



INTERNALIZATION OF METAPHYSICAL VALUES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE MODERN ERA

INTERNALISASI NILAI METAFISIKA DALAM PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DI ERA MODERN

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Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in the modern era is often trapped in an approach that is overly textual, dogmatic, and focused solely on legal aspects (fiqh) and rituals. This results in the marginalisation of the metaphysical dimensions of Islam—such as the concept of divinity (uluhiyah), the nature of humanity, the unseen world, the purpose of creation, and the spiritual relationship with Allah—which are in fact the foundation of the meaning and intrinsic motivation of all religious teachings. Without the internalisation of these metaphysical values, religious education risks becoming formalistic and unable to respond to existential challenges and spiritual crises amid the onslaught of materialism and secularisation in the modern world. This article aims to analyse the urgency and strategies for internalising metaphysical values within the framework of contemporary Islamic Religious Education, as well as to formulate an approach model relevant to the modern era. This study uses a qualitative method with a philosophical-analytical library research approach. Data were collected from primary sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and the works of classical and contemporary Islamic thinkers on education and metaphysics. The analysis was conducted hermeneutically and deductively to develop a conceptual framework. The analysis shows that the internalisation of metaphysical values in PAI is crucial for: (1) building a holistic Islamic worldview, (2) developing a deep spiritual awareness (ihsan), (3) providing a solid moral foundation that transcends positive law, and (4) creating mental-spiritual resilience in facing modern complexities. To achieve this, it is necessary to reorient the PAI curriculum to integrate metaphysical elements through an interdisciplinary approach (linking it to science, psychology, and philosophy), reflective and contemplative learning methods (such as tadabbur and tafakkur), and the use of digital technology as a medium for creative spiritual exploration.

Keywords : Islamic Religious Education; Metaphysical Values; Internalisation; Spirituality; Modern Era; Integrative Curriculum.



Abstrak

Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di era modern sering kali terjebak dalam pendekatan yang terlalu tekstual, dogmatis, dan berfokus pada aspek hukum (fiqh) serta ritual semata. Hal ini mengakibatkan terpinggirkannya dimensi metafisika Islam—seperti konsep ketuhanan (uluhiyah), hakikat manusia, alam gaib, tujuan penciptaan, dan hubungan spiritual dengan Allah—yang justru menjadi fondasi makna dan motivasi intrinsik dari seluruh ajaran agama. Tanpa internalisasi nilai-nilai metafisika ini, pendidikan agama berisiko menjadi formalistik dan kurang mampu menjawab tantangan eksistensial serta krisis spiritual di tengah gempuran materialisme dan sekularisasi dunia modern. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis urgensi dan strategi internalisasi nilai-nilai metafisika dalam kerangka Pendidikan Agama Islam kontemporer, serta merumuskan model pendekatan yang relevan dengan konteks era modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research) yang bersifat filosofis-analitis. Data dikumpulkan dari sumber-sumber primer seperti Al-Qur'an, Hadis, serta karya pemikir Islam klasik dan kontemporer tentang pendidikan dan metafisika. Analisis dilakukan secara hermeneutis dan deduktif untuk menyusun kerangka konseptual. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa internalisasi nilai metafisika dalam PAI sangat krusial untuk: (1) membangun worldview (pandangan dunia) Islam yang holistik, (2) mengembangkan kesadaran spiritual (ihsan) yang mendalam, (3) memberikan dasar moral yang kokoh yang melampaui hukum positif, dan (4) menciptakan ketahanan mental-spiritual dalam menghadapi kompleksitas modern. Untuk mencapainya, diperlukan reorientasi kurikulum PAI yang mengintegrasikan elemen metafisika melalui pendekatan interdisipliner (mengaitkannya dengan sains, psikologi, dan filsafat), metode pembelajaran yang reflektif dan kontemplatif (seperti tadabbur, tafakkur), serta pemanfaatan teknologi digital sebagai media penjelajahan spiritual yang kreatif.

Kata Kunci : Pendidikan Agama Islam; Nilai Metafisika; Internalisasi; Spiritualitas; Era Modern; Kurikulum Integratif.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is a fundamental instrument in shaping the character and worldview of the Muslim generation. In the traditional context, IRE has successfully maintained the transmission of normative knowledge about faith, worship, and morals. However, in the modern era, characterised by rapid technological advancement, materialism, and the challenges of secular thinking, the PAI approach, which is often still doctrinal, textual, and fragmented, is considered inadequate to address existential anxieties and the crisis of meaning (Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 1999). Religious education faces the risk of being reduced to a mere collection of practical rules (how to) that lose their rational-spiritual dimension (why), thus giving rise to a religiosity that is intellectually fragile and spiritually shallow.

