

Implementation of Philosophy of Religion Principles In Islamic Education of Islamic Boarding School

Encung¹, Ibnu Rusydi²

¹ Universitas al-Amien Prenduan Sumenep; encung34@gmail.com

² Universitas Wiralodra Indramayu; ibnurs@gmail.com

Abstract

Keywords:

Theocentric
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education.

This study analyzes the implementation of Theo-Humanism concept of God-centered to build humanized-God centered character in Islamic boarding school education of Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan, Sumenep, Madura. Applying qualitative instrumental case study design involving 16 key respondents, consisting of students, teachers, and institutional stakeholders, selected through purposive sampling. The research explored field data through in-depth interviews with the key respondents, applying triangulation across time and methods to ensure data credibility. In addition, participatory observation was conducted throughout educational and instructional activities, with a primary focus on examining teacher-student relationships, analyzing curricular documents, and eliciting students' experiential narratives. The findings indicate that the integration of Divine and human values is manifested in an integrated curriculum model that harmonizes naqli (revealed) and aqli (rational) forms of knowledge. This integration is grounded in a collaborative educational system implemented on a 24-hour basis under the close supervision of educators who function as murabbi, mudabbir, and khādim al-tarbiyah. Such an approach strengthens ethical and moral education based on Theo-Humanist principles, which serve as the fundamental foundation for shaping students' character oriented toward their role as al-khalifah fi al-ard (God's vicegerents on earth) representing the highest recognition of human dignity in fulfilling life in the world.

Abstrak

Kata kunci:
Theo-Humanism;
Pendidikan
Pesantren;
Studi Kasus
Instrumental
Kualitatif;
Integrasi Naqli dan
Aqli;
Pembentukan
Karakter Khalifah..

Penelitian ini menganalisis penerapan konsep (Theo-Humanism) dalam berketuhanan pada pendidikan Pesantren di MAK Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan Sumenep Madura. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif kasus instrumental (Qualitative Instrumental Case Study) yang melibatkan 16 responden utama dari santri MAK guru dan stakeholder sebagai sampling bertujuan. Peneliti mengeksplorasi data lapangan melalui wawancara mendalam (in depth interview) dengan responden utama dengan system triangulasi antar waktu dan metode, kemudian melakukan observasi partisipatif dalam setiap aktivitas pengajaran kependidikan dengan fokus utama untuk mendalami Relasi guru-siswa dan mempelajari Dokumen kurikulum serta menggali Narasi pengalaman siswa selama belajar di pesantren. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai-nilai ketuhanan dan kemanusiaan tercermin dalam model kurikulum terpadu yang menyelaraskan pengetahuan naqli (wahyu) dan aqli (rasional) yang berbasis sistem Pendidikan kolaboratif yang dijalankan selama 24 jam dibawah pengawasan khusus para pendidik yang berposisi sebagai (murobbi mudabbir) dan (hkodzimu tarbiyah) sehingga muncul penguatan pendidikan etika dan akhlak mulia dengan asas (Theo-humanism) yang menjadi landasan utama dalam pembentukan karakter peserta didik yang berorientasi sebagai al-khalifah (fi al- ardh) (god vicegerent) yaitu bentuk pengakuan tertinggi kemanusiaan manusia dalam menjalankan kehidupan di dunia. .

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Corresponding Author:

Encung

Universitas al-Amien Prenduan Sumenep; encung34@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Islamic education stands at a critical juncture the complex terrain between preserving religious authenticity and engaging with modern educational demands (Ahmad Kusaini et al., 2024; Faizah et al., 2025; Qasserras, 2024). The persistent dichotomy between religious and western secular knowledge continues to challenge today Islamic educational institutions worldwide (Abdala, 2023). This dichotomy often manifests in curricular structures that separate "religious" and "general" subjects, pedagogical approaches that prioritize rote memorization over critical engagement, and educational philosophies that struggle to articulate a coherent integration of divine revelation and human reason (Adimayuda et al., 2025; Hasbi et al., 2025; Maa'uun et al., 2025).

MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan Madura as Higher education in Madura represents a fascinating case study of an institution attempting to navigate these challenges through the framework of Theocentric Humanism upon philosophy of religion. This Islamic higher education uniquely combines an intensive Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz*) program with a national curriculum with all within a philosophical framework that seeks to harmonize traditional Islamic values with contemporary educational needs. Beside this higher education school majoring religiosity that tends to applicate God superiority curricula modification. The institution's experiment offers valuable insights into the practical implementation of philosophical principles derived from Classical Islamic thought.

