Beyond Terminology: A Qur'an and Hadith Reconstruction of *Tarbiyah, Ta'līm*, and *Ta'dīb*

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Abstract

This study addresses persistent terminological ambiguity in Islamic education by reconstructing the concepts of *tarbiyah, ta'līm*, and *ta'dīb* based on Qur'anic and Hadith sources. While previous studies have examined these terms philosophically or semantically, they often fail to clarify their distinct educational functions and practical implications. This article argues that these concepts represent complementary dimensions of a unified Islamic educational paradigm rather than interchangeable terms. The study employs qualitative text-based religious research using *tafsīr tarbawī* and *ḥadīth maudū'ī* approaches. Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions relevant to the three concepts were systematically identified, classified, and analyzed through authoritative classical and contemporary exegesis. Conceptual reconstruction was further guided by Izutsu's Qur'anic semantic framework to uncover their epistemological, ontological, and axiological orientations. The findings demonstrate that *tarbiyah* functions as a process-oriented framework emphasizing holistic, gradual human development; *ta'līm* represents authoritative, ethically grounded knowledge transmission; and *ta'dīb* serves as the axiological goal of education, centered on the formation of *adab*. Together, they form an integrated educational paradigm, with *pesantren* illustrating their organic implementation. As a normative-conceptual study, findings are not empirically generalizable. However, they provide a foundational framework for curriculum design and institutional analysis in Islamic education. This study offers a Qur'an-Hadith-based reconstruction that bridges conceptual debates and educational praxis, contributing a coherent framework for Islamic educational reform.

Keywords: Islamic Education, *Ta'dīb, Tafsir-Hadith Tarbawi, Ta'līm, Tarbiyah*.

Abstrak

Studi ini membahas ambiguitas terminologi yang terus-menerus terjadi dalam pendidikan Islam dengan merekonstruksi konsep *tarbiyah*, *ta'līm*, dan *ta'dīb* berdasarkan sumber Al-Qur'an dan Hadits. Meskipun studi sebelumnya telah meneliti istilah-istilah ini secara filosofis atau semantik, studi tersebut sering kali gagal mengklarifikasi fungsi pendidikan dan implikasi praktisnya yang berbeda. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa konsep-konsep ini mewakili dimensi komplementer dari paradigma pendidikan Islam yang terpadu, bukan istilah yang dapat dipertukarkan. Studi ini menggunakan penelitian keagamaan berbasis teks kualitatif dengan pendekatan tafsir *tarbawī* dan hadis *maudū'ī*. Ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an dan tradisi Nabi yang relevan dengan ketiga konsep tersebut diidentifikasi, diklasifikasikan, dan dianalisis secara sistematis melalui penafsiran klasik dan kontemporer yang otoritatif. Rekonstruksi konseptual selanjutnya dipandu oleh kerangka semantik Al-Qur'an Izutsu untuk mengungkap orientasi epistemologis, ontologis, dan aksiologisnya.

Temuan menunjukkan bahwa *tarbiyah* berfungsi sebagai kerangka kerja berorientasi proses yang menekankan perkembangan manusia secara holistik dan bertahap; *ta'līm* mewakili transmisi pengetahuan yang berwibawa dan berlandaskan etika; dan *ta'dīb* berfungsi sebagai tujuan aksiologis pendidikan, yang berpusat pada pembentukan adab. Bersama-sama, keduanya membentuk paradigma pendidikan yang terintegrasi, dengan pesantren sebagai ilustrasi implementasi organiknya. Sebagai studi normatif-konseptual, temuan-temuan tersebut tidak dapat digeneralisasikan secara empiris. Namun, temuan-temuan tersebut memberikan kerangka kerja dasar untuk desain kurikulum dan analisis kelembagaan dalam pendidikan Islam. Studi ini menawarkan rekonstruksi berbasis Al-Qur'an dan Hadis yang menjembatani perdebatan konseptual dan praktik pendidikan, serta memberikan kerangka kerja yang koheren untuk reformasi pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, *Ta'dīb,* Tafsir-Hadis *Tarbawi, Ta'līm, Tarbiyah.*

Introduction

Education occupies a central position in the intellectual history of Islam. Since the classical period, Islamic scholarship has consistently linked discussions of humanity, knowledge, and the meaning of life to education.[1] In this sense, education in Islam is not merely a means of transmitting knowledge but an integral, holistic process of personal development encompassing spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions.[2] Debates concerning the nature, purpose, and orientation of Islamic education, therefore, remain highly relevant, particularly in the context of contemporary social transformations and ongoing global challenges.

