

Forms of Knowledge Integration in The Perspective of Wahdatul Ulum

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ABSTRACT

This research examines various forms of knowledge integration from the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum. Wahdatul Ulum is a philosophical view that emphasizes the unity and close relationship between various branches of knowledge. This study discusses the fundamental concepts of Wahdatul Ulum, such as knowledge integration, scientific synthesis, and interdisciplinary connections. Furthermore, this research also analyzes the practical applications of these concepts in various disciplines, including religion, science, philosophy, and the humanities. The research methodology employed involves literature review and analysis of the thoughts of scholars and intellectuals who have developed the concept of Wahdatul Ulum. The findings of this research depict diverse ways in which knowledge integration can be applied within the context of Wahdatul Ulum, ranging from multidisciplinary approaches to frameworks that unify various aspects of knowledge. This research provides valuable insights into how the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum can inspire and enrich our understanding of knowledge integration. The implications of this research are that knowledge integration from the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum can aid in solving complex problems and promote a more holistic understanding of the world and knowledge. Therefore, this research holds significant relevance in the context of advancing science and interdisciplinary thinking.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Science is one of the most fundamental aspects of human development and understanding of this complex world. Over time, the development of science has laid the foundation for various different disciplines, bringing about significant changes in various aspects of human life. In order to achieve a deeper understanding of the universe and human existence, the integration of knowledge has become a crucial concept.

In this context, the perspective of *Wahdatul Ulum* (unity of knowledge) plays a significant role. *Wahdatul Ulum* is a philosophical and epistemological concept in the Islamic tradition that emphasizes the unity of knowledge as the primary point of departure in confronting the complexity of the world. It reflects an effort to comprehend the universe and all its elements as a closely interconnected unity and to integrate various branches of knowledge to achieve a deeper understanding of reality.

In recent times, Muslim scholars have been intensively debating the unification of knowledge and religion, leading to a new concept in education known as *Wahdatul Ulum*. *Wahdatul Ulum* is a perspective that describes all forms of knowledge in the world as an inseparable unity. This also implies that all forms of knowledge stem from the same source, which is Allah.

However, the situation differs in Western and European education, where there is no attempt to integrate science with religion. Consequently, there is a separation or dichotomy in the world of knowledge, which is also reflected in the education system in Indonesia, similar to the Western world. There is a separation between science education and religious education, among other things.

If we observe the Islamic golden age in the past, all Muslim scholars or intellectuals undoubtedly appreciated the concept of knowledge integration. This is because Islam recognizes that all knowledge comes from Allah, the All-Knowing. Therefore, it gave rise to scholars who were proficient in integrating various fields of knowledge.

In the Islamic view, the unity of sciences paradigm asserts that all knowledge is fundamentally a unity originating from Allah through His revelation, whether directly or indirectly. Hence, all fields of knowledge should communicate and converge toward the same goal, always walking hand in hand. This should apply not only to religious knowledge but also to scientific knowledge. Thus, religion and science should always be harmonious and not in conflict with each other.

This paradigm produces scientists with profound knowledge in various fields, viewing all branches of knowledge as a cohesive whole and capable of connecting all these disciplines into a rich and integrated understanding. The unity of science does not create scientists who merely gather knowledge from various fields like pasting newspaper

clippings together, but they are able to unify and synthesize this knowledge into a comprehensive analysis of specific scientific phenomena.

This understanding of the concept has inspired many scholars in the past not only to specialize in one field of knowledge but also to have a strong understanding of various disciplines. For example, many Islamic scholars in the past, such as Al-Farabi, mastered natural sciences like mathematics and physics, yet they also had expertise in political science. Ibn Sina, considered the Father of modern medicine by many, was not only famous for his work in medicine, such as the "Qanun fi Thib," but also for his writings in various other fields, especially philosophy. His other famous work, "Asy Syifa," contains various topics from other branches of knowledge and spans 18 volumes.