The concept of Theocentric Humanism finds its roots in the rich tradition of Classical Philosophy of religion, particularly in the works of thinkers like Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali. These philosophers developed sophisticated frameworks for integrating reason and revelation, arguing that true human flourishing (*insaniyyah*) could only be achieved through proper orientation toward the Divine (Zulfa, 2023). Theocentric Humanism thus represents a philosophical position that affirms human potential and dignity while recognizing that these qualities find their ultimate source and purpose in relation to God (Abdul-Jabbar & Makki, 2024). This research is motivated by the urgent need to reconstruct Islamic educational philosophy in response to contemporary challenges. The study examines how a higher education of MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan implements Theocentric Humanism principles through its educational practices, curriculum design, and institutional culture. By investigating this case, the research aims to contribute to broader discussions about Islamic educational reform and the integration of traditional wisdom with modern pedagogical approaches that reflects namouras philosophical concept and theory. The conceptual framework of Theocentric Humanism draws heavily from Classical Islamic Philosophy of religion, particularly from the works of Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali. Al-Farabi's concept of the perfect state and the role of education in achieving human happiness provides important groundwork for understanding the integration of philosophical and religious knowledge (Al-Attas, 1980). His view that philosophy and religion represent "two languages expressing the same truth" offers a powerful framework for overcoming the *naqli-aqli* dichotomy that plagues contemporary Islamic education. Al-Ghazali's comprehensive approach to knowledge and character development offers crucial insights for contemporary education. His integration of philosophical rigor with spiritual depth, particularly in his magnum opus "The Revival of the Religious Sciences," provides a model for educational approaches that balance intellectual development with spiritual and moral formation (Hashim & Rossidy, 2023). His concept of *adab* as encompassing both outward etiquette and inward states offers a holistic framework for

character education (Febrianti et al., 2025; Mustikamah et al., 2025; Nurdi & Ahmad, 2025).

Recent scholarship in Islamic education has increasingly addressed the need for integrated approaches that transcend traditional dichotomies. Abdallah (2023) examines various models for integrating naqli and aqli knowledge in Islamic school curricula, identifying both challenges and promising practices. Her work demonstrates that successful integration requires not only curricular innovation but also teacher development and institutional support. Alkouatli (2023) explores Ibn Sina's educational philosophy and its implications for contemporary practice, particularly focusing on concepts of human flourishing and becoming. Her research emphasizes the importance of educational environments that support the holistic development of students' potentials, both intellectual and spiritual (Al-Attas, 1980).

Dagli (2022) investigates the concept of adab and its modern educational implications, arguing for the continued relevance of traditional character education in contemporary contexts. His work shows how adab education can be implemented through both formal and informal means, creating educational cultures that support moral and spiritual development.

Hashim and Rossidy (2023) examine the integration of science and religion through ethical cosmology, drawing particularly on Mulla Sadra's philosophical framework. Their research demonstrates how philosophical concepts can inform practical educational approaches that connect scientific learning with ethical and spiritual considerations (Juwaini et al., 2025; Najah et al., 2025; Rakhmat, 2023). Though slightly older references than the other in the philosophy of religion provides a foundational examination of theocentric pedagogy and human flourishing. The work in this field continues to be highly influential in contemporary discussions of Islamic educational philosophy, particularly regarding the integration of spiritual and intellectual development.

The framework incorporates several key concepts like the harmonization of revealed and rational knowledge, recognizing that both ultimately derive from the same divine source. The actualization of innate human potentials for knowledge, virtue, and spiritual realization. Adab Formation: The cultivation of comprehensive ethical character that encompasses both outward behavior and inward states. Khalifah Agency: The development of students' capacity to act as responsible vicegerents of God on earth, contributing positively to their communities and the wider world.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a case study design. The methodology is particularly appropriate for investigating complex educational phenomena in the real-life contexts, allowing for detailed examination of the interactions between various factors and components (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research focuses on higher education of Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan as a single case that represents an interesting instance of Theocentric Humanism implementation in Islamic education.

