

Reconstructing Principles of Islamic Education in Qur'anic Exegesis and Their Application in Modern Education

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the fundamental principles of Islamic education as derived from Qur'anic exegesis and examines their application within contemporary educational contexts. Using a qualitative literature review approach, the research integrates classical Qur'anic interpretations with recent scholarship in Islamic and educational studies to construct a coherent conceptual framework. The analysis identifies four foundational principles *tawhīd* (divine unity), universality, balance (*wasathiyyah*), and *rahmah* (compassion) as central to the Islamic educational worldview. These principles operate simultaneously as epistemological foundations, ethical orientations, and pedagogical guidelines that connect spiritual consciousness, intellectual development, moral cultivation, and social responsibility. The findings demonstrate that when Qur'anic principles are thematically interpreted and systematically embedded within curriculum design and pedagogical practice, Islamic education offers a holistic and adaptive model capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges. This study contributes to the field by articulating an integrative framework that bridges classical Qur'anic foundations with modern educational demands, positioning Islamic education as a transformative and contextually relevant paradigm in plural and dynamic societies.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), the Education, Leisure, Culture, and Religion Cluster received 329 complaints in 2023, with the highest number involving bullying in educational institutions, followed by complaints related to school policies and the fulfillment of students' educational rights (KPAI, 2023). KPAI further warned that bullying in schools represents an "iceberg phenomenon," where many cases remain undisclosed, noting that at least 20 bullying incidents recorded in 2023 resulted in fatalities, underscoring the urgent need for educational approaches that strengthen not only academic achievement but also students' moral and character development (KPAI, 2024). Islamic education, as a comprehensive and multidimensional process, derives its primary foundations from the Qur'an, the central text of Islam. Unlike secular educational paradigms that separate knowledge from moral and spiritual dimensions, the Qur'an presents education as an integrated process of intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and social development. It provides not only religious guidance but also principles of learning, character formation, and human responsibility that remain relevant to educational theory and practice (Norlianti, Aliyah & Zainuri, 2023:206). Central to this vision is the Qur'anic command to seek knowledge and cultivate human potential. The first revelation, "Read in the name of your Lord who created," frames learning as an act oriented toward God, ethical purpose, and human excellence. Rather than emphasizing knowledge solely for practical outcomes, Islamic education integrates intellectual achievement with moral and spiritual formation, producing learners who are both intellectually competent and ethically grounded. Contemporary scholarship highlights the importance of aligning Islamic educational principles with modern educational needs while

preserving their Qur'anic foundations. The Qur'an provides normative guidance for curriculum development by integrating educational content with character formation. Studies on Ulumul Qur'an-based curriculum management demonstrate that embedding Qur'anic values into curriculum planning and evaluation strengthens students' character while preparing them to respond to contemporary challenges with ethical awareness (Susiyati et al., 2024:980). Likewise, research on Islamic education curriculum confirms that a Qur'an-based curriculum promotes both religious authenticity and social relevance, enabling learners to contribute meaningfully to society (Maulana, 2024:255–256).

The integration of Qur'anic values also requires pedagogical approaches that extend beyond rote learning toward reflective inquiry, ethical reasoning, and critical engagement. Evidence from curriculum implementation in Islamic schools indicates that intentional integration of Qur'anic values positively shapes students' attitudes, behaviour, and decision-making, demonstrating that *ta'dīb* (moral cultivation) is a central objective of Islamic education rather than a supplementary component (Suhertini et al., 2025:3003). Another essential dimension is the use of thematic and contextual interpretation (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*) to relate Qur'anic educational principles to contemporary issues. Research shows that thematic interpretation supports the development of curricula that remain faithful to revelation while responding effectively to present educational realities (Sadiah & Alim, 2025:56). Such an approach bridges timeless Qur'anic values with the evolving needs of modern education. The relevance of these principles is further reflected in addressing challenges such as intolerance, social fragmentation, and ethical uncertainty. By emphasizing justice (*'adl*), compassion (*rahmah*), and moderation, the Qur'an offers a foundation for inclusive education that nurtures learners who are knowledgeable, socially responsible, and ethically grounded (Hasan & Albab, 2024:598). Despite these advances, existing studies largely examine individual aspects of Islamic education, such as curriculum, pedagogy, or character development, without sufficiently integrating Qur'anic exegesis with contemporary educational practice. This gap underscores the need for a comprehensive framework that connects foundational Qur'anic interpretation with modern educational applications. Accordingly, this study examines the fundamental principles of Islamic education derived from Qur'anic exegesis and analyzes their application in contemporary educational contexts. By synthesizing findings on curriculum, pedagogy, and ethical formation, it proposes an integrated framework that preserves the Qur'an's educational vision while responding to present educational challenges, positioning Islamic education as a dynamic and transformative paradigm for developing spiritually enlightened, ethically grounded, intellectually capable, and socially responsible individuals.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative literature review methodology (also referred to as library research) to explore the fundamental principles of Islamic education derived from Qur'anic exegesis and to analyze their application in modern educational contexts. The qualitative literature review method is appropriate for this research because it allows for an in-depth examination of conceptual frameworks, theoretical foundations, and interpretative perspectives found in existing academic literature without engaging in new fieldwork or primary data collection. In this approach, texts such as academic articles, books, reports, and policy documents are systematically selected, critically examined, and synthesized to construct a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Library research relies on written sources and descriptive-analytic inquiry to identify themes, interpret concepts, and develop theoretical insights. It is widely employed in educational research to establish conceptual foundations and synthesize existing knowledge (Abdurrahman, 2024). The research process consisted of defining the research focus, conducting a systematic literature search, screening relevant sources, organizing the data, and synthesizing the findings through thematic