The main problem identified is the dissociation between the teaching of the outward aspects (sharia) and the appreciation of the inner aspects (hakikat) in many contemporary PAI practices. Islamic metaphysical values, which include discussions about the nature of God (uluhiyah) (Wahyudi, 2024), the essence of humanity, the realm of angels, destiny, and the purpose of creation (maqashid al-kawn), are often marginalised or taught dogmatically without philosophical depth (Cholid Fadil, Muhammad Wahyudi, Cahaya, 2024). As a result, students



may be adept at answering fiqh questions but fail to develop a solid theological framework to respond to critical modern questions about science, diversity, and justice (Rosnani Hashim, 2025). This phenomenon gives rise to problems such as the dichotomy of knowledge, a hidden spiritual crisis, and vulnerability to simplistic religious understandings.

Several theories can be used to analyse this problem, including:

- a) Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory, used to understand the process of internalising values through social interaction and guidance in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where educators act as facilitators of metaphysical appreciation;
- b) Naquib Al-Attas' Theory of Knowledge Integration, particularly the concept of islamisation of knowledge and its emphasis on ta'dib (the cultivation of manners) and the introduction to hakikat (metaphysics) as the basis of education (Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 1999);
- c) The concept of Contemplative Spiritual Education (Tazkiyatun Nafs), referring to the Sufi tradition of Al-Ghazali, which views education as a process of purifying the soul to achieve ma'rifah, which is relevant for developing reflective learning methods (Moosa, 2005);
- d) Social Reconstruction Curriculum Theory, to design an Islamic Education curriculum that not only preserves tradition but also actively reconstructs religious understanding that is responsive to the challenges of the times, with metaphysics as its critical foundation (Muhammad Wahyudi, Mega Dini Fitriani, 2022).

The research gap from previous studies lies in several things. First, many studies on PAI focus more on aspects of learning methodology, curriculum, or character assessment without touching on an in-depth discussion of the reconstruction of metaphysical content itself (Suyono, Diky Ardha Sundawa, Rizaldi Isnanta, Jailani, 2026). Second, discussions on the integration of science and religion tend to occur at the cosmological level, but rarely explore the internalisation of metaphysical values as an epistemological and psychological foundation for students (Muqowim, 2019). Third, although there are studies on spirituality in education, the approach is often psychological-generic and not firmly anchored in the framework of classical Islamic epistemology, such as the works of Al-Ghazali or Mulla Sadra, which are rich in applied metaphysical concepts (Nurohman, 2020). Therefore, this article attempts to fill the gap by offering a conceptual framework for internalisation that is not merely a transfer of knowledge but of metaphysical values into the structure of the curriculum, methods, and evaluation of PAI in accordance with the context of the modern era (Rahman, 2019).

This article aims to analyse the urgency and formulate a model for the internalisation of metaphysical values in PAI in the modern era. By integrating philosophical analysis of Islamic metaphysical knowledge and contemporary educational theory, it is hoped that a conceptual proposal can be produced that enriches the discourse and practice of PAI to be more holistic, profound, and transformative.



2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a philosophical-analytical library research method. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the study is to analyse and construct the concept of internalising metaphysical values in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in depth, rather than testing hypotheses or measuring variables quantitatively (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study focuses on exploring meaning, contextual understanding, and creating a theoretical framework based on textual sources.

The data in this study were collected from two types of sources: 1) Primary data, which are the main sources that form the basis of conceptual analysis, including verses from the Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet that discuss Islamic metaphysical values (such as the concept of divinity, the nature of humanity, the unseen world, and the purpose of creation) and the works of classical and contemporary Islamic thinkers discussing metaphysics and Islamic education, such as the works of (Imam Al-Ghazzali & Translated by Malik Karim Amrullah, 1963), Mulla Sadra, and modern thinkers such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Naquib Al-Attas. Secondary data consists of supporting sources, including books, journal articles, proceedings, and research reports relevant to the topics of internalisation of metaphysical values, Islamic education, and the philosophy of education, as well as educational policy documents such as the 2013 Curriculum and guidelines for the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia, to be analysed for their relevance to the metaphysical dimension. Data collection techniques were carried out through systematic documentation studies. The researcher searched for relevant text sources from the database.