The case study approach enables the researcher to investigate the phenomenon in depth, examining how the philosophical principles of Theocentric Humanism are translated into educational practice through various means including curriculum design, teaching methods, institutional culture, and student development activities. The bounded nature of the case (a single institution with a clear philosophical orientation)

allows for focused investigation while recognizing the complexity of educational practices within this context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The researcher conducted two months of intensive participatory observation at MA Tahfidz al-amien Prenduan Madura, focusing on classroom activities, *tahfiz* sessions, extracurricular programs, and educational daily routines. Observation guidelines were developed to focus particularly on: (1) learning interactions and teaching methods; (2) integration of values in various educational activities; (3) character development practices; and (4) manifestations of Theocentric Humanism principles in daily educational practice. The researcher maintained detailed field notes and reflective journals throughout the observation period.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 students, 10 teachers, and 5 school administrators. Student participants were selected through purposive sampling to represent different grade levels, academic abilities, and lengths of time at the institution. Teacher participants included those teaching various subjects (both religious and general subjects) with varying levels of experience. Administrator participants included the school principal, curriculum coordinator, *tahfiz* program coordinator, character education coordinator, and student affairs coordinator.

Interview protocols were developed for each participant category, focusing on their understanding and experience of Theocentric Humanism principles in educational practice. Questions explored participants' perspectives on knowledge integration, character development, spiritual formation, and the challenges and successes of implementing the madrasah's educational philosophy (Bryman, 2016).

The research adhered to strict ethical standards throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with special attention to obtaining parental consent for student participants. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms and careful handling of identifiable information. The research protocol was approved by appropriate institutional review boards, and permission was obtained from relevant educational authorities. The researcher maintained reflexivity throughout the process, acknowledging his own positionality and potential biases as an educator and researcher interested in Islamic educational reform. Regular reflective journaling and peer debriefing helped to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the data rather than personal preconceptions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The empirical investigation at MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan reveals a complex and multi-layered implementation of Theocentric Humanism principles that permeates virtually every aspect of the educational ecosystem. The findings present a rich tapestry of educational practices that successfully bridge the often-contentious divide between traditional Islamic education and modern pedagogical approaches, creating what can best be described as an integrated educational philosophy in practice.

The core of the madrasah's approach lies in its distinctive curriculum model, which moves beyond mere addition of religious content to secular subjects toward a fundamental reimagining of how knowledge itself is structured and delivered. Classroom observations consistently demonstrated how teachers skillfully wove together scientific concepts with spiritual insights, creating a seamless educational experience that honors both rational inquiry and divine revelation. In mathematics classes, for instance, teachers guided students to recognize mathematical patterns in nature not as abstract concepts but as manifestations of divine precision and order. The Fibonacci sequence found in flower petals and plant growth patterns became not just

mathematical curiosities but tangible evidence of cosmic harmony and intelligent design. This approach effectively operationalizes Al-Farabi's philosophical principle that rational inquiry and revelation represent complementary rather than contradictory paths to truth (Niyozov & Khan, 2024).

The integration extends beyond theoretical connections to practical applications that prepare students for real-world challenges while maintaining spiritual consciousness. Science laboratories become spaces not just for experimentation but for contemplation of natural phenomena as signs (*ayat*) of divine wisdom (Indasari et al., 2025; Musslifah, Deporos, et al., 2025; Sriharini et al., 2018). Chemistry lessons exploring molecular structures regularly incorporate discussions about the perfection of divine creation, while physics experiments investigating motion and energy serve as springboards for reflecting on the consistency of natural laws as evidence of divine order (Mazzei, 2024). This careful balancing of empirical investigation with spiritual reflection creates a learning environment where students develop both scientific competence and metaphysical awareness simultaneously.

The pedagogical approach observed at the madrasah reflects a profound understanding of education as a process of drawing out rather than pouring in. Teachers consistently functioned as facilitators rather than mere transmitters of knowledge, employing dialogical methods that encouraged students to actively construct understanding through questioning, discussion, and critical reflection. The traditional Islamic concept of *hiwar* (dialogue) emerged as a central pedagogical strategy, with classrooms characterized by vibrant exchanges where students felt comfortable challenging ideas, posing alternative viewpoints, and engaging in respectful debate (Muhtadin et al., 2023; Zamsiswaya et al., 2024). This approach effectively created what can be described as communities of inquiry where knowledge emerged through collaborative exploration rather than unilateral transmission.