analysis (Jamaluddin, Rahmatullah, & Farid, 2025). To ensure methodological transparency, the literature search was conducted through Scopus-indexed journals, Google Scholar, Crossref, Garuda, and DOAJ using keywords such as "Qur'anic exegesis," "tafsir tarbawi," "Islamic education," "educational philosophy," "Qur'anic educational values," and "Islamic education curriculum," together with their Indonesian equivalents. Contemporary journal articles published between 2023 and 2025 were prioritized to capture recent scholarly developments, while classical tafsir and hadith works were included as the primary epistemological sources. The selected literature met four criteria: relevance to Qur'anic exegesis and Islamic education, publication in scholarly sources, conceptual contribution to the research objectives, and sufficient discussion of educational principles. The final corpus was analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify recurring concepts and synthesize classical and contemporary perspectives into an integrated framework of Islamic educational principles.

Table 1. Main References Included in the Literature Review

Category	Main References	Main Contribution
Research articles (2023–2025)	Ahmed & Chowdhury (2024); Hasan & Albab (2024); Maulana (2024); Hasanah et al. (2025); Helmy et al. (2025); Ma'ruf & Mirza (2025); Rahardja et al. (2025); Rahim et al. (2025); Sadiah & Alim (2025); Suhertini et al. (2025); Arifuddin et al. (2025); Gaffar & Anees (2025); Hamzah et al. (2025); Mubin et al. (2025); Malizal (2025).	Provides recent theoretical and empirical perspectives on Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic educational philosophy, curriculum development, educational values, and the reconstruction of Islamic education in contemporary contexts.
Qur'anic exegesis (Tafsir)	<i>Jāmi' al-Bayān</i> (Al-Ṭabarī); <i>Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb</i> (Fakhrud-dīn al-Rāzī); <i>Ta'wīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah</i> (Al-Māturīdī); <i>Al-Nukat wa al-'Uyūn</i> (Al-Māwardī); <i>Irsyād al-'Aql al-Salīm</i> (Abū al-Su'ūd); <i>Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī</i> (Al-Ālūsī); <i>Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr</i> (Ibn 'Āsyūr); <i>Al-Tafsīr al-Munīr</i> (Wahbah al-Zuhaylī).	Provides authoritative interpretations of Qur'anic verses that serve as the primary basis for deriving Islamic educational principles.
Hadith and classical Islamic literature	<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i> ; <i>Sunan al-Dārimī</i> ; <i>Qiwām al-Sunnah</i> ; <i>Al-Taṣwīr al-Nabawī</i> ; <i>Syarḥ al-Ṭhībī</i> ; <i>Syarḥ al-Zurqānī</i> ; <i>Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt</i> ; <i>Baṣā'ir Dhawī al-Tamyīz</i> .	Strengthens the interpretation of educational ethics, moral values, and prophetic educational principles supporting the Qur'anic analysis.
Methodological references	Abdurrahman (2024); Jamaluddin et al. (2025).	Provides the conceptual and procedural framework for conducting qualitative library research and thematic literature synthesis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Qur'anic Exegesis as the Foundation for Reconstructing Islamic Educational Principles

The reconstruction of Islamic educational principles cannot be separated from the Qur'an as the primary source of Islamic teachings and values. However, the Qur'an does not present educational theories in a systematic and technical manner comparable to contemporary educational literature. Rather, educational concepts are dispersed throughout various verses and require a process of interpretation (*tafsīr*) to uncover their pedagogical significance. Consequently, Qur'anic exegesis functions as an epistemological bridge that connects divine revelation with educational theory and practice. Through tafsir, Qur'anic guidance is transformed from normative texts into conceptual foundations capable of addressing educational challenges across different historical and social contexts (Ma'ruf & Mirza, 2025). From the perspective of Islamic educational philosophy, tafsir is not merely an effort to explain linguistic meanings or clarify legal rulings. It also serves as an intellectual endeavor aimed at uncovering the worldview, ethical values, educational objectives, and human ideals embedded within revelation. The Qur'an contains foundational teachings

concerning human nature, knowledge, morality, social responsibility, and spiritual development. These teachings require systematic interpretation before they can be translated into educational principles and pedagogical frameworks. Therefore, the historical development of Islamic educational thought has always been closely connected to the interpretive efforts of Muslim scholars who sought to derive educational insights from the Qur'an and apply them to changing social realities (Ma'ruf & Mirza, 2025).

Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of returning to Qur'anic exegesis as the starting point for reconstructing Islamic education. Hasanah et al. (2025) argue that contemporary Islamic education often experiences fragmentation between spiritual purposes and educational practices. Educational institutions frequently prioritize technical competencies, academic achievement, and vocational outcomes while paying insufficient attention to spiritual growth and moral formation. Through a thematic Qur'anic approach (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*), they demonstrate that the Qur'an envisions education as a holistic process encompassing intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions. This finding suggests that educational reconstruction should begin with a re-examination of Qur'anic teachings in order to restore the unity of educational aims. The significance of educational interpretation is further emphasized in studies on *Tafsir Tarbawi*. According to Ma'ruf and Mirza (2025), educational exegesis provides the philosophical foundation for Islamic education because it systematically identifies educational values, goals, methods, and learner characteristics embedded within revelation. Through this approach, the Qur'an becomes not merely a source of religious instruction but also a source of educational theory capable of guiding curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and character formation. Educational reconstruction therefore requires continuous engagement with Qur'anic interpretation to ensure that educational practices remain rooted in Islamic principles while responding effectively to contemporary challenges. The dynamic role of tafsir becomes increasingly important in the modern era, where educational institutions face unprecedented transformations driven by globalization, technological innovation, multiculturalism, and digital communication. Contemporary Qur'anic studies have increasingly emphasized contextual and problem-oriented approaches to interpretation. Muttaqin, Alba, and Haq (2024) explain that contemporary exegesis seeks to integrate classical interpretive traditions with contemporary realities, enabling the Qur'an to provide guidance for emerging social and intellectual issues. This interpretive orientation allows Qur'anic principles to remain relevant and applicable without compromising their theological foundations. Within this framework, reconstructing Islamic educational principles involves more than simply extracting educational concepts from individual verses. It requires a comprehensive interpretive effort that integrates classical exegetical heritage, contemporary educational needs, and the broader objectives of Islamic teachings. Classical tafsir contributes theological depth and normative legitimacy, while contemporary educational interpretation provides contextual relevance and practical applicability. The interaction between these dimensions generates educational principles that are simultaneously faithful to revelation and responsive to modern realities. Consequently, Qur'anic exegesis serves not merely as a textual discipline but as the foundational methodology through which Islamic educational principles can be continuously rediscovered, reformulated, and reconstructed for contemporary educational contexts (Hasanah et al., 2025; Muttaqin et al., 2024).

3.2 The Principle of Tawḥīd and Its Application

The principle of tawḥīd forms the ontological and epistemological foundation of Islamic thought. It is articulated most clearly in the opening verse of Sūrat al-'Alaq, the first divine command revealed to the Prophet ﷺ: "Read in the name of your Lord who created." (Qur'an, al-'Alaq 96:1). By linking the command *iqra'* to the phrase "in the name of your Lord," this verse

places *tawhīd* at the center of human consciousness and learning. Knowledge is not a neutral or self-sufficient pursuit; it is an act grounded in the recognition of Allah as the sole Creator and source of meaning. Classical exegetes paid close attention to this verse as the first revelation received by the Prophet ﷺ. Al-Māturīdī notes that most scholars of *ta'wīl* regard it as the opening of prophetic revelation, though some hold differing views yet the dominant position confirms al-'Alaḳ as the earliest revealed *sūrah* (al-Māturīdī, 2005: 575). Abū al-Su'ūd al-'Imādī supports this position more firmly, citing al-Zuhrī's well-known *hadith* on the encounter in the Cave of Ḥirā', where *iqra'* marks the formal beginning of revelation and prophethood (Abū al-Su'ūd, n.d.: 177). Conceptually, *tawhīd* in this verse binds together three dimensions: divine lordship (*rubūbiyyah*), epistemic orientation, and ethical responsibility. Naming Allah as "your Lord who created" situates human existence within a purposeful order under one Creator so knowledge only becomes meaningful when it is aligned with that order, turning learning into an act of devotion. Contemporary Islamic thought stresses that this integration guards education against the fragmentation of knowledge and against value-neutral abstraction. In practice, *tawhīd* serves as a unifying paradigm connecting intellectual growth with spiritual awareness, helping learners see coherence between revelation, reason, and empirical inquiry. Recent studies in Islamic pedagogy suggest that a *tawhīdīc* framework nurtures holistic thinking, ethical sensitivity, and a sense of transcendent purpose, particularly at the higher-education level.