The data were analysed using thematic content analysis and hermeneutic analysis techniques. The analysis process was carried out in three stages: 1) Data Reduction, selecting and categorising data based on key themes. 2) Hermeneutic Analysis, interpreting metaphysical texts (from both primary and secondary sources) to understand their meaning and implications for contemporary educational practices. This approach allows researchers to explore the philosophical and contextual dimensions of metaphysical values (Nurkhalis, 2023). Synthesis and Verification, synthesising findings from various sources to construct a conceptual framework for the internalisation of metaphysical values in PAI. The synthesis results are verified through discussions with Islamic education experts and theory triangulation to ensure the validity of the interpretation.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. The Urgency of Internalising Metaphysical Values in Contemporary Islamic Education

An analysis of literature and curriculum documents reveals that Islamic Education in many contexts is still dominated by a cognitive-instrumental approach, where success is measured by the ability to memorise normative facts and perform rituals. This approach neglects the affective-transformative dimension that is at the heart of Islamic metaphysical values. Metaphysical values, which include an understanding of Tawhid as a cosmological



principle, the essence of humans as 'abdun and khalifah, and the afterlife as the teleology of existence, function as a framework of meaning that underlies all outward practices (Rosnani Hashim, 2025). Without the internalisation of these values, religious education is prone to producing what is referred to (Muqowim, 2019) as 'religious literacy without spiritual fluency' or text literacy but meaning blindness.

In the modern era, marked by digital disruption, ecological crisis, and ideological plurality, the failure to internalise this metaphysics has serious implications. Students face complex existential questions about identity, purpose in life, and global ethics, which cannot be answered by fiqh arguments alone. They need a solid and rational foundation of an Islamic worldview, which is sourced from a deep Islamic ontology and epistemology (Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 1999). The internalisation of metaphysics becomes a bridge to make religious teachings not external rules, but internal principles that guide reasoning and actions in modern complexity.

b. Mapping Core Metaphysical Values and the Challenges of Their Internalisation

Based on an analysis of primary texts, three core metaphysical values that need to be internalised, along with the challenges of doing so in the modern era, can be mapped out.

Core Metaphysical Values and the Challenges of Their Internalisation in the Modern Era

Core Metaphysical Values	Key Concepts	Implications for Education	The Challenge of Internalisation in the Modern Era
Tawhid as an Ontological Principle	The Oneness of Allah, His Names and Attributes, the creation of the universe.	Building an integrated worldview; science as a verse of nature.	The dominance of the secular-scientific paradigm; the reduction of religion to the private sphere.
The Nature of Human Beings	Humans as servants and caliphs; nature; unity of the soul (aql, qalb, nafs).	Holistic education: intellectual, spiritual, character.	Materialism and consumption-based identity; the crisis of meaning in life.
The Teleology of Existence	Life in this world as a test and preparation; justice in the hereafter; the concept of tawakkal.	Cultivating long-term life goals and resilience.	Instant and hedonistic culture; scepticism towards the supernatural.

The main challenge lies in shifting the teaching of the above values from the cognitive stage (knowing the definitions) to the internalisation stage (internalising them and making them the basis for action). Research (Suyono, Diky Ardha Sundawa, Rizaldi Isnanta, Jailani, 2026) shows that one-way lecture methods are still dominant, so that metaphysics learning often stops at dogmatism, rather than rational-spiritual enlightenment that encourages personal reflection.



c. Internalisation Framework Model: Integration, Methods, and Evaluation

Based on a synthesis of various theories, this study proposes an integrative and spiral internalisation framework model. This model consists of three main interrelated components.

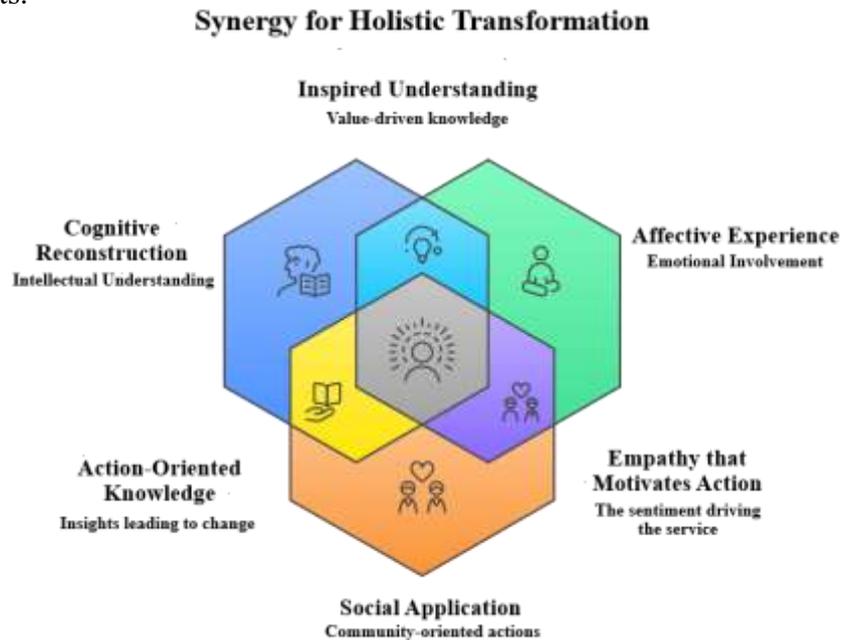


Diagram of the Model of Metaphysical Value Internalisation in Islamic Education in the Modern Era

1) Curriculum Integration (Macro Level)

Metaphysical values should not be taught in separate subjects. They should be integrated into the entire discourse of Islamic Education and, if possible, across disciplines. For example:

- b. Integration with Science, discussing the concepts of tawhid and the order of nature (sunnatullah) in physics or biology lessons, referring to contemporary works on science and Islam (Iqbal, 2007);
- c. Integration with Social Issues, analysing problems of social justice, ecology, or bioethics from the perspective of the metaphysical concepts of khilafah and amanah.