Central to the educational philosophy is the *murabbi* system, which extends the teacher's role beyond academic instruction to encompass holistic mentorship. The research documented numerous instances where teachers served as moral exemplars, spiritual guides, and personal counselors, developing relationships with students that transcended conventional teacher-student dynamics (Musslifah, Khusnuliawati, et al., 2025). These relationships manifested in regular one-on-one sessions where mentors addressed not only academic progress but also personal challenges, spiritual development, and character formation. The *murabbi*-mentee relationships often continued beyond graduation, evolving into lifelong connections that provided ongoing guidance and support. This mentoring approach effectively actualizes the classical Islamic educational principle that the most powerful teaching occurs through personal example and relationship rather than mere instruction.

Character education at the institution moves beyond theoretical discussion to comprehensive practical implementation through what might be termed an ecology of *adab*. The entire institutional environment—from physical spaces to daily routines to interpersonal interactions—is carefully designed to cultivate virtuous character. Simple practices such as maintaining immaculate cleanliness in shared spaces, observing proper etiquette when entering and leaving rooms, and demonstrating respect in speech and behavior are consistently reinforced not as arbitrary rules but as expressions of deeper spiritual values. The research observed how these practices gradually become internalized, creating a distinctive institutional culture where ethical conduct emerges naturally from shared values rather than external enforcement.

The development of *adab* extends into sophisticated community engagement programs that connect character development with social responsibility. Students regularly participate in organized visits to orphanages and elderly care facilities, where they provide not only material assistance but also companionship and emotional support. Environmental conservation projects see students leading reforestation efforts and waste management initiatives, understanding these activities as practical fulfillment of their role as stewards of God's creation (Juwaini et al., 2025; Salamah et al., 2025). These experiences are systematically debriefed through reflective discussions that help students connect their actions to broader ethical principles and spiritual understandings, ensuring that community service remains grounded in conscious intentionality rather than becoming mere routine.

The madrasah's approach to developing student agency represents perhaps the most innovative aspect of its educational model. Through carefully designed project-based learning experiences, students are empowered to identify community needs, develop innovative solutions, and implement practical interventions (Nurdi & Ahmad, 2025; Rohmadi et al., 2024). The research documented numerous examples of student-led initiatives that successfully addressed real-world problems while maintaining alignment with Islamic ethical principles. Entrepreneurship projects saw students developing small businesses that adhered to Islamic finance principles while addressing local market needs (Arief et al., 2025; Gunartin et al., 2025). Environmental initiatives involved students conducting scientific research on local ecosystems and developing conservation strategies based on their findings. These projects consistently demonstrated students' ability to integrate knowledge from multiple domains while maintaining ethical and spiritual consciousness.

The implementation of this comprehensive educational model faces significant challenges that reveal important insights about the complexities of educational innovation. Teachers reported considerable difficulty in finding appropriate resources and developing effective pedagogical strategies for integrating scientific and spiritual perspectives. The absence of standardized materials means that each teacher must essentially develop their own integrative approaches, creating inconsistent implementation across different classrooms and subjects (Afirda & Nasution, 2025; Effendi et al., 2025). This challenge is particularly acute for teachers with specialized training in either religious or scientific disciplines but limited exposure to the other domain.

Assessment presents another formidable challenge, as conventional evaluation methods prove inadequate for capturing the complex learning outcomes targeted by the madrasah's approach. Teachers struggle to develop assessment strategies that can effectively measure spiritual development, character formation, and integrated understanding alongside academic achievement (Dewi et al., 2025; Makalao et al., 2025). The tension between the institution's holistic educational goals and external pressure to demonstrate performance on standardized tests creates ongoing philosophical and practical dilemmas (Mazzei, 2024). Teachers must constantly navigate the challenge of preparing students for conventional assessments while remaining true to the madrasah's broader educational philosophy.

Resource limitations emerge as a consistent constraint on innovation and quality. Teachers work with limited materials, large class sizes, and inadequate technological support, relying heavily on personal creativity and dedication to compensate for material shortcomings. The research documented numerous instances where teachers personally developed learning materials, funded classroom resources from their own

salaries, and invested extensive unpaid time in mentoring activities. While this dedication reflects remarkable commitment, it also raises questions about sustainability and equity in educational innovation.

Despite these challenges, the research identified several crucial factors that enable the madrasah's successful implementation of Theocentric Humanism principles. Teacher commitment emerges as the single most important enabling factor, with educators demonstrating extraordinary dedication to the institution's philosophical vision. This commitment manifests in willingness to accept lower salaries, invest personal time in professional development, and continually innovate despite resource constraints. The research suggests that this commitment stems from deep philosophical alignment with the madrasah's educational vision rather than merely professional obligation.

