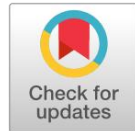


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Epistemological Foundations of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education: A Reading of Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri at the University Level

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ABSTRACT

Background. The increasing demand for knowledge integration in Islamic higher education has intensified discussions on the epistemological foundations of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE). However, existing studies on Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's epistemological framework largely focus on its philosophical dimensions, with limited attention to its potential contribution to the reconstruction of contemporary Islamic educational paradigms.

Purpose. This study aims to analyze the relevance of al-Jabiri's epistemology and explore its contribution to the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in Islamic universities.

Methods. Employing a qualitative library research design, the study utilized descriptive-analytical interpretation and thematic synthesis to examine primary and secondary sources related to bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies.

Results. The analysis generated four major themes: (1) bayani epistemology as the normative foundation of Islamic education, (2) irfani epistemology as the ethical and spiritual dimension of learning, (3) burhani epistemology as the driver of scientific and multidisciplinary development, and (4) an integrative epistemological model for Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education. The literature synthesis indicates that the three epistemological traditions function in a complementary rather than competing manner. Bayani provides normative and theological grounding, irfani contributes ethical-spiritual depth, while burhani supports critical inquiry and scientific reasoning. Their interaction forms an integrative framework that bridges revelation, spirituality, and rational inquiry. This model further supports curriculum development, interdisciplinary learning, and research innovation within Islamic higher education institutions.

Conclusions. Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education can be understood as an epistemological reconstruction effort that integrates religious and scientific knowledge. The study concludes that al-Jabiri's epistemological framework offers a conceptual foundation for producing graduates who are intellectually competent, spiritually grounded, and socially responsible.

KEYWORDS

Bayani Epistemology, Burhani Epistemology, Irfani Epistemology, Knowledge Integration, Religious Education

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Islam and science has become one of the most important discussions in

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contemporary Islamic education, particularly in response to the growing demand for knowledge integration within higher education. The rapid development of science, technology, and global social transformation has challenged Islamic educational institutions to formulate educational paradigms capable of reconciling religious values with scientific advancement. Consequently, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is no longer understood solely as a discipline concerned with religious instruction but has evolved into a multidisciplinary field that interacts with the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and technological studies. Within this context, the integration of religious and scientific knowledge has emerged as a strategic agenda in the transformation of Islamic higher education institutions (Muhammad Amimul Ahsan, 2013; Hidayah, 2024).

The transformation of Islamic higher education in Indonesia has been marked by the emergence of various integrative models of knowledge development, particularly following the conversion of several State Islamic Institutes (IAIN) into State Islamic Universities (UIN). These institutional reforms have encouraged the development of educational paradigms that seek to overcome the long-standing dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. Models such as the Twin Towers paradigm at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, the Tree of Knowledge at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, and the Integrative-Interconnective paradigm at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta illustrate different approaches to bridging Islamic scholarship and contemporary scientific disciplines (Chaudhury et al., 2019; Yamin et al., 2022). Despite these developments, the epistemological foundations that support such integration remain a subject of ongoing scholarly debate.

One of the most influential contemporary Muslim thinkers addressing this issue is Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri. Through his critique of Arab-Islamic reason (*naqd al-'aql al-'arabi*), al-Jabiri developed a framework consisting of three major epistemological traditions: *bayani*, *irfani*, and *burhani*. *Bayani* emphasizes textual interpretation and scriptural authority, *irfani* focuses on spiritual experience and intuitive knowledge, while *burhani* prioritizes rational inquiry and empirical verification. According to al-Jabiri, these epistemological traditions have profoundly shaped the development of Islamic intellectual history and continue to influence contemporary educational thought, knowledge production, and institutional transformation within the Muslim world (Al-Jabiri, 1993).

The growing interest in al-Jabiri's epistemology has generated numerous studies discussing the characteristics and relevance of *bayani*, *irfani*, and *burhani* in various fields of Islamic studies. However, existing literature predominantly examines these epistemologies as philosophical concepts or as foundations of Islamic intellectual traditions. Relatively limited attention has been devoted to exploring how these three epistemological traditions can be synthesized into a comprehensive framework for multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in contemporary higher education institutions. Furthermore, previous studies have rarely examined the implications of epistemological integration for addressing current educational challenges, including interdisciplinary learning, knowledge integration, scientific development, and religious moderation (Fur'qon, M. A., Baroroh, S. L. N. U., n.d.).

