

## THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION MUHAMMAD ABDUH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

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### Abstract

The dichotomic view that emerges in people's lives has a negative impact on Islamic education in Indonesia. Islamic education in Indonesia began to experience retardation and disintegration due to this dichotomic view. In fact, in the womb of Indonesian Islamic education there are not yet born scholars who have a deep spiritual and intellectual commitment. Therefore, this study offers the concept of Islamic education Muhammad Abduh as a solution. This study aims to elaborate on Muhammad Abduh's Islamic education concept and show the implications of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic education concept on Islamic education in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative approach to the type of literature study research. The data collection technique used is the documentation technique. The data that has been collected is then analyzed using content analysis. Researchers found that the concept of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic education was to educate the minds and souls of students. Implications of the concept of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic Education to Islamic Education in Indonesia, among others, should the purpose of education pay attention to human nature as a whole. Students should both men and women add scientific insights. Educators should have good intellectual and religious competence. Learning methods that are applied should develop aspects of reason and soul (knowledge transfer and value transfer). Islamic education in Indonesia should study the treasures of modern science and religious scholarship.

Keywords: The Concept of Islamic Education, Muhammad Abduh, Islamic Education in Indonesia

### A. INTRODUCTION

The classical period (650-1250 M) was a period of expansion and integration that led to the progress made by Muslims. Various advances have been made, motivated by progress in the field of Islamic education that has succeeded in producing human resources that drive these progress. Achievement of Muslims in the decade of the classical century (650-1250 M) began to experience a setback precisely in the 12th century M The setback experienced, was caused by the scholars not paying attention to the requisite science rationally. In this century, Muslims are completely cut off relations with the intellectual flow of science and technology.<sup>1</sup>

Such conditions occur throughout the Muslim world, especially in Indonesia as the majority of the population is Muslim. The strong doctrinaire and normative

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<sup>1</sup> Armai Arief, *Reformasi Pendidikan Islam* (Ciputat: CRSD Press, 2007), p. 114

understanding in Indonesia arises when Indonesia experiences a very long colony. Indonesian Muslims began to experience underdevelopment and disintegration in various aspects of community life and there was a clash between Islamic education and Western education that gave rise to a dichotomical view of the community towards ulemas (traditional) and intellectuals (Western).<sup>2</sup>

Such conditions are still developing until now. In fact, Islamic pesantren educational institutions as Indonesian Islamic educational institutions are still resistant to the wave of modernization. The discourse that develops in the world of pesantren and is considered important is the realm of fiqh. The role of ratios in drawing legal conclusions, formal legality, sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah is effectively less empowered. The theology developed by pesantren generally follows the Asy'ariyah school, this school does not seem to place the maximum portion of reason.<sup>3</sup>

The application of this kind of Islamic education pattern has a negative influence on students' technical learning, where they learn by memorizing without understanding and understanding in Islamic educational institutions. In fact, this memorization system has overcome the tradition of dialogue, curiosity (fresh curiosity), fresh ideas, originality, innovation and creativity of students, so students do not know the true meaning of memorized material. The impact is even more alarming, according to Shafi'i Ma'arif that from the womb of Islamic education there are not yet born scholars who have a deep spiritual and intellectual commitment.<sup>4</sup>

The problem that befell Islamic education in Indonesia is basically a very complex problem. Issues that are not only in the input and process of Islamic education, but issues that have reached the output of Islamic education. To overcome this, improvement is the only option that needs to be pursued by Islamic education in Indonesia.

The improvement in question is an improvement at the level of the basic concepts that serve as a reference for Islamic education, bearing in mind that the root of the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia is sourced from the basic concepts of Islamic education which are referred to. Thus the researcher does not necessarily compile the concept of Islamic education with a personal view, but the researcher tries to propose the concept of Islamic education in the view of Muhammad Abduh who is well-known with his modern slam education concept. In addition, Muhammad Abduh tried to overcome the problem of Islamic education in Egypt, an issue which is not much different from the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia. For this reason, through a study entitled "Muhammad Abduh's Islamic Education Concept and Its Implications for Islamic Education in Indonesia", the researchers hope that this research will be an alternative-solution to the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia.