From this understanding, the speaker aims to elucidate various forms of knowledge integration from the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum, which will be discussed in sub-topics including Vertical Integration, Horizontal Integration, Actualization Integration, Intrapersonal Integration, and Ethical Integration.

The objective of this writing is to explore various forms of knowledge integration from the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum. Thus, we will present an in-depth analysis of the Wahdatul Ulum concept and how it contributes to efforts to integrate various disciplines of knowledge. We will delve into various case studies and approaches used in this context, seeking a deeper understanding of the benefits of knowledge integration within the framework of Wahdatul Ulum.

Through this research, we hope to provide valuable insights into the importance of Wahdatul Ulum in the context of knowledge integration. It is expected to be a significant contribution to understanding how knowledge integration can serve as a means to achieve a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the world and human existence. Thus, this research can provide a deeper perspective on the role of Wahdatul Ulum in the development of science and the integration of science and spirituality in human thought.

B. METHODS

The research method in this paper requires an approach that encompasses literature analysis, philosophical contemplation, and conceptual review. Here are the research method steps applied in this paper:

- a. Literature Analysis: Conduct a search for relevant literature on Wahdatul Ulum and the integration of knowledge in academic sources such as books, journal articles, and related research. Gather and review literature that supports an understanding of Wahdatul Ulum and fundamental concepts related to the integration of knowledge.
- b. Philosophical Examination: Examine the philosophical ideas underpinning the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum, including the viewpoints of prominent philosophers and Islamic thinkers who have developed this concept. Analyze relevant philosophical thinking and relate it to the concept of knowledge integration.
- c. Conceptual Review: Elaborate on and discuss the fundamental concepts of Wahdatul Ulum, such as the unity of knowledge, scientific synthesis, and the interconnectedness of different fields of knowledge. Explain how these concepts apply in the context of knowledge integration.
- d. Analysis and Correlation: Analyze and identify various forms of knowledge integration that can be applied within the framework of Wahdatul Ulum based on findings from literature analysis, philosophical contemplation, and conceptual review. Establish correlations between the concepts of Wahdatul Ulum and the forms of knowledge integration you discover.
- e. Synthesis and Argumentation: Synthesize your findings and develop a strong argument regarding the significance of knowledge integration within the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum. Substantiate your argument by referencing relevant sources and philosophical thinking.

C. FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WAHDATUL ULUM

As explained earlier, knowledge in the presence of Allah and His Messenger is an inseparable part. The same applied to the first generation of Muslim scientists, where knowledge also held an integral position.

However, in subsequent periods, knowledge experienced disintegration or fragmentation, and it can even be said to have "strayed from its roots" due to the pressures of secularization and the dualistic, pragmatic, and materialistic views of some Muslim

scholars. This disintegration was further exacerbated by the tendency of Muslims to imitate and adopt educational approaches far from the principles of monotheism (tauhid). This was also caused by the deviation of the Muslim community's vision from the true Islamic vision as a result of "contemporary confusion" and misinterpretation in understanding scholarly aspects.

With the development of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra in Medan as an Islamic educational institution that not only develops Islamic knowledge but also Islamic science, and not just for the sake of knowledge alone but also for advancing civilization, this university has formulated and established the implementation of scholarly integration known as 'Wahdatul 'Ulum.'

This approach is also based on the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia regarding the procedures for implementing knowledge integration in Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. 'Wahdatul 'Ulûm' in this context encompasses the vision, concepts, and paradigm of knowledge that are based on the principle of unity and believed to be a gift from God. Therefore, its ontology, epistemology, and axiology are presented as acts of devotion to God and dedicated to the development of civilization and the well-being of humanity.

Thus, the State Islamic University of North Sumatra in Medan not only establishes departments or faculties in the fields of Islamic studies and Islamic science, but the development of all disciplines of knowledge is based on belief and norms, thinking, and their application as a form of devotion to God. Furthermore, the goal is to contribute to the development of civilization and the well-being of humanity, as a tangible manifestation of devotion to God.