More importantly, previous studies generally treat *bayani*, *irfani*, and *burhani* as separate epistemological categories or as historical components of Islamic intellectual traditions. As a result, limited attention has been given to explaining how these epistemologies may function collectively within contemporary Islamic higher education and contribute to the development of multidisciplinary educational frameworks. This unresolved issue represents the central research gap addressed by the present study.

This gap is particularly significant because contemporary Islamic universities are increasingly expected to produce graduates who are not only religiously literate but also scientifically competent, ethically responsible, and capable of responding to complex global challenges. Consequently, understanding how bayani, irfani, and burhani interact within a multidisciplinary educational framework becomes both a scholarly necessity and a practical concern for the future development of Islamic higher education.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's epistemological framework and examine its relevance to the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in Islamic higher education institutions. Specifically, this study investigates the educational functions of bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies and explores how their integration can contribute to the reconstruction of contemporary Islamic educational paradigms.

The novelty of this study lies in its effort to move beyond descriptive explanations of al-Jabiri's epistemology by developing an integrative analytical framework that connects bayani, irfani, and burhani with contemporary models of multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education. By synthesizing these epistemological traditions within the context of Islamic higher education transformation, the study contributes theoretically to discussions on knowledge integration and educational epistemology while also offering practical insights for curriculum development and institutional innovation in Islamic universities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative library research design to examine the relevance of Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's epistemological framework to the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in Islamic higher education. Library research was selected because the primary objective of the study was to explore, interpret, and synthesize theoretical perspectives, epistemological concepts, and scholarly discussions concerning bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies. Rather than generating empirical data through field observations or interviews, this study focused on developing an analytical understanding of how these epistemological traditions contribute to contemporary models of knowledge integration within Islamic universities. Library research is particularly appropriate for investigating conceptual frameworks, philosophical traditions, and theoretical developments that require critical interpretation and synthesis of existing scholarly knowledge (Rockström et al., 2009; Rukavina et al., 2019).

The study was based on two interrelated textual corpora. The primary corpus consisted of Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's major works on Arab-Islamic epistemology, particularly those discussing bayani, irfani, and burhani as foundational modes of knowledge production within Islamic intellectual history. The secondary corpus comprised peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, conference proceedings, and academic studies examining Islamic epistemology, knowledge integration, multidisciplinary education, and the transformation of Islamic higher education. To ensure analytical relevance and contemporary significance, priority was given to publications indexed in Scopus and other reputable academic databases published between 2019 and 2025, while seminal classical works were retained to preserve theoretical continuity and contextual depth.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic process of literature identification, screening, selection, and documentation. Relevant literature was identified using keywords such as "Al-Jabiri epistemology," "bayani," "irfani," "burhani," "knowledge integration," "Islamic higher education," "multidisciplinary Islamic education," and "integration of religion and science." The

identified publications were subsequently screened based on their relevance to the research objectives, conceptual contribution, publication quality, and scholarly credibility. Sources that did not directly address epistemological issues, educational integration, or contemporary Islamic higher education were excluded from the analysis. This procedure follows contemporary recommendations for rigorous literature review research that emphasize transparency, relevance, and systematic selection of scholarly sources (Knapp, 2016; Al-jabiri & Sulaiman, 2024).

The analysis adopted a thematic synthesis approach to identify, organize, and interpret recurring patterns across the selected literature. The analysis adopted a conceptual and descriptive-analytical approach supported by thematic synthesis. While thematic synthesis was employed to identify recurring patterns and relationships across the literature, the descriptive-analytical approach was used to interpret the philosophical meanings, educational implications, and epistemological interconnections among bayani, irfani, and burhani traditions. Thematic synthesis is widely recognized as an effective method for integrating findings from diverse sources and generating higher-order conceptual interpretations (Labrell et al., 2018; Halstead, 2004)..