2) Method Transformation (Meso Level)

Learning methods must shift from transmission to transformation. Some relevant methods are:

- a. Reflective-Contemplative Learning (Tadabbur and Tafakkur), using techniques such as spiritual journaling, hermeneutic text reading, and dzikir-based meditation to connect concepts with inner experiences (Asman, Woro Yustia Pratiwi, Bambang Sismedi Saputro, Muhammad, 2025);



- b. Inquiry-Based Learning on Existential Questions, facilitating students to formulate and seek answers to big questions such as ‘What is the purpose of my life?’ by exploring Islamic metaphysical sources;
 - c. Role Models and Paradigmatic Stories, bringing to life metaphysical thinkers such as Al-Ghazali or Ibn Sina, whose intellectual and spiritual journeys are relevant to the search for identity in the modern era.
- 3) Reorientation of Evaluation (Micro Level)
- Evaluation must be able to measure the depth of understanding and appreciation, not just memorisation. Authentic evaluation techniques such as reflective portfolios, philosophical essays, participatory observation of ethical behaviour, and social projects with a spiritual dimension need to be developed.

d. Discussion

This discussion finds that the internalisation of metaphysical values plays a dual role. First, it serves as the foundation for spiritual resilience. When faced with a massive and contradictory flow of information, individuals with a strong metaphysical foundation will have internal criteria (*furqan*) to filter and assess information, as well as inner peace (*ithmi'nan*) that comes from belief in a larger paradigm (Waghid, 2013). Second, metaphysical values become a source of authentic global ethics. Concepts such as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which originate from the metaphysical nature of God the Most Merciful, can be internalised as intrinsic motivation to do good across boundaries, transcending mere obedience to external rules.

However, the implementation of this framework requires educators who not only master the material but have also undergone a similar internalisation process and are skilled in transformative pedagogical methodologies. Teacher education and training (LPTK) needs to include Islamic philosophy and metaphysics as well as critical pedagogy as core components of their curriculum.

An analysis of the PAI Curriculum Framework shows that the metaphysical dimension is implicitly present in the Core Competencies (KI) regarding spiritual attitudes. However, its operationalisation in the Basic Competencies and teaching materials is still vague. This study recommends making the metaphysical dimension more explicit, systematic, and measurable in curriculum documents. This can be done by adding specific learning outcomes that target students' philosophical-religious thinking and metacosmic awareness, as well as providing resources and practical learning examples for teachers.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the in-depth discussion outlined above, this study concludes that the internalisation of metaphysical values in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is not an academic luxury, but rather a strategic necessity to respond to the challenges of meaning and spirituality in the modern era. The PAI approach, which has tended to be fragmented and oriented towards cognitive-instrumental aspects, has proven inadequate for shaping Muslim individuals who possess spiritual resilience and a solid worldview. Islamic metaphysical values, which include



a deep understanding of Tawhid, the nature of humanity (insan), and the teleology of the afterlife, are the foundation that provides meaning, intrinsic motivation, and an ethical framework that transcends mere ritual compliance.

This study successfully formulated an integrative and spiral internalisation framework model. This model emphasises the need for a holistic reconstruction of the PAI curriculum, in which the metaphysical dimension is integrated with discussions of science, contemporary issues, and global ethics. The transformation of learning methods towards a reflective-contemplative approach (such as tadabbur and tafakkur) and inquiry-based learning is key to shifting learning from knowledge transfer to consciousness transformation. In addition, reorienting the evaluation system towards authentic assessment that is capable of measuring the depth of appreciation and application of values is a prerequisite for ensuring that the internalisation process occurs substantively.

The implications of these findings are practical and policy-oriented. At the institutional level, it is necessary to revise the national PAI curriculum framework to make the metaphysical dimension an explicit and measurable element in learning outcomes. At the educator level, a continuous professional development programme is needed to equip teachers with a philosophical understanding of Islamic metaphysics and transformative pedagogical skills. Broadly speaking, the internalisation of these metaphysical values is expected to produce a generation of Muslims who are not only formally religious but also spiritually intelligent, capable of responding to the challenges of the times with an integral worldview, and contributing to the development of a civilisation based on mercy (rahmatan lil 'alamin). For further research, empirical studies to test the effectiveness of the proposed framework model and the development of learning modules based on metaphysical values are important steps that are recommended.

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