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Integration Of Philosophy, Science, And Religion From The Perspectives Of Ontology, Epistemology, And Axiology

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Abstract: *Humans have a natural drive to seek truth through various channels, namely philosophy, science, and religion. However, a dichotomy or conflict often occurs between these three entities in public understanding. This research aims to analyze the integrative relationship between philosophy, science, and religion through a philosophical foundation. The method used is library research with a descriptive-analytical approach toward related literature. The author collected primary and secondary data, then analyzed them using content analysis. The research results show that philosophy, science, and religion should not be opposed. Ontologically, science studies physical objects, while religion reaches the metaphysical dimension. Epistemologically, science uses the scientific method, while religion is sourced from revelation confirmed by reason. Axiologically, religion provides an ethical foundation for the application of science. In conclusion, there is a complementary relationship where religion provides moral guidance and meaning, science provides the means for understanding nature, and philosophy bridges the two through a framework of critical thinking.*

Keywords: Philosophy of Science; Integration of Knowledge; Ontology; Epistemology; Axiology

INTRODUCTION

Humans are truth-seeking beings. In the effort to understand reality, humans use three main instruments: philosophy, science, and religion. These three are often considered to operate independently or even conflict with each other. Science is considered to focus only on empirical facts, while religion is considered to deal only with subjective beliefs that are unscientific.

The development of science in the modern world is often predicted to decrease the influence of religion through the theory of secularization. However, facts show that science and religion actually increasingly play important roles simultaneously in human life (Harahap & Salminawati, 2022). Problems arise when one-sided truth claims occur. Secular modern science often rejects God's intervention, while some religious understandings reject scientific facts.

There is a research gap (knowledge gap) in understanding how these three entities can unite without undermining each other. Many previous studies focus only on the conflict or separation (independence) between science and religion. This paper offers a different analysis by using the foundation of the philosophy of science (ontology, epistemology, and axiology) as a bridge. The author argues that philosophy is able to place science and religion in their respective positions so that harmonization is created, rather than conflict.

Intense debates between science and religion in the modern world are often triggered by Western cultural history, where the birth of modern science was anchored in the secularization movement that rejected the doctrine of religious authority in order to affirm the truth of reason and sensory experience (Harahap & Salminawati, 2022). Atheist figures such as Richard Dawkins, for example, provocatively accuse religion of teaching humans to be satisfied with trivial supernatural explanations and blinding them to real evidence. On the other hand, philosophers of science such as Paul Feyerabend actually criticize the dominance of modern science, which is considered to have turned into a "new religion" that oppresses creativity, stifles imagination, and forces uniformity of thought. This tension creates a polarization where science is often claimed as the only path toward objective truth, while religion is cornered into a position of irrationality that hinders progress.

Even though the dominance of science is so strong, the prediction of secularization theory, which states that the influence of religion would dim alongside the advancement of science, has not been proven. Empirical facts instead show an anomaly where science and religion increasingly play important roles simultaneously in modern human life. This dual need is clearly visible in crisis situations such as a pandemic, where humans depend on science for medical solutions, yet at the same time require religion for inner peace in facing an inevitable fate (Ismail et al., 2024). This phenomenon confirms that humans cannot be fully satisfied solely with materialistic scientific explanations without the touch of religious spiritual meaning.

The greatest challenge at present is bridging the epistemological gap between science, which answers the question "how" the mechanisms of nature work, and religion, which answers the questions "why" and "for what" this reality exists (Masrizal et al., 2019). Rapidly advancing modern science often loses its ethical direction because it detaches itself from axiological values, thus potentially becoming a threat to humanity if not guided by a moral vision. Therefore, the integration of knowledge is not merely a superficial matching, but a fundamental effort to reunite the reading of revealed texts (ayat qauliyah) and the reality of the universe (ayat kauniyah) as an inseparable unity of the source of truth.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses the library research method. The author collected data from various literature sources such as books, scientific journals, and other relevant documents. The data used consists of primary and secondary data related to

philosophy, science, and religion (Jendri, 2019). The approach used is qualitative with content analysis techniques.

The research process begins by inventorying literature that discusses ontology, epistemology, and axiology, as well as the relationship between science and religion. The author then performs data classification and text interpretation. This method involves elements of interpretation and description to understand the deep meaning of those texts (Harahap & Salminawati, 2022).

The analysis is conducted by comparing theories and concepts from various thinkers. The author uses deductive and inductive logic to draw conclusions. The author does not conduct field research, but instead engages in a dialogue with texts to find a complete construction of thought regarding the integration of knowledge (Fadli & Miftahuddin, 2020). This method enables the author to explain abstract concepts into a systematic understanding regarding the tripartite relationship between philosophy, science, and religion.

RESEARCH RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Philosophical Foundation: Ontology, Epistemology, And Axiology

Philosophy of science examines three interconnected dimensions of knowledge: ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Ontology concerns the nature of reality and the objects of inquiry. While scientific inquiry focuses on empirical phenomena, religious inquiry also addresses God and realities beyond sensory experience (Dewi, 2021; Dongoran et al., 2024). Epistemology examines how knowledge is acquired and validated. Science relies on observation, experimentation, and rational analysis, whereas religious knowledge draws primarily on revelation interpreted through reason (Dongoran et al., 2024; Authar & Rijal, 2024). Axiology addresses the purposes, values, and ethical implications of knowledge, emphasising its contribution to human well-being (Juhari, 2019; Harahap & Salminawati, 2022).

These dimensions are closely connected: the objects studied, the methods employed, and the purposes pursued jointly shape scientific inquiry. Ontology clarifies what is investigated, while axiology guides the ethical direction of research and its applications. Although scientific objectivity seeks to minimise bias, research priorities and uses remain influenced by human interests and values.

Integrating ontology and axiology is therefore essential to responsible scientific development. Discoveries concerning atomic or genetic realities, for example, require ethical reflection on their potential benefits and harms. Scientific validity depends on evidence and sound methods, while ethical acceptability requires a separate assessment of consequences and responsibilities. Axiology thus guides the pursuit and application of knowledge towards human well-being, social sustainability, and environmental protection (Siraj et al., 2024).

Typology Of The Relationship Between Science And Religion

Ian G. Barbour identifies four typologies of the relationship between science and religion: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. Conflict arises when scientific and religious claims are regarded as incompatible, often through scientific materialism or scriptural literalism. The Galileo controversy illustrates this tension (Ihsan et al., 2021). Independence separates their domains, associating science with natural mechanisms and religion with meaning and purpose. Although this approach reduces conflict, it risks compartmentalising human understanding (Jendri, 2019; Ismail et al., 2024). Dialogue explores conceptual and methodological connections while respecting their differences.

Integration seeks a coherent relationship between scientific knowledge and religious understanding. Barbour distinguishes three approaches: natural theology, which draws on nature to support belief in God; theology of nature, which reconsiders theological interpretations in light of scientific findings; and systematic synthesis, which brings both into a shared philosophical framework

(Jendri, 2019). Religious ethics can also guide scientific development and its applications (Harahap & Salminawati, 2022).

Within Islamic thought, Kuntowijoyo distinguishes enduring revealed truth from cumulative and revisable scientific knowledge. Integration should therefore avoid forcing scriptural verses to match provisional scientific theories. Instead, revelation can provide an ethical and interpretive framework that guides scientific inquiry while remaining open to its development.

Islamic Perspective On Integration Of Knowledge

From an Islamic perspective, there is no rigid separation between religious and general knowledge. All knowledge originates from God, both through the qauliyah verses (the Qur'an) and the kauniyah verses (the universe) (Ihsan et al., 2021). History records that Muslim scientists of the past, such as Ibn Sina and Al-Razi, were able to combine intellectual brilliance with spiritual devotion. They did not view science as the enemy of religion (Ihsan et al., 2021).

Science in Islam is bound by values (axiology). Science must bring practical benefits to human well-being and guide humans to know their Creator (Juhari, 2019). Islam rejects secular views that remove God's role from the scientific process. Instead, reason and revelation must work together equitably. Any apparent contradiction is seen as a limitation of human interpretation, not a fault in the revelation itself. Therefore, the Islamization of science movement is relevant to returning science to the foundations of monotheism and ethics (Ihsan et al., 2021).

In the Islamic worldview, the integration of science and religion is not an attempt at forced conformity, but rather a logical consequence of the principle of Tawhid. The Islamic perspective rejects the dichotomy that strictly separates religious knowledge from general knowledge, believing that all sources of knowledge originate from the One God. Fundamentally, Islam views the texts of revelation (the qauliyah verses) and the reality of the universe (the kauniyah verses) as having equal status as signs of God's greatness. Consequently, scientific exploration of the universe is no less sacred than the study of holy texts, as both are attempts to read God's "verses." If there is a conflict between scientific findings and religious texts, Islam views this not as an intrinsic contradiction, but rather as a result of the limitations of human interpretation of one or both of these sources.

History records that Islamic science is built on a foundation of revelation confirmed by reason and observation. Unlike the history of modern Western science, which arose from secularization and rebellion against church dogma, science in Islamic civilization was born from the impetus of revelation itself. The first revelation (Quran, Al-Alaq: 1-5), which commands "to read," became the primary stimulus for the companions and early Muslim scientists to develop a scientific tradition. Therefore, for Muslim scientists like Ibn Sina and Al-Razi, scientific activity was a form of worship and rational proof of the truth of

revelation. They did not experience a split personality because their intellectual intelligence went hand in hand with spiritual devotion.

However, challenges arose when the secular hegemony of modern Western science dominated the world of Islamic education. Modern science, built on the foundations of rationalism and empiricism, tended to reject the authority of revelation and separate facts from values. In response, contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi initiated the Islamization of science movement. This movement was not simply labeling science with verses, but rather an epistemological effort to free science from the shackles of secular ideology and return it to an Islamic metaphysical framework. The goal was to make science no longer value-free, but value-laden, oriented toward the welfare of the people (Jasmine, 2014).

Kuntowijoyo offers an approach called "Islamic Science" or integralistic science. He distinguishes between religious "truth," which is non-cumulative (absolute and fixed), and scientific "progress," which is cumulative (developing and changing). From this perspective, the integration of science demands that revelation be used as an open paradigm guiding the direction of scientific development. Secular science, which relies solely on reason, often experiences moral crises and a dead end in meaning. Therefore, integration requires a reunification of three main pillars: faith, knowledge, and practice. Knowledge without faith is blind and destructive, while faith without knowledge is paralyzed (Ihsan et al., 2021).

Operationally, the integration of science into Islam can be realized through a serious research program. This is not sufficient with mere philosophical discourse; it must also be practical through three research models: historical research to explore the intellectual heritage of Islam, philosophical research to formulate a robust epistemological framework, and experimental research (scientific research) guided by Islamic ethics. Thus, the resulting science will not only be technically sophisticated but also environmentally friendly and humane, in accordance with the vision of rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for the universe) (Authar & Rijal, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Philosophy, science, and religion have a harmonious and complementary relationship when positioned on the right ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundations. Science reads natural phenomena empirically, philosophy provides a framework for critical thinking, and religion provides a foundation for absolute truth and ethical guidance. Conflict only occurs when one party exceeds its authority or ignores other dimensions.

This study recommends the need to develop an educational curriculum that integrates these three aspects. Future researchers can examine the practical application of this integration in specific teaching materials in schools or

universities. Thus, science not only enlightens the mind but also strengthens faith and morality. Fundamentally, science and religion are two complementary interpretations; science reads natural reality (ayat kauniyah), while religion reads the text of revelation (ayat qauliyah).

Both are human natures that should not be opposed, but rather united in an integrative paradigm as proposed by Ian G. Barbour. This harmony demands that the development of science not stop at mere rationality, but must be guided by three main pillars: faith, knowledge, and good deeds. Without a solid axiological foundation from religion, scientific progress risks becoming blind and losing its humanitarian orientation, thus failing to bring true benefits.

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