The analytical process consisted of four stages. First, all selected literature was read repeatedly to identify key concepts, arguments, and epistemological assumptions. Second, meaningful segments of data were coded according to their epistemological characteristics, educational functions, and implications for knowledge integration. Third, related codes were grouped into broader thematic categories through a process of constant comparison. Finally, the resulting themes were interpreted and synthesized to construct an integrative understanding of al-Jabiri's epistemology within the context of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education.

The thematic synthesis resulted in four major analytical themes: (1) Bayani Epistemology as the Normative Foundation of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education, (2) Irfani Epistemology as the Ethical–Spiritual Dimension of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education, (3) Burhani Epistemology as the Driver of Scientific and Multidisciplinary Development, and (4) An Integrative Epistemological Model for Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education. These themes served as the basis for examining the strengths, limitations, contemporary relevance, and educational implications of al-Jabiri's epistemological framework for Islamic higher education.

To enhance analytical rigor, the study employed three strategies. First, the selection of primary and secondary texts was conducted systematically based on relevance, scholarly credibility, and conceptual contribution. Second, a consistent analytical framework grounded in al-Jabiri's epistemological categories was applied throughout the interpretation process. Third, the stages of coding, thematic categorization, and conceptual synthesis were documented transparently to ensure interpretive consistency. These procedures were intended to strengthen the credibility, coherence, and transparency of the study's findings while minimizing subjective interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Epistemological Mapping of Al-Jabiri's Framework

Table 1. Thematic Synthesis of Al-Jabiri's Epistemology in Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

Theme	Core Characteristics	Educational Function	Educational Implication
Bayani	Textual interpretation, scriptural authority, revelation-based reasoning	Provides theological and normative foundations	Strengthens Islamic identity, ethics, and religious literacy

Irfani	Spiritual experience, intuition, moral awareness	Develops ethical and spiritual competence	Promotes character formation, empathy, and religious moderation
Burhani	Rational inquiry, empirical verification, critical thinking	Encourages scientific investigation and interdisciplinary learning	Supports innovation, research culture, and problem solving
Epistemological Integration	Interaction among bayani, irfani, and burhani	Produces holistic educational paradigm	Facilitates multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

As shown in Table 1, the literature synthesis generated four interconnected themes that explain the educational functions and contemporary relevance of al-Jabiri's epistemological framework. These themes subsequently served as the basis for interpreting the role of bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies in the development of multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education.

The thematic synthesis reveals that al-Jabiri's epistemological framework consists of three interconnected modes of knowledge production: bayani, irfani, and burhani. Rather than functioning as isolated categories, these epistemologies represent different sources of authority, methods of validation, and educational orientations. Bayani derives knowledge from authoritative religious texts and provides normative guidance; irfani emphasizes spiritual experience and moral awareness as pathways to understanding reality; while burhani relies on rational inquiry, empirical observation, and logical verification. As summarized in Table 1, these epistemologies perform complementary rather than competing functions within Islamic intellectual traditions (Jabiri, 2021; Idrus, 2019; Samsudin, 2019).

This mapping suggests that contemporary Islamic education should not privilege one epistemology at the expense of the others. Instead, the challenge lies in constructing meaningful interactions among textual authority, spiritual formation, and scientific reasoning. Such interactions provide the foundation for understanding how al-Jabiri's framework can contribute to the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in contemporary Islamic universities.

Unlike previous studies that primarily discuss bayani, irfani, and burhani as separate epistemological categories, the present analysis identifies their educational functions and interrelationships within the context of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education. This analytical perspective enables the study to move beyond descriptive interpretations and generate a conceptual synthesis that explains how the three epistemologies contribute collectively to knowledge integration in Islamic higher education (Husnatul Mahmudah, 2022).

The four themes presented in Table 1 were not predetermined categories but emerged through an iterative process of coding, comparison, and thematic synthesis of the selected literature. The analytical process revealed recurring patterns concerning the sources of knowledge, modes of verification, educational functions, and implications for knowledge integration. Consequently, the thematic mapping provides an analytical bridge between al-Jabiri's epistemological theory and contemporary debates on multidisciplinary Islamic education.