The command *iqra'* also signals that seeking knowledge in Islam is active and reflective—it demands critical engagement and responsible interpretation, all carried out within an awareness of divine unity. This challenges secular epistemologies that separate knowledge from metaphysical grounding, offering instead a model where intellectual growth stays tied to moral formation—an integration current research links to intellectual integrity and ethical consistency in academic life. Thus, *tawhīd* as expressed in the first revealed verse becomes the cornerstone of the Islamic worldview and its educational philosophy: faith, knowledge, and action converge in the recognition of Allah's oneness, shaping individuals able to carry both spiritual and worldly responsibilities with coherence. Imam al-Mawardī, in *Tafsir al-Nukat wa al-'Uyun*, reads the verse as a command to begin reading by invoking the name of the Lord who creates an attribute that directly confronts Quraysh idol-worship, since their idols possessed no creative power. Through this, Allah affirms His absolute oneness, clearing away theological confusion (al-Mawardī, n.d.: 403). Al-Khālīq thus functions as a corrective that dismantles idolatry and redirects human consciousness toward the true source of existence and knowledge—implying that Islamic education must be built on reinforcing *tawhīd*: all knowledge and all creation originate from Allah alone. Coupling *iqra'* with *bi-ismi rabbika alladhī khalaq* establishes a monotheistic epistemology in which knowledge is inseparable from divine acknowledgment. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī unpacks *bi-ismi rabbika* as carrying several related meanings: grammatically a circumstantial qualifier (recitation should begin with Allah's name); a plea for divine assistance (*isti'ānah*) in overcoming human limitation; and a marker of sincerity (*ikhhlāṣ*), since an act devoted entirely to Allah is protected from satanic influence (al-Rāzī, 2000: 215). These layered meanings articulate core principles of Islamic educational philosophy: learning rooted in spiritual awareness, intention shaped by invoking Allah's name. Contemporary studies confirm that embedding this monotheistic consciousness into learning strengthens students' ethical integrity and spiritual resilience (Pranoto & Isnawati, 2024: 48). The *isti'ānah* dimension also reminds learners that education is never a purely human effort but depends on Allah as al-'Alīm a recognition of epistemic limitation that modern Qur'anic-education research links to humility and dependence on divine guidance while *ikhhlāṣ* guards learning from being reduced to pragmatic or materialistic ends. Al-Aluṣī adds that mentioning *rubūbiyyah* signals gradual nurturing toward human perfection, as seen in how revelation progressively elevated the Prophet ﷺ toward the highest moral and intellectual excellence implying

that divine education works through sustained guidance and cultivation, not instant transformation (al-Alusi, 1995: 401). Practically, a tawhīd-centered framework shapes both method and relationships in Islamic education: teachers act as *murabbī* guiding students to see knowledge as a trust from Allah, while learners pursue study with sincere intention, beginning by invoking Allah's name and seeking His help. Success, then, is measured not only by academic achievement but by how far knowledge draws individuals closer to Allah, builds character, and fosters social responsibility a link recent educational studies confirm strengthens moral and spiritual development.

The universal principle in Qur'an 21:107 further grounds an inclusive philosophy of Islamic education. Since the Prophet's ﷺ mission extends to all humanity, education becomes a transformative process nurturing intellect, moral integrity, spiritual awareness, and social responsibility open to all regardless of ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, or social status, as access to knowledge reflects divine mercy for humankind (Gaffar & Anees, 2025: 137–139). This universal orientation requires integrating *rabbānī* (divine) and *insānī* (humanistic) values within Islamic education's epistemology, spreading mercy through compassion, tolerance, and ethical accountability, while remaining open to diverse sources of knowledge so long as they stay consistent with tawhīd. Recent scholarship shows this integrative epistemology lets Islamic education stay rooted in revelation while engaging constructively with global intellectual traditions and plural realities (Gaffar & Anees, 2025: 140–143). Contemporary studies on Islamic educational epistemology likewise affirm tawhīd as more than a moral value it is the organizing structure of Islamic knowledge itself, in which all learning flows from the awareness that Allah alone is the ultimate source of truth (*tawhīdī* epistemology), rejecting the secular fragmentation that disrupts the unity of the Islamic educational worldview (Helmy, Surahman, & Sumarna, 2025).