Visionary leadership provides another critical enabling factor, with administrators successfully buffering the institution from external pressures while providing clear philosophical guidance (Daulay et al., 2024; Hamdanah et al., 2025; Hermawan et al., 2025). Leaders demonstrate remarkable skill in navigating regulatory requirements while maintaining the madrasah's distinctive educational approach. They create protective structures that allow for educational innovation while ensuring necessary accountability, effectively balancing tradition with innovation in ways that sustain the institution's philosophical integrity.

The boarding school environment emerges as a particularly significant enabling factor, creating a total immersive educational experience that reinforces the madrasah's values through consistent environmental messaging. The physical separation from distracting influences allows for focused educational effort while the residential context enables the integration of learning across academic, extracurricular, and daily living contexts (Ikhwan et al., 2025). This holistic environment proves particularly effective for character development, as ethical principles can be consistently reinforced and practiced across diverse situations rather than being confined to specific lessons or subjects.

The findings collectively suggest that successful implementation of Theocentric Humanism requires what might be termed an ecosystem approach to educational reform—one that addresses not only curriculum and pedagogy but also teacher development, institutional culture, physical environment, and community relationships (Kohout-Diaz, 2026; Qasserras, 2024). The madrasah's experience demonstrates that meaningful educational innovation cannot be achieved through piecemeal changes but requires comprehensive transformation of the entire educational ecosystem (Ariona et al., 2023; Setiawan et al., 2025). This insight has significant implications for other institutions seeking to implement similar educational approaches, suggesting that success depends on addressing multiple interconnected factors rather than focusing on isolated interventions.

The research also reveals the critical importance of philosophical coherence in educational innovation. The madrasah's effectiveness appears to stem largely from the consistent application of its underlying philosophical principles across all aspects of its educational program. This coherence creates a powerful educational environment where different elements reinforce rather than contradict each other, producing synergistic effects that transcend what any single component could achieve independently. This finding challenges common approaches to educational reform that focus on implementing isolated best practices without attention to philosophical consistency.

Ultimately, the case of MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan offers both inspiration and caution for educational innovators. It demonstrates the remarkable possibilities that emerge when educational institutions courageously implement coherent philosophical

visions with commitment and creativity. Simultaneously, it reveals the significant challenges and complexities involved in sustaining such innovations over time, particularly in contexts of resource limitation and external pressure. The madrasah's experience suggests that successful educational transformation requires not only vision and commitment but also strategic wisdom in navigating constraints and building enabling structures that sustain innovation amid challenge.

Epistemological Integration in Curriculum Design and Practice

The findings reveal that MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan implements epistemological integration through a carefully designed curriculum model that harmonizes naqli and aqli knowledge. This integration operates at multiple levels, from overall curriculum structure to daily lesson plans and teaching practices. The madrasah's curriculum combines the national curriculum with specialized Islamic studies and an intensive *tahfidh* program in approximately a 60:40 ratio. However, rather than simply adding Islamic content to a standard curriculum, the institution has developed an integrated approach where connections between different knowledge domains are explicitly emphasized and explored. The curriculum is organized around thematic units that connect Qur'anic verses and Islamic concepts with various subject areas. For example, a unit on "Creation and Cosmology" integrates verses from the Qur'an about creation with physics concepts about the origin and nature of the universe, biology concepts about biodiversity and ecosystems, and geography concepts about environmental stewardship. This approach reflects in Al-Farabi's view that philosophy (rational inquiry) and religion (revelation) are "two languages expressing the same truth" addressing different aspects of human understanding but ultimately complementary rather than contradictory (Ahmed, 2025).

Classroom Implementation

In classroom practice, teachers are expected to develop lesson plans that explicitly connect subject matter content with relevant Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions, or Islamic ethical principles. For instance, in physics lessons about thermodynamics, teachers discuss the laws of thermodynamics as manifestations of *sunnatullah* (God's laws in nature), emphasizing the consistency, order, and wisdom evident in natural phenomena. Students are encouraged to see scientific laws not as mere human discoveries but as insights into the divine order governing creation.

Similarly, mathematics instruction incorporates exploration of geometric patterns found in nature (such as the Fibonacci sequence in flowers or fractal patterns in Islamic art) as signs (*ayat*) of divine creativity and precision. This approach helps students develop both mathematical understanding and spiritual awareness, seeing mathematical regularity as evidence of divine wisdom rather than as abstract concepts divorced from spiritual significance.