Bayani Epistemology as the Normative Foundation of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

The synthesis of contemporary literature indicates that bayani epistemology remains a fundamental foundation for the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in Islamic higher education institutions. Within al-Jabiri's epistemological framework, bayani emphasizes knowledge derived from authoritative religious texts, particularly the Qur'an and

Hadith, through interpretation, linguistic analysis, and juristic reasoning. In contemporary Islamic education, this epistemology continues to play a central role in shaping curriculum orientation, educational objectives, and ethical standards, ensuring that the integration of scientific knowledge remains connected to Islamic values and religious commitments (Abdullah, 2014; N. Şahin, 2019).

The findings reveal that bayani epistemology provides an important normative structure for multidisciplinary learning because it offers a coherent ethical framework that guides the production, dissemination, and application of knowledge. Recent studies on Islamic higher education demonstrate that the integration of religion and science requires not only methodological innovation but also a value-based foundation capable of addressing contemporary social, technological, and environmental challenges (March, 2015; Zarkasyi, 2010). In this regard, bayani serves as a source of moral orientation that enables Islamic Religious Education to maintain its religious identity while engaging with diverse scientific disciplines.

At the same time, the literature indicates that the dominance of bayani epistemology within many Islamic educational institutions may create challenges for interdisciplinary knowledge development when textual interpretation becomes the primary or exclusive source of authority. Several recent studies argue that excessive dependence on textual approaches may limit critical inquiry, reduce openness to empirical evidence, and constrain the development of innovative educational responses to rapidly changing social realities (Halstead, 2004; Hidayat, 2016). This concern is particularly relevant in higher education contexts where students are expected to engage with complex global issues such as artificial intelligence, environmental sustainability, digital transformation, and multicultural citizenship.

The analysis further suggests that the contemporary relevance of bayani epistemology lies not in its exclusive dominance but in its capacity to function as a normative and ethical foundation within a broader epistemological framework. Rather than operating independently, bayani should interact constructively with burhani and irfani epistemologies to promote a more balanced model of knowledge integration. Such an approach enables Islamic Religious Education to preserve its theological foundations while simultaneously encouraging critical reasoning, scientific inquiry, and spiritual development (Nurafifah et al., 2023; Fazlin, H., Hasan, H., & Muid, 2003).

Irfani Epistemology as the Ethical Spiritual Dimension of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

The analysis reveals that irfani epistemology constitutes the ethical and spiritual dimension of multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE). Unlike bayani epistemology, which derives knowledge primarily from authoritative religious texts, irfani emphasizes inner experience, spiritual awareness, moral intuition, and the purification of the self as legitimate pathways to understanding reality. Within al-Jabiri's epistemological framework, irfani represents a mode of knowing that transcends purely textual and rational approaches by emphasizing the transformative relationship between knowledge, spirituality, and human character. The findings indicate that this epistemological dimension remains highly relevant for contemporary Islamic higher education, particularly in addressing the growing concern that educational systems often prioritize cognitive achievement while neglecting ethical and spiritual formation (Al-Jabiri, 1993; Zarkasyi, 2010).

The literature further suggests that the integration of religious and scientific knowledge cannot be achieved solely through curriculum reform or interdisciplinary collaboration. Rather, meaningful integration requires the cultivation of ethical dispositions that guide how knowledge is produced, interpreted, and applied in society. Recent studies on Islamic higher education emphasize that spiritual intelligence, moral responsibility, and character development are essential components

of holistic education, particularly in the context of rapid technological advancement and social transformation (Fazlin et al., 2024). In this regard, irfani epistemology provides a framework for ensuring that scientific and professional competencies remain connected to ethical values and spiritual commitments.

The findings also demonstrate that irfani epistemology plays a significant role in promoting religious moderation, empathy, and intercultural understanding within Islamic educational environments. Contemporary scholarship argues that higher education institutions are increasingly required to develop graduates who possess not only disciplinary expertise but also emotional maturity, social responsibility, and the ability to engage constructively with diverse perspectives (Al-Attas, 1995). Through its emphasis on self-reflection, spiritual awareness, and moral cultivation, irfani contributes to the development of educational approaches that prioritize human dignity, social harmony, and responsible citizenship. Consequently, this epistemology extends the purpose of education beyond knowledge acquisition toward personal and societal transformation.