3.3 The Principle of Universal and Its Application

Universality is one of Islam's defining traits: its teachings bind no single space, time, race, or culture. As a complete way of life spanning creed (*'aqīdah*), worship (*'ibādah*), social dealings (*mu'āmalāt*), and ethics (*akhlāq*) Islam guides human welfare in this world and the next. It belongs to no particular group. It is, instead, a divine message addressed to all humankind. Allah ﷻ states: "*And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to all worlds.*" (Qur'an, al-Anbiyā' 21:107). Al-Alusi reads "We have not sent you" as encompassing every form of divine legislation and guidance aimed at human happiness, both worldly and eternal. "Except as a mercy to all worlds," he notes, functions as an exclusive purpose clause the Prophet's mission has no aim beyond manifesting mercy for all creation, whether by embodying it, possessing it, or delivering it through revelation (al-Alusi, 1995: 99). Abu al-Su'ud al-Imadi adds a sharper point: everything the Prophet ﷺ brought forms the basis of happiness in both realms of existence. If people fail to benefit, the fault lies in their own neglect not in any withholding of divine mercy (Abu al-Su'ud, n.d.: 89). A second verse reinforces this scope: "*And We have not sent you except comprehensively to all people as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, but most people do not know.*" For Ibn 'Ashur, this settles the matter decisively: the Prophet's mission was never confined to Mecca, to Arabs, or to those who met him in person. It reaches all of humanity, across time and space affirming both the universality and the permanence of Islamic revelation (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984: 199). This universal mandate, drawn from Surah al-Anbiyā' 21:107, gives Islamic educational philosophy its inclusive foundation. Education here is not reducible to intellectual training; it also cultivates moral integrity, spiritual depth, and social responsibility. Because the Prophet's mission was universal, education too must stay open to everyone regardless of ethnicity, nationality, religion, or social status while still working to form individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and ethically grounded. This universality also calls for weaving together *rabbānī* (divine) and

insānī (humanistic) values. Education becomes a channel for mercy building compassion, tolerance, and social accountability while remaining open to knowledge from diverse sources, so long as it does not contradict *tawhīd*. Recent scholarship confirms that this integrative approach lets Islamic pedagogy stay rooted in revelation even as it engages global intellectual traditions (Hassan & Abdullah, 2023: 214).

The Prophet ﷺ himself affirmed this scope (Abu al-Qasim, 1993: 107): “*I have been sent to all of humanity.*” ‘Ali Subhi reads this as proof that Islamic law is complete and fit for every generation until the Day of Judgment its harmony with human nature (*fiṭrah*) and rational maturity is precisely what keeps it relevant, unlike human-made legal systems that need constant revision. Islam, in this sense, belongs to no single race or civilization; it is a religion for all humankind (‘Ali Subhi, 2002: 46). This orientation shows up concretely in how Islamic education fosters tolerance toward diversity. Research on inclusive Islamic education finds that embedding *rahmatan lil ‘alamin* (mercy to all creation), respect for difference, and intercultural dialogue into curricula meaningfully builds tolerant attitudes among students in multicultural settings (Hamzah et al., 2025: 31). Where curricula and teaching practice are grounded in these universal values, learning environments tend to become more inclusive and responsive to cultural, religious, and social diversity—strengthening social cohesion in plural societies. The same universal principles, rooted in Qur’anic teaching and the prophetic example, also support mercy-based approaches to education—ones that move beyond doctrine into genuinely humanistic engagement with others. Studies on mercy-based education point to the Prophet’s ﷺ own conduct in plural settings as a model for educational harmony, one built on compassion, justice, and communal benefit (Arifuddin et al., 2025: 43). Taken together, these findings suggest that an inclusive, mercy-oriented Islamic education is not merely compatible with divine guidance it is one way that guidance translates into a meaningful contribution to global civilization.

3.4 The Principle of Balance and Its Application

Wasathiyyah—balance and moderation—is not confined to matters of creed and worship; it also anchors the Islamic educational system. Education, from this view, is not meant merely to sharpen intellect or meet worldly needs. It aims at something larger: an integrated human personality, one that holds physical and spiritual dimensions, reason and conscience, this world and the next, in equilibrium. Allah ﷻ states: “*But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and do not forget your share of the world.*” (Qur’an, al-Qasas 28:77). Al-Alusi reads the command to “seek the abode of the Hereafter” as an obligation: worldly wealth and resources should be channeled toward divine pleasure and reward, so that every blessing serves a higher moral end (al-Alusi, n.d.: 318). Wahbah al-Zuhaili takes this further—wealth and resources should be used in obedience to Allah, since the world is a field cultivated now and harvested in eternity. Yet “do not forget your share of the world” is no throwaway clause; it recognizes lawful worldly enjoyment food, clothing, shelter, marriage. Here lies the essence of *wasathiyyah*: Islam rejects both ascetic withdrawal and unrestrained materialism, calling instead for measured engagement guided by ethical restraint (al-Zuhaili, 1991: 160–161). Applied to education, this verse reframes academic achievement and professional success as instruments, not final goals—means of devotion to Allah and service to society. And “do not forget your share of the world” affirms that practical skill, technological progress, and scientific development are themselves part of human responsibility and stewardship. Allah ﷻ also declares: “*And thus We have made you a balanced community (ummataṉ wasaṭan) so that you may be witnesses over humanity.*” (Qur’an, al-Baqarah 2:143). Al-Tabari explains *ummataṉ wasaṭan* as a community that is moderate, just, and exemplary. Linguistically, *wasath* carries the sense of “middle,” “best,” “most noble”; here it is interpreted as *al-‘adl*, justice. The Muslim community, in his reading, sits between two extremes—