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<sup>2</sup> Azyumardi Azra, Pendidikan Islam; Tradisi dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 2002), p. 159-160

<sup>3</sup> Armai Arief, Ibid, p. 40-45

<sup>4</sup> Muslih Usa (ed), Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia antara Cita dan Fakta (Yogyakarta: PT Tiara Wacana Yogya, 1991), p. 20

## B. METHOD OF RESEARCH

Based on this study, researchers used a qualitative approach to the type of library research. Library research aims to collect data and information sourced from books, magazines, documents, notes, and historical stories as well as other stories contained in the library room.<sup>5</sup> While the data collection techniques used are documentation techniques. The analysis in this study uses content analysis. Content analysis will produce a conclusion about the language style of the book, ideas in the contents of the book and writing.<sup>6</sup>

## C. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Biography of Muhammad Abduh

Muhammad Abduh was born in 1849 M. His full name, Muhammad bin Abduh bin Hasan Khairullah, was born in the village of Mahallat Nashr in al-Buhairah Regency, Egypt. Muhammad Abduh's father, Abduh Hasan Khairullah, was from Turkey and had lived in Egypt for a long time. Muhammad Abduh's mother was named Junainah bint Uthman al-Kabir, if traced the family's origins, Junainah came from the descendants of the Arabs whose lineage reached Umar Ibn al-Khattab.<sup>7</sup>

At the age of 10 years, the first education that Muhammad Abduh received was learning to write and read under the guidance of his parents. After Muhammad Abduh was adept at reading and writing, he was sent to one of the teachers who memorized the Qur'an. Within two years Muhammad Abduh had memorized the Qur'an.<sup>8</sup>

In 1862 he was sent by his parents to a religious college in the Ahmadi mosque located in Tantha. Muhammad Abduh was dissatisfied and annoyed with the teaching methods applied. Finally, in 1864 he decided to return to his hometown and was determined to help his parents farm.

Through the services of his uncle, Muhammad Abduh finally returned to love science and was determined to return to the Shaykh Ahmadi mosque to complete his studies. After studying at Tantha, in 1866 he continued to al-Azhar college in Cairo. In 1866 Jamaluddin al-Afghany came to Egypt on his way to Istanbul. In this year Muhammad Abduh met Jamaluddin al-Afghany for the first time with his friends.

Muhammad Abduh's meeting with al-Afghany really opened his mind to Muhammad Abduh's thoughts. In 1871, Muhammad Abduh actively wrote essays in al-Ahram's media. In 1877, Muhammad Abduh graduated from al-Azhar with the title 'Alim. Therefore, from the diploma he obtained, he was entitled and had the authority to teach at al-Azhar. In 1882 the Pasabi revolt broke out, Muhammad Abduh who led al-Waq'a'i al-Misriyyat was accused of being involved in the case. Eventually, the Egyptian government exiled it to Beirut, Syria. In his

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<sup>5</sup> Mardalis, *Metode Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Proposal* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1993), p. 28

<sup>6</sup> Suharsimi Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktik* (Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta, 2013), p. 16

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Amir Aziz, *Pembaharuan Teologi Perspektif Modernisme Muhammad Abduh dan Neo Modernisme Fazlur Rahman* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2009),. 9

<sup>8</sup> Yusran Asmuni, *Dirasah Islamiyah III; Pengantar Studi Pemikiran dan Gerakan Pembaharuan dalam Dunia Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: PT Raya Gafindo Persada, 1998), p. 78

exile, Muhammad Abduh met again with Jamaluddin al-Afghany and founded the al-*Urwatul al-Wutsqa* newspaper organization.

The publication of this newspaper was banned by the British, French and Dutch, finally in 1885 Muhammad Abduh left Paris and returned to Beirut. In Beirut, Muhammad Abduh had the opportunity to teach at Sulthaniyah tertiary institutions. In 1894 Abduh was appointed a member of the A'la assembly from al-Azhar. As a member of the assembly, Muhammad Abduh gave many changes and improvements to Al-Azhar's body as a university. Muhammad Abduh died on July 11, 1905. His body was buried in the State tomb in the city of Cairo.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Muhammad Abduh's Islamic Education Concept

### a. Educational Objectives According to Muhammad Abduh

The purpose of education that caught Abduh's attention was a balance between mind and soul. As Muhammad Abduh said that the purpose of education is to educate the mind and soul to the limits of the possibility of students being able to achieve world happiness and happiness after death.<sup>10</sup> According to Abduh, mind and soul are always dynamic in knowing the nature of the nature, and through the ability of reason the nature of nature is able to be revealed. While religion should be a driving force for reason in its search for knowing the secrets of nature, but with the condition that reason does not go beyond the limits of reasonableness.<sup>11</sup>

