses as an experience will produce the truth of empiricism and knowledge that comes from reason or reason produces the truth of rationalism. Meanwhile, basically, the source of knowledge that comes from revelation, inspiration, and intuition is the same, because this type of truth is absolute and all three are given through spiritual power.

### **Islamic Education Method**

If in the study of Western epistemology there are three schools of thought, namely rationalism, empiricism, and institutionalism, in Islamic studies there are three models of thinking. The three models of thinking in Islamic epistemology are; Bayani, Burhani, and irfani (Mukti, 2017). In the context of Muhammad Sholeh's thought, because his Islamic educational thought is a Sufistic moral education thought, epistemologically, the method used to obtain sources of knowledge uses the irfani method. As explained earlier, in the irfani method, there are three elements known as the body of methods and we will explain the following stages:

*First*, Riyadhoh or Spiritual Exercise. Riyadhah is an exercise of the soul in truth and sincerity in the context of istiqomah in worshipping Allah SWT. To be able to achieve the goals of Islamic education set by Muhammad Sholeh, namely the existence of ma'rifatullah, a student must first undergo a process or period of mental training. The mental training carried out in this guidance process is as exemplified and carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Examples are carrying out sunnah prayers, reading the Qur'an, studying, dhikr, praying, and so on. In this process, there are three things as a form of riyadhah that must be done by students to be able to know Allah SWT, namely seeking knowledge, being consistent with sunnah practices, and maintaining time.

*Seconds*, Following Tariqot Through Sufistic Ascents (maqomat). To be able to realize the goals of Islamic education, namely to be able to ma'rifatullah or get to know Allah SWT more and get happiness in the world and the hereafter, Muhammad Sholeh established the tariqat process with climbing stages as a Sufistic phase that must be passed by students. The stages of climbing or maqamat that must be passed are repentance, Qana'ah, Zuhud, Tawakkal, Ikhlas and Uzlah (Muhammad Salih ibn Umar al-Samarani, 1317H: 76).

*Third*, Ahwal or Sufistic Experience. In the process of leading to ma'rifatullah, a student will experience an inner situation known as ahwal. Ahwal is a psychological condition as a psychological effect experienced by students to achieve educational goals when they reach a certain level of maqamat (Shabir, 2017). The appreciation of this Sufistic experience is given by Allah SWT to people who are trying earnestly to reach a certain state. Muhammad Sholeh did not discuss specifically about this issue, it's just that there was one term he put forward, namely the existence of a waliyullah. According to Muhammad Sholeh, waliyullah is someone who because of his obedience and efforts to stay away from all immoral acts so that he becomes ma'rifatullah (M. S. Ibnu U. Al-Samarani, 2000)

Named as waliyullah, because he has left all the things he faces only to Allah SWT. So it can be stated that one of the privileges given by Allah SWT to people who have ma'rifatullah is to become a waliyullah.

## CONCLUSION

Epistemologically, Muhammad Sholeh's Islamic educational thought basically aims to shape the character of students to have akhlaq al-karimah by using a Sufistic approach. This is based on an understanding of the various basic potentials possessed by each individual student. In Muhammad Sholeh's view, every human being consists of two main elements, namely material elements or *jism* and immaterial elements or non-*jism* elements. The immaterial elements consist of *aql*, spirit, *nafs*, and *qalb*. It is through the process of Islamic education that all the potential that exists in every human being is then directed and developed to have a noble character so that they will get happiness in life in this world and in the hereafter.

Muhammad Sholeh's source of Islamic education thought the basis of Islamic education according to Muhammad Sholeh is rooted in the Qur'an and al-Hadith, so that all educational practices that are carried out are based on these two main sources in Islam. Muhammad Sholeh then divides knowledge into two parts, namely the science of al-Mu'amalah and the science of al-Mukasyafah. The knowledge of al-Mu'amalah is knowledge that can make the heart clean, not love the world, keep away from bad deeds and follow lust. The knowledge of al-Mu'amalah is then divided into two types, namely the science of al-Shari'ah (sciences that come from Allah and are in the Qur'an and al-Hadith) and the science of Ghairu al-Shari'ah (sciences that come from God and are in the Qur'an and al-Hadith) sciences derived from reasoning and human experience whose function is to support the science of al-Shari'ah).

While the science of al-Mukasyafah or Ladunni science, is knowledge that comes directly from Allah SWT without going through human efforts. The process of being able to activate the spiritual potential in the human heart so that it will be able to capture and have an understanding of the science of al-Mukasyafah can only be done when someone has studied the science of al-Mu'amalah. Because in the science of al-Mu'amalah there are various kinds of knowledge that teach humans to always have al-karimah or maheasy morals and leave the madzmumah morals in life.

The method used to know the epistemology of Muhammad Sholeh's educational thought is carried out through three main elements, namely: *riyadhoh* (spiritual practice), *maqamat* (stages of Sufistic ascent), and *ahwal* (sufism experience). *Riyadhah* is an exercise of the soul in truth and sincerity in the context of *istiqomah* in worshiping Allah SWT. The mental training carried out in this guidance process is as exemplified and carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. There are three forms of *riyadhoh* that can be done by a student to get to know Allah SWT through three activities, namely; seek knowledge, be consistent with the practice of the sunnah, and always maintain time.

The implementation of riyadhoh which is carried out continuously and is carried out without getting bored will give birth to good habits in daily life. As a result of the implementation of riyadhoh carried out, it will enter the next stages known as maqamat. The maqamat that must be passed are; repentance, qanaah, zuhud, tawakkal, sincere, and uzlah.

After going through various maqamat steps, a student in the next stage will experience a mental state called ahwal. Ahwal is a psychological condition as a psychological effect experienced by students to achieve educational goals when they reach a certain level of maqamat. Ahwal is a psychological condition as a psychological effect experienced by students to achieve educational goals when they reach a certain level of maqamat. In this initial position a student can reach the level of waliyullah. In the view of Muhammad Sholeh, waliyullah will be achieved by someone when a student has submitted all things only to Allah SWT.■

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