the excess of those who deified prophets, and the neglect of those who distorted revelation. This middle position is precisely what qualifies the community to bear moral witness over other nations, since justice and equilibrium are what Allah loves most (al-Tabari, n.d.: 141).

Read together, these verses show Islam pursuing balance across every dimension of lifeworldly and eternal, spiritual and material, individual and collective. Out of this equilibrium, the Muslim community emerges as a moderating force built on justice, mercy, and public welfare. In practice, *wasathiyyah* shapes pedagogy toward proportional development across all learning domains. Curricula that integrate religious and empirical-social sciences embody this balance, presenting knowledge as one coherent system rather than fragmented parts. Teaching that attends to cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions alike ensures education reaches the full range of human potential an approach contemporary Islamic education studies link to stronger ethical awareness and intellectual coherence. Research on *Wasathiyyatul Islam* in education confirms that moderation promotes balance, justice, and inclusivity as core to a harmonious society embedded not only in doctrine but in curriculum design, teaching method, and the student–teacher relationship, reinforcing social cohesion in plural settings (Mubin et al., 2025: 68). Studies on internalizing *wasathiyyah* values similarly find that integrative approaches interactive teaching, contextual discussion cultivate cognitive, affective, and behavioral expressions of moderation among students, strengthening resilience against extremism (Rahim et al., 2025: 125). *Wasathiyyah* also demands equilibrium between theory and practice, so knowledge translates into ethical conduct and social contribution; the same balance extends to gender equity, affirming equal rights to learning and participation for men and women alike. Cultivating religious moderation (*al-wasathiyyah fi al-dīn*) within education, recent empirical research suggests, plays a real role in preventing extremism and intolerance while building social harmony. More broadly, balance keeps Islamic education responsive to contemporary developments without loosening its divine foundations. Scientific and technological progress can be embraced so long as it stays aligned with *tawhīd* and oriented toward public benefit. In this way, Islamic education moves beyond transmitting information; it forms individuals who are intellectually capable, morally grounded, and socially responsible. *Wasathiyyah*, in the end, produces an educational paradigm where worldly engagement and spiritual accountability coexist—equipping human beings to act as ethical agents and contributors to global civilization.

3.5 The Principle of *Rahmah* (Compassion) and Its Application

One of the most fundamental principles of Islamic teaching is *rahmah* compassion and mercy which constitutes the core of the prophetic mission of Muhammad ﷺ. Islam does not merely promote justice and balance; it embeds *rahmah* as a moral and spiritual foundation governing the relationship between human beings and Allah, among fellow humans, and with all creation. In this sense, *rahmah* represents a comprehensive ethical orientation that permeates belief, conduct, and social interaction. Terminologically, *rahmah* denotes gentleness of the heart that necessitates the manifestation of benevolent action toward the recipient of mercy. At times, the term refers to tenderness alone, while in other contexts it signifies the bestowal of goodness even without emotional softness (al-Fairuzabadi, 1996: 53). Al-Jurjani defines *rahmah* as the will to confer goodness upon others, emphasizing its volitional and active dimension (al-Jurjani, 1983: 110). Accordingly, *rahmah* transcends mere sentiment; it embodies a conscious intention and commitment to produce benefit, protection, and reform. It is an empathetic disposition that materializes in concrete actions aimed at human and universal well-being. Allah ﷻ declares: “*And We have not sent you [O Muhammad] except as a mercy to all worlds.*” (Qur’an, al-Anbiyā’ 21:107). Ibn ‘Ashur interpretes *rahmah* here as functioning grammatically as a *ḥāl* describing the very state and essence of the Messenger ﷺ, not merely an external quality of his message. His