Abduh was convinced that the educational goals formulated were able to overcome these problems. He said that with the education of reason is able to uncover the secrets of nature in the form of science, then be able to distinguish what is good and bad and what is beneficial and not. For Abduh this is the first basis. The second basis, education of the soul or religion is able to foster noble qualities and morals and keep away from bad traits. According to Abduh, if everyone succeeds in combining the two bases, then he will always look for things that are useful and stay away from mudharat, so he will achieve world and hereafter happiness.<sup>12</sup>

According to Abduh, so far women only follow customary law. Their lives are filled with a variety of khurafat so that very few of them are pursuing religious knowledge. Seeing this condition, Abduh strongly suggested that women also get the same rights as men in terms of studying. He based his opinion with Q.S al-Ahzab: 35. On the basis of this verse, Abduh said that the verse parallels between men and women in seeking knowledge, both religious and worldly. Therefore, women must be released from the shackles of ignorance by giving them education.<sup>13</sup>

According to Muhammad Abduh, both men and women are required to study. Both are ordered to know the obligations established by Islam and also

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<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Amir Aziz, *Pembaharuan Teologi Perspektif Modernisme Muhammad Abduh dan Neo Modernisme Fazlur Rahman* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2009), p. 16

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Imarah (ed.), *Al-A'mal al-Kaamilah al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz atsalis* (Kairo: Dar Asyuruk, 1993), p. 29

<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Abduh, *Risalah at-Tauhid* (Kairo: al-Hii'ah al-'Ammah Li Qoshur Ats Tsaqofah, 2000), p. 124

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Imarah (ed.), *Ibid*, p. 29

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, *Tarikh al-Ustad al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz al-Awwal* (Dar al-Fadhilah: Kairo, 2006), p. 471

matters relating to the faith. Both are required to seek knowledge that teaches them in life, teaches them to do good in interacting with people who are in contact with them, both near and far, according to the information contained in the Qur'an. In addition, both are permitted to seek benefits found in nature, whether investigating or examining the earth, sky, or water. In this order, both men and women, are obliged to prepare themselves to seek knowledge, overcome poverty, make ends meet, or perfect pleasure without obstacles or challenges from religion.<sup>14</sup>

## **b. Students, Avoiding All Forms of Imitation**

As was the condition of education at the time of Abduh, he was saddened to see the condition of the prosecutors of religious knowledge in most Islamic countries. According to him, they learn the science of monotheism or the science of kalam only from the summary, which is adapted by later scholars. Even for intelligent people, they only understand words that are written only, they are not able to conduct discussions or research on the proposition, and they are not able to improve the introduction and preamble, or distinguish between right and wrong. All that they swallow as if the summary books are the books of Allah and His Messenger.<sup>15</sup>

According to Abduh, submitting to the truth is something commendable. Therefore, each claimant must take lessons from those who preceded him, both dead and alive. However, the prosecutor of knowledge must use his mind to judge their legacy, so if there is something right then it is taken, and the wrong is left. So right thoughts arise from courage, and courage is of two kinds; courage reveals the restraint (taklid) and courage sets the correct standard for measuring the truth of an opinion or thought. Thus, the prosecutor of knowledge will be free from slavery of others, and he is only a servant of the truth. The teachings of Islam itself, essentially freeing the ratio and the human mind from all the fetters that bind it, Islam frees the mind from the influence of imitation that enslaves it and Islam utilizes reason as it should.<sup>16</sup>

## **c. Students, Demand Knowledge from Anyone and Anywhere**

Muhammad Abduh was actually not willing to see the condition of the prosecutors of knowledge in the bow of the imitation of their scholars. In addition to voicing the importance of reason to the prosecutors of knowledge, he also voiced tolerance or respect for experts in science despite their differences in belief. In fact, Abduh voiced the importance of taking knowledge from them. Abduh revealed; Conditions experienced by prosecutors of knowledge can only be overcome with knowledge. Therefore, the prosecutors of knowledge need to be mobilized to seek knowledge and find it in any place and from the lips or tongue of anyone. So when the prosecutors of knowledge meet with an expert, anywhere and from any tribe or group, they respect and crowd, not unlike the ants swarming

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<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Abduh, *Al-Islam wa an-Nasronniyah ma'a 'Ilmi wa alMadaniyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Hadatsah, 1988), p. 96

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Abduh, *Al-Islam wa an-Nasronniyah ma'a 'Ilmi wa alMadaniyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Hadatsah, 1988), p. 182

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Abduh, *Risalah at-Tauhid* (Kairo: al-Hii'ah al-'Ammah Li Qoshur Ats Tsaqofah, 2000), p. 160



on honey without regard to religion or belief. The most important thing for them is useful knowledge or wisdom.<sup>17</sup>

As an illustration, a Bukhari Imam who collects hadith is in front of ‘Imran bin Hathan is a khawarij and Bukhari is receiving a hadith from him. While ‘Amar ibn‘ Ubeid, the leader of mu'tazilah, was in front of Hasan al-Bashri, a Sunnah expert from the tabi'in group, and ‘Amar bin‘ Ubeid learned from him.

