



Beyond Technocracy: A Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis for the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) in Islamic Education

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Abstract

The accelerating dominance of technocratic rationality and performative accountability within contemporary education has generated profound concern regarding the erosion of spirituality, ethical consciousness, and holistic human formation in Islamic educational institutions. Although the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs introduced the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) as a transformative curriculum initiative intended to restore compassion, relationality, and human-centered learning, the curriculum remains epistemologically fragile due to the absence of a coherent philosophical framework integrating spirituality, ethics, cognition, and transformative pedagogy. Addressing this gap, the present study develops a Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM) as a post-technocratic curriculum architecture for contemporary Islamic education. Employing a qualitative conceptual-hermeneutic design grounded in critical Islamic educational philosophy, the study analysed classical Islamic texts, contemporary scholarly literature, and official KBC policy documents through purposive and criterion-based selection. The findings reveal that the integration of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems thinking reconstructs the epistemological foundations of Islamic curriculum discourse by positioning love not merely as an affective value, but as an ontological, ethical, and pedagogical principle governing knowledge, human flourishing, and educational purpose. The study further demonstrates that the tri-yaqin epistemological ascent fundamentally redefines Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) through the integration of conceptual understanding, reflective awareness, and ethical-spiritual embodiment oriented toward ihsan-consciousness. Moreover, the alignment between the Panca Cinta principles and Maqasid al-Shariah establishes a coherent teleological framework capable of resisting reductionist educational instrumentalism while strengthening transformative pedagogy, ecological responsibility, and relational ethics. Ultimately, this study positions Islamic educational philosophy as a globally relevant alternative paradigm for reconstructing spiritually grounded, human-centered, and ethically transformative education within an increasingly performative post-technocratic world.

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INTRODUCTION

The accelerating dominance of technocratic rationality within contemporary education has generated profound concern among scholars of curriculum studies, philosophy of education, and religious pedagogy. Across diverse educational systems, schools are increasingly governed by performative accountability, measurable competencies, standardised assessment cultures, and market-oriented definitions of success that prioritise efficiency over human flourishing. Such tendencies have contributed to what Daliri-Ngametua & Hardy, (2022); Leonardi, (2025) describes as the gradual displacement of educational purpose by learning management and performative productivity. Recent debates in transformative and contemplative education similarly argue that excessive emphasis on measurable outcomes has weakened the ethical, relational, and spiritual dimensions of learning, producing forms of schooling that are cognitively productive yet existentially impoverished (Chapman & Miller, 2022; Mayselless & Kizel, 2022). Within Islamic education, this condition creates a particularly acute epistemological crisis because the classical Islamic tradition conceptualises education not merely as knowledge transmission, but as the holistic cultivation of *adab*, spirituality, ethical consciousness, and human becoming. Contemporary Muslim educational institutions therefore face a growing tension between global technocratic educational pressures and the foundational Islamic vision of *tarbiyah* as transformative formation (Ummah et al., 2025). Although Islamic schools continue to demonstrate strong commitment to religious instruction, many struggle to preserve the metaphysical and ethical depth of Islamic educational philosophy amid increasingly instrumental educational environments. Consequently, the search for alternative educational paradigms capable of integrating spirituality, ethics, cognition, and social responsibility has become one of the most urgent intellectual projects in contemporary Islamic education.

The Indonesian educational landscape reflects these tensions with increasing visibility. Over the past decade, Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, particularly *madrasah* and *pesantren*, have confronted escalating concerns related to bullying, intolerance, ecological disengagement, emotional fragmentation, and the weakening of relational ethics among students. Several recent studies indicate that curriculum implementation within many Islamic schools remains heavily oriented toward cognitive achievement and administrative compliance, while dimensions such as compassion, spiritual maturity, and social empathy often receive secondary attention (Masripah & Mohammad, 2025). In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Religious Affairs officially introduced the *Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta* (KBC) in July 2025 as a transformative curricular initiative intended to restore the ethical and spiritual orientation of Islamic education. Structurally organised around the *Panca Cinta*, namely love of Allah and His Messenger, love of knowledge, love of self and others, love of the environment, and love of the homeland, KBC represents one of the most ambitious educational reforms in post-Reformasi Indonesian Islamic education. The curriculum explicitly positions itself against dehumanising educational technocracy and seeks to re-centre educational practice upon compassion, relationality, spirituality, and social responsibility. At the same time, the emergence of KBC reflects a broader global movement toward ethics-based and human-centred educational transformation that challenges neoliberal models of schooling. Nevertheless, despite its philosophical ambition and public enthusiasm, KBC continues to raise fundamental questions concerning the epistemological assumptions underlying the concept of “love” within curriculum discourse. Without a rigorous philosophical foundation, there remains a significant risk that the curriculum may eventually be absorbed into symbolic policy rhetoric or reduced to performative moral language disconnected from authentic transformative practice.