Based on this paradigm, the reintegration of knowledge in the context of 'Wahdatul 'Ulûm' can be carried out in five forms:

1. ***Vertical Integration***

Vertical integration in the context of Wahdatul Ulum, which emphasizes that knowledge originates from one source, namely Allah, is a profound understanding of the origin and essence of knowledge in the Islamic tradition. In this understanding, all knowledge and wisdom come from Allah, who is the source of all knowledge and wisdom.

This concept is often associated with the view of *Wahdatul Wujud* (the unity of existence), which teaches that everything exists within and from Allah.

In this context, vertical integration encompasses the merging of all forms of knowledge, including natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and religious knowledge, within a broader understanding of their connection to the one source of knowledge, which is Allah. In this perspective, knowledge is not something separate or isolated but part of a larger understanding of reality and existence. Vertical integration in *Wahdatul Ulum* can include:

- a. **Understanding Knowledge as a Sign of Allah:** All knowledge, whether it's in the natural sciences, social sciences, or religious studies, is viewed as a sign or proof of the existence of Allah. This knowledge helps humans approach a deeper understanding of Allah.
- b. **Emphasis on Absolute Truth:** This concept emphasizes that all knowledge, both worldly and religious, should seek the absolute truth that originates from Allah.
- c. **Integration of Ethics:** In vertical integration, ethics and morality are integrated into all aspects of knowledge to ensure that human knowledge and actions align with religious values.
- d. **Respect for Divine Wisdom:** Understanding that human knowledge is only a small part of the limitless divine wisdom and that humans should humble themselves in the pursuit of knowledge.

Thus, vertical integration in *Wahdatul Ulum* leads to a deeper understanding of the source of knowledge, which is Allah, and how knowledge in various disciplines can unite in reverence and acknowledgment of divine wisdom. This is a profound concept in the intellectual and spiritual tradition of Islam.

Integrating knowledge with spirituality is important because the purpose of human life is to attain awareness of God. The essence of religious experience for a Muslim is *Tawhid*, which creates a comprehensive worldview of reality, truth, the world, space, time, human history, and destiny, all centered around *Tawhid*.

Therefore, the relationship between humans and Allah is based on understanding. Humans have the capacity to understand through knowledge-storage organs such as

memory, imagination, reasoning, intuition, consciousness, and the like, and all of these are unified in the experience of monotheism.

2. *Horizontal Integration*

The Wahdatul Ulum interdisciplinary approach is a concept associated with a holistic understanding of knowledge. It is a growing approach within the Islamic intellectual tradition, emphasizing the integration and unity of diverse knowledge. One form of integration in this approach is horizontal integration.

Horizontal integration in the Wahdatul Ulum interdisciplinary approach refers to the effort to integrate various disciplines or fields of knowledge across disciplines. This means connecting knowledge from different disciplines to complement each other and provide a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon or issue.

For example, in the study of religion and science, horizontal integration can combine an understanding of religious texts with scientific findings to gain deeper insights into the relationship between religion and science. In this context, horizontal integration aims to avoid sharp separations between religious knowledge and scientific knowledge and promotes a holistic understanding.

Horizontal integration can also be applied in various other fields, such as ethics, philosophy, social sciences, and more. Its goal is to create a richer and more complex understanding of various complex issues and phenomena.

In practice, horizontal integration in the Wahdatul Ulum interdisciplinary approach requires scholars and researchers to have in-depth knowledge of various disciplines and the ability to connect concepts from different disciplines. This can be helpful in solving complex problems and providing a richer perspective on reality.

This approach also emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration among scholars, researchers, and thinkers from various fields, so that the knowledge produced can be more comprehensive and relevant in addressing contemporary challenges.

In the context of Wahdatul Ulum, horizontal integration can include:

- a. **Integration between Natural Sciences and Religious Studies:** Efforts to link natural sciences with religious teachings so that the understanding of the universe and natural processes can be seen in the context of religious values and teachings.