A pivotal milestone in modern Islamic educational discourse was the recommendation of the Muslim World International Conference on Education (Mecca, 1977). The conference proposed three core concepts: *tarbiyah, ta'līm, and ta'dīb* as the most comprehensive representation of Islamic education. These concepts do not exclude other educational terms identified by Nata, such as *tahżīb, wa'ż, mau'iżah, riyāḍah, tazkiyah, talqīn, tadrīs, tafaqquh, tabyīn, tażkirah,* and *irsyād*.[3] Rather, they collectively encompass the full meaning of education in Islam. As stated in Appendix B of the conference document, *"The full meaning of education in the Islamic context lies in the connotations of the terms tarbiyah, ta'līm, and ta'dīb. What each of these terms reveals*

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[1] Hasan Asari, *Menguak Sejarah Mencari 'Ibrah: Risalah Sejarah Sosial-Intelektual Muslim Klasik,* Revisi (Perdana Publishing, 2017).

[2] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam* (International Inst. of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1980).

[3] Abuddin Nata, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* (Kencana, 2016).

about humanity, society, and the environment in relation to God is interrelated, and together they represent the scope of education in Islam, both formal and informal."[4]

Numerous studies have examined these three core concepts from different perspectives. Previous research by Pramita et al. emphasizes the philosophical foundations of Islamic education by positioning *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* as fundamental concepts of human formation.[5] Qodir & Asrori focus on the epistemological dimensions of the Qur'an, examining how these terms structure Islamic knowledge.[6] Ahmad Syah uses a semantic approach to analyze the conceptual fields and the internal relationships among the three terms.[7] Other studies, such as those by Abdiyantoro et al. and Susanti et al., explore their practical manifestations in general educational contexts.[8]

Al-Attas, however, believes that the use of *ta'dib* is sufficient to accommodate the intent and meaning of both *ta'lim* and *tarbiyah*. He even believes, as Daud does, that the use of *ta'dib-tarbiyah-ta'lim* in the Mecca Conference is a compromise that neglects the accuracy and authenticity of Islamic educational ideas and concepts.[9] Al-Attas, driven by this belief, wrote a special paper proposing *ta'dīb* as a more comprehensive term for Islamic education at the second conference of Islamic education experts, held in Islamabad in 1980. He emphasized that *"the conceptual structure of ta'dīb encompasses the elements of knowledge ('ilm), instruction (ta'līm), and good guidance (tarbiyah). Therefore, there is no longer a need to refer to Islamic education with these three keywords simultaneously."*[10]

Despite the valuable contributions made by him and the aforementioned researchers, most existing studies remain conceptual, philosophical, or semantic. A major limitation lies in the absence of a systematic analysis of how the meanings of

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[4] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, ed., *Aims and Objectives of Islam Education* (King Abdul Aziz University, 1979), 157.

[5] Aldila Winda Pramita et al., "Hakikat Pendidikan Islam: Tarbiyah, Ta'lim Dan Ta'dib," *Journal of Educational Research and Humaniora (JERH)*, 2023, 83–89.

[6] Abdul Qodir and Muhammad Asrori, "Epistemologi Pendidikan Qur'ani: Telaah Terhadap Konsep Ta'lim, Tarbiyah, Dan Ta'dib Dalam Al-Quran," *Peradaban Journal of Interdisciplinary Educational Research* 3, no. 1 (2025): 1–16.

[7] Ahmad Syah, "Term Tarbiyah, Ta'lim Dan Ta'dib Dalam Pendidikan Slam: Tinjauan Dari Aspek Semantik," *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 7, no. 1 (2008): 138–50.

[8] Restu Abdiyantoro et al., "Pemahaman Guru Pada Konsep Tarbiyah, Ta'lim, Dan Ta'dib Dalam Pembelajaran Untuk Pembentukan Karakter," *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Multidisipliner Research* 2, no. 2 (2024): 11–20; Linna Susanti et al., "The Reality of Tarbiyah, Ta'lim, and Ta'dib in Islamic Education," *SUHUF* 35, no. 2 (2023): 11–19.