The urgency of addressing this epistemological problem has become increasingly evident within recent educational scholarship. Global educational discourse has progressively shifted toward contemplative pedagogy, ethics of care, transformative learning, and socio-emotional education as corrective responses to the limitations of purely instrumental schooling (Goswami, 2025; Nimasari et al., 2025). At the same time, scholars of Islamic education have argued that contemporary curriculum reform frequently adopts imported humanistic frameworks without sufficiently engaging the intellectual depth of Islamic epistemological traditions (Habibi, 2024). This concern is particularly relevant in the context of KBC because the official curriculum framework relies significantly upon Rogerian humanism and Appreciative Inquiry approaches, both of which provide valuable pedagogical insights but remain limited in articulating the ontological and teleological

foundations of Islamic education. While such frameworks successfully promote positive relational learning, they do not fully explain how love functions within the Islamic conception of knowledge, selfhood, spirituality, and ethical becoming. More importantly, they remain epistemologically vulnerable to technocratic recapture because humanistic values can easily be transformed into measurable behavioural indicators within bureaucratic educational systems. Several scholars have warned that contemporary educational reforms frequently fail not because of their ethical aspirations, but because they lack coherent philosophical architectures capable of resisting institutional reductionism (Bozkurt, 2026; Macpherson, 2025). In the Indonesian Islamic educational context, this challenge becomes especially significant because KBC aspires not merely to improve pedagogy, but to reconstruct the very meaning of Islamic education itself. Therefore, developing a philosophically grounded and operationally coherent Islamic epistemology for KBC is no longer optional, but intellectually and institutionally necessary.

Among the most promising intellectual resources for constructing such an epistemological foundation are the traditions of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems thinking. Classical Sufi scholars such as al-Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi, and Jalaluddin Rumi conceptualised knowledge as an integrative process involving intellectual inquiry, spiritual purification, ethical discipline, and transformative consciousness. Within this tradition, knowledge is not understood as neutral information acquisition, but as a participatory mode of becoming through which the human being gradually approaches existential and spiritual wholeness. Contemporary scholarship has increasingly revisited Sufi educational thought as a response to modern crises of alienation, fragmentation, and spiritual emptiness in educational institutions (Fadilah, 2025; Khan et al., 2025). Simultaneously, the Maqasid al-Shariah tradition offers a teleological framework centred upon the protection and flourishing of religion, intellect, life, lineage, and property as interconnected dimensions of human wellbeing. Recent developments in Maqasid systems theory, particularly through the works of Al-Turabi & Auda, (2025), have expanded maqasid discourse beyond jurisprudence toward dynamic systems thinking applicable to social transformation, ethics, and educational reform. Importantly, both Sufi epistemology and Maqasid systems theory share a common rejection of reductionist understandings of human beings and knowledge. They instead emphasise interconnectedness, moral purpose, relationality, and holistic flourishing as central educational principles. This convergence suggests the possibility of constructing an alternative curriculum paradigm capable of positioning Islamic education beyond technocratic rationality without abandoning intellectual rigor or contemporary educational relevance.

Previous scholarship has contributed important insights into Islamic transformative pedagogy, spirituality, curriculum reform, and values-based education, yet the existing literature remains conceptually fragmented. Studies by Aufa & Baharun, (2025); Mohamed et al., (2025) have strongly criticised the cognitification of Islamic education and argued for pedagogical models centred upon ethical becoming, relationality, and transformative consciousness. Research conducted by Chowdury, (2025); Hidayat et al., (2025) demonstrates that Sufi-oriented educational approaches can significantly strengthen spiritual intelligence, empathy, moral awareness, and reflective learning among Muslim students. In parallel, scholars such as Abdullah et al., (2025); Sulaeman et al., (2025) have explored the integration of Maqasid al-Shariah into curriculum development, educational leadership, and institutional ethics. Other studies within Indonesian Islamic education have highlighted the importance of multicultural moderation, ecological awareness, relational pedagogy, and civic ethics in shaping contemporary Islamic schooling (Fauzi & Darajat, 2025). Collectively, these studies indicate a growing global and local movement toward holistic and ethically grounded educational paradigms. However, the dominant orientation of the literature remains compartmentalised because spirituality, maqasid, transformative pedagogy, and curriculum theory are usually examined independently rather than integrated into a unified epistemological framework. As a result, the philosophical relationship between Islamic metaphysics, educational teleology, and curriculum operationalisation remains insufficiently theorised.

