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**MUHAMMAD ABDUH'S CONCEPT OF MODERNIZATION
ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

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Abstract

Islamic education plays a crucial role in instilling the values of Islamic teachings within the educational sphere. This study aims to analyze and describe Islamic educational thought from the perspective of Muhammad Abduh. The research employs a library-based approach, using data collection techniques such as documentation from books, scholarly journal articles, and other documents relevant to the research theme. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that Muhammad Abduh was a prominent modern Islamic thinker who initiated various reforms, particularly in the areas of social and political education for Muslims, who at the time were experiencing stagnation. This stagnation was largely due to the influence of *jumud*—a rigid, unchanging mindset—that Abduh viewed as a form of ignorance. According to him, the Qur'an contains numerous verses that encourage Muslims to think critically, as it is through thinking that knowledge is born. He also supported the views of some Western writers who argued that the decline of the Muslim world was caused by the ideology of *jabariyyah* (fatalism). To address this, Abduh reformed the education system, including its curriculum and goals. He believed that the traditional education model widely applied in many institutions needed renewal, starting with the education system at Al-Azhar, which he considered the center of Islamic education globally.

Keywords: Modernization, Islamic Education, Muhammad Abduh

INTRODUCTION

Islam as a system of life which contains sub-systems in the form of political, economic, social, cultural and educational aspects, presents normative foundations in realizing each of the existing sub-systems.¹

Islam is the theological basis of several sub-systems, including education. By always accommodating the transcendent spirit in every educational process, Islamic education can be understood as a guidance in direction in an effort to produce intelligent students, not only intellectually, but also spiritually, which in turn will lead to a maximum and responsible Muslim identity.”²

¹Umiarso, Zamroni, Pendidikan Pembebasan dalam perspektif Barat dan Timur, (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruz Media, 2011), hlm. 33

² Ahmad Tafsir, Ilmu pendidikan dalam Perspektif Islam, (bandung: Rosdakarya, 2008), hlm. 32

At this time, the position of Islamic education is in a position of determinism. That is, that in its early history Islamic education had reached its peak of glory, and was able to give birth to many figures of science that developed and advanced in Islamic civilization. But now, the conditions that occur are the opposite, meaning that in the practical reality of Islamic education seems helpless, because it is faced with the reality of the development of modern industrial society.

If we look at the reality today, it is often still not directly proportional to the normativity of Islamic education. The resulting educational pattern still always preserves the practice of oppression and encourages the form of coercion (indoctrination) against students. The educational process has noble goals, but its realization does not prioritize the principle of respect for the existence of students as independent individuals in creating themselves and reality, will only end in vain.

Ideologically, coercion and oppression in the educational process occur because the learning material is not something that is needed by students in life, as well as learning methods that are monotonous and emphasize teacher activeness rather than learner participation in an interaction that is carried out.³

Admittedly or not, the paradigm of Islamic education is still conservative-normative. That is what causes Islamic education to run stagnant and difficult to develop. Conservative means conservative, maintaining the prevailing circumstances and traditions.⁴ While Normative is more adhering to the norm, according to the norms or rules that apply.⁵ Basically, these two terms in education have one weakness: anti-criticism, anti-reason and anti-change. This is what often makes education difficult to develop for the better.

Therefore, a progressive paradigm and revolutionary thinking are needed to change the current pattern of Islamic education. A progressive, liberal, responsible pattern of thought is absolutely necessary in order to advance Islamic education.

Therefore, we will examine educational thinkers who are able to provide new concepts in the Islamic education system and historically Indonesia has the same background so that the study of this figure is expected to be able to influence Islamic education in Indonesia.

Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) was a true modernist in the fields of law and education. The ideas he dug were sourced from the highest Islamic law directly, namely the Koran and Hadith, successfully giving birth to a modernization movement that stomped the world of education in the Middle East and even the European continent.

Muhammad Abduh's idea of modernizing education was motivated by the state of Muslims who were stubborn, rigid, conservative, causing them to be completely backward in the stage of reality on the stage of global civilization history. According to him, the downturn of Arab Muslims at that time was caused by the stagnation of applicable education. Therefore, education must make fundamental reforms.

Abduh with his educational modernization movement tried to open the door to *ijtihad* which had frozen the thinking of Muslims. Therefore, the study of this figure is very interesting to find the tangent and knot point of Islamic education.

From this idea (Modernization of Muhammad Abduh) will be a pioneer for the source of inspiration in enriching the *khaznah* of Islamic education. This is based on the reality of the backwardness of the Indonesian education world which has similarities with the situation in the Arabian Peninsula at that time. The similarity is seen more specifically

³ Ahmad, Arifi, *Politik Pendidikan Islam: Menelusuri Ideologi dan Aktualisasi Pendidikan Islam di Tengah Arus Global*, (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2009), hlm 7

⁴ Departemen Pendidikan nasional, *Kamus Besar bahasa Indonesia*

⁵ Ibid

in the conservative learning model with the memorization method as its hallmark. The conservative learning model can be said to be oppression by educators to participants.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

In describing the data obtained, researchers used a thematic approach, which is to describe the activities of a character based on a number of themes that use concepts that are usually used to study a particular scientific field of study.⁶

Data Sources

Data sources are grouped into two categories, namely primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes all of Muhammad Abduh's books both related to the modernization of education and not. While secondary sources include several journals and articles on the modernization of Islamic education that assist the author in processing primary data.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was carried out in three stages, namely:⁷

1. Orientation Stage: at this stage the researcher collects data in general about the character's educational thinking to find interesting and important things to research.
2. Exploration Stage: at this stage, data collection is more focused in accordance with the focus of the study.
3. Focused Study Stage: at this stage researchers began to study the concept of modernization of Islamic education Muhammad Abduh.

Data Collection Method

The data collection method in this research is the documentation method. And also the interview method that will be used is as supporting data in data collection.

Data Analysis

Based on the characteristics of a qualitative character study, the data analysis used is qualitative analysis with the type of taxonomy analysis, namely analysis that focuses on certain domains that are very useful for describing the phenomenon or problem that is the target of the study.⁸

THEORETICAL STUDIES

Modernization of Islamic education

Islam throughout its history has not always played an ideal and determinant role for its adherents. In order to deal with problematic social and cultural realities, Islam is not always able to provide the answers expected by its adherents definitively. This fact is much related to the divine nature and transcendence of Islam in the form of normative-dogmatic provisions in general. In this case, if examined carefully, it will be seen that there is a kind of "theological battle" between the necessity of holding normative doctrines and the desire to give new meaning to these doctrines so that their relative historicity appears. This battle in turn gives rise to theological, intellectual, moral and

⁶ Arief Furchan dan Agus Maimun, *Studi Tokoh Metode Penelitian Mengenai Tokoh*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), hlm. 34

⁷ Furchan dan Maimun, *Studi Tokoh...* hlm. 47

⁸ Ibid., hlm. 65-66

social conflicts among Muslims at large. This fact, among others, triggered the birth of the modernization movement in Islam.⁹

The term modernization or renewal is a translation of the term *tajdid*. Terms that are similar to this are renewal, *tajdid*, modernization. These three terms are often understood differently, so it is not uncommon to cause endless polemics among Muslims themselves. On this occasion, these three terms will be understood as terms that have similar meanings if not the same meaning.

Azyumardi Azra¹⁰ quoted by Toto Suharto argues that modernization or renewal is an effort to actualize Islamic teachings in accordance with social developments that occur. With this understanding, renewal in Islam means that it has been present since the earliest times along with the birth of Islam itself.

Meanwhile, Faisal Ismail states that modernization means a conscious effort made by a nation to adapt to the constellation of the world in a certain period in which the nation lives.¹¹ With this understanding, modernization efforts can be said to always appear in every period or era. This can be examined and understood from the historical journey of each nation. In addition, this understanding also indicates that renewal is the same as an effort to “adopt” Islamic teachings with new developments.

In addition to these two figures, Nurcholis Madjid states that modernization is a process of overhauling mindsets and new rational work procedures.¹² The definition of renewal proposed by Nurcholis Madjid implies that modernization is an effort that is synonymous with rationalization. In addition, the definition of renewal offered by Nurcholis also implies that modernization is a process to free oneself from traditionalism which is full of old or traditional mindsets and work procedures. In other words, modernization is the opposite of traditionalization.

Despite the differences of opinion among Muslim scholars about the concept and definition of modernization, modernization in Islam has its own character and characteristics, which are different from other modernists. Modernist ideas and ideas in Islam arise as an effort to interpret the Muslims to the sources of Islamic teachings in order to deal with various sociocultural changes that occur in each time and place, thus Islamic modernization actually has a normative-theological foundation derived from the sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Al-Quran and Hadith.¹³

From various searches for normative foundations for the ideas and ideas of Islamic modernization, it can be said that modernization is a form of implementation of Islamic teachings in a contextual manner on the basis of interpretative interpretation. Modernization is actually an issue that has long emerged in the life of Muslims. This fact shows that the Islamic modernization movement has always appeared in various forms. All forms of modernization are responses and answers of Muslims to all the problems of their time, which they must welcome wisely and wisely.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Muhammad Abduh

Sheikh Muhammad Abduh's full name is Muhammad bin Abduh bin Hasan Khairullah. He was born in the village of Mahallat Nashr in al-Buhairah District, Egypt in

⁹ Abdurrahman assegaf, Suyadi, Pendidikan Islam Madzhab kritis, (Yogyakarta: Gama Media,2008) hlm.85

¹⁰ Toto Suharto, filsafat Pendidikan, (yogyakarta: Ar Ruzz media,2006), hlm. 167

¹¹ Faisal Ismail, Paradigma kebudayaan Islam: Studi Kritis dan Refleksi Historis

¹² Nurcholis Madjid, Islam Kemodernan dan keindonesiaan (Bandung: Mizan,1998),hlm. 86

¹³ Abdurrahman Aseegaf, Suyadi, Pendidikan Islam Madzhab kritis, hlm .86

1850 AD/1266 H, coming from a family that was not classified as rich and not of noble descent.

Muhammad Abduh lived in a family of farmers in the countryside. However, his father was known as an honorable person who likes to give help. All his brothers helped his father manage the farm, except Muhammad Abduh who was assigned by his father to study science. This choice may have been a coincidence or it may have been because he was deeply loved by his father and mother. This is evidenced by the attitude of his mother who was impatient when left by Muhammad Abduh to another village, only two weeks after his departure, his mother had come to visit. He was married at a very young age in 1865, when he was only 16 years old.

He briefly returned to Masjid al-Ahmadi Thantha, then headed to Cairo to study at al-Azhar, in February, 1866. At this university he was acquainted with many lecturers whom he admired, including: First, Shaykh Hasan ath-Thawi who taught books of philosophy by Ibn Sina, logic by Aristotle, and so on. In fact, these books were not taught at al-Azhar at that time; Second, Muhammad al-Basyuni, a scientist who devoted a lot of attention to the field of language literature, not through teaching grammar but through subtlety of taste and ability to practice it.

Besides a little enlightenment from the above knowledge, Abduh met Jamaludin Al-Afghoni, in 1871. Jamaludin was a leading Egyptian figure in Egypt, the initiator of freedom of thought in religion and politics. And since his encounter with al-Afghoni, Abduh has tried to make adjustments to Islamic teachings with the demands of the times, such as adjustments to the demands of the times, such as adjustments to the demands of science and technology. This idea of adjustment is what was later called Abduh's modernization which stemmed from his opposition to taklid.

The Works Of Muhammad Abduh

Muhammad Abduh was a Muslim scholar, writing many articles in various newspapers such as al-Ihram, Tsamrotul Funun, al-Urwatul Wutsqa and so on. He is a very meticulous what is written or lectured is always with complete preparation, so it is not surprising that most of the results of his lectures are in a state of readiness to be booked.

The works of Muhammad Abduh are as follows:

1. Risalah al-Waridah: the first book authored by him whose contents explain the science of monotheism in terms of Sufism.
2. Wahdatul Wujud: explains the understanding of a group of Sufis about the unity between God and His creatures.
3. Falsafatul Ijtima' Wattarikh: compiled when lecturing at the Darul Ulum madrasa, contains a description of the philosophy of history and the development of society.
4. Syarah Nahjul Balagha: A commentary by Sayyidina Ali on Arabic literature, explaining monotheism and the truth of Islam.
5. Syarah Bashairun Nasiriyah: A summary of the science of mantiq (logic), completed by M. Rashid Ridha.
6. Risalah Tawhid: This book deals with how mankind can recognize the Oneness of God through rational arguments.
7. Al-Islamu wa Nashraniyah ma'al ilmi wa madaniyah: contains a defense of Islam against the attacks of Christianity in the fields of science and culture.
8. Tafsir juz 'amma: a tafsir whose content is to eliminate all superstition and shirk that afflicts Muslims.

In addition to these books there are other essays such as:

1. Hash'iyah ala Syarh ad Daiwani lil aqo'idil adudiyah
2. Risalah ar rodad 'ala dhohriyyah, a translation of an essay by Jamaluddin al-Afghani.
3. Maqomat badi' az-Zamanai al-Hamdi
4. Nizamaut Tarbiyah al-Mishriyah, and others.¹⁴

Muhammad Abduh's Thought Style

Muhammad Abduh was born and raised and lived in a society that was being touched by basic developments in Europe. This society is a society that is frozen, rigid, tightly closing the door to *ijtihad*, ignoring the role of reason in understanding God's *shari'a* or in deriving laws because they have felt sufficient with the work of their predecessors who also lived in a period of freezing reason (*jumud*) and based on *khurofat*". Europe, on the other hand, was a society that deified reason, especially after the amazing scientific discoveries of the time."¹⁵

The state of European society had actually planted the seeds of its influence since the arrival of the French expedition (Napoleon) to Egypt in 1798. However, Muhammad Abduh clearly felt the growth of these seeds when he entered the gates of Al-Azhar. At that time, the educational institution's coaches and scholars had been divided into two groups, namely the majority and the minority. The first group adhered to the pattern of *taqlid*, which teaches students that the opinions of previous scholars are just memorized, without leading to research, comparison and commentary. While the second group adheres to the pattern of *tajdid* (reformers) who emphasize their descriptions in the direction of reasoning and the development of taste."¹⁶

Thanks to Abduh's knowledge of Sufism and Sheikh Darwishy's encouragement that he always study various fields of science, which he received when he was young, it is not surprising that Abduh's instincts supported by the Shaykh made Abduh more inclined to side with the minority group which at that time was spearheaded by Sheikh Hasan Al-Thawil who had taught philosophy and logic long before Al-Azhar knew him. On the other hand, Abduh's meeting with Al-Afgani made Abduh active in various social and political fields, and later led him to reside in Paris, master the French language, live the life of the people, and communicate with European thinkers at that time.

There are several styles of Muhammad Abduh's thought, namely:

1. Modernization

As has been mentioned above that since his encounter with Al- Afgani, Abduh tried to make adjustments to Islamic teachings with the demands of the times, such as adjustments to the development of science and technology. This idea of adjustment was later called modernization. The source of Abduh's modernization ideas stemmed from his opposition to *taqlid*. According to Muhammad Abduh, the Qur'an commands its people to use their common sense, and forbids them to follow previous opinions without following exactly the proofs that support these opinions, even if they are expressed by people who should be most respected and trusted. Abduh stipulated three criteria for this act of *taqlid*, these three criteria are: (1) Excessive glorification of the ancestors and their teachers. (2) The belief in the greatness of past religious leaders, as if they had reached perfection. (3)

¹⁴ Abdurrahman Assegaf, Suyadi, Pendidikan Islam Madzhab Kritis Perbandingan Teori Pendidikan Timur dan Barat, (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2008), hlm.45

¹⁵ M. Quraish Shihab, Studi Kritis Tafsir Al-Manar Karya Muhammad duh dan M. Rasyid Ridha, (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 1994), hlm. 17

¹⁶ Ibid, hlm. 15

Fear of being hated and criticized if he releases his mind and trains himself to hold on to what is considered absolutely correct.¹⁷

Based on this view, Abduh understood the Qur'an, especially with regard to the condemnation of the attitude and actions of taqlid, even though it concerns the attitude of the mushrikeen. Furthermore, he criticized the Muslims, especially the knowledgeable ones, who followed the opinions of previous scholars without paying attention to their proofs.

In connection with this modernization, a modernist usually has several characteristics, including always trying to face all situations with confidence and courage, and the movement is populist, and always involves personal thinking. Then the modernists who have made reform as their benchmark are those who try to create positive bonds between Qur'anic thought and modern thought.¹⁸ The combination of these two thoughts has given birth to several modern social and moral institutions with an orientation to the Qur'an.

Muhammad Abduh addressed modern Western civilization selectively and critically. He always used the principle of ijtihad as the main method to break the stagnation of Muslim thought. Abduh never thought, let alone tried to take over completely everything that came from the Western world. Because he thought that doing so would mean changing the old taqlid with a new taqlid, also because it would not be useful, due to differences in thought and social structure of each region.¹⁹ Islam according to Abduh must be able to straighten out the lacunae of western differences and clean up the negative aspects that accompany them. Thus, these differences will eventually become the strongest support for the teachings of Islam, as soon as they become known and recognized by the followers of Islam."²⁰

2. Reformist

Muhammad Abduh was a reformer whose style of reform was reformistic-reconstructive. This is because Muhammad Abduh always saw tradition with a rebuilding perspective. In order for the tradition of a society to survive and continue to be accepted, it must be rebuilt. This rebuilding is of course with a modern framework and rational prerequisites. Reformistic thinking in its first form was philosophical."²¹

3. Conservative

The renewal movement initiated by Muhammad Abduh was conservative, this can be seen from Muhammad Abduh's attitude which did not intend to change the self-portrait of Islam. Risalah Tauhid is evidence of this thinking. Muhammad Abduh in this work seeks to reaffirm the self-portrait of Islam that has achieved finality and excellence."²²

Thus came to the surface the three typologies of thought, namely modernist, reformist, conservative, which were raised in relation to Muhammad Abduh's reforms. All three are reflections in reading all of Muhammad Abduh's thoughts. In the reading, the first style emphasizes more on the aspect of selectivity and Muhammad Abduh's critical attitude in addressing and viewing Western civilization. The second pattern emphasizes Muhammad Abduh's efforts to rebuild the Islamic tradition in a

¹⁷ Nur Cholis Madjid, *Islam Kemodernan Dan Keindonesiaan*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1989), hlm. 172.

¹⁸ Toto Suharto, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Arruzz, 2006), hlm. 258

¹⁹ M. Qurais Shihab, *Studi Kritis Tafsir Al Manar*, hlm. 19.

²⁰ Ibid, hlm. 20

²¹ Toto Suharto, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam*, hlm. 265

²² Ibid, hlm. 266

reconstructive manner. While the third style focuses its reading on Muhammad Abduh's efforts to defend Islam through the finality and superiority of Islam. So, the core of Muhammad Abduh's thought is:

Freeing the mind from the bonds of taqlid and understanding religion like the salaf before the emergence of contradictions and returning in search of religious knowledge to its first source and considering in the environment of the scales of reason given by Allah SWT to find balance and reduce confusion and error. In this way one is regarded as a friend of knowledge who is engaged in researching the secrets of nature, inviting respect for the truth and to adhere to the education of the soul and the improvement of deeds.

Improving the Arabic language and wording, whether in official conversations or in correspondence between people. Reforming the political sphere, this he did in the Shura Council since he was elected to it." [24] If we look here, we see an agenda for renewal in the fields of language, politics, and creed and general guidance. And in all these areas, Abduh offered constructive criticism. The core of it all was Islamic education. He saw that the deterioration of Islamic society was due to faulty education.²³

MODERNIZATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION BY MUHAMMAD ABDUH

The Objectives of Islamic Education by Muhammad Abduh

To empower the Islamic education system, Muhammad Abduh established his own objectives for Islamic education, namely: to educate the soul and mind and convey them to the limits of what a person can achieve in terms of happiness in this world and the hereafter.

Intellectual education is intended as a tool to instill habits of thinking and the ability to distinguish between good and bad. By instilling habits of thinking, Muhammad Abduh hoped that the intellectual stagnation that had gripped Muslims at that time could be overcome, and that spiritual education would give rise to a generation that was not only capable of critical thinking, but also possessed noble character and a pure soul.

In empowering Islamic education, Muhammad Abduh established the objectives of Islamic education, which he formulated as follows: educating the mind and soul and conveying them to the limits of what a person can achieve in terms of happiness in this world and the hereafter. From the formulation of these educational objectives, it can be understood that what Muhammad Abduh wanted to achieve was a goal that encompassed cognitive (intellectual) and affective (spiritual) aspects. Thus, there is a balance between reason and spirituality. Intellectual education is intended as a tool to instill the habit of thinking and to distinguish between good and bad, between what brings benefit and what brings harm. With this, Muhammad Abduh hoped that the stagnation of thought that plagued Muslims at that time could be eroded.

For Muhammad Abduh, human actions stem from the conclusion that humans are beings who are free to choose their actions. Muhammad Abduh explains that what supports human actions are reason, will, and power.²⁴ Combined with spiritual (affective) goals, it is hoped that this will give rise to a new generation that is highly intellectual, critical thinkers, but also has noble character and a pure soul. Thus, attitudes reflecting moral decay can be eradicated. According to Abduh, if both aspects are educated and developed—meaning that reason is enlightened and the soul is educated with religious morality—then the Muslim community will rise up and be able to compete and keep pace with nations that have already advanced culturally.

²³ Muhammad Al Bahiy, *Pemikiran Islam Modern*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1986), hlm. 95

²⁴ Harun Nasution, *Muhammad Abduh dan Teologi Rasional Muktazilah* (Jakarta: 1987) hlm. 309

Muhammad Abduh's Method

In the field of education, Muhammad Abduh tended to use methods based on rationalist philosophy. The influence of his teacher (Jamaluddin) was quite significant on the teaching methods he applied after becoming an educator. The method used by Jamaluddin was a practical method ('maliyyah') that emphasized imparting understanding through discussion.²⁵

Muhammad Abduh changed the way knowledge was acquired, from the traditional method of memorization to a rational and insightful approach. In addition to memorization, students were also required to understand the material explained by the teacher. Muhammad Abduh also revived the munazharah method (a public debate forum that tests the strength of one's theories and views) in understanding knowledge and distancing himself from the blind imitation (following the opinions of others) method prevalent among scholars at the time. He also promoted academic freedom among Al-Azhar students. Additionally, he developed a systematic method for interpreting the Quran based on five principles:

1. Adjusting events that occurred at that time with the text of the Quran.
2. Making the Quran a unified whole.
3. Using the surah as a basis for understanding the verses.
4. Simplifying the language used in interpretation.
5. Not neglecting historical events when interpreting verses that were revealed at that time.
6. Initiating an Integral Islamic Education Curriculum

In addition to intellectual education, Muhammad Abduh also emphasized spiritual education in order to produce a generation capable of thinking and possessing noble character and a pure soul. He realized this educational goal in a set of curricula from elementary to high school levels. The curriculum is as follows.²⁶

Al-Azhar Curriculum

Muhammad Abduh's career began after he completed his studies in 1877. Through the efforts of Prime Minister Riadl Pasya, he was appointed as a lecturer at Darul Ulum University, and also became a lecturer at Al-Azhar University. He continued to implement radical changes in line with his vision, which aimed to inject fresh air into Islamic higher education institutions, revitalize Islam through new methods aligned with the progress of the times, develop Arabic literature to make it a rich and vibrant language, and eliminate outdated, rigid, and fanatical practices.

In teaching, Muhammad Abduh emphasized to his students the importance of critical and rational thinking, not being bound to a particular opinion, and avoiding fatalism, because the lack of critical thinking and fatalism among Muslims was the cause of the decline of the Ummah, the weakness of the Ummah, the absence of jihad among the Ummah, the absence of cultural progress among the Ummah, and the Ummah's departure from the basic norms of Islamic education.

He emphasized the importance of imparting understanding in every lesson taught. He warned educators not to teach students using rote memorization methods, as such methods would only damage their reasoning abilities, as he had experienced when studying at the Ahmadi Mosque training school in Thanta.²⁷

²⁵ Ahmad Syar'I, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus) hlm.110

²⁶ Ysmansyah, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*, (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group) hlm. 242

²⁷ Ibid

At that time, there was a prolonged intellectual crisis in the Islamic world. One of the causes of this crisis was the dichotomy of knowledge at that time, which caused Muslims to fall far behind in terms of culture and civilization. The same thing happened at Al-Azhar. Muhammad Abduh believed that if education at Al-Azhar could be improved, the condition of Muslims would also improve. According to him, administrative reforms were necessary, the curriculum needed to be expanded to include modern sciences, so that Al-Azhar could stand on equal footing with universities in Europe and become a beacon and guiding light for Muslims.

Muhammad Abduh's efforts to reform Al-Azhar University included: (a) Introducing modern European sciences into Al-Azhar. (b) Changing the education system from rote learning to a system based on understanding and reasoning. (c) Reviving the munazaroh (discussion) method before moving on to taqlid. (d) Establishing regulations regarding education, such as prohibiting students from reading commentaries (hasyiya) and detailed explanations (syarh) of educational texts during their first four years, and (e) Extending the study period and shortening the vacation period.

Elementary School

Muhammad Abduh believed that religion is the foundation of a person's soul and character. Therefore, religious education should be taught to children as early as possible, starting from their elementary school years. Referring to the statement that Islam is the foundation for shaping the soul and character of a Muslim, it is hoped that by possessing the soul and character of a Muslim, Egyptian society will develop a sense of unity and nationalism that can lead Egyptian society to achieve progress in national life.

High School

One of the efforts to improve education in Egypt was to establish government secondary schools to produce experts in various fields of administration, military, health, industry, and so on. At this level, Muhammad Abduh felt it necessary to add materials related to Islam. With the inclusion of religious materials, it was hoped that prospective civil servants and military officers would have a good religious and moral foundation.

The three types of schools established by Muhammad Abduh were not intended to create exclusive social groups, but rather to serve the interests of society. Muhammad Abduh's principle was that education should be based on morality and religion. Teaching was necessary to achieve a better life, while education was seen as the most effective tool for change.

Among Muhammad Abduh's educational reforms was also the issue of women's education. According to him, women have the same rights as men to receive educational services. Women must be freed from the chains of ignorance, and therefore education must be provided. In elevating the dignity of women, there are several issues that must be addressed in education for women: reducing divorce rates and prohibiting polygamy. All of Muhammad Abduh's thoughts on women are articulated and developed in *Tahrir al-Mar'ah*, a work by his student, Qasim Amin.

In the field of non-formal education, Muhammad Abduh mentioned reform efforts (islah). In this case, Muhammad Abduh saw the need for government intervention, especially in preparing preachers. Their main tasks include:

1. Conveying the obligation and importance of learning.
2. Educating them by teaching them what they have forgotten or do not yet know.
3. Instilling in them a love for their country, homeland, and leaders.

The educational reforms implemented by Muhammad Abduh were influenced by the religious and educational circumstances of the time. The religious and social

conditions in Egypt at that time were quite concerning. The crisis facing the community was not only in the areas of faith and sharia law but also in ethics and morality. Muhammad Abduh's ideas were in line with the times. The educational reforms implemented by Muhammad Abduh at Al-Azhar had a significant impact on educational institutions in Egypt, and his reformist ideas were also written and disseminated through famous magazines in Egypt, namely Al-Manar and Al-Urwat Al-Wusqa.²⁸

Muhammad Abduh sought to develop a curriculum that was in line with the needs of Egyptian society at that time. He believed that specialized schools that educated scholars should offer a broad range of subjects, so he added several additional subjects to the Al-Azhar curriculum, including philosophy, logic, and modern science. His intention was to prepare high-quality human resources, namely modern scholars.

Some of Muhammad Abduh's efforts, although he did not have time to fully implement them, had a positive impact on Islamic educational institutions. Muhammad Abduh's efforts were not very smooth due to challenges from scholars who strongly adhered to old traditions and were determined to defend them.

Islamic education, which always demands the actualization of Islamic values in its curriculum, is the main focus and starting point for modernization in the field of education. This has become increasingly evident since the contact between Islam and the Western world in the late 18th century. The Islamic modernization movement in education, in all its forms and manifestations—whether conservative, reformist, secular, or fundamentalist—has serious implications for the implementation of educational modernization.

In the subsequent development of the Islamic modernization movement, especially the modernization of education, it cannot be separated from philosophical elements in the form of ideals and related educational institutions. The existence of educational vision and mission in the modernization of Islamic education is a philosophical foundation and ideological paradigm of how Islamic educational modernization should ideally be carried out. Therefore, the aspects of institutional vision and mission in educational modernization are two things that cannot be separated.

The modernization movement in Egypt long before Muhammad Abduh was quite exhausting. The experiences of Turkey and Egypt are sufficient to reflect the conditions under which the process of educational modernization took place in the Islamic world. At the earliest stage, both Turkey and Egypt were not primarily focused on modernizing educational institutions. What is referred to in various literature as “modernization” essentially involves the renewal of ideas and aspirations from an intellectual perspective,

All efforts at modernization in the field of Islamic education have always sparked pros and cons among Muslim leaders themselves. Some of them believe that the modernization of education through the transformation of modern knowledge should be limited to the field of technology alone. Meanwhile, other leaders believe that Muslims must acquire both Western technological and intellectual knowledge, because there is no knowledge that is harmful.

Various issues faced by Muslims related to the challenges of the modern world were addressed and approached by Muhammad Abduh from an Islamic perspective. This is the strongest characteristic of the modernization undertaken by Muslims in the earliest period.

Based on the reform movement led by Muhammad Abduh, the issues of educational modernization and legal reformulation were strongly emphasized by Muhammad Abduh. According to Rasyid Ridho, quoted by Toto Suharto, Abduh's

²⁸ Ahmad Syar'I, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam*, hlm.108

educational goal was “to educate the mind and soul and develop them to the extent that students can achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter.”²⁹

From the educational objectives outlined above, Muhammad Abduh seems to want the educational process to shape a Muslim personality that is balanced between the physical and spiritual, as well as intellectual and moral. Education should not only develop cognitive aspects, but also harmonize affective and psychomotor aspects. This perspective reflects his critique of the educational situation and activities in Egypt at the time, where education emphasized only one aspect while neglecting the others.

This educational situation continued to exist because at that time there were two models of education in Egypt. The first model was the “modern school.” This type of school focused solely on intellectual development. In Muhammad Abduh's view, this model of education could threaten the existence of religion and morality in the nation because it was influenced by modern Western thinking that was not based on religion. The second model was the “Religious School,” which retained a doctrinal, theological, and traditional character. Graduates of this model were reluctant to accept change and tended to cling to old traditions. Therefore, Muhammad Abduh sought to implement institutional reform by synthesizing the two school models, thereby bridging the divide between them in a synergistic manner.³⁰

With his reform agenda, Muhammad Abduh aspired to eliminate the dualistic system in Egyptian education. He suggested that modern schools focus on religious and moral aspects. Meanwhile, for religious schools such as al-Azhar, Muhammad Abduh recommended that they be restructured into educational institutions that follow the modern education system.

Abduh focused on modernizing education at al-Azhar because, for him, modernizing al-Azhar was equivalent to improving the condition of the entire Muslim community, as its students came from all corners of the world. Al-Azhar is the center of knowledge in Egypt and even throughout the Islamic world. If the teaching system at al-Azhar could be improved, the subjects taught expanded to include new fields of knowledge, and even if Islam could be renewed and improved starting from here, then Abduh hoped that the winds of change would blow across Egypt and even other Islamic countries.[39]

Within the Al-Azhar curriculum, Abduh introduced modern science and knowledge, which at that time only included Islamic sciences. Abduh turned Al-Azhar into a laboratory for his ideas, teaching modern science while also preserving classical Islamic sciences. In addition to philosophy, Abduh also successfully incorporated mathematics, algebra, geometry, and earth sciences into the al-Azhar curriculum. Muhammad Abduh offered an educational curriculum that combined Islamic sciences with modern Western knowledge.

Abduh's modernization of education stemmed from a comprehensive interpretation of the Quran. The Quran and hadith were placed as the highest sources of law in all of Abduh's thinking. Furthermore, since humans are endowed with reason to understand Islam comprehensively and constantly face the increasingly complex challenges of modern life, it is through reason that humans can overcome all problems through *ijtihad*. Through reason, humans can also continuously renew their faith through a deep understanding of God, humanity, and the universe. With the courage to engage in *ijtihad* and the intention to constantly renew faith, a spirit of renewal will emerge. It is from this perspective that Abduh's educational paradigm was born to modernize

²⁹ Abdurrahman Aseegaf, Suyadi, Pendidikan Islam Madzhab kritis hlm. 89

³⁰ Toto Suharto, filsafat Pendidikan, hlm. 276

education, which had previously been dichotomous. Modern education is education that studies natural sciences such as physics, sociology, philosophy, and others, while also not neglecting religious sciences such as tafsir, fiqh, hadith, aqidah, and others. Through such an educational system, students will achieve a balance of knowledge—religious and general knowledge—which also means that a balance between this world and the hereafter is realized. This is often referred to as religious humanism in various contemporary discourses.

This is where the urgency of Muhammad Abduh's modernization thinking lies, which is applied to Islamic educational institutions, namely the principle of balance in education. Muhammad Abduh sought to balance the intellectual and moral aspects in an Islamic education system. Muhammad Abduh believed that Muslims would be able to compete with the West in discovering new knowledge and be able to match it in terms of culture.

If this can be done, Muslims will no longer be plunged into darkness as they were in the Middle Ages. Abduh's criticism and thoughts on balanced education are based on his assumption that modern Western science, which emphasizes rationality, does not contradict Islamic teachings, which contain spiritual aspects. For Abduh, the two are not contradictory; in fact, they support each other.

In addition, Muhammad Abduh's educational reform practices can be observed through the restructuring of al-Azhar. There are at least five aspects to this restructuring. First, curriculum reform. Second, annual examinations with scholarships awarded to students who pass. Third, the selection of good and useful books. Fourth, the duration of primary courses is longer than that of secondary courses. Fifth, the addition of courses related to modern science.

THE RELEVANCE OF MUHAMMAD ABDUH'S CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

In the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, it appears that the responses and reactions of Islamic boarding schools to the modern Western education system and the modern Islamic education system promoted by Islamic modernists are highly diverse and reflect the unique characteristics of each boarding school. At least two models of response from Indonesian Muslims to the modernization of Islamic education can be identified.

The first is the nearly complete adoption of modern education systems and institutions. The starting point for this attitude is the modern education system and institutions, not the traditional Islamic education system and institutions. Second, the adoption of certain aspects of the modern education system, particularly in terms of curriculum content, teaching techniques, and methods. The foundation for this attitude is the traditional Islamic education system and institutions themselves, which are then modernized, not the modern education system and institutions. An example of this is what was done by the Manba'ul Ulum Islamic boarding school in Surakarta, founded by Susuhunan Pakubuwono in 1906. Like most Islamic boarding schools, Manba'ul Ulum provides education and instruction in traditional Islamic sciences. As part of its modernization efforts, the school incorporated several modern subjects into its curriculum.

According to a mapping conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, there are three types of Islamic boarding schools in terms of their approach to modernity. The first is the Salafiyah (traditional) Islamic boarding school. The name "Salafiyah boarding school" is based on its teaching methods, which use traditional approaches such as sorogan and bandongan/wetonan, without age restrictions or time

limits. There are two types of Salafiyah boarding schools: pure Salafiyah, where the boarding school only conducts classical and non-classical recitation of the Kitab Kuning (classical Islamic texts); and Salafiyah plus, where the boarding school not only conducts recitation of the Kitab Kuning but also provides school-based education or madrasah education, or even university education. Today, only a few boarding schools still maintain this traditional educational system. The second type is Salafiyah Plus, where the boarding school, in addition to conducting religious studies, also provides formal education through schools, madrasahs, or even universities.

Second, Khalafiyah (Modern) Islamic Boarding Schools. Islamic boarding schools of this type are those that have adopted a classical teaching system, have a fixed curriculum, and impose age and time restrictions. Some of these Khalafiyah boarding schools have curricula affiliated with the Ministry of Religion (madrasah), the Ministry of Education (schools), while others use their own curricula (such as Pondok Modern Gontor and Al-Amien Prenduan), and some use a combined curriculum.

Third, Boarding School. This boarding school is residential in nature, as the students live in the boarding school, while their education or schooling takes place outside the boarding school. The kyai acts as a supervisor and spiritual mentor for the students through religious study sessions and majlis ta'lim.

Thus, the educational concept of Muhammad Abduh, when examined from educational factors, demonstrates its relevance to the National Education System as outlined in Law Number 20 of 2003, particularly regarding the national educational objectives, which are to enlighten the nation's life and to cultivate students who possess faith and piety.³¹

Muhammad Abduh's contribution to teaching methods is relevant to Indonesian education, as can be seen in schools throughout Indonesia. The methods used in the teaching and learning process are not always based on memorization. Teachers strive to present methods that are easily understood by students, including discussion, quizzes, and practical exercises.

When viewed from the perspective of the educational concepts put forward by Muhammad Abduh, researchers feel that they are not particularly relevant to the current situation in Indonesia. Muhammad Abduh sought to combine the intelligence of the younger generation with Islamic guidance. Although there are now several schools in Indonesia that incorporate his ideas, many public schools still do not prioritize religious education (especially Islam). This may be due to the diverse nature of Indonesian society, where there are various differences, one of which is the issue of religion.

KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa kesulitan belajar yang dialami oleh siswa di SMPN Tahfidz Madani Pasir Pengaraian mencakup berbagai bentuk, mulai dari kesulitan membaca dan menulis, gangguan konsentrasi, hingga kesulitan memahami konsep abstrak. Kesulitan ini tidak berdiri sendiri, melainkan dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal seperti keterbatasan kognitif dan motivasi belajar, serta faktor eksternal seperti metode pembelajaran yang kurang variatif, beban hafalan tahfidz yang tinggi, dan minimnya pendampingan belajar di rumah. Diagnosis yang dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi memberikan gambaran awal yang cukup untuk mengarahkan strategi intervensi yang relevan dan adaptif.

³¹ Muhammad Kholid Fathoni, Pendidikan Islam dan Pendidikan Nasional, (Jakarta: Departemen Agama RI), hlm 10.

Temuan ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya sistem diagnosis kesulitan belajar yang terstruktur dan kolaboratif di tingkat sekolah. Intervensi berupa bimbingan belajar, program remedial, serta pendekatan individual yang melibatkan guru dan pembina tahfidz terbukti mulai membantu siswa dalam mengatasi hambatan belajarnya, meskipun masih memerlukan penguatan sistematis. Oleh karena itu, sekolah perlu mengembangkan kebijakan yang mendukung asesmen berkelanjutan, pelatihan guru, serta sinergi antarunit pendidikan agar setiap siswa dapat memperoleh layanan pembelajaran yang setara dan optimal sesuai dengan kebutuhannya.

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