However, the analysis also identifies several challenges associated with the implementation of irfani epistemology in contemporary higher education. The subjective nature of spiritual experience often makes it difficult to assess, standardize, or integrate into formal academic structures. Unlike bayani and burhani approaches, which rely on textual interpretation and empirical verification respectively, irfani knowledge is rooted in personal experience and inner awareness. This characteristic may create tensions within modern educational systems that emphasize measurable learning outcomes and evidence-based assessment practices. Furthermore, excessive reliance on spiritual intuition without adequate engagement with textual and rational approaches may risk reducing academic rigor and limiting interdisciplinary dialogue (A. Şahin, 2018).

Burhani Epistemology as the Driver of Scientific and Multidisciplinary Development

The analysis identifies burhani epistemology as the primary driving force behind the development of multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in contemporary Islamic higher education. Within al-Jabiri's epistemological framework, burhani is characterized by rational inquiry, logical reasoning, empirical investigation, and systematic verification. Unlike bayani, which derives authority from religious texts, and irfani, which emphasizes spiritual experience, burhani seeks knowledge through critical analysis and evidence-based reasoning. The findings indicate that this epistemological orientation has become increasingly significant in responding to the demands of modern higher education, where scientific literacy, interdisciplinary collaboration, and problem-solving skills are essential components of academic excellence.

The literature suggests that the transformation of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, particularly through the conversion of State Islamic Institutes (IAIN) into State Islamic Universities (UIN), reflects a growing recognition of the importance of burhani epistemology. This transformation was driven by the need to overcome the long-standing dichotomy between religious sciences and modern scientific disciplines. Contemporary studies argue that knowledge integration requires a rational and methodological framework capable of facilitating dialogue between revelation-based knowledge and empirical sciences (N. Şahin, 2019). In this regard, burhani epistemology functions as a bridge that enables Islamic Religious Education to engage with disciplines such as social sciences, natural sciences, technology, health sciences, and environmental studies without losing its religious foundations.

The findings further reveal that burhani epistemology has influenced the emergence of various institutional models of knowledge integration within Indonesian Islamic universities. The

“Twin Towers” model at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya promotes interaction between Islamic sciences and modern disciplines while preserving the autonomy of each field. Similarly, the “Tree of Knowledge” model at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang emphasizes the interconnectedness of religious knowledge, scientific inquiry, and professional expertise. Meanwhile, the “Spider Web” model developed at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta advocates an integrative-interconnective approach that encourages interdisciplinary dialogue and collaborative knowledge production. Although these models differ conceptually, they share a common epistemological orientation rooted in burhani reasoning, namely the belief that knowledge advances through critical engagement, intellectual openness, and scientific inquiry.

A comparative reading of these institutional models indicates that the role of burhani epistemology is neither uniform nor uncontested across Islamic universities. While the Twin Towers, Tree of Knowledge, and Integrative-Interconnective paradigms all promote scientific inquiry and interdisciplinary engagement, they differ substantially in the extent to which rational and empirical approaches are integrated with religious and spiritual dimensions. Therefore, the growing prominence of burhani epistemology should not be interpreted as evidence of its superiority over bayani or irfani traditions. Rather, it reflects the increasing demand for research productivity, scientific competitiveness, accreditation standards, and global academic engagement within contemporary higher education systems.

A significant finding of this study is that burhani epistemology provides the methodological foundation necessary for addressing contemporary educational and societal challenges. Issues such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, environmental sustainability, public health, religious pluralism, and social inequality cannot be adequately understood through textual interpretation alone. They require empirical investigation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and critical reasoning. Recent scholarship on Islamic higher education emphasizes that universities are increasingly expected to produce graduates capable of integrating religious values with scientific competence in order to respond effectively to global challenges (Nasrullah et al., 2014). Therefore, burhani epistemology contributes not only to knowledge production but also to the development of adaptive and socially responsive educational practices.