Biology lessons provide particularly rich opportunities for integration. The study of human embryology, for example, is taught alongside the Qur'anic description of human development in Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:12-14). Students examine both the scientific details of embryonic development and the Qur'anic account, considering how these different forms of knowledge might inform and enrich each other. This approach operationalizes what Abdallah (2023) calls the "beyond the binary" approach, actively working to dismantle artificial barriers between religious and scientific knowledge.

Despite the thoughtful curriculum design, the implementation of epistemological integration faces significant challenges. The research found that integration quality varies considerably depending on individual teachers' understanding, commitment, and pedagogical skills (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Gojali et al., 2024). Teachers with strong backgrounds in both Islamic studies and their subject areas were generally more successful at creating meaningful integrations, while those with more specialized training often struggled.

Science teachers particularly noted the challenge of finding appropriate and accurate connections between scientific concepts and Islamic teachings. They expressed concern about potentially forced or superficial connections that might undermine both scientific integrity and religious authenticity. The madrasah addresses this challenge through regular teacher development sessions where teachers collaborate to develop integrated lesson plans and share successful strategies.

Another challenge comes from standardized testing requirements that tend to emphasize compartmentalized knowledge rather than integrated understanding. Teachers reported tension between preparing students for national exams that treat subjects as separate domains and fostering the integrated understanding that the madrasah's philosophy emphasizes (Alam & Fadlillah, 2025; Haqqi et al., 2025; Hidayah et al., 2025).

Fitrah Development through *Murabbi* Approach

The concept of fitrah (innate human disposition toward goodness and recognition of the Divine) plays a central role in the madrasah's educational philosophy. The institution understands education not as inserting knowledge into empty vessels but as facilitating the actualization of potentials already present within students.

The *Murabbi* System At the heart of fitrah development is the *murabbi* system, where each teacher mentors 10-15 students through regular personal meetings and guidance. These *murabbi*-mentee relationships extend beyond academic guidance to include personal, spiritual, and character development (Al-Farabi, 2001). Mentors meet their mentees weekly to discuss academic progress, personal challenges, spiritual growth, and character development.

The *murabbi* system reflects Ibn Sina's concept of the soul as a "rational spiritual substance" with innate capacities for knowledge, virtue, and spiritual realization in the life of man (Mazzei, 2024). Mentors see their role as helping students recognize and develop their innate capacities rather than imposing external standards or expectations. This approach aligns with what Paulo Freire describes as "pedagogies of becoming" – educational approaches focused on facilitating students' unfolding and actualization of their latent potentials toward positive things in life (Nasir, 2024).

Dialogical Pedagogy Classroom teaching methods heavily emphasize dialogue (*hiwar*) and critical thinking rather than rote memorization (Hashim, 2017). In Islamic history classes, for example, students are encouraged to debate the ethical decisions of historical figures, consider alternative courses of action, and extract contemporary lessons from historical events. This approach aims to develop students' capacity for ethical reasoning and independent judgment rather than merely transmitting historical information.

Similarly, in Qur'anic studies, students engage in discussions about the meanings and implications of verses rather than simply memorizing them. Teachers facilitate discussions that help students connect Qur'anic teachings to their own lives and

contemporary issues, fostering personal engagement and understanding rather than passive reception (Kaminski, 2017). This dialogical approach creates educational environments that allow students to develop their potential through what Ibn Sina termed *hads* (intellectual intuition) – moments of insight and understanding that emerge from a prepared and purified intellect. Rather than simply accumulating information, students are encouraged to develop deep understanding and personal realization of truths (Gutas, 2014).

Holistic Development Programs Beyond academic instruction, the madrasah offers various programs supporting holistic development. Regular spiritual retreats (*khalwat*) provide opportunities for reflection and spiritual practice. Leadership training programs help students develop practical skills and confidence. Arts and sports programs allow for creative expression and physical development (Nasr, 2012). These diverse programs reflect the understanding that *fitrah* actualization involves multiple dimensions of human development – intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social. The educational approach aims to support development across all these dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on academic or religious learning (Sardar, 2021).

Assessment of *Fitrah* Development Assessing *fitrah* development presents significant challenges, as it involves dimensions not easily captured through conventional testing. The madrasah uses a combination of methods including mentor evaluations, self-assessments, portfolio assessments, and observation of practical application. These assessments focus on growth and development over time rather than comparison with external standards. Teachers noted the difficulty of assessing internal states and spiritual development, acknowledging that their assessments necessarily focus on observable behaviors and expressions rather than internal realities. They emphasized the importance of creating trusting relationships that allow students to share their inner experiences and developments more openly.

Table: 1 *Fitrah* Development through *Murabbi* Approach

Dimension of <i>Fitrah</i>	Description	<i>Murabbi</i> Role/Approach	Development Outcome
Spiritual <i>Fitrah</i>	Innate tendency to recognize and worship God	Guide students in Qur’anic values, rituals, and spiritual practices	Strengthened faith, <i>taqwa</i> , and God-consciousness
Intellectual <i>Fitrah</i>	Natural capacity for reasoning and seeking truth	Encourage critical thinking, inquiry-based learning, and integration of <i>naqli</i> & <i>aqli</i> knowledge	Balanced intellectual growth and wisdom
Emotional <i>Fitrah</i>	Innate ability to feel, love, and empathize	Nurture <i>akhlaq</i> , compassion, and resilience through modelling and mentoring	Emotional maturity, empathy, and noble character
Social <i>Fitrah</i>	Inborn nature to live collectively and cooperate	Facilitate teamwork, service learning, and community engagement	Responsible citizenship and social responsibility
Physical <i>Fitrah</i>	Natural need for health, strength, and balance	Promote healthy lifestyle, discipline, and physical activities	Well-being, vitality, and physical readiness
Creative <i>Fitrah</i>	Innate potential for innovation and expression	Encourage arts, problem-solving, and creative projects	Productivity, innovation, and self-expression

Moral Fitrah	Natural inclination toward truth, justice, and goodness	Provide moral guidance, role modelling, and ethical decision-making	Integrity, justice, and <i>akhlakul karimah</i>
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Teachers and administrators consciously serve as role models of adab, understanding that their example often teaches more powerfully than their instructions. The research observed numerous instances where teachers modeled patience, respect, humility, and other virtues in their interactions with students, colleagues, and visitors. The murabbi system provides a structured context for adab mentoring, where mentors help students develop specific aspects of character through personal guidance, feedback, and encouragement. Mentors work with students to identify areas for growth, set personal development goals, and track progress over time.

Adab education extends beyond personal behavior to social responsibility through various community service programs. Students regularly visit orphanages, elderly homes, and community centers, providing service and companionship (Dagli, 2022). They participate in environmental clean-up projects, mosque maintenance, and other community improvement activities. These service activities are framed as practical expressions of Islamic virtues – compassion, generosity, responsibility, and service to others. Through reflection sessions following service activities, students are guided to connect their actions to broader ethical and spiritual principles.

Character assessment presents significant challenges, particularly in balancing formative development with summative evaluation (Febrianti et al., 2025; Mufrihah et al., 2025; Shaukat et al., 2024). The madrasah uses a multifaceted approach including: (1) Mentor evaluations based on regular observation and interaction (2) Self-assessment and reflection journals (3) Peer feedback in structured settings, (4) Observation of practical application in various contexts (5) Parent feedback on observed changes in behavior at home. These assessments focus on growth and development rather than comparison with absolute standards. Teachers emphasize the importance of descriptive feedback that helps students understand their progress and identify areas for continued development.

The assessment approach reflects concept of modern educational implications of adab, which emphasizes the developmental nature of character formation and the importance of contextual understanding rather than standardized measurement (Dagli, 2022).

Khalifah Agency through Experiential Learning

The development of students' agency as *khalifah* (vicegerents of God on earth) represents the culmination of the madrasah's educational approach (Hashim & Rossidy, 2023). This dimension focuses on empowering students to act as responsible agents who contribute positively to their communities and the wider world. Experiential, project-based learning provides the primary means for developing khalifah agency. Students engage in projects that require them to identify community needs, develop solutions, implement plans, and reflect on outcomes. These projects integrate knowledge and skills from various subject areas while emphasizing ethical and spiritual dimensions.

For example, environmental projects (organized under the theme "ramadan al-bee'ah" – environmental stewardship) involve students in waste management initiatives, tree planting, water conservation, and environmental education campaigns. These projects require scientific knowledge about environmental issues, practical skills in

project management, and ethical reflection on human responsibility toward creation (Rahman, 1982). Entrepreneurial projects provide another important context for developing *khalifah* agency. Students develop small businesses that adhere to Islamic ethical principles, with profits often donated to charitable causes. These projects integrate mathematical skills, economic understanding, ethical reasoning, and practical business skills.

The development of *khalifah* agency extends beyond the school through various community engagement programs. Students work with local communities on development projects, educational initiatives, and social services. These engagements provide opportunities for students to apply their learning in real-world contexts while developing understanding of community needs and challenges. For instance, students might work with a local village to develop a clean water system, combining engineering knowledge, community organizing skills, and ethical consideration of water as a shared resource and divine blessing. Such projects blur the distinction between "sacred" and "secular" activities, instead framing all beneficial work as potential worship and fulfillment of human responsibility.

Throughout these experiential learning activities, teachers facilitate reflection that helps students connect their actions to underlying values and principles. For example, a science project on sustainable agriculture might be framed as fulfillment of the trust (*amanah*) of *khalifah* to care for the earth. A community service project might be connected to concepts of social justice and responsibility.

This integration represents what Hashim and Rossidy (2023) describe as "reconnecting science and religion through ethical cosmology" – practical activities that embody the integration of knowledge, values, and action. Students learn to see their worldly engagements not as separate from spiritual life but as expressions of spiritual commitment and responsibility.

Table 2: Khalifah Agency through Experiential Learning

Dimension of Khalifah Agency	Description	Experiential Learning Approach	Expected Outcome
Spiritual Stewardship	Responsibility as God’s vicegerent on earth	Reflection, Qur’anic contemplation, spiritual retreats	Awareness of divine trust and accountability
Environmental Stewardship	Duty to preserve and sustain nature	Hands-on environmental projects, eco-friendly campaigns, farming	Ecological responsibility and care for creation
Social Responsibility	Obligation to contribute to society and justice	Community service, social action projects, problem-based learning	Empathy, leadership, and social justice awareness
Moral-Ethical Leadership	Acting with fairness, honesty, and integrity	Role-play, ethical dilemma discussions, service leadership training	Integrity, trustworthiness, and <i>akhlaq al-karimah</i>
Intellectual Stewardship	Using knowledge for human benefit	Research-based learning, innovation labs, inquiry projects	Wisdom, creativity, and problem-solving skills
Cultural Stewardship	Preserving and appreciating diverse traditions	Cultural immersion, dialogue, arts-based learning	Respect, tolerance, and intercultural understanding

Economic Stewardship	Managing resources with justice and balance	Entrepreneurship projects, cooperative learning, financial literacy
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CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan as Islamic higher education successfully embodies the principles of Theocentric Humanism through its integrated educational approach. Theocentric humanism describe highest humanity fulfilling human life need here after that accordance with Islamic philosophy of religion. In the field of implementation manifests through four key dimensions: (1) epistemological integration that harmonizes naqli and aqli knowledge in curriculum design and daily practice; (2) fitrah actualization through murabbi-based mentoring and dialogical pedagogy; (3) character formation through comprehensive adab education embedded in daily routines and community engagement; and (4) development of students' agency as khalifah fil ardh through experiential, project-based learning that connects values with action.

The findings affirm that Classical Islamic philosophy of religion remains highly relevant in addressing contemporary educational challenges, particularly in bridging the persistent dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge. The case also shows how philosophical principles can be translated into practical educational approaches that nurture both spiritual awareness and intellectual capacity. The study reveals that successful implementation requires several essential supporting factors: teachers deeply committed to the educational philosophy, visionary leadership that maintains philosophical integrity, a conducive learning environment that enables holistic education, and supportive communities that share educational values. However, significant challenges persist including resource limitations, varying levels of philosophical understanding among educators, constraints posed by standardized assessment systems, and broader cultural changes that affect youth development.

Theoretical implications suggest that Theocentric Humanism provides a viable framework for reconstructing Islamic education that balances spiritual formation with intellectual development. The case demonstrates how philosophical concepts from the Islamic tradition can inform contemporary educational practice, suggesting the continued relevance of classical wisdom for modern challenges.

This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on Islamic educational reform by providing empirical evidence of how philosophical principles of philosophy of religion can be effectively translated into practical educational models that nurture both spiritual awareness and intellectual capacity. The case of MA Tahfidz Al-Amien Prenduan offers both inspiration and practical guidance for educators seeking to develop more integrated, holistic approaches to education.

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