[9] Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *Filsafat Dan Praktik Pendidikan Islam Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas*, trans. Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi et al. (Mizan, 2003), 175.

[10] Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam*, 34.

tarbiyah, ta'līm, and *ta'dīb* can be reconstructed based on authentic sources, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, and then translated into concrete educational goals and institutional practices. As a result, a gap remains between theoretical discussions and the reality of Islamic education.

This study seeks to address that gap by engaging *pesantren* as a representative analytical model for examining the implications of these three educational concepts. Rather than treating pesantren as an empirical research object, this study engages existing scholarly discussions on pesantren to demonstrate how the three dimensions of Islamic education can be integratively conceptualized.

Methodologically, this study is grounded in an analysis of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions related to *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb*, employing pedagogical approaches rooted in *tafsīr* and hadith studies. It also draws upon Izutsu's conceptual framework, particularly his argument that key Qur'anic terms embody the Islamic worldview of reality and human existence.[11] This framework enables the three educational terms to be understood not merely as lexical expressions, but as normative concepts with significant pedagogical implications.

In line with Umar's argument that integrating Qur'anic and hadith into educational discourse strengthens their relevance across time and context, this study emphasizes the importance of a coherent conceptual foundation for Islamic educational objectives.[12] Within the pesantren context, such a foundation is essential for articulating educational goals that are not solely shaped by market demands or societal trends, but are firmly rooted in Islamic theological and anthropological perspectives. Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) reconstruct the meanings of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* from the perspectives of *tafsīr* and hadith-based educational studies; and (2) analyze the conceptual implications of these terms for the formulation of Islamic educational objectives, with *pesantren* serving as a representative model of implementation.

Method

This study employs a qualitative exploratory research design with a text-based religious research approach. The research aims to reconstruct the conceptual meanings of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* and to examine their implications for Islamic educational

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[11] Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia: Pendekatan Semantik Terhadap Al-Qur'an*, trans. Agus Fahur Husein (Tiara Wacana, 2003).
[12] Ahmad Umar Umar, *Manhaj Al-Tarbiyah Fi Al-Quran Wa Al-Sunnah* (Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1996).

objectives. The study was conducted from June to December 2025. The research place is defined as the field of Islamic textual and scholarly sources, where Qur'anic-Hadith discourse and authoritative interpretations are treated as the primary locus of inquiry. In this context, *pesantren* is not examined as an empirical institution through measurement, but as a normative educational model that historically embodies and practices the integrated principles of Islamic education.

Data collection in this study was primarily conducted through documentation techniques. The data sources consist of primary textual data, including selected Qur'anic verses and thematically relevant hadiths drawn from authoritative canonical collections, and secondary data in the form of classical and contemporary scholarly works on Islamic education, tafsīr, and hadith studies. Techniques such as interviews and observations were not employed, as the research focus is conceptual and normative rather than empirical-social. Consequently, the role of informants in this study is fulfilled by authoritative texts and scholarly interpretations, which function as the main sources of meaning and conceptual articulation within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Data analysis was conducted using an interpretative-analytical method. Qur'anic data were analyzed using the *tafsīr tarbawī* approach, which involves linguistic analysis, thematic contextualization, the extraction of educational values, and the formulation of normative educational principles. Hadith data were analyzed using a thematic hadith approach (*al-maudū'ī*),[13] which includes theme determination, data compilation, authenticity classification (*maqbūl* and *mardūd*), thematic interpretation, and conceptual synthesis. The analyzed data were then systematically organized into conceptual tables to highlight the relationships among *tarbiyah, ta'līm, and ta'dīb* (Table 1). In the final stage, an implication analysis was conducted to articulate the contribution of these reconstructed concepts to Islamic educational objectives, particularly within the *pesantren* context.

Table 1. Inventory of Qur'an Verses and Hadiths on the Theme of Education

Concept	Source (Qur'an/Hadith)	Text Excerpt	Conceptual Relevance
Tarbiyah	Qur'an, Al-Fātiḥah [1]: 2	رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ	The term *rabb* reflects *rubūbiyyah* as the foundation of *tarbiyah*: nurturing, sustaining, and guiding creation toward perfection.
	Qur'an, Al-Isrā'	كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرً	Family-based *tarbiyah* is the first

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[13] Walid bin Usman bin Ibrahim Al-Rasyudi, *Al-Hadîs al-Maudû'i Dirâsah Ta'sîliyah Tatbîqiyah* (Syabakah Alaukah, 2023).