#### **d. Educator, Mastering Modern Science and Religious Sciences**

Muhammad Abduh said that a Muslim educator lacked devotion to Islam, in various aspects of modern life, except if the educators mastered one language from various European scientific languages, so the educators would understand the writings of Europeans about Islam, whether praising or insulting.<sup>18</sup>

However, this does not mean that Abduh was very enthusiastic about Western sciences. However, the purpose of visiting Europe is to improve Islamic education, he invites educators to think rationally and he also invites to clean up foreign elements, especially Western thought. For Abduh, seriously accepting knowledge is the original spirit of the religion of Islam, and in his opinion only Islam is able to unite the science of religion and science. Islam for Abduh is a strict defender of rational thought, and his dogmas can be explained scientifically.<sup>19</sup>

#### **e. Educators, Have Responsibility and Good Morals**

Abduh wanted people who knew the true nature of religion, they were tasked with exploring in all directions to conduct research in each school. They research to find out the behavior of employees, if they are good, honest, and pious employees, then it needs to be glorified. However, according to Abduh further, such a thing would not exist except only a few of the educators who have good morals. In fact, according to Abduh, there were only two people in al-Azhar who were really good educators. Most of them do not pay attention to educational matters and they also do not care about the moral damage that befall students.

The importance of this responsibility and character, Abduh firmly established criteria for employees in each school. He said that every employee in the school, both the principal and educators must have the authority in disciplining students and educating their souls, and every educator and principal should have noble character, and good character.<sup>20</sup>

#### **f. Learning methods**

Abduh tried to improve teaching methods in traditional Islamic educational institutions. In this endeavor, Abduh recalls how to teach the time he had shared with Shaykh Darwisy in Kanisah, a method of conceptual understanding, where Abduh recited to him a book, then Shaykh Darwisy explained to Abduh about the

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<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Abduh, *Al-Islam wa an-Nasronniyah ma'a 'Ilmi wa alMadaniyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Hadatsah, 1988), p. 98

<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, *Tarikh al-Ustad al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz ats-Tsani* (Dar al-Fadhilah: Kairo, 2006), p. 927

<sup>19</sup> Nurcholis Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), p. 312

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Imarah (ed.), *Al-A'mal al-Kaamilah al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz atsalis* (Kairo: Dar Asyuruk, 1993), p. 121-123

meaning and explanations clearly, then from the meaning Abduh could not yet understand, he asked Shaykh Darwisy. From the answers expressed, Abduh felt satisfied and more enthusiastic in studying knowledge. Therefore, Abduh then emphasized the importance of understanding a book.<sup>21</sup>

then Abduh explained the meaning of the matan with a concise but profound explanation. After that, Abduh invited students to ask questions. Then Abduh answered succinctly and was able to satisfy students who asked questions. In answering each of these questions, Abduh associates with scientific problems, so the learning seems different and it seems that the lesson taught is logic or mantiq.<sup>22</sup>

According to Abduh, religious education with the correct basics will foster mind and soul with noble qualities, so that the mind and soul that are fostered, will encourage to produce moral glory. In this case, Abduh said that a small child or youth in the early days of balighnya, need to be trained to worship, chant the name of Allah, and be trained for prayer, both bowing and prostration, even an educator must first practice in schools about the examples of the prayer.

Muhammad Abduh strongly emphasized the importance of learning that combines theory and practice. He said, that every school needs to practice the lessons taught after the lessons are finished. Therefore, this method will not be able to run without a scientist who is scientifically adequate, in addition to adequate in terms of morals. Abduh said, in measuring the competence of educators the morals and ability to educate were the benchmarks.<sup>23</sup>

### **3. Implications of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic Education Concepts on Islamic Education in Indonesia**

#### **a. Implications of the Concept of Educational Objectives**

The implications of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic education goals for Islamic education in Indonesia should pay attention to human nature as a whole, without suppressing one aspect while the other aspects are ignored. Both reason and spirit are the goals of Islamic education to be developed and utilized. This needs to be pursued as a form of manifestation of the people who prosper the earth, that is, those who are not only spiritually intelligent while their intellectuals are ignored, but those who prosper the earth who are capable of intellectually and spiritually-al-khalifah fil ardh-.