- b. **Integration between Social Sciences and Humanities:** Integration between social sciences, such as sociology and psychology, with humanities, such as literature and philosophy, to understand how values, culture, and social interactions influence human experiences.
- c. **Interdisciplinary Application in Research and Education:** Encouraging research and education that involve various disciplines to seek more comprehensive solutions to complex problems.
- d. **Integration of Technology with Traditional Wisdom:** Using modern technology in the development of traditional knowledge and wisdom to achieve balanced progress beneficial to society.
- e. **Incorporating Religious Perspectives into Social and Humanistic Sciences:** Integrating understanding of religion and spirituality into social and humanities analysis to understand moral and ethical aspects in a social context.

Horizontal integration in Wahdatul Ulum aims to achieve a broader, holistic, and comprehensive understanding of reality and enhance awareness of the interconnectedness of various disciplines and fields of knowledge. It also encourages dialogue between various branches of science and spiritual beliefs, promoting a deeper and harmonious understanding of the world and humanity's place in it.

In this approach, various perspectives are utilized and interconnected, but the branch of knowledge that forms the basis of research or discussion remains the primary focus. Thus, a transdisciplinary approach is used to combine perspectives from various fields, transcending the boundaries of existing academic disciplines.

3. Actuality Integration

Aligning the scientific approach that has been developed with the needs and realities of society is an important step. This integration takes the form of applying knowledge in a concrete or empirical manner (through real-life experiences), known as "Dirâsah Taqiyah." Its purpose is to ensure that knowledge remains relevant to the needs of societal development, the well-being of humanity, and the advancement of civilization.

In the context of Wahdatul Ulum, actuality integration refers to efforts to integrate or connect the actual or real-life aspects of human life, knowledge, and experiences with

spiritual or religious understanding. This definition includes the concept that everything in everyday life, including actions, thoughts, and experiences, can be a means to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between humans and God or spiritual reality.

Actuality integration within Wahdatul Ulum encompasses the following ideas:

- a. **Everyday Life as a Spiritual Vehicle:** This concept emphasizes that daily activities, such as work, learning, interacting with others, and various life experiences, can be used as a means to draw closer to God or to experience spiritual reality. In this regard, there is no separation between daily life and spiritual practice.
- b. **Understanding of Duties and Responsibilities:** Actuality integration also means understanding that everyday tasks and responsibilities can be carried out with full awareness of religious and ethical values. This creates opportunities for spiritual growth through righteous and virtuous actions.
- c. **Combining Knowledge with Spiritual Wisdom:** This integration combines worldly knowledge with spiritual values and teachings, enabling knowledge and wisdom to be applied in ways that help individuals draw closer to God.
- d. **Using Experience as an Educational Medium:** Actuality integration also means using life experiences as valuable educational tools. Each experience is regarded as a lesson and an opportunity for spiritual growth.
- e. **Emphasis on Awareness and Healing:** In actuality integration, self-awareness and an awareness of spiritual reality are seen as essential elements in the spiritual journey. Self-awareness and an awareness of spiritual reality are key elements in this integration.

Actuality integration in Wahdatul Ulum encourages individuals to live a more conscious, meaningful, and spiritually significant life. This helps bridge the gap between the material world and the spiritual world, allowing individuals to lead a balanced and meaningful life from both a worldly and spiritual perspective.

4. Ethical Integration

In the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum, ethical integration is seen as an effort to understand and appreciate ethical differences as part of the broader wealth of knowledge

and understanding. This refers to the idea that each ethical group has its unique contributions to building greater knowledge and understanding.

In practice, ethical integration in the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum may involve:

- a. **Inter-ethical Dialogue:** Encouraging active and constructive dialogue among various ethical groups to understand and appreciate cultural, historical, and identity differences.
- b. **Joint Studies and Research:** Encouraging inter-ethical collaboration in research and academic studies to explore deeper knowledge about various aspects of human life.
- c. **Inclusive Education:** Ensuring that the education system reflects ethical diversity and promotes a better understanding of the diverse contributions of various ethical groups to human history and culture.
- d. **Empowering Minority Ethics:** Promoting the empowerment of minority ethical groups to actively participate in social, economic, and political life, ensuring they have an equal role in building society.
- e. **Social Justice:** Promoting social justice that recognizes the rights of all individuals, regardless of their ethical backgrounds.

Ethical integration in the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum aims to create a more inclusive, harmonious, and diverse society where various ethical groups can live together in peace and mutual respect. This aligns with the values of peace, tolerance, and respect for diversity advocated by many religious teachings, including Islam.

5. *Intrapersonal Integration*

The Wahdatul Ulum scientific approach (unity of knowledge) in the context of intrapersonal integration emphasizes the understanding of the unity among various aspects of the human self, including the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions. This means that individuals, in this view, must seek unity and balance among all these aspects in order to achieve a deeper understanding of themselves and their relationship with the universe and its Creator.

Here are some ways in which intrapersonal integration can be understood in the Wahdatul Ulum scientific approach:

- a. **Integration of the Spiritual and Intellectual Dimensions:** In this view, the spiritual and intellectual dimensions of individuals are not separated. Instead, intellectual knowledge and understanding must be used as a means to develop a deeper spiritual understanding. One should seek unity between worldly knowledge and spiritual experience.
- b. **Emotional Balance:** Individuals should seek emotional balance that allows them to manage their emotions wisely and understand the role of emotions in decision-making and social interactions.
- c. **Social Integration:** Intrapersonal integration within the Wahdatul Ulum approach also includes social integration, i.e., how individuals interact with others and understand their role in society. This includes values such as empathy, tolerance, and social justice.
- d. **Holistic Self-Development:** This approach encourages individuals to develop themselves holistically, meaning that they should nurture their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. This may involve practices such as meditation, reflection, or worship as a means to achieve this balance.
- e. **Self-Awareness:** Self-awareness is a crucial aspect of intrapersonal integration within the Wahdatul Ulum perspective. Individuals should develop a deep understanding of themselves, including their strengths, weaknesses, values, and life goals.

In the Wahdatul Ulum scientific approach, intrapersonal integration is an essential part of the effort to achieve a deeper understanding of oneself, the universe, and the Creator. It also contributes to achieving a more balanced and meaningful life and better relationships with others in society.

D. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the discussion on the forms of knowledge integration in the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum can encompass several key points as follows:

1. **Understanding the Unity of Knowledge:** Wahdatul Ulum teaches that knowledge, regardless of its discipline, is part of a larger understanding of existing reality. It

emphasizes the importance of integrating various disciplines of knowledge to comprehend the greater whole.

2. **Integration between Spiritual and Worldly Knowledge:** This approach encourages the integration of spiritual knowledge (religion, ethics, philosophy) and worldly knowledge (natural sciences, social sciences) as a means to gain a richer understanding of the universe and the meaning of life.
3. **Interdisciplinary Dialogue:** Wahdatul Ulum promotes interdisciplinary dialogue to explore deeper and holistic knowledge about complex phenomena. This involves collaboration among experts from various fields to tackle larger issues.
4. **Holistic Understanding of Humanity:** The integration of knowledge in the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum also includes a holistic understanding of humanity as a complex entity, encompassing physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions. This requires individuals to seek balance in their self-development.
5. **Appreciation of Knowledge Diversity:** This approach encourages an appreciation for the diversity of knowledge offered by various disciplines and cultures. It establishes a foundation for cross-cultural tolerance, understanding, and cooperation.
6. **Advocating Social Justice:** Knowledge integration in the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum can also contribute to efforts to create a more just and inclusive society where knowledge and intellectual wealth can be used for the common good.

This conclusion demonstrates that the Wahdatul Ulum approach advocates a vision of knowledge integration that transcends disciplinary boundaries and recognizes the unity of knowledge in achieving a deeper understanding of the universe, humanity, and the meaning of life. This integration has the potential to enrich human thinking and understanding, as well as support efforts to build a more harmonious and peacefully coexisting society.

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