Nevertheless, the analysis also reveals several limitations associated with the dominance of burhani epistemology. Excessive emphasis on rationality and empirical verification may inadvertently marginalize spiritual experience and religious authority, creating tensions with educational traditions that prioritize textual and moral dimensions of learning. Furthermore, the adoption of modern scientific paradigms without critical reflection may encourage forms of knowledge integration that are procedural rather than genuinely transformative. Several scholars have cautioned that scientific modernization in Islamic higher education should not lead to the erosion of ethical values, religious identity, or the distinctive intellectual heritage of Islamic scholarship (Ahmad, 2007; N. Şahin, 2019). Consequently, burhani epistemology should be understood as a necessary but insufficient foundation for holistic Islamic education.

The present study therefore argues that the strength of burhani epistemology lies not in replacing bayani and irfani traditions, but in facilitating constructive interaction among them. Its role is to expand intellectual horizons, encourage critical thinking, and promote interdisciplinary knowledge production while remaining anchored in ethical and spiritual values. This finding extends previous discussions on al-Jabiri’s epistemology by demonstrating that burhani serves as the operational mechanism through which multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education can be realized in practice. In this sense, burhani functions as the engine of educational transformation, enabling Islamic higher education institutions to move beyond the dichotomy of religion and

science toward a more integrated, dynamic, and contextually relevant model of knowledge development.

An Integrative Epistemological Model for Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

The synthesis of the literature suggests that the primary contribution of al-Jabiri's epistemological framework lies not in the superiority of any single mode of reasoning, but in the dynamic interaction among bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies. The findings demonstrate that each epistemological tradition performs a distinct yet complementary function within the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education (IRE). Bayani provides normative and theological foundations, irfani contributes ethical and spiritual orientation, while burhani offers methodological tools for scientific inquiry and interdisciplinary engagement. Consequently, the integration of these three epistemologies creates a more comprehensive educational framework capable of addressing the complex intellectual, moral, and social challenges faced by contemporary Islamic higher education (Ahmad Baso, 2000).

The analysis further reveals that the transformation of Islamic higher education in Indonesia reflects an ongoing effort to operationalize this epistemological integration. Institutional models such as the Twin Towers of UIN Sunan Ampel, the Tree of Knowledge of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, and the Spider Web paradigm of UIN Sunan Kalijaga illustrate different approaches to overcoming the historical dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. Although these models vary in structure and emphasis, they share a common objective: to establish meaningful dialogue between revelation-based knowledge, spiritual values, and scientific reasoning. This finding suggests that successful knowledge integration requires not merely curriculum reform but also epistemological reconstruction (Jabiri, 2021).

A critical examination of these integration models reveals that the success of epistemological integration remains uneven across institutions. Although many Islamic universities have adopted integrative frameworks at the conceptual level, the practical implementation of interdisciplinary learning often encounters institutional barriers, including disciplinary compartmentalization, limited collaboration across faculties, and the persistence of traditional academic boundaries. Consequently, the existence of an integration model does not automatically guarantee meaningful interaction among religious, scientific, and spiritual forms of knowledge (N. Şahin, 2019). This finding suggests that epistemological integration should be evaluated not only through institutional narratives but also through its actual influence on curriculum design, teaching practices, research culture, and academic governance.

A significant finding of this study is that multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education should be understood as an epistemological project rather than solely a curricular project. Previous discussions on educational integration frequently focus on institutional structures, curriculum design, or academic programs. However, the present analysis indicates that the deeper challenge lies in reconciling different ways of knowing, validating, and applying knowledge. Without epistemological integration, interdisciplinary education risks becoming a superficial combination of subjects rather than a genuinely transformative learning process. Therefore, the interaction of bayani, irfani, and burhani provides an essential foundation for developing coherent and sustainable models of multidisciplinary Islamic education.

The findings also highlight the importance of epistemological pluralism in responding to contemporary global challenges. Issues such as artificial intelligence, environmental sustainability, social inequality, intercultural dialogue, and religious moderation require educational approaches that transcend disciplinary boundaries. Bayani contributes ethical and normative guidance, irfani

cultivates moral responsibility and spiritual awareness, while burhani facilitates critical analysis and evidence-based problem solving. The integration of these dimensions enables Islamic higher education institutions to produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also ethically responsible and socially engaged.