Concept	Source (Qur'an/Hadith)	Text Excerpt	Conceptual Relevance
	[17]: 24		educational process, gradual and morally reciprocal.
	Qur'an, Al-Ḥajj [22]: 5	رَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ	*Tarbiyah* signifies growth that develops and benefits others, not mere increase.
	Qur'an, Asy-Syu'arā' [26]: 18	أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا	*Tarbiyah* emphasizes process, not educators' authority claims; growth does not guarantee moral truth.
	Qur'an, Al-Baqarah [2]: 276	يَمْحَقُ اللهُ الرِّبٰوا وَيُرْبِى الصَّدَقٰتِ	Social dimension of *tarbiyah*: growth through giving rather than exploitative accumulation.
	Qur'an, Ar-Rūm [30]: 39	فَلَا يَرْبُوْا عِنْدَ اللهِ	True growth (*tarbiyah*) must be socially and theologically grounded.
	Hadith Muslim, 1014	فتربو في كفّ الرحمن حتى تكون أعظم من الجبل	Divine and social *tarbiyah*: small deeds are nurtured and developed gradually by God, emphasizing education as a sustained formative process.
Ta'līm	Qur'an, Al-'Alaq [96]: 4–5	الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ	Establishes *ta'līm* as systematic teaching mediated through tools. Knowledge is transmitted, accumulated, and internalized.
	Qur'an, Al-Baqarah [2]: 31	وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا	Ontological foundation of *ta'līm*: knowledge grants human distinction and meaning-making capacity.
	Qur'an, Ar-Raḥmān [55]: 2	عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ	Teaching precedes human creation, positioning *ta'līm* as a cosmic and civilizational principle.
	QS. Al-Jumu'ah [62]: 2	يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ	Defines the Prophet's pedagogical role: textual instruction and contextual understanding.
	Qur'an, Al-Baqarah [2]: 282	وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ	Links *ta'līm* with piety. Knowledge includes ethical and spiritual dimensions beyond cognition.
	Qur'an. Al-Kahfi [18]: 65	وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا	Affirms the existence of divinely granted (*ladunni*) knowledge beyond empirical learning.
	Qur'an, Al-Anbiyā' [21]: 7	فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ	Establishes epistemic authority and scholarly mediation in *ta'līm*.
	Hadith Muslim, 1478	إن الله لم يبعثني معنتا ولا متعنتا ولكن بعثني معلما ميسرا	*Ta'līm* as a universal obligation, including for women.
Ta'dīb	Hadith al-Dārimī, 3625	إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَأْدُبَةُ اللهِ	Establishes the Qur'an as a divine banquet of adab. *Ta'dīb* is the process of cultivating proper conduct through engagement with revelation.
	Hadith al-Dārimī, 3640	لَيْسَ مِنْ مُؤَدِّبٍ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُؤْتَى أَدَبُهُ، وَإِنَّ أَدَبَ اللهِ الْقُرْآنُ	Affirms the Qur'an as the ultimate source of adab. Islamic education aims at instilling divine ethics, not merely social norms.
	Hadith al-Bukārī, 97	وَرَجُلٌ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ أَمَةٌ فَأَدَّبَهَا فَأَحْسَنَ تَأْدِيبَهَا	Demonstrates *ta'dīb* as a concrete educational practice emphasizing

Concept	Source (Qur'an/Hadith)	Text Excerpt	Conceptual Relevance
			moral formation and disciplined upbringing.
	Ibn Taimiyyah, p.353	أَدَّبَنِي رَبِّي فَأَحْسَنَ تَأْدِيبِي	Validates the meaning of the *ta'dīb* tradition. Positions Allah as the supreme educator and adab as the essence of education.

Results and Discussion

Understanding the concepts of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* cannot be confined to their literal or lexical meanings. The results of this study demonstrate that such a reductionist approach obscures the epistemological depth and normative orientation embedded in Qur'anic and Prophetic discourse. Through an analysis grounded in authoritative (*mu'tabar*) works of tafsīr and hadith scholarship, this study reconstructs these three terms as interrelated yet distinct educational concepts, each representing a specific dimension of the Islamic worldview (*weltanschauung*) on human formation.