Beyond fragmentation, previous studies also reveal unresolved theoretical and practical tensions that continue to limit the development of transformative Islamic curriculum models. Existing research on Sufi pedagogy tends to prioritise spiritual formation and contemplative practice without systematically addressing curriculum design, assessment systems, or Higher Order Thinking Skills frameworks required within modern educational institutions (Hamzah et al., 2022; Xiao et al.,

2025). Conversely, Maqasid-oriented educational studies frequently focus on ethical objectives and policy dimensions while providing limited discussion concerning the epistemological processes through which transformative knowing and ethical consciousness emerge (Yu et al., 2026). Furthermore, scholarship concerning KBC itself remains highly preliminary because most current discussions are descriptive, policy-based, or motivational rather than critically philosophical and analytically operational. No existing study has specifically synthesised Sufi epistemology, Maqasid systems thinking, and the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta into a coherent post-technocratic curriculum framework capable of simultaneously addressing spirituality, cognition, ethics, and transformative pedagogy. This absence represents a significant intellectual gap because curriculum reform without epistemological coherence risks reproducing the same technocratic assumptions it seeks to resist. Moreover, the relationship between Islamic spirituality and HOTS development remains underexplored, despite increasing educational pressure to integrate critical thinking, creativity, and ethical intelligence within Islamic schooling. Therefore, there remains an urgent need for a conceptual framework capable of reconstructing Islamic curriculum theory through the integration of Sufi metaphysics, Maqasid teleology, and transformative educational praxis in a manner that is philosophically rigorous, pedagogically operational, and globally relevant.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to develop a Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model for the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta within Indonesian Islamic education. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems theory can be integrated into a coherent, HOTS-compatible, and non-technocratic curriculum framework capable of operationalising the Panca Cinta principles philosophically and pedagogically. Theoretically, this study contributes to contemporary Islamic curriculum studies by reconstructing the epistemological assumptions through which knowledge, spirituality, ethics, and human flourishing are understood within Islamic education. The study also contributes to broader international debates concerning post-neoliberal education, contemplative pedagogy, ethics-based curriculum transformation, and spiritually grounded educational reform. Practically, the proposed framework offers conceptual guidance for curriculum architecture, teacher formation, assessment systems, and institutional transformation within madrasah and Islamic higher education contexts. More importantly, this article argues that the future of Islamic education depends not merely on curricular innovation, but on the reconstruction of the philosophical foundations that shape educational meaning itself. By positioning love not as sentimental rhetoric but as an epistemological, ethical, and ontological principle of education, this study proposes an alternative paradigm capable of moving Islamic education beyond the limitations of technocratic modernity toward a more holistic vision of human becoming.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative conceptual research design grounded in critical Islamic educational philosophy and post-technocratic curriculum inquiry. The research specifically adopted a conceptual-hermeneutic approach aimed at reconstructing the epistemological foundations of the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) through the integrative synthesis of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems theory. A conceptual design was selected because the primary objective of the study was not to generate statistical generalisation or behavioural measurement, but to critically analyse, interpret, and reconstruct the philosophical assumptions underlying contemporary Islamic curriculum reform. Conceptual inquiry is particularly relevant when educational reforms possess strong normative aspirations but lack sufficiently articulated epistemological coherence capable of guiding curriculum implementation and pedagogical practice (Babacan & Güven, 2026; Irayanti, 2026). Within philosophy of education, conceptual and hermeneutic methodologies are widely recognised as appropriate approaches for examining educational ontology, ethical purpose, and theoretical reconstruction because they enable researchers to engage critically with systems of meaning, intellectual traditions, and normative educational paradigms rather than merely observable variables (Phillips, 2023; Stahl, 2024). In this study, the methodological orientation was additionally informed by critical curriculum theory, which conceptualises curriculum as an epistemological and political construction shaped by competing visions of human flourishing,

knowledge, and social order (Pu & Xu, 2024; Wahlström, 2023). Consequently, the study positioned KBC not simply as a curriculum policy initiative, but as an epistemological intervention within broader international debates concerning technocratic education, transformative pedagogy, and spiritually grounded curriculum reform.