entire existence, in other words, constitutes mercy; his actions, words, and teachings consistently embody compassion for all creation (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984: 164). The Prophet ﷺ affirmed this himself: "O people, I am nothing but a gifted mercy" (al-Darimi, 2000: 166). Al-Thaibi reads this as meaning the Prophet ﷺ is mercy, presented by Allah to all creation those who accept this gift find success and salvation, while those who reject it lose out by their own choice. Gentleness, compassion, and deep concern for the believers, he adds, were essential to the Prophet's character (al-Thaibi, 1997: 3700; 3684). Ibn 'Ashur identifies two dimensions through which *rahmah* manifests in the Prophetic mission: mercy embodied in the Prophet's own personality, and mercy embedded within his law (*sharī'ah*). The first shows up in his purified soul and virtuous character—divinely adorned with compassion, as Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Qaysi al-Isybili puts it: Allah dressed Muhammad ﷺ in the ornament of mercy, so that his existence, attributes, and conduct all became expressions of mercy toward creation (al-Zurqani, 1996: 293). This harmony between his compassionate nature and the revealed law is precisely why the *sharī'ah* itself is grounded in mercy.

Allah's own words confirm this nurturing: "It is by mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them" (Qur'an, Āl 'Imrān 3:159). Ibn 'Ashur reads this as evidence that the Prophet's gentleness came from mercy Allah planted in his soul and disposition, enabling him to meet humanity with kindness and patience (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984: 99). Consistent with this, the Prophet ﷺ explicitly refused to curse his enemies, saying he was sent not to condemn but to bring mercy a line that captures the ethical center of Islam (Muslim, 1955: 2006). The second dimension of *rahmah* lives in the law itself: Islamic legislation consistently weaves in compassion, ease, and concern for human welfare. Ibn 'Ashur stresses that Muhammad's ﷺ *sharī'ah* is saturated with mercy—in its objectives, its rulings, its ethical guidance so that divine law serves humanity's interest rather than imposing unnecessary hardship (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984: 167). In education, this principle takes tangible shape. In the educator's disposition, compassion shows up as warm relationships with learners, a rejection of harshness and coercion, generous encouragement, and exemplary conduct—a teacher shaped by *rahmah* educates through ethical modeling and sincerity, not instruction alone. In the learning process itself, *rahmah* appears as dialogical, empathetic pedagogy; teaching methods adapted to learners' capacities and circumstances; and compassionate values woven into moral, social, and spiritual curricula. Contemporary research in Islamic education links compassion-based pedagogy to stronger emotional well-being, moral development, and intrinsic motivation among students. Scholarship in this area treats *rahmah* as a central pedagogical value one shaping not just educator-learner relations but also the design of inclusive learning environments and ethical assessment practices. Research analyzing Qur'anic conceptions of compassion, for instance, finds that *rahmah* encompasses humane communication, responsiveness to learners' needs, and a teaching attitude that is empathetic yet firm all with direct bearing on classroom practices centered on emotional well-being, moral development, and engagement (Rahardja, Supriadi & Surahman, 2025). Empirical work corroborates this further: implementing *rahmah* within character education significantly boosts tolerance and prosocial attitudes among learners. Studies involving Islamic school students show that weaving *rahmah* into school culture and activities positively shapes tolerance and mutual respect qualities essential for building inclusive, socially responsible learners (Adytiya, 2025). At a broader level, *rahmah* positions Islamic education as a transformative force, one aimed at producing individuals marked by empathy, justice, and social responsibility. By embedding compassion as a guiding principle, Islamic education lives out Islam's universal mission as *rahmatan li al-'ālamīn* shaping human beings who contribute meaningfully to societal harmony and global well-being.

3.6 Reconstructing a Contemporary Framework of Islamic Education

The four Qur'anic principles discussed above *tawhīd*, universality, *wasathiyyah*, and *rahmah* are not separate educational values sitting side by side. They form an integrated philosophical framework, each principle reinforcing the others, together laying the conceptual groundwork for an Islamic education that stays faithful to revelation while remaining responsive to contemporary challenges. Figure 1 maps out how these four principles relate to one another and jointly drive the transformation of Islamic education today.

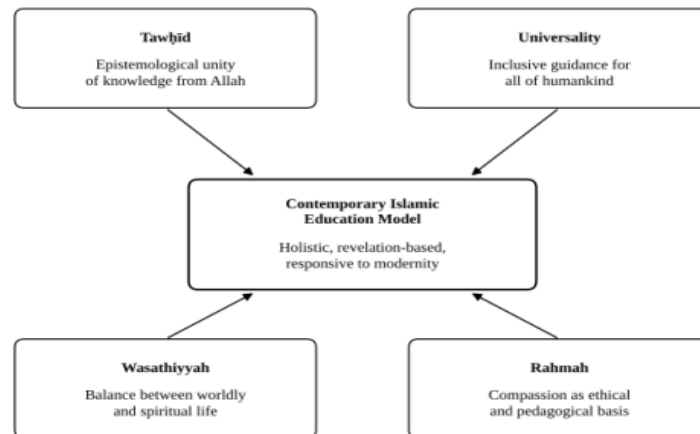


Figure 1. Illustrates the conceptual

interconnection among the four Qur'anic principles discussed above. *Tawhīd* provides the epistemological foundation by unifying all knowledge under the recognition of Allah as its ultimate source. Universality extends this foundation outward, ensuring that Islamic education remains inclusive and accessible to all of humankind regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or social status. *Wasathiyyah* supplies the principle of balance, harmonizing worldly engagement with spiritual accountability and intellectual growth with moral development. *Rahmah*, in turn, grounds the entire framework in compassion, shaping the ethical and pedagogical relationships between educators and learners. As shown in the diagram, these four principles do not operate independently; rather, they converge to form a single, coherent model of contemporary Islamic education one that remains faithful to revelation while responding constructively to the demands of the present age. Universality, meanwhile, gives the framework its inclusive, global reach. Today's societies are marked by cultural diversity, transnational interaction, and shared global challenges conditions under which Islamic education must cultivate openness, intercultural understanding, and constructive engagement, all while staying grounded in Islamic values. It becomes, in effect, a platform for global citizenship, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence closely aligned with contemporary educational goals around dialogue, collaboration, and intercultural competence (Malizal, 2025). *Wasathiyyah* contributes balance. Modern education tends to swing between extremes cutthroat academic competition on one side, narrow career utilitarianism or spirituality detached from social reality on the other. *Wasathiyyah* offers a different path, harmonizing intellectual growth with moral development, emotional well-being, spiritual awareness, and social engagement producing learners who are academically competent, ethically responsible, and psychologically resilient, and better equipped to navigate ideological polarization, extremism, and the ethical strain of digital and social-media life. *Rahmah* supplies the pedagogical and ethical core. Contemporary educational discourse already values empathy, care, emotional intelligence, and inclusive learning spaces qualities the Islamic tradition captures in the single concept of *rahmah*, turning education into a compassionate process of nurturing human potential. A *rahmah*-oriented

model prioritizes meaningful teacher student relationships, learner-centered pedagogy, moral guidance, and social responsibility so education becomes not just information transfer but a transformative process shaping humane, ethical, socially conscious individuals.

Together, these four principles form a holistic framework equipped to address contemporary educational challenges without drifting from Qur'anic foundations. Hasanah et al. (2025) identify fragmentation—the separation of spiritual, intellectual, and social aims as one of the central crises facing Islamic education today. A reconstructive approach grounded in these Qur'anic principles overcomes exactly this fragmentation, restoring the interconnection between faith, knowledge, character, and action. Educational reconstruction, in this light, is not curricular tinkering but a wholesale re-envisioning of educational philosophy itself (Hasanah et al., 2025). A contemporary framework of Islamic education, then, can be understood as a dynamic synthesis: *tawhīd* provides epistemological unity, universality drives inclusiveness and global engagement, *wasathiyyah* ensures balanced human development, and *rahmah* shapes educational relationships and practice. Together they offer a coherent Qur'anic paradigm one capable of guiding Islamic education through the demands of modernity without losing its spiritual authenticity, positioning it not as a system of religious instruction alone but as a transformative force for shaping knowledgeable, ethical, compassionate, and socially responsible contributors to global civilization.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Qur'an provides a comprehensive and coherent foundation for Islamic education through principles that shape its epistemological orientation, ethical structure, and pedagogical direction. The principle of *tawhīd* establishes the unity of knowledge and purpose by grounding all educational activity in divine consciousness, while the principle of universality affirms Islamic education as an inclusive system oriented toward the well-being of humanity as a whole. Together, these principles frame education as an integrated process that links intellectual inquiry with moral responsibility and social accountability. The principles of balance (*wasathiyyah*) and *rahmah* further reinforce this framework by ensuring equilibrium between spiritual and worldly dimensions and by embedding compassion as a central educational value. *Wasathiyyah* guides curriculum and pedagogy toward proportional development across cognitive, affective, and practical domains, while *rahmah* informs humane educational relationships, inclusive learning environments, and ethical engagement with diversity. These principles collectively prevent reductionist approaches to education and support the formation of individuals characterized by intellectual coherence, ethical awareness, and social commitment. By synthesizing Qur'anic exegesis with contemporary educational research, this study highlights the capacity of Islamic education to engage constructively with modern challenges while remaining firmly rooted in its revelatory foundations. An educational framework grounded in *tawhīd*, universality, balance, and compassion positions Islamic education as a dynamic and integrative system capable of nurturing spiritually grounded, ethically responsible, and socially engaged learners. This confirms the enduring relevance of Qur'anic educational principles for advancing educational theory and practice in an increasingly complex global context.

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