The potential of reason and spirituality would not have been possible without the guidance and direction of Islamic education. Therefore, Islamic education in the modern arena should put forward the two aspects above, without suppressing one aspect while the other is ignored, given the increasingly complex challenges of modernity, both internal and external challenges. By using these two aspects, the answer to the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia has been overcome, especially the dichotomic view that separates science from religion.

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<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, *Tarikh al-Ustad al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz al-Awwal* (Dar al-Fadhilah: Kairo, 2006), p. 22

<sup>22</sup> Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, *Tarikh al-Ustad al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz ats-Tsani* (Dar al-Fadhilah: Kairo, 2006), p. 756

<sup>23</sup> Muhammad Imarah (ed.), *Al-A'mal al-Kaamilah al-Imam as-Syaikh Muhammad Abduh al-Juz ats-alis* (Kairo: Dar Asyuruk, 1993), p. 124

## **b. Implications of Student Concepts**

There are several implications of the concept of Muhammad Abduh's students for Islamic education in Indonesia. First, the obligation to study must not discredit differences in gender status between men and women. Therefore, both men and women have the obligation to study, both religion and science. Secondly, students should avoid baseless ties. The bond is only based on the bandwagon and prejudices whose truth value is uncertain. Such a culture will only inhibit reason to think, even taqlid culture will only make reason rigid and frozen.

Third, in this modern context, students should add scientific insights by seeking knowledge from anyone and anywhere. Scientists actually offer a variety of different sciences, so that there are many branches of science, both religious and scientific. From various branches of science, it is unfortunate if students do not take it and only follow one discipline. Whereas the demands of the modern era require a scientific insight into learners, and not only require diplomas or superior values of students (certificate oriented).

## **c. Implications of the Educator's Concept**

Researchers found several implications of the concept of educator Muhammad Abduh on Islamic education in Indonesia. First, in this modern context, external challenges that come from foreign cultures have a negative influence on children's morals and morals. Educators need to feel responsible for the damage done, so they do not simply ignore the damage done to their children. In this case, the need for educators who have noble character to improve the morals and morals of students. He feels responsible for correcting the moral and moral inequalities of others by displaying the nobility he has. Secondly, as educators should always renew the quality of self, both theoretical and practical qualities that are reflected in the way of teaching, designing learning designs, even the ability to establish communication relationships between people.

## **d. Implications of the Concept of Learning Methods**

Researchers found several implications of the concept of Muhammad Abduh's learning methods for Islamic education in Indonesia. First, educators should apply learning methods that lead to the transfer of knowledge, namely educators not only provide limited knowledge to students, but educators need to provide understanding and experience of a material to students. Second, educators should also apply methods that can affect the souls of students, in this case the transfer of value is that educators provide noble values to the souls of students, so that their souls are embedded in the values of goodness that can guide in actions and words.

## **e. Implications of the Concept of Science Integration**

As is known, Islamic education in Indonesia is thick with dichotomic views. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate religious knowledge and general science. Indonesian Islamic Education should study the treasures of religious scholarship and the treasures of Western science, so that religious knowledge will be known because it truly contains the source of truth, and leaves religious knowledge that contains damage. It will also be well known that Western product science is to



take advantage of positive values to improve the backwardness of Islamic education.

## D. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic Education concept, it can be concluded that the Islamic Education concept initiated by Muhammad Abduh is modernist. In the concept that Abduh failed, it seems quite clear that Abduh wanted the concept of Islamic education which balanced the education of reason and spiritual education. He then elaborated the concept of education more broadly into the concept of educational goals, the concepts of students, the concept of educators, the concept of learning methods and the concept of integration of science. Based on this concept, Abduh did try to change the fate of the conditions of Islamic education in Egypt. Similar to the condition of Islamic education in Indonesia, there is a compatibility between Abduh's problem and the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia. Therefore, the fresh idea of Muhammad Abduh's Islamic education concept has implications for the problem of Islamic education in Indonesia. The concept was reappointed as a solutive idea in solving problems of Islamic education in Indonesia.

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