Research Context and Scope

The study was conducted within the context of contemporary Indonesian Islamic education reform following the official launch of the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in July 2025. Analytically, the research focused on the philosophical and curricular implications of KBC policy documents, particularly Keputusan Menteri Agama No. 1503/2025 and Dirjen Pendis Decree No. 6077/2025, alongside classical Islamic texts and contemporary scholarly literature related to Islamic education, Sufism, Maqasid al-Shariah, transformative pedagogy, contemplative education, and curriculum theory. The conceptual analysis was undertaken between August 2025 and January 2026. Indonesia was selected as the contextual focus because KBC represents one of the most ambitious contemporary attempts to construct a non-technocratic Islamic curriculum paradigm at the national policy level. Furthermore, Indonesian Islamic education provides a uniquely complex educational environment in which traditional pesantren epistemologies coexist with modern competency-based educational systems, creating substantial philosophical tensions between spiritual formation and performative educational rationality. The study therefore situated KBC within both local Islamic educational realities and broader international discussions concerning post-neoliberal education, ethics-based pedagogy, and holistic human development. Such positioning enabled the research to engage simultaneously with Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary global curriculum discourse.

Data Sources and Sampling Strategy

The population of this study consisted of philosophical texts, educational policy documents, and peer-reviewed academic publications relevant to Sufi epistemology, Maqasid al-Shariah, Islamic curriculum theory, transformative pedagogy, and contemporary educational reform. Because the study employed a conceptual-philosophical methodology, the unit of analysis was textual and epistemological rather than human participants. Sources were selected through purposive and criterion-based sampling to ensure conceptual relevance, theoretical rigor, and interpretive depth. Inclusion criteria comprised four principal categories. First, classical Islamic texts discussing epistemology, spirituality, ethics, and educational formation, particularly works by al-Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi, Jalaluddin Rumi, al-Shatibi, and Ibn Ashur. Second, contemporary peer-reviewed scholarship published predominantly between 2021 and 2026 addressing Islamic education reform, transformative pedagogy, curriculum theory, contemplative education, and Maqasid systems thinking. Third, official KBC policy and curriculum documents issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. Fourth, international educational scholarship examining post-technocratic curriculum paradigms, ethics of care, and spiritually grounded educational transformation. Sources lacking direct conceptual relevance to curriculum epistemology, Islamic educational philosophy, or transformative pedagogy were excluded from analysis to maintain analytical coherence and theoretical focus. The selection strategy was intentionally designed to facilitate dialogue between classical Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary educational thought while preventing superficial thematic association or fragmented conceptual interpretation.

Research Instruments and Conceptual Framework

The primary research instruments consisted of conceptual mapping matrices, hermeneutic analytical frameworks, comparative epistemological coding protocols, and interpretive synthesis tables developed specifically for this study. The conceptual mapping matrix was employed to systematically identify and analyse relationships among the Panca Cinta principles, the tri-yaqin epistemological ascent, and the Maqasid al-Shariah framework. The hermeneutic analytical framework was used to interpret how concepts such as mahabbah, 'ilm, qalb, ihsan, tarbiyah, and human flourishing were articulated across classical Islamic texts and contemporary curriculum discourse. In addition, comparative coding protocols were developed to identify convergences, tensions, and epistemological alignments between Sufi metaphysics, Maqasid systems theory, and transformative pedagogy literature. Unlike purely thematic qualitative coding, the coding process in

this study functioned philosophically by tracing ontological assumptions, teleological structures, and educational implications embedded within texts. Instrument construction was informed by conceptual analysis procedures commonly employed in philosophy-of-education research and Islamic educational inquiry (Usiono et al., 2026). The instruments were further refined iteratively throughout analysis to accommodate emerging conceptual relationships and unresolved epistemological tensions identified during textual interpretation. This iterative flexibility was necessary because philosophical synthesis involves not only categorisation but also critical reconstruction and dialectical integration of ideas across distinct intellectual traditions.