This reconstruction is particularly significant in educational theory and practice. The findings indicate that imprecise use of educational terminology in Islamic contexts risks producing conceptual confusion that may translate into flawed pedagogical objectives and institutional policies. A clear illustration of this risk appears in the contemporary distinction between "*character education*" and "*akhlāq education*". While "*character*" is commonly defined through socially negotiated norms that are historically contingent and value-relative, *akhlāq* (الأخلاق) is conceptually anchored in its etymological relation to *al-Khāliq* (الخالق), thereby embedding moral formation within a transcendent moral order. This distinction clarifies why official Indonesian educational policy (UU Sisdiknas, 2003) employs the term *akhlāq mulia* (noble morality) rather than "character," as previously highlighted in comparative studies.[14] The results thus underscore the necessity of conceptual precision when articulating Islamic educational goals.

The Concept of *Tarbiyah*: Nurturing as a Process of Holistic Growth

The findings reveal that *tarbiyah* is fundamentally a process-oriented concept rooted in gradual, sustained, and purposeful development. Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī's analysis of the term *Rabb* (Qur'an 1:2) demonstrates that *tarbiyah* signifies nurturing

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[14] Syahrial Zulkapadri, "Pendidikan Karakter Dan Pendidikan Akhlak (Studi Perbandingan)," *At-Ta'dib* 9, no. 1 (2014): 109–25.

and cultivating something step by step until it reaches its intended perfection.[15] Although the verbal derivatives *rabba, rabbā,* and *rabbaba* share this semantic field, the absolute use of *Rabb* (رب) is reserved exclusively for God, emphasizing that ultimate authority over growth and perfection belongs to the Divine.

Al-Ṭabarsī's linguistic exegesis reinforces this finding by identifying *tarbiyah* as the original semantic core of Rabb, encompassing meanings such as master (*al-sayyid al-muṭā'*), owner (*al-mālik*), protector (*al-ṣāḥib*), and reformer or evaluator (*al-muṣliḥ*).[16] Collectively, these meanings indicate that *tarbiyah* extends beyond instruction to include care, supervision, moral correction, and responsibility for outcomes. From an educational perspective, this positions *tarbiyah* as a comprehensive framework for nurturing human potential rather than a narrow instructional method.

Further analysis of Quraish Shihab's interpretation highlights the pedagogical implications of *rubūbiyyah*.[17] The findings indicate that divine *tarbiyah* models an educational relationship characterized by compassion, guidance, discipline, and accountability.[18] While corrective measures may be perceived as harsh or undesirable at certain stages of human development, they ultimately serve the higher purpose of moral and spiritual maturation. This model reframes education as a formative process guided by wisdom rather than immediate comfort or instrumental success.

Synthesizing Qur'anic evidence, this study identifies three interrelated dimensions of *tarbiyah*: the divine (*rabbānī*), familial, and social. The divine dimension is most clearly articulated in Qur'an 1:2, establishing God as the ultimate educator. The familial dimension appears in verses such as Qur'an 17:24, 22:5, and 26:18, which collectively demonstrate that family-based tarbiyah is grounded in ethical responsibility rather than reciprocity. Al-Ṭabarsī's interpretation of *kamā* (كما) in Qur'an 17:24 suggests that children are morally obliged to surpass, not merely repay, the care they received from their parents.[19]

The analysis of Qur'an 22:5 further reveals that *tarbiyah* implies not only growth (*ziyādah*) but flourishing (*intifākh*), indicating that the ultimate goal of education is to produce outcomes that are more refined and beneficial than their

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[15] Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Mu'jam Mufradât Alfaz Alquran* (Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah, 2004).

[16] Abu Ali al-Fadl bin al-Hasan Tabrasi, *Majma' al-Bayân Fi Tafsîr Alquran*, I (Dar al-Ulum, 2005), 26.

[17] M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, I (Lentera Hati, 2005), 30–31.

[18] Khalid bin Hamid Al-Hazami, *Usûl Al-Tarbiyah al-Islâmiyah* (Dar Alam al-Kutub, 1420).

[19] Abu Ali al-Fadl bin al-Hasan Tabrasi, *Majma' al-Bayân Fi Tafsîr Alquran*, VII (Dar al-Ulum, 2005), 183.

origins.[20] Meanwhile, Qur'an 26:18 illustrates that even nurturing provided by an unjust authority, such as Pharaoh's upbringing of Moses, is still recognized as *tarbiyah*. However, it fails when detached from moral and theological truth. This finding underscores the need for *tarbiyah* to prioritize the learner's growth rather than the authority or ego of the educator.[21]

The social dimension of *tarbiyah* is evident in Qur'an 2:276 and 30:39, which contrast charity and usury in terms of growth and blessing. The findings indicate that social *tarbiyah* functions as moral education at the communal level, cultivating empathy, generosity, and social responsibility while countering greed and exploitation. Thus, *tarbiyah* frames education as an act of nurturing life, values, and social harmony.[22]

The Concept of *Ta'līm*: Authoritative Transmission of Knowledge

The findings indicate that *ta'līm* represents the epistemic dimension of Islamic education, emphasizing structured, repetitive, and authoritative transmission of knowledge. Al-Iṣfahānī distinguishes *ta'līm* from *I'lām* by noting that *ta'līm* involves sustained pedagogical engagement that embeds knowledge deeply within the learner, rather than merely conveying information.[23]

Qur'an 96:4–5 provides the foundational articulation of ta'līm, where the repeated use of *'allama* (علّم) following *iqra'* (اقرأ) establishes God as *al-'Ālim*, the ultimate source of knowledge. The designation of *al-qalam* (القلم) as a medium of instruction highlights the centrality of writing, documentation, and intellectual transmission.[24] The findings confirm that *ta'līm* encompasses both material and immaterial means of learning, including revelation, textual knowledge, and reflective reasoning.[25]

The relationship between *ta'līm* and *taqwā* is explicitly articulated in Qur'an 2:282, which concludes with the statement, *"Be mindful of God, and God will teach you."* This verse indicates that Islamic epistemology integrates empirical, rational, and

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[20] M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, IX (Lentera Hati, 2005).

[21] Tabrasi, *Majma' al-Bayân Fi Tafsîr Alquran*, VII, 237.

[22] Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, I, 594–96.

[23] al-Iṣfahānī, *Mu'jam Mufradât Alfaz Alquran*, 384.

[24] M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, XV (Lentera Hati, 2005), 401–2.

[25] Abu Ali al-Fadl bin al-Hasan Tabrasi, *Majma' al-Bayân Fi Tafsîr Alquran*, X (Dar al-Ulum, 2005), 307.

metaphysical dimensions of knowledge. The findings thus affirm that *ta'līm* cannot be reduced to technical instruction; it is inherently ethical and spiritual in orientation.

The inclusion of *'ilm ladunnī* in Qur'an 18:65 further expands the epistemic scope of *ta'līm*. This form of divinely bestowed knowledge, inaccessible through conventional learning alone, underscores the Qur'anic assertion that moral refinement and spiritual discipline are prerequisites for higher epistemic attainment. The findings challenge reductionist epistemologies in modern education by affirming that not all valid knowledge is produced through formal instruction or empirical methods. [26]

Taken together, these results demonstrate that *ta'līm* functions as the epistemological backbone of Islamic education, oriented toward forming God-conscious individuals capable of integrating revealed, rational, and experiential knowledge. This framework resonates with contemporary interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches while remaining firmly grounded in Islamic epistemology.[27]

The Concept of *Ta'dib*: Ethical Orientation and the Formation of *Adab*

The findings identify *ta'dīb* as the ethical telos of Islamic education. Drawing on the work of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *ta'dīb* is shown to encompass knowledge (*'ilm*), instruction (*ta'līm*), and nurturing (*tarbiyah*) within a unified moral framework.[28] Unlike conceptual compromises that treat these terms as separate or interchangeable, *ta'dīb* integrates them into a coherent vision centered on the formation of *adab*.

Although early critiques[29] questioned the hadith foundations of *ta'dīb*, subsequent analyses grounded in Ibn Taymiyyah's scholarship and corroborative narrations in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī support the conceptual validity of this framework.[30] Recent hadith studies further classify these narrations as *maqbūl li ghayrih*, reinforcing their acceptability within Islamic scholarship.[31]

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[26] Farah Ahmed, "Devising an Islamic Approach to Learning and Teaching Through Hadīth Jibrīl: Reorienting Ourselves Toward Educating from within an Islamic Worldview," in *Curriculum Renewal for Islamic Education* (Routledge, 2021).

[27] Muhammad Amin Abdullah, "Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin dan Transdisiplin: Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Riset pada Pendidikan Tinggi Masa Depan," in *Era Disrupsi: Peluang dan Tantangan Pendidikan Tinggi Indonesia*, ed. Daniel Dhakidae (Akademi Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, 2017).

[28] Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam*.

[29] Badaruddin, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam* (Pustaka Pelajar, 2007).

[30] Imam Bukhari, *Shahih Al-Bukhari* (Dar Ibn Katsir, 2002), 37 Kitab al-'Ilm, Bab Ta'lim al-Rajul Amatahu wa Ahlahu. Hadis No.97; Ibn Taimiyyah, *Majmu'ah al-Rasa'il al-Kubra Li Ibn Taimiyyah*, II (Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabiy, n.d.), 353.

[31] Annida Fitriana Supriadi and Elan Sumarna, "Analisis Kritik Hadits Tentang Cara Tuhan Mendidik Manusia Dengan Sempurna: أَدبنى ربى فأحسن تأديبى," *Rayah Al-Islam* 6, no. 01 (2022): 35–37.

The Prophetic depiction of the Qur'an as *ma'dubatullāh* (the banquet of God) frames education as participation in a divinely prepared moral and intellectual order.[32] The findings confirm al-Attas's assertion that the contemporary crisis of Muslim education is best understood as a loss of adab. Consequently, *ta'dīb* emerges as a corrective paradigm that prioritizes moral orientation, proper placement of knowledge, and ethical responsibility.

Comparatively, the results indicate that while *tarbiyah* emphasizes developmental processes and *ta'līm* focuses on epistemic transmission, *ta'dīb* centers on the educator as a moral exemplar and on education as ethical formation. These concepts are not mutually exclusive; rather, they represent complementary dimensions within an integrated Islamic educational paradigm.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* should not be treated as interchangeable terms or loosely compromised synonyms. Rather, they constitute an integrated paradigm of Islamic education, each operating within a distinct epistemological, ontological, and axiological focus. Together, these concepts form a coherent framework that carries significant implications for addressing terminological ambiguities and reorienting contemporary Islamic educational discourse.

A first major implication concerns the risk of reducing Islamic education to a single conceptual category, such as *tarbiyah*, *ta'līm*, or *ta'dīb*. Recent scholarly debates, such as those highlighted by Anwar et al.,[33] tend to position these concepts dichotomously or hierarchically, implicitly suggesting that one term should replace or supersede the others. The findings of this study, however, demonstrate that such an approach risks narrowing the philosophical scope of Islamic education. Instead of functioning as competing paradigms, *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* operate in a complementary and mutually reinforcing relationship. Conceptual debates in Islamic education, therefore, would benefit more from integrative synthesis than from ideological simplification or terminological substitution.

Within this integrated framework, *tarbiyah* functions as a process-oriented dimension that emphasizes sustained growth, nurturing, and moral cultivation; *ta''līm*

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[32] Bukhari, *Shahih Al-Bukhari*.
[33] Heru Saiful Anwar et al., "Reconstructing Ta'dib Philosophy: A Theoretical Framework for Modern Islamic Boarding School System," *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 17, no. 1 (2025): 269–80.

operates as the epistemic mechanism for authoritative and structured transmission of knowledge; and *ta'dīb* provides the normative orientation and ethical telos of education. This conceptual differentiation is particularly important at the academic level, as it clarifies that terminological debates should not revolve around exclusivity but around the proper articulation of how these dimensions interact within a unified educational vision.

A second implication relates to the epistemological foundations of Islamic education. The Qur'anic conception of *ta'līm* consistently links knowledge to divine authority, ethical readiness, and moral accountability. The intrinsic relationship between *ta'līm* and *taqwā* underscores that knowledge in Islam is not merely an accumulation of information, but a means toward moral consciousness and servitude to God. From this perspective, knowledge carries the status of *amānah* (trust), demanding ethical responsibility from both learners and educators.

In contemporary educational contexts, this epistemological insight challenges dominant cognitive and instrumental paradigms that prioritize measurable outcomes over moral orientation. The recognition of *'ilm ladunnī* further reinforces the idea that the highest forms of knowledge are not attained solely through pedagogical technique, but through spiritual discipline and ethical refinement. Consequently, Islamic educational curricula should not be confined to cognitive achievement alone, but should consciously integrate ethical and transcendental dimensions as constitutive elements of learning.

A third implication concerns the central role of *ta'dīb* as the ethical orientation and ultimate objective of Islamic education. Many contemporary educational crises, manifested in high academic performance accompanied by weak moral integrity, can be interpreted as symptoms of a loss of adab. Within the framework articulated by this study, educational success is not measured solely by academic indicators, technical competencies, or labor-market competitiveness, but by the extent to which education enables individuals to recognize their proper place in relation to God, knowledge, society, and themselves. *Ta'dīb* thus implies the necessity of educators functioning not merely as instructional facilitators, but as moral exemplars whose conduct embodies the values they transmit.

At the institutional level, the *pesantren* tradition historically represents an organic integration of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb*. In this study, *pesantren* is not treated as an empirical object of measurement but as a normative–historical model that

illustrates how these educational dimensions have been institutionally embodied within the Islamic educational tradition. The residential system reflects *tarbiyah* as a continuous, life-oriented process; the *kiai–santri* relationship and textual learning traditions exemplify *ta'līm* grounded in religious authority; and the cultivation of daily conduct (adab) demonstrates that education in *pesantren* extends beyond classroom instruction into the totality of life.

In the context of contemporary educational modernization, these findings suggest that *pesantren* should not be reduced to generic categories such as *"boarding schools"* or merely labeled as *"Islamic schools."* The term *pesantren* itself carries a conceptual richness that preserves *ta'dīb* as an ethical orientation while accommodating the systematic development of *ta'līm* and the structured processes of *tarbiyah*. Recent incorporations of *pesantren*-inspired values into national education initiatives further indicate that its conceptual foundations can inform broader educational reforms without neglecting administrative and governance requirements.

Finally, the conceptual reconstruction offered in this study provides philosophical support for the use of *akhlāq mulia* (noble morality) within Indonesian national education discourse. This terminological choice reflects not merely linguistic preference, but a value orientation aligned with the concept of *ta'dīb*. Unlike *"character education,"* which often relies on socially negotiated and value-relative norms, moral education grounded in *akhlāq* possesses a theological foundation that resists complete relativization. In this sense, the integration of *ta'dīb* offers a normative anchor for moral education that remains responsive to social change while rooted in transcendent ethical principles. This study is limited to textual and conceptual analysis and does not empirically assess pedagogical outcomes. Future research may extend this framework through field-based studies that examine how the integration of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* operates across diverse educational institutions and sociocultural contexts.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* are not interchangeable terms nor mere terminological variants within Islamic educational discourse. Rather, they represent distinct yet interrelated conceptual dimensions that together constitute an integrated paradigm of Islamic education. Reducing Islamic education to any single one of these concepts risks narrowing its philosophical scope and undermining its normative orientation.

Through Qur'anic and Hadith-based pedagogical analysis, this study reconstructs *tarbiyah* as a continuous process of holistic human development, *ta'līm* as an authoritative and ethically grounded transmission of knowledge, and *ta'dīb* as the axiological telos of education centered on the formation of adab and the proper placement of knowledge. This reconstruction demonstrates that Islamic education is not confined to cognitive achievement or skill acquisition, but is fundamentally concerned with shaping morally grounded individuals in a balanced relationship with God, knowledge, self, and society.

Conceptually, the findings contribute to resolving longstanding terminological ambiguities in Islamic education by bridging theoretical debates with educational praxis. The integrated framework of *tarbiyah, ta'līm,* and *ta'dīb* offers a coherent model capable of engaging modern educational challenges without sacrificing its theological and ethical foundations. In this regard, the *pesantren* emerges as a normative-historical model that exemplifies the organic integration of these three dimensions.

Ultimately, this study argues that meaningful reform in Islamic education cannot rely solely on curricular innovation, pedagogical techniques, or institutional restructuring. Instead, it must be grounded in a robust conceptual reconstruction of its foundational terms. Positioning *ta'dīb* as the ultimate educational orientation, supported by *ta'līm* and actualized through *tarbiyah*, provides a sustainable, value-oriented framework for Islamic education in contemporary contexts.

Acknowledgments

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