Nevertheless, the implementation of an integrative epistemological model is not without challenges. Institutional inertia, disciplinary compartmentalization, limited interdisciplinary expertise, and resistance from both traditionalist and modernist perspectives may hinder the realization of epistemological integration. Furthermore, the balance among bayani, irfani, and burhani is often difficult to maintain, as educational institutions may privilege one epistemology over the others depending on their historical, cultural, and organizational contexts (Al-Jabiri, 2000). These findings suggest that epistemological integration should be viewed as a continuous process of negotiation and adaptation rather than a fixed educational formula.

Based on these findings, this study proposes an Integrative Epistemological Model for Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in which bayani functions as the normative foundation, irfani serves as the ethical spiritual mediator, and burhani operates as the methodological driver of scientific development. The interaction among these three epistemologies creates a holistic educational paradigm capable of integrating religious values, spiritual formation, and scientific inquiry within a unified framework. This model extends previous discussions on al-Jabiri's thought by demonstrating its practical relevance for reconstructing Islamic Religious Education in contemporary higher education and by offering a conceptual foundation for future curriculum development, interdisciplinary research, and institutional transformation within Islamic universities.

The findings of this study culminate in the development of an Integrative Epistemological Model that operationalizes al-Jabiri's epistemological framework within the context of contemporary Islamic higher education. As presented in Table 2, the model demonstrates how bayani, irfani, and burhani epistemologies perform complementary educational functions and collectively contribute to the realization of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education. This synthesis represents the principal conceptual contribution of the present study.

Table 2. Proposed Integrative Epistemological Model for Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education

Epistemology	Main Role	Educational Contribution	Expected Graduate Outcomes
Bayani	Normative Foundation	Provides ethical and theological guidance	Religious literacy and moral awareness
Irfani	Ethical–Spiritual Mediator	Cultivates spirituality and character formation	Empathy, self-awareness, and social responsibility
Burhani	Scientific and Methodological Driver	Encourages critical thinking and interdisciplinary inquiry	Analytical competence and problem-solving skills
Integration of Three Epistemologies	Holistic Knowledge Development	Connects revelation, spirituality, and science	Balanced, adaptive, and multidisciplinary graduates

Table 2 illustrates the integrative epistemological model proposed in this study. The model demonstrates that multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education cannot rely exclusively on a single epistemological tradition. Instead, the interaction among bayani, irfani, and burhani creates a holistic educational framework capable of integrating religious values, spiritual formation, and scientific inquiry within contemporary Islamic higher education.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri's epistemological framework remains highly relevant for the development of Multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education in contemporary Islamic higher education. The thematic synthesis reveals that bayani epistemology functions as the normative foundation that provides theological and ethical guidance, irfani epistemology serves as the ethical spiritual dimension that nurtures character formation and moral responsibility, and burhani epistemology acts as the methodological driver that promotes scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary engagement. Rather than operating independently, these three epistemological traditions perform complementary roles that collectively support the integration of religious values, spiritual development, and scientific knowledge. The findings therefore suggest that multidisciplinary Islamic Religious Education should be understood not merely as a curricular integration project but as a broader epistemological reconstruction that seeks to overcome the dichotomy between religion and science within Islamic higher education.

The principal contribution of this study lies in the development of an Integrative Epistemological Model that operationalizes al-Jabiri's framework within the context of contemporary Islamic higher education. This model offers a conceptual foundation for curriculum development, interdisciplinary learning, research innovation, and institutional transformation by positioning bayani, irfani, and burhani as interconnected dimensions of knowledge production and educational practice. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its reliance on library research and theoretical analysis, which does not allow direct examination of how these epistemological traditions are implemented in educational settings. Future research is therefore encouraged to conduct empirical investigations in Islamic universities to explore how epistemological integration influences curriculum design, teaching practices, student learning experiences, and institutional culture. As Islamic higher education continues to respond to rapid social, technological, and intellectual change, the ability to harmonize revelation, spirituality, and scientific reasoning will become increasingly important for developing graduates who are intellectually competent, ethically responsible, and capable of contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable global society.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the writing of this work, the author used DeepL to check the grammar. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as necessary and assumes full responsibility for the content of this publication.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

Author 5: Supervision; Validation.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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