Validity and Trustworthiness

To ensure analytical rigor and conceptual trustworthiness, the study employed several validity and reliability strategies appropriate to qualitative conceptual inquiry. Content validity was established through expert review involving three scholars specialising in Islamic education, curriculum studies, and Islamic philosophy who evaluated the coherence, conceptual relevance, and interpretive consistency of the analytical framework. Interpretive credibility was strengthened through prolonged engagement with both classical Islamic sources and contemporary curriculum literature, allowing concepts to be understood within their broader intellectual and historical contexts rather than through isolated textual extraction. The study additionally employed theoretical triangulation by critically comparing concepts across multiple scholarly traditions, including Sufi epistemology, Maqasid systems theory, transformative education, critical pedagogy, and curriculum philosophy. In conceptual and hermeneutic research, reliability is understood primarily in terms of analytical consistency, philosophical coherence, and transparency of interpretive reasoning rather than statistical replication (Maher, 2025). Therefore, the researchers maintained a detailed audit trail documenting conceptual revisions, coding decisions, interpretive reflections, and synthesis procedures throughout the analytical process. Peer debriefing sessions were also conducted with Islamic education scholars to minimise interpretive bias and strengthen philosophical consistency. At the same time, the researchers critically acknowledged that conceptual synthesis inevitably involves interpretive selectivity and epistemological positioning. Such limitations were addressed reflexively throughout the analytical process in order to preserve intellectual integrity and methodological transparency.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted systematically through several interconnected stages. The first stage involved identification and collection of primary and secondary sources relevant to KBC, Islamic educational philosophy, Sufi epistemology, Maqasid al-Shariah, and transformative curriculum theory. During the second stage, the researchers conducted intensive close reading and textual immersion to identify central philosophical categories, recurring educational themes, and implicit epistemological assumptions embedded within the selected literature. The third stage involved hermeneutic coding and conceptual categorisation using iterative comparative analysis. At this stage, concepts were not merely classified thematically, but critically examined in terms of their ontological orientation, ethical implications, pedagogical function, and compatibility with contemporary curriculum discourse. The fourth stage involved dialectical synthesis through comparative conceptual reading, allowing convergences and tensions among Sufi epistemology, Maqasid systems thinking, and KBC principles to be systematically identified and theoretically integrated. Subsequently, the researchers developed the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM) as a conceptual framework capable of operationalising the philosophical foundations of KBC. Throughout the process, reflective memo-writing was continuously employed to document analytical insights, interpretive tensions, conceptual ambiguities, and emerging theoretical relationships. This procedure ensured that the resulting framework emerged through rigorous philosophical engagement rather than descriptive thematic aggregation alone.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative conceptual analysis combined with critical hermeneutic interpretation and integrative epistemological synthesis. The analytical process followed several interrelated stages adapted from thematic analysis and philosophical inquiry frameworks proposed by (DeJonckheere et al., 2024; Khurshid et al., 2026; Naeem et al., 2025). First,

data reduction was performed by selecting textual segments directly related to educational epistemology, spirituality, ethical formation, curriculum purpose, and transformative pedagogy. Second, open conceptual coding was conducted to identify recurring philosophical categories such as mahabbah, ihsan, qalb, transformative knowing, spiritual ontology, relational pedagogy, ethical flourishing, and anti-technocratic education. Third, these conceptual categories were grouped into broader interpretive themes representing epistemological relationships among Sufi thought, Maqasid teleology, and curriculum theory. Fourth, dialectical analysis was employed to examine conceptual compatibilities, tensions, and philosophical contradictions across traditions. Fifth, integrative synthesis was conducted to construct a coherent epistemological framework capable of positioning KBC within broader discussions of post-technocratic and transformative education. Finally, critical comparative analysis was undertaken to situate the proposed SM-ESM framework within international curriculum discourse, including contemplative education, ethics-based pedagogy, critical curriculum studies, and spiritually grounded educational reform. The analysis prioritised conceptual coherence, philosophical depth, and interpretive rigor rather than empirical quantification. Importantly, the study treated curriculum not merely as instructional structure, but as a philosophical system shaping how knowledge, spirituality, ethics, and human flourishing are understood educationally.

Research Ethics

This study adhered to fundamental principles of academic and interpretive ethics. Although the research did not involve direct human participants, ethical considerations remained essential in relation to scholarly honesty, responsible interpretation, and faithful representation of intellectual traditions. All primary and secondary sources were cited appropriately using APA style to ensure transparency and prevent plagiarism. The researchers maintained careful sensitivity toward the theological and philosophical depth of classical Islamic texts and avoided reductive interpretations that might instrumentalise Sufi spirituality or Maqasid principles for purely bureaucratic curriculum purposes. Interpretive neutrality was not assumed; instead, the researchers adopted a reflexive stance acknowledging that all philosophical inquiry is shaped by epistemological positioning and conceptual orientation. To minimise ideological bias, the study employed peer review, theoretical triangulation, and iterative critical reflection throughout the analytical process. Furthermore, the study sought to preserve the integrity of both Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary educational scholarship by avoiding simplistic harmonisation between classical and modern paradigms. Through these ethical commitments, the research aimed to contribute rigorously and responsibly to contemporary discussions concerning Islamic education reform, transformative curriculum theory, and the reconstruction of spiritually grounded educational paradigms in the post-technocratic era.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The conceptual analysis conducted in this study revealed that the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta requires a more coherent epistemological foundation capable of integrating spirituality, ethics, cognition, and transformative educational purpose within a unified Islamic curriculum framework. Through critical hermeneutic synthesis of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems theory, the study identified a multidimensional educational structure that positions love not merely as an affective value, but as an ontological and pedagogical principle shaping human formation and educational meaning. This synthesis subsequently led to the development of the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM), which functions as the principal theoretical contribution of the study and as a proposed philosophical foundation for the operationalisation of KBC in contemporary Islamic education.

The Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM)

The central finding of this study is the formulation of the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM), a multidimensional curriculum framework developed to provide a philosophically coherent foundation for the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) in Indonesian Islamic education. The analysis revealed that although KBC represents a significant ethical and educational

innovation, its official formulation remains epistemologically vulnerable because the curriculum largely relies on general humanistic frameworks without sufficiently articulating the ontological, teleological, and spiritual dimensions of Islamic education. Through integrative hermeneutic synthesis, the study found that Sufi epistemology and Maqasid al-Shariah systems theory can be systematically integrated into a coherent educational architecture capable of operationalising spirituality, transformative learning, ethical formation, and holistic human development within contemporary curriculum discourse. The resulting framework positions love not merely as an emotional or moral value, but as a foundational epistemological principle governing how knowledge, ethics, selfhood, and educational purpose are understood. In this synthesis, the Panca Cinta principles function simultaneously as curriculum orientation, pedagogical process, and transformative educational outcome. The findings further demonstrate that the integration of Sufi metaphysics with Maqasid systems thinking enables KBC to move beyond symbolic moral rhetoric toward a philosophically defensible and pedagogically operational curriculum paradigm. Most importantly, the study found that Islamic curriculum reform becomes substantially more coherent when spirituality, cognition, ethics, social responsibility, and ecological consciousness are conceptualised as interconnected dimensions of human flourishing rather than fragmented educational domains.

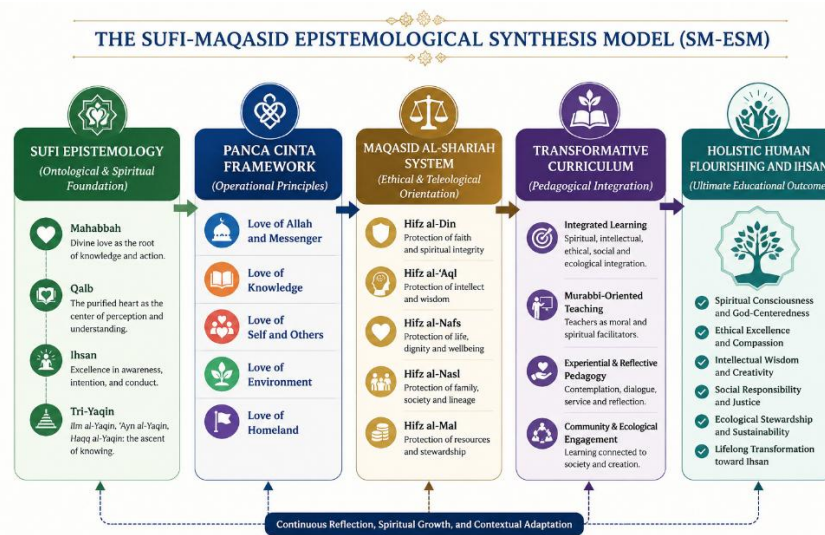


Figure 1. Integrated Architecture of the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model

Figure 1 illustrates the overall architecture of the SM-ESM framework emerging from this study. The synthesis demonstrates that Sufi epistemology functions as the ontological and spiritual foundation of educational formation, while the Maqasid framework operates as the ethical and teleological orientation guiding curriculum purpose. Positioned between these two dimensions, the Panca Cinta principles become the operational bridge translating spiritual ontology into transformative educational practice. The findings indicate that KBC can therefore function as a holistic curriculum model integrating spirituality, cognition, ethics, citizenship, and ecological awareness within a unified educational paradigm. This integrated structure also differentiates the SM-ESM from conventional competency-based curriculum models that frequently isolate intellectual performance from ethical and spiritual formation.

Reconstructing Higher Order Thinking Skills Through the Tri-Yaqin Framework

Another major finding concerns the reconceptualisation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) within an Islamic epistemological framework. Contemporary educational systems generally define HOTS through cognitive taxonomies emphasising analysis, evaluation, and creativity. However, the analysis conducted in this study found that such frameworks remain epistemologically incomplete from an Islamic educational perspective because they isolate cognition from spirituality, ethics, and existential transformation. The SM-ESM framework addresses this limitation by integrating the tri-yaqin epistemological ascent consisting of ‘ilm al-yaqin, ‘ayn al-yaqin, and haqq al-yaqin. Within this framework, educational development progresses from rational understanding toward experiential witnessing and ultimately transformative ethical consciousness. The findings

demonstrate that authentic Islamic higher-order thinking involves not only intellectual sophistication but also spiritual awareness, moral refinement, and relational responsibility. Consequently, the study proposes *ihsan* as the highest educational horizon within Islamic transformative pedagogy, extending beyond conventional creativity-based HOTS frameworks. This reconstruction positions Islamic education not merely as cognitive advancement, but as the cultivation of spiritually grounded and ethically responsible human beings capable of contributing constructively to society and creation.

Table 1. Tri-Yaqin Framework and HOTS Reconstruction

Tri-Yaqin Level	Epistemological Orientation	HOTS Dimension	Educational Outcome
'Ilm al-Yaqin	Rational and conceptual understanding	Remembering and understanding	Foundational knowledge
'Ayn al-Yaqin	Experiential and reflective awareness	Applying and analysing	Reflective learning
Haqq al-Yaqin	Transformative ethical consciousness	Evaluating and ethical creativity	Ihsan-oriented formation

Table 1 demonstrates that the tri-yaqin framework provides a more holistic reconstruction of HOTS within Islamic education. Unlike conventional taxonomies that position cognition as the highest educational objective, the SM-ESM framework situates intellectual development within broader processes of spiritual and ethical becoming. The analysis revealed that *'ilm al-yaqin* corresponds to foundational conceptual understanding acquired through structured inquiry and disciplinary learning. *'Ayn al-yaqin* represents experiential engagement through reflective practice, dialogue, contemplation, and social interaction. Finally, *haqq al-yaqin* signifies transformative ethical embodiment in which knowledge becomes integrated within character, spirituality, and social responsibility. The findings therefore suggest that Islamic higher-order thinking should not be interpreted solely through cognitive complexity, but through the integration of intellect, spirituality, and ethical consciousness.

Mapping the Panca Cinta Within the Maqasid Framework

The study also found that the Panca Cinta principles can be systematically mapped onto the Maqasid al-Shariah framework, thereby strengthening the teleological coherence of KBC. The analysis revealed that each dimension of love within the curriculum corresponds to a specific aspect of human flourishing protected within the maqasid tradition. *Cinta Allah dan Rasul-Nya* aligns with *hifz al-din* through the cultivation of spiritual integrity, ethical devotion, and transcendental consciousness. *Cinta ilmu* corresponds closely with *hifz al-'aql* because intellectual development is understood not merely as cognitive accumulation but as transformative cultivation of wisdom and ethical reasoning. Similarly, *cinta diri dan sesama* reflects *hifz al-nafs* through compassion, relational ethics, dignity, and emotional wellbeing. The findings additionally indicate that *cinta lingkungan* may be interpreted within an expanded understanding of *hifz al-mal* when environmental stewardship is conceptualised as *amanah* rather than material possession alone. Finally, *cinta tanah air* corresponds to the intergenerational and civic dimensions of *hifz al-nasl* through social responsibility, national solidarