

ISLAMIZATION OF EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA: THE INFLUENCE AND LEGACY OF ISMAIL RAJI AL-FARUQI

Abdul Hanan bin Abdul Salam^{1*}, Nur Syamim Syahirah Mat Hussin²

¹ Paramadina University, Indonesia; abdulhanan840840@gmail.com

² Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Malaysia; nursyamims@uitm.edu.my

Article History:	Received: 4 January 2025	Revised: 7 April 2025	Accepted: 23 April 2025
------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------



© 2025 by Authors. Submitted for possible open-access publication under the terms and conditions of the Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20871/kpjipm.v11i1.396>

Abstract: *Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's vision of the Islamization of Knowledge (IoK) has profoundly influenced Malaysia's education system, shaping both policies and pedagogical approaches. His engagement with Malaysian scholars and political figures, including Syed Naquib al-Attas, Anwar Ibrahim, and Mahathir Mohamad, contributed to integrating Islamic principles into national education. This influence is reflected in the Malaysian National Education Philosophy, which emphasizes holistic development grounded in Islamic values. At the school level, the integration of Islamic studies into general education has been expanded through policies that blend religious and secular knowledge. The establishment of Islamic secondary schools and tahfiz institutions underscores the government's efforts to develop an education system aligned with Islamic teachings. Additionally, tertiary institutions have introduced Islamic perspectives in various disciplines, including science, law, and economics, aiming to produce professionals guided by ethical and religious principles. Beyond traditional education, al-Faruqi's influence extends to professional fields such as public health, where Islamic values have been incorporated into medical ethics and healthcare training. However, the implementation of IoK faces challenges, particularly criticisms that non-Western frameworks may not align with global academic standards or local funding priorities. Furthermore, the increasing influence of Western educational models, market-driven policies, and accreditation demands has led to debates over whether the Islamization agenda is being diluted. This paper explores the extent to which al-Faruqi's IoK principles continue to shape Malaysia's education system amidst these evolving challenges. It argues that while efforts to integrate Islamic values persist, there is a need for continuous dialogue to balance Islamic epistemology with modern educational demands, ensuring that knowledge remains both relevant and rooted in ethical and spiritual foundations.*

Keywords: *Dualism, Integration, Islamization, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Secularism.*

Abstrak: Visi Ismail Raji al-Faruqi tentang islamisasi ilmu pengetahuan (IoK) telah

* Corresponding Author

memberikan pengaruh besar terhadap sistem pendidikan di Malaysia, membentuk kebijakan serta pendekatan pedagogis. Keterlibatannya dengan cendekiawan dan tokoh politik Malaysia, seperti Syed Naquib al-Attas, Anwar Ibrahim, dan Mahathir Mohamad, berkontribusi dalam integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam pendidikan nasional. Hal ini tercermin dalam falsafah pendidikan kebangsaan yang menekankan perkembangan holistik berlandaskan nilai Islam. Di tingkat sekolah, pendidikan Islam diperkuat dengan mengintegrasikan ilmu agama dan sekuler, termasuk melalui sekolah menengah Islam dan institusi tahfiz. Di perguruan tinggi, perspektif Islam diterapkan dalam berbagai disiplin ilmu, seperti sains, hukum, dan ekonomi, guna mencetak profesional yang berlandaskan etika Islam. Selain itu, dalam bidang kesehatan, prinsip Islam mulai diterapkan dalam pelatihan tenaga medis dan etika kesehatan masyarakat. Namun, upaya islamisasi pendidikan menghadapi tantangan. Kritik utama adalah bahwa kurikulum berbasis Islam dianggap kurang sesuai dengan standar akademik global dan tuntutan pasar tenaga kerja. Selain itu, meningkatnya pengaruh model pendidikan Barat dan kebijakan berbasis pasar menimbulkan perdebatan mengenai masa depan IoK. Pemerintah dan akademisi menghadapi dilema dalam menjaga keseimbangan antara integrasi Islam dan standar pendidikan modern. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi sejauh mana prinsip IoK al-Faruqi masih membentuk pendidikan Malaysia di tengah perubahan zaman. Meskipun upaya Islamisasi tetap berjalan, diperlukan strategi yang lebih adaptif dan dialog yang berkelanjutan untuk memastikan bahwa sistem pendidikan tidak hanya relevan secara global, tetapi juga tetap berakar pada nilai-nilai Islam yang kuat.

Kata-kata Kunci: *Dualisme, Integrasi, Islamisasi, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Secularism.*

Introduction

The process of Islamization began with the Prophet Muhammad Saw., after he received revelation and was appointed as a messenger. He was tasked with spreading Islam to all people, regardless of their race or background. During the reign of Caliph Umar, Islam expanded significantly, reaching nearly two-thirds of the world. The growth of Islam in various fields such as science, ethics, politics, and society progressed steadily until it peaked during the Abbasid era under Caliph al-Ma'mūn. However, this civilization declined after the Mongol invasion led by Hulagu Khan, which devastated Baghdad, destroying libraries and burning many original works of Islamic scholars on a large scale (Saputra, Zulmuqim, and Masyudi 2023, 575–87).

The glory of this great Islamic civilization should be the basic knowledge of the current generation of young people. According to Al-Faruqi, the country's education system should cover the subject of Islamic philosophy and civilization to every generation, regardless of whether they are muslims or non-muslims. Islamic civilization that is not taught by Western civilization demonstrates injustice and discrimination against truth (Faruqi 1989, 152).

Westernization has accelerated since the Middle Ages, encouraging a progressive and modern manner of life. This knowledge frequently relies on logic and atheism, leaving many muslims confused about the fundamental nature of knowledge itself (Iqbal 2013, 277). For example,

traditional Islamic beliefs began to conflict with modern education, which frequently prioritizes secular knowledge above religious understanding. This established a duality in the educational system.

Unintentionally, a duality in education has emerged inside muslim society, and this Western influence has had a severe impact on the *ummah*. The division of these two systems has resulted in students acquiring fragmented knowledge. Those studying Islamic courses may not connect with modern scientific notions, whereas those at secular schools may lack a foundation in religious teachings (Muhammed-Lawal, 2019). It is critical that we do not overlook modern knowledge while working towards Islamization. That's why the author favors al-Faruqi's approach to Islamization, which can benefit everyone, particularly muslims (Azizah and Sahri 2024, 296–306).

There are various initiatives aimed at integrating Islamic teachings with modern education. This includes the development of Ulul-albab Science Schools in Malaysia, which emphasize memorizing the Qur'an while also teaching scientific disciplines. These schools aim to provide a balanced educational atmosphere that incorporates both religious and secular knowledge. Other initiatives include the establishment of the International Islamic University, Islamic banking, and various organizations that address muslim issues. Despite these efforts, significant gaps remain in the Islamization process. For example, students at Ulul-albab Science Schools generally lack exposure to broader aspects of Islamic culture, and Islamic studies are insufficiently integrated with Western scientific subjects. This shows that, while structures exist, they may not be successful in connecting the two knowledge systems. The absence of contact between religious professors and those teaching secular courses disrupts the integration of Islamic concepts into modern education, thereby impeding overall Islamization efforts (Subirin et al. 2018, 1022–32).

Therefore, the goal of this study is to use bilateral dialogue sessions to promote an open attitude. Its specific goal is to encourage efforts to incorporate Islamic ideas into the pursuit of knowledge by facilitating conversations among educators about Islamic civilization and philosophy. Furthermore, the results of this study can be used to encourage open dialogue on a variety of media channels. By revealing the contemporary relevance of this discussion, this study aims to support ongoing efforts to harmonize knowledge by integrating Islamic perspectives with modern intellectual discussion. To ensure that all opinions are heard and appreciated in the quest for knowledge and understanding, these discussions must be based on the values of justice, harmony, humanity, and shared prosperity.

Brief Biography of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi was born in 1921 in Jaffa, Palestine. His father, Abdul Huda al Faruqi, was a Qadi in the district. He obtained his fundamental religious lessons from his father, as well as the outcomes of his studies at the nearby mosques. From 1926 to 1939, he attended primary school at the College des Frères in Lebanon, where French was the primary language of teaching. In 1941, al-Faruqi completed his studies at the American University of Beirut, securing a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy. At the age of 24, he was appointed by British colonists as Governor of Galilee from 1945 to 1947 (Yusuf 2022, 37–41).

He emigrated to the United States in 1948, shortly after Israel colonized the Galilee areas. He began to pursue academic studies, focusing on religious and scholarly issues. This inspired him to expand his knowledge. Later, he attended Indiana University and earned a Master of Arts degree in philosophy (Suhaimi 2016, 131–40). Two years later, he received his second master's degree in philosophy from Harvard University. In 1952, al-Faruqi obtained his Ph.D. from Indiana University. His dissertation is titled *On Justifying God: Metaphysics and Epistemology of Value*. However, the findings were not sufficient, so he moved to Egypt and studied Islamic sciences for four years at al-Azhar University (Yusuf 2022, 37–41; Abdurrahmansyah 2002, 144).

Due to his intense intellectual enthusiasm, al-Faruqi began his academic career in 1958–1961 as a visiting lecturer in Islamic studies at McGill University in Canada. To broaden and enhance his understanding, he also studied Judaism and Christianity (Septiana 2020, 20–34). He worked with the Institute for Islamic Research in Karachi from 1961 until 1966. He did, however, relocate to the United States in 1966–1968 to serve as the Rector of Religious Studies at the Chicago Faculty of Islamic Religion. He founded the Institute's Centre for Islamic Studies and became a professor at Temple University, Philadelphia, in 1968. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and his wife were murdered in their home in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, on 27 May 1986 by an African American convert to Islam named Joseph Louis Young, also known as Yusuf Ali (Yusuf 2022, 37–41).

Thus, in 1993, the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), located in Washington, DC, presented a prize for al-Faruqi's scholarly contributions in his honor (Rachman 2020, 154–70). Al-Faruqi produced a lot of scientific work. He wrote frequently to express his thoughts on his academic anxieties. His scientific writings cover topics such as science, modernism, Islamic global issues, and the Islamization of science. The works of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi are documented in 25 book titles and at least 100 articles. His works include the following: *Christian Ethics*, *Atlas of Islamic Culture and Civilization*, *Ushul al-Syhyuniyah fi alDin al-Yahudi*, *Historical Atlas of Religion of the World*, *Trealogue of Abraham*

Faith, Cultural Atlas of Islam, Tauhid: What It Means for Life and Thought, Islamization of Workplan and General Knowledge Principles, Islamic and Culture, Urubah and Religions, On Arabism, and An Analysis of the Dominant Ideas of Arabism and Islam as its Highest Moment of Consciousness.

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi's Doubt about Modern Education in "Islamization of Knowledge- General Principles and Work Plan"

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi was concerned about modern education because he believed that current Western educational institutions were fundamentally incompatible with Islamic norms and principles. This concern has been discussed with other academics such as Zuhdiyyah (2016, 292–313), Sholehuddin (2010, 203–14), and Sulaiman (2020, 96–110). Each of the authors engages with the concept of Islamization of knowledge, considering its implications and challenges within modern educational contexts.

Zuhdiyyah (2016, 292–313) discusses the history of the concept of Islamization of al-Faruqi, and concludes that, first, the intellectual crisis about epistemological issues and the decline in scientific value that afflicted muslim nations. Second, his biography demonstrates that he was educated in a blend of Western and Islamic methods. The third is al-Faruqi's romanticism regarding the prosperity of Islam in Baitul Hikmah during the Abbasian era, when it was the site of numerous foreign civilizations that were studied and spread. During al-Faruqi's lifetime, the West exerted a significant influence on the Islamic world, particularly in the fields of contemporary science and technology. He is among those who still accept Western civilization while wishing to change and add value to the knowledge inherent in it (Sholehuddin 2010, 203–14).

Undoubtedly, muslims' intellectual and methodological deterioration is caused by the *ummah's* inability to master their educational system. A poor education system is a breeding ground for disease. Schools and institutions followed a Western structure that was distinct from Islam and its legacy. They are created with Western caricatures. They are exiled between Islam and modernity. The curriculum that was created was secular, with funding provided by the government that constituted; additionally, this secularization was promoted in the name of racial nationalism and regional patriotism (Faruqi 1989, 152). If Islamic ethics are not lived and practiced in the lives of the *ummah*, there will be a moral deterioration among them. People will start looking for other sources of moral reference from Islam. This situation will cause the dualism of the education system, namely Islamic Education and Ethical Education from the West, which is not associated with religion (Sholehuddin 2010, 203–14).

The decline of muslims continues to increase, and the *ummah* begins to retreat. The *ummah* is getting more and more stupid, ignorant, fanatical,

and irrational. They began to abandon the source of creativity. At that time, the *ummah* began to be amazed by the progress of the West. They are tempted by western progress so that some *ummah* want reform by westernization, and it turns out that the path taken can destroy the muslim *ummah* itself (Sholehuddin 2010, 203–14).

The lack of an Islamic vision among educators and students has led to a serious intellectual and spiritual crisis in muslim education. Al-Faruqi (1989, 152) viewed this as one of the greatest challenges facing the *ummah*, arguing that many muslim-majority countries had adopted Western models of education without critically assessing their impact. As a result, students often find themselves disconnected from their Islamic worldview, struggling to reconcile their faith with modern knowledge. This detachment creates confusion, leaving them without a strong intellectual foundation to engage with contemporary issues through an Islamic lens. Rather than integrating Islam into their fields of study, many either passively accept Western ideologies or reject them outright. Both approaches, according to al-Faruqi, are problematic because they prevent the development of a balanced and comprehensive Islamic intellectual tradition.

Another concern that al-Faruqi highlighted was the motivation behind education. He observed that many muslim students pursued higher learning not to seek wisdom (*hikmah*) or contribute to the *ummah*, but rather for personal success, wealth, and social status. Education has become a means to secure a career rather than a path to intellectual and spiritual growth. This, he argued, resulted in a generation of scholars who, despite being highly educated, could not critically engage with knowledge from an Islamic perspective. Many remained dependent on Western intellectual frameworks, unable to develop original, Islamically grounded responses to contemporary challenges. This dependency, in Al-Faruqi's view, was a continuation of the colonial legacy that kept muslim societies intellectually subordinated.

He was also deeply troubled by the secularization of knowledge. In many universities across the muslim world, Islamic epistemology was either marginalized or entirely excluded from the curriculum. This led to an education system that was detached from divine guidance, producing graduates who were well-versed in their respective disciplines but lacked a moral and ethical foundation. Al-Faruqi warned that such an approach to knowledge created a widening gap between modern sciences and Islamic values, which in turn weakened the intellectual strength of the *ummah*. He believed that true progress could only be achieved when knowledge was pursued with an awareness of its ethical and spiritual dimensions, rather than as a purely technical or economic endeavor.

To address these issues, al-Faruqi proposed the Islamization of knowledge as a comprehensive reform strategy. This did not mean

rejecting modern disciplines but rather reinterpreting and integrating them within an Islamic worldview. He called for an education system that would not only impart technical knowledge but also cultivate moral responsibility, critical thinking, and intellectual independence among students. By doing so, muslims would no longer be passive consumers of Western thought but active contributors to global knowledge from an Islamic perspective.

Ultimately, al-Faruqi saw the absence of vision in education as a crisis that threatened the muslim identity itself. Without a clear intellectual direction, future generations would be unable to engage with modern challenges in a meaningful way. He called for a revival of Islamic education—one that would nurture both faith and reason, ensuring that knowledge was pursued not just for personal success, but as a means of serving humanity and upholding Islamic values.

Al-Faruqi claimed that only Islam could solve the issues of the muslim *ummah* and the entire world. Every desired change must be proactive and integral to human life on a global scale. The approach employed is the “sociographic pedagogy analysis”, which is a community education that has been analyzed to attain the aspiration. He seeks to re-establish the Islamic vision in education through the theory of “holistic idealization of theoretical perspective,” which focuses on generating an ideal society (Sholehuddin 2010, 203–14). Therefore, Zuhdiyyah (2016, 292–313) considers al-Faruqi as a muslim revivalist; a group that is not just Islamizing western knowledge but more about the process of *tajdīd* and *iṣlāḥ*.

According to Bigliardi (2012, 501–19) in “*Barbour’s Typologies and The Contemporary Debate on Islam and Science*,” the Islamization of al-Faruqi is considered the earliest and most important stage in the reconstruction of the Islamic Community. It is a crucial step in Islamic society and serves as the foundation for a broader Islamization process that aims to restore the centralization of Islam in all areas of life, including intellectual property. At the same time, relations with Islamic universities should be established.

Integration of religion and science does not imply removing identity from each other’s knowledge; rather, if it is founded on monotheism, consciousness will emerge via a comprehensive, harmonious, and holistic paradigm. At the same time, it has positive consequences in the field of education; instructors will be more creative with new ideas, more optimistic, and establish a mutually respectful attitude (Sulaiman 2020, 96–110). He also added that *sunnatullah* and *dīnullāh* should not be in conflict because they both come from the same source. Disagreements arise from a misinterpretation of texts or a divergence from scientific fact. If this integration is not carried out, the inheritance of science will decline; on the contrary, science without a religious base is the source

of misuse of science, resulting in the ruin of the *ummah*. As a result, the combination of religion and learning from a young age must be instantly acclimated by applying it to every level of education as the major support for human regeneration (Sulaiman 2020, 96–110).

Islamization Framework by Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi

Ismail Faruqi has come up with fresh ideas and philosophies of thought, expressing a comprehensive reform *fiqrah*. His concept was able to restore the tradition of *'aqliyyah* and a rational understanding of Islam, earning him the title “a man of two worlds: west and east, intelligently at ease in both but at peace with neither” (Rashid and Amir 2012, 27–32).

The main purpose of al-Faruqi's Islamization is to eliminate dualism in the education system. Several principles need to be compiled in order to form the framework of Islamic thought and methodology. His basic principle is tawhid. The knowledge must also be sourced from the Qur'an and hadith. In conclusion, al-Faruqi compiled the principles that should be present in the *ummah*, namely (1) the oneness of Allah, (2) the unity of creation, (3) the unity of truth, (4) the unity of knowledge, (5) the unity of the truth of life, and (6) the unity of humanity (Faruqi 1989, 152).

According to Saputra, Zulmuqim, and Masyudi (2023, 575–87), based on these principles, al-Faruqi has outlined 12 work steps with 5 objectives:

1. Mastery of modern science disciplines.
2. Mastery of Islamic heritage treasures.
3. Building the relevance of Islam to each of the modern disciplines.
4. Creatively combining the values and treasures of Islamic heritage with modern sciences.
5. Directing the Islamic school of thought to the paths that reach the pattern of Allah's plan.

The 12 steps that must be taken for the process of Islamization of this science are:

1. Mastery of modern disciplines.
2. Discipline surveys.
3. Mastery over Islamic treasures.
4. Mastery of the analysis of Islamic treasures.
5. Determination of the relationship between modern science and Islamic treasures.
6. Critical assessment of modern discipline.
7. Critical assessment of Islamic treasures.
8. Survey on the problems of muslims.
9. Survey on the problems of human beings.

10. Creative analysis and synthesis.
11. Reformulating disciplines within the Islamic framework.
12. The spread of science that has been Islamized.

The principles and concepts of al-Faruqi's Islamization offer a holistic approach that prioritizes the well-being of all humanity, particularly muslims. These principles promote collaboration across various fields, fostering values such as tolerance, non-discrimination, openness, and fairness. Additionally, during the peak of Islamic civilization in the Abbasid era under Caliph al-Ma'mūn, there was a remarkable culture of knowledge expansion. Muslim scholars at the House of Wisdom (Baitul Hikmah) translated works from diverse civilizations into Arabic, significantly enriching the intellectual landscape of the time.

Critiques and Views of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's Concepts

The effort and idea of Islamization of science has caused a controversial debate among muslims. Since it was reserved about 40 years ago, various attitudes have emerged. Some are enthusiastic and optimistic about this Islamization, and some behave and consider this Islamization to be only a momentary euphoria, just an action for the inferiority complex because Islam is lagging behind Western civilization (Khoiron 2022, 77–88).

According to Agustini and Sofa (2024, 363–70), the difference of opinion between al-Faruqi and Nasr lies in their approach to integrating science and religion. Al-Faruqi's approach is to integrate science and religion, while Nasr's approach is more to rediscover the roots of Islamic epistemology in modern science, emphasizing the importance of understanding science in the context of spirituality and Islamic beliefs so that science can strengthen muslims' confidence and faith (Nasr 2022, 227).

Bistara (2020, 113–17) argued that Western science frequently prioritizes values over empirical data and rationality. In contrast, Islamic science regards the pursuit of knowledge as an exploration of Allah's power in the universe. Modern science also makes an important contribution to unravelling the mysteries of the universe. Nasr's reaction to the epistemic issues presented by Western scientific education is especially notable.

According to Taufik and Yasir (2017, 109–23), Nasr takes a sufi perspective, pushing for a concept of science that combines both intellectual inquiry and spiritual awareness. He claimed that al Faruqi's proposed integration is not only possible, but also necessary. They have similar ideas on Islamization and the integration of science and religion. They agreed that modern science is secular, and they both recreated Islam's true epistemology. The only distinction is their separate approaches (Khoiron 2022, 77–88). However, Nasr's approach is limited in terms of quantity (Bistara 2020, 113–17), whereas Faruqi's Islamization

framework enriches Nasr's notion of thought through a holistic and comprehensive work.

According to Daud (1998, 507), Syed Naquib al-Attas was the first to introduce the "Islamization of modern science" and the original pioneer of the concept of Islamization of science. Al-Faruqi benefited a lot from al-Attas's writings, particularly his ideas on *adab*, the concept of *kulliyah*, *jāmi'ah*, the nature of dualism, the hegemony of science, and modern secular challenges. His efforts in the Islamization of science were significantly influenced by his engagement with al-Attas's ideas through extensive discussions and readings that addressed the confusion among muslims stemming from secularization and alienation from their heritage. For instance, in his work *Islam and Culture*, al-Faruqi illustrates the impact of al-Attas on his thought (Daud 1998, 507). This demonstrates that al-Faruqi's approach to Islamization was fundamentally shaped by Al-Attas's insights, leading to the development of a movement aimed at reconciling Islamic teachings with contemporary scientific understanding.

According to Saputra, Zulmuqim, and Masyudi (2023, 575–87), al-Faruqi's methodology is often seen as too complex and hard to understand. While his work is detailed, it is still unclear how to put it into practice. They suggest that the process of Islamization should focus more on a holistic approach that includes both spiritual and intellectual aspects in understanding science. Al-Faruqi believes that Islamization involves not just adding Islamic principles to science, but also freeing people from traditions that go against Islamic teachings. He is criticized for concentrating too much on adapting Western social sciences, which he views as secular and lacking Islamic values (Taufik and Yasir 2017, 109–23). To make the Islamization of knowledge successful, the focus should first be on the individual. Al-Attas argues that purifying the soul and developing moral character should come first before combining modern science with Islamic principles, which al-Faruqi tends to ignore.

Ziauddin Sardar is a prominent thinker and writer in Islamic scholarship and modern science, known for his critical analysis of al-Faruqi's ideas (Putawa 2024, 1–15). He emphasizes the complexity of knowledge in what he terms "post-normal times," arguing that modern science is not neutral; rather, it is shaped by the perceptions, ideologies, and paradigms of Western society. Sardar warns that if al-Faruqi attempts to Islamize Western science, it risks becoming a form of Westernization of Islam, where Western values and thought structures remain dominant (Putawa 2024, 1–15). Sardar critiques al-Faruqi's approach as insignificant, pointing out that it often relies on bold claims without a solid methodological framework for applying changes in scientific fields. This dependence on Western methods poses risks for muslims, who may continue to rely on secular approaches (Wiwaha 2018, 70–79).

Additionally, Sardar challenges al-Faruqi's idea of the unity of truth

and science, arguing that not all knowledge pursued is inherently truthful. For instance, the pursuit of knowledge for destructive purposes—such as developing anthrax or nuclear weapons—should not be considered a legitimate search for truth (Muslih 2017, 133). However, Sardar proposes that the Islamization of science must be grounded in Islamic epistemology. He advocates for the development of contemporary Islamic knowledge, termed “Islamic science,” which should be based solely on Islamic values. This epistemology can be achieved through two paradigms: the paradigm of knowledge and the paradigm of behavior, both derived from the Qur’an and the Sunnah (Taufik and Yasir 2017, 109–23).

In contrast, Fazlur Rahman emphasizes the importance of shaping students’ personalities with Islamic values in both personal and social contexts in his work, *Islam and Modernity*. He inspires muslim students to pursue higher education grounded in these values. Rahman famously asserts that science is a tool whose ethical implications depend on how it is used (Singh 2012, 344). While he views Islamization primarily in terms of “responsibility,” al-Attas argues that it should encompass not only moral aspects but also metaphysical dimensions that subsequently influence epistemology (Saifuddin and Karomi 2023, 242–62).

According to Adebayo (2018, 125–30) and Ali (2011, 89–116), some critics argue that the Islamization of knowledge merely involves producing textbooks for students and does not genuinely contribute to the advancement of Islam. There are concerns that this Islamization could weaken the Islamic movement and that it may serve as a purely political agenda. Notably, Abdul Salam, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist, asserts that there is only one universal science and that concepts such as “Islamic science” are not valid, like the absence of Hindu, Jewish, or Christian science. Bassam Tibi views Islamization as a form of indigenization or privatization closely linked to the cultural strategies of Islamic fundamentalism. Abdul Karim further argues that the Islamization of science is both illogical and impossible, while Usep Fahrudin describes it as lacking creativity, likening it to plagiarism or the appropriation of others’ work.

Following these critiques, Adebayo (2018, 125–30) notes that the early scholars’ criticism of Islamization has unintentionally slowed down its progress. Khoiron (2022, 77–88) emphasizes that Islamization is a challenging endeavor that requires the involvement of various elements and the ability to overcome obstacles such as linguistic, racial, socio-economic, gender, and religious barriers. This task is far more complex than mere labelling or superficial efforts.

Despite these criticisms, all contributors have played a role in shaping the discourse on the Islamization of knowledge, which has gained recognition at the institutional level (Daud 1998, 507). For instance, DS Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia’s 10th Prime Minister, likens the differing

opinions on Islamization among figures like al-Faruqi and al-Attas to the diverse paths leading to Baitul Haram in Makkah, where many routes exist but ultimately converge at the Kaaba (Amir and Rahman 2022, 65–80).

In summary, while there are significant critiques regarding the concept of Islamization, ranging from concerns about its authenticity and effectiveness to its potential political motivations, there remains a collective acknowledgment of its importance in contemporary discourse. The ongoing dialogue reflects a rich tapestry of perspectives aimed at navigating the complexities of integrating Islamic values within modern knowledge systems.

Relevance of Islamization in the Educational Framework in Malaysia

Al-Faruqi's connection with the muslim community in Malaysia began in the 1960s when he engaged in discussions with Syed Naquib al-Attas at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. This marked the start of his involvement with the Islamic community, which had previously been limited to religious teachings in madrassas and mosques (Nor 2011, 59–78; Abdullah 1997, 394). His influence grew in the 1970s after attending the ABIM (Malaysian Islamic Youth Force) congress, invited by Anwar Ibrahim, who later became Malaysia's 10th Prime Minister. At this event, al-Faruqi shared his ideas and encouraged ABIM to advise the government and participate in politics to promote Islamization and Islamic values (Arni 2023, 89). This emphasis on Islamization in education and governance has persisted over the years, reflected in Malaysia's expanding Islamic curriculum and the establishment of religious-focused schools such as Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA).

In 1984, al-Faruqi participated in a conference organized by the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), attended by then-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. This meeting led Mahathir to adopt policies that integrated Islamic values into governance, including introducing Islamic banking and enhancing the role of sharia courts. Hamid and Ismail (2014, 159–80) note that Mahathir's initiatives aimed to Islamize the country through various projects, including establishing educational institutions like IIUM. This aligns with the more recent trends of incorporating Islamic perspectives into Malaysia's education system, particularly through increased Arabization, the strengthening of Islamic studies in national schools, and a greater focus on aligning knowledge with Islamic ethical frameworks (Hamid 2018, 745–61).

According to Rahman et al. (2018, 28–42), al-Faruqi is recognized as a key authority in contemporary Islamic thought, influencing policymaking among Malaysian leaders. His ideas significantly impacted education through figures like Mahathir, Musa Hitam, and Anwar Ibrahim. Al-Faruqi's thoughts helped shape the Malaysian National Education

Philosophy, which emphasizes comprehensive individual development based on belief in God. This philosophy underpins Malaysia's education system and has led to integrated curricula at primary and secondary levels that combine various disciplines with Islamic values (Noordin 1990, 253; Nordin and Rahman 2023, 14–28).

The expansion of Islamic education, evident in national schools and universities, reflects a continuation of this vision. In IIUM, an inclusive education is being promoted as open and universal education. Islamic higher education no longer limits the study program to religious science, but also to the general science, including omitting the terms and designations of religious and general science (Hidayaturrahman et al. 2021, 55–66).

The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) plays a crucial role in advancing the Islamization and integration of knowledge across its academic programs. The Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS), inspired by Abu Sulaiman, the second president of IIIT, is deeply rooted in Ismail al-Faruqi's intellectual framework. The faculty offers 38 major courses, including 14 conducted in Arabic, along with optional service courses and compulsory subjects. These courses aim to merge religious and social sciences to produce professionals who can fulfill the vision of Islam (Hidayaturrahman et al. 2021, 55–66).

Under the leadership of Kamal Hassan, the third Rector of IIUM, the university has focused on integrating heritage with modern knowledge through concepts such as *iṣlāḥ* (reform), *tajdīd* (renewal), *iḥyā'* (revitalization), *taḥdīth* (organization), and *takāmul ma'rifi* (integration). More recently, efforts to Islamize knowledge have expanded into science and medical education, reinforcing the trend of integrating Islamic perspectives even in traditionally secular fields (Amir 2023, 1–12).

For example, the Faculty of Laws integrates both "human law" and "revealed law," providing students with a comparative understanding of legal systems. Postgraduate students are also encouraged to study law from a comparative perspective, bridging the gap between secular and Islamic legal traditions. IIUM also plays a key role in training scholars in both Shariah and civil law, fostering an approach that seeks to harmonize these legal frameworks for a more cohesive and just system (Hanafi, 2021, 101–35).

Beyond legal studies, IIUM promotes Islamization through its specialized institutes, including the Institute of Halal Research and Training (INHART), the Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance (IiIBF), and the International Institute of Islamic Civilization and Malay World (ISTAC), as well as the Centre for Islamic Economics. These institutions function both independently and collaboratively to ensure an interdisciplinary approach that aligns academic disciplines with Islamic

values (Hanafi 2021, 101–35).

One key initiative is allowing science students to minor in Halal Studies, which combines Islamic legal principles with food management—a significant area in Malaysia due to the importance of halal certification. However, in 1996, the focus on the Islamization of Knowledge (IoK) was reduced, as market demands and higher education accreditation requirements shifted priorities toward credit-based specialization rather than interdisciplinary integration (Hanafi 2021, 101–35).

Despite these challenges, IIUM continues to integrate Islamic teachings into its educational framework. For instance, muslim students in KIRKHS must take *tilāwah al-Qur’ān* (Qur’anic recitation) classes and participate in *halaqa* (Islamic study circles) or *tahfīz* (Qur’an memorization) as part of their co-curricular activities. Meanwhile, non-muslim students take a dialogue-based course in place of these subjects (Hanafi 2021, 101–35).

Additionally, IIUM promotes the concept of *usrah* (*halaqa*), which provides informal Islamic study circles in the mosque. Since 2016, this initiative has expanded to include not only students but also non-academic muslim staff and campus residents in *maḥallah* (hostels). Research by Abdullah, Dollah, and Marusin (2017, 6) highlights the positive impact of *Usra* in fostering a sense of community among IIUM’s students, faculty, and staff (Hanafi 2021, 101–35).

Efforts to Islamize Malaysia’s education extend beyond the university level to include health practitioners as well. The Public Health (PH) curriculum in Malaysia has been restructured to incorporate Islamic principles, aiming to align medical education with ethical and spiritual values. However, some critics argue that non-Western syllabi may not fully address local realities or public funding priorities. Additionally, the implementation of Islamization in medical education, particularly in clinical and public health settings, remains understudied and requires further research (Yunus, Hasan, and Esa 2021, 43–55).

The Malaysian muslim community and government have absorbed twelve frameworks from al-Faruqi’s ideas for Islamizing science, summarized into four steps: first, correcting facts based on Islam; second, incorporating Islamic views; third, fostering harmony with Islamic heritage; and fourth, integrating science within a monotheistic paradigm (Arni 2023, 89). While these efforts have shown limited success so far, they align with contemporary educational policies that reinforce Islamic identity in Malaysia. The continued establishment of Islamic schools, the reinforcement of Islamic values in national education policies, and the development of integrated curricula all indicate that Malaysia’s education system is leaning toward Islamization rather than Westernization. However, the presence of Western educational influences, particularly in higher education institutions, suggests an ongoing duality that requires further study and strategic alignment. Ongoing support from current and

future generations is essential for mobilizing these Islamization efforts.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the idea of Islamization of knowledge as proposed by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, with a special focus on how it relates to the field of education. Al-Faruqi believed that knowledge should be rooted in the Islamic worldview, guided by the principle of *tawhid* (the oneness of God). He called for an education system that doesn't just borrow from Western models but is built upon Islamic foundations. In the Malaysian context, the concept of Islamization is not entirely new. It has been practiced in various ways, especially in Islamic higher education. However, the implementation is often not fully aligned with the original vision of al-Faruqi. There's still a need for a more holistic approach that goes beyond simply adding Islamic content to existing subjects.

To truly reflect al-Faruqi's vision, the integration of Islamic and modern knowledge must be done thoughtfully and thoroughly. This involves not only curriculum design but also nurturing students and educators who are spiritually grounded, ethically aware, and intellectually strong. Moving forward, Islamic educational institutions—especially at the tertiary level—should continue developing frameworks and strategies that reflect the balance between faith and reason. This approach will not only strengthen the identity of muslim learners but also contribute to producing graduates who are capable of facing modern challenges with confidence and wisdom.

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, Abdul Rahman Haji. 1997. *Pemikiran Islam di Malaysia*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press.
- Abdullah, Nik Md Saiful Azizi Nik, Hj Hanafi Dollah, and Awang Abdul Muizz Awang Marusin. 2017. "Development of Students' Character through Usrah Education as Lifelong Learning: Case Study in the International Islamic University Malaysia." Conference presented at the International Conference on Lifelong Learning for Islamic Education (ICLLIE) 2017, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan.
- Abdurrahmansyah. 2002. *Sintesis Kreatif: Pembaruan Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam Isma'il Raji' Al-Faruqi*. Yogyakarta: Global Pustaka Utama.
- Adebayo, Rafiu Ibrahim. 2018. "The History and Philosophy of Islamization of Knowledge: A Preliminary Study of Pioneers' Thought." *Indonesian Journal of Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (IJIS)* 2 (1): 125–30. <https://doi.org/10.20885/ijiis/vol2.iss1.art6>.
- Agustini, Afifah, and Ainur Rofiq Sofa. 2024. "Integrasi Islam dan Sains dalam Pemikiran Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Al-Ghazali, dan Ibnu Khaldun: Pendekatan Iman, Islam, dan Ihsan Berdasarkan Al-Qur'an, Hadits, dan Qoul Ulama." *Jurnal Budi Pekerti Agama Islam* 2 (6): 363–85. <https://doi.org/10.61132/jbpai.v2i6.858>.
- Ali, Muhammad Mumtaz. 2011. "Issues in Muslim Liberal and Islamic Revivalist Thought: An Analysis of the Views of Watt and Sikand." *American Journal of Islam and Society* 28 (4): 89–116. <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v28i4.333>.
- Amir, Ahmad Nabil. 2023. "Islamization of Knowledge in Historical Perspective." *Tarikhuna: Journal of History and History Education* 5 (1): 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.15548/thje.v5i1.5871>.
- Amir, Ahmad Nabil, and Tasnim Abdul Rahman. 2022. "Education in the Al-Faruqi's Perspective and Its Implementation in the Context of the Islamization of Knowledge." *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education* 5 (1): 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.21093/sajie.v5i1.5475>.
- Arni, Arni. 2023. "Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (Pengaruhnya Terhadap Islamisasi Sains di Malaysia Tahun 1921-1986 M)." Skripsi, Makassar: Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar. <https://repositori.uin-alauddin.ac.id/27247/>.
- Azizah, Nur Amalina Wafi', and Ikhsan Kamil Sahri. 2024. "Konsep

- Teologi Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi." *DIAJAR: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 3 (3): 296–306. <https://doi.org/10.54259/diajar.v3i3.2656>.
- Bigliardi, Stefano. 2012. "Barbour's Typologies and the Contemporary Debate on Islam and Science." *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 47 (3): 501–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9744.2012.01269.x>.
- Bistara, Raha. 2020. "Islam dan Sains Menurut Sayyid Nasr Nasr." *Prosiding Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam dan Sains* 2 (March): 113–17.
- Daud, Wan Mohd Nor Wan. 1998. *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.
- Faruqi, Ismail Raji al-. 1989. *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*. Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Hamid, Ahmad Fauzi Abdul. 2018. "Islamic Education in Malaysia." In *Handbook of Islamic Education*, edited by Holger Daun and Reza Arjmand, 745–61. Switzerland: Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64683-1_27.
- Hamid, Ahmad Fauzi Abdul, and Muhamad Takiyuddin Ismail. 2014. "Islamist Conservatism and the Demise of Islam Hadhari in Malaysia." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 25 (2): 159–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2014.880549>.
- Hanafi, Sari. 2021. "From Streamlining to Mainstreaming 'Islamization of Knowledge': The Case of the International Islamic University of Malaysia." *American Journal of Islam and Society* 38 (1–2): 101–35. <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v38i1-2.1086>.
- Hidayaturrahman, Mohammad, Sudarman Sudarman, Husamah Husamah, and Ita Rahmania Kusumawati. 2021. "Integrating Science and Religion at Malaysian and Indonesian Higher Education." *Al-Ta Lim Journal* 28 (1): 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.15548/jt.v28i1.658>.
- Iqbal, M. 2013. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. California: Stanford University Press.
- Khoiron, Alvin. 2022. "Diskursus Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan dalam Pemikiran Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi dan Para Pengkajinya." *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 7 (1): 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajip.v7i1.1828>.
- Muhammed-Lawal, Adam Adesina. 2019. "An Analysis of the Effects of

Secularism and Dualism towards Islamic Education.” In *International Conference on Quran as Foundation of Civilisation (SWAT)*. Malaysia: Penerbit USIM, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia. <https://oarep.usim.edu.my/handle/123456789/16807>.

Muslih. 2017. “Kritik Ziauddin Sardar Terhadap Konsep Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi.” Skripsi, Yogyakarta: UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/27030/>.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. 2022. *Islam, Sains, dan Muslim: Pergulatan Spiritualitas dan Rasionalitas*. Translated by Muhammad Muhibbuddin. Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD.

Noordin, Tajul Ariffin. 1990. *Pendidikan Suatu Pemikiran Semula*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Nordin, Nurul Athirah, and Nur Farhana Abdul Rahman. 2023. “Islamisasi Ilmu dan Cabarannya Terhadap Pengajian Islam di Malaysia.” *International Journal of Religion, Arts, and Humanities (IJRAH)* 3: 14–28.

Nor, Mohd Roslan Mohd. 2011. “Sejarah dan Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam di Malaysia.” *At-Ta’dib* 6 (1): 59–78. <https://doi.org/10.21111/at-tadib.v6i1.547>.

Putawa, Rilliandi Arindra. 2024. “Islamization of Science: Ziauddin Sardar’s Critique of the Universality of Science.” *Dharmakirti: International Journal of Religion, Mind and Science* 1 (2): 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.61511/ijroms.v1i2.2024.291>.

Rachman, Poppy. 2020. “Implikasi Konsep Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi.” *HUMANISTIKA: Jurnal Keislaman* 6 (2): 154–70. <https://doi.org/10.55210/humanistika.v6i2.369>.

Rahman, Tasnim Abdul, Zuriati Mohd Rashid, Wan Sabri Wan Yusof, and Ahmad Nabil Amir. 2018. “Sumbangan Al-Faruqi dalam Pembaharuan dan Transformasi Islam di Malaysia.” *AL-QIYAM International Social Science and Humanities Journal* 1 (2): 28–42.

Rashid, Zuriati Mohd, and Ahmad Nabil Amir. 2012. “The Stature of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1921-1986).” *Islāmiyyāt* 34: 27–32.

Saifuddin, Ahmad Farid, and Kholid Karomi. 2023. “Analisis Respons Fazlur Rahman Terhadap Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan.” *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam* 21 (2): 241–62. <https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v21i2.12222>.

- Saputra, Dedek, Zulmuqim, and Fauza Masyudi. 2023. "Konseb Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Pada Studi Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Ismail Raji al Faruqi dan Syad Naquid al Attas Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan: Studi Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Ismail Raji al Faruqi dan Syad Naquid al Attas." *Journal of International Multidisciplinary Research* 1 (2): 575–87. <https://doi.org/10.62504/fb713c76>.
- Septiana, Nanda. 2020. "Kajian Terhadap Pemikiran Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi Tentang Islamisasi Sains." *JIE (Journal of Islamic Education)* 5 (1): 20–34.
- Singh, David Emmanuel. 2012. *Islamization in Modern South Asia: Deobandi Reform and the Gujjar Response*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.
- Sholehuddin, M. Sugeng. 2010. "Isma'il Raji Al-faruqi the Founding Father Islamisasi Pengetahuan." *Forum Tarbiyah* 8 (2): 203–14.
- Subirin, Nor Adzimah, Nor Hayati Alwi, Fathiyah Mohd Fakhruddin, Umi Kalthom Abdul Manaf, and Siti Suria Salim. 2018. "Ulul Albab Generation: Roles of Ulul Albab Teachers in Malaysian Selected School." *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 7 (14): 1022–32.
- Suhaimi, Suhaimi. 2016. "Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan (Telaah Kritis Pemikiran Ismail Raji al-Faruqi)." *Jurnal Al-Ulum* 2 (1): 1–9.
- Sulaiman, Muhammad. 2020. "Integrasi Agama Islam dan Ilmu Sains dalam Pembelajaran." *Pancawahana: Jurnal Studi Islam* 15 (1): 96–110.
- Taufik, Muhammad, and Muhammad Yasir. 2017. "Mengkritisi Konsep Islamisasi Ilmu Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi: Telaah Pemikiran Ziauddin Sardar." *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 25 (2): 109–23. <https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v25i2.3830>.
- Wiwaha, Kurnia Sari. 2018. "Epistimologi Paradigma Islam: (Studi Pemikiran Ziauddin Sardar)." *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama dan Lintas Budaya* 3 (1): 70–79. <https://doi.org/10.15575/rjsalb.v3i1.3673>.
- Yunus, Raudah Mohd, Md Mahmudul Hasan, and Nurul Yaqeen Mohd Esa. 2021. "Rethinking Public Health Pedagogy in Muslim Countries Postcolonially." *Bangladesh Journal of Integrated Thoughts* 17 (1): 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.52805/bjit.v17i1.190>.
- Yusuf, Imtiyaz. 2022. "Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi." In *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: Three.*, 2022–6:37–41. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. <https://brill.com/display/db/ei3o>.

Zuhdiyah, Zuhdiyah. 2016. "Islamisasi Ilmu Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi." *Tadrib* 2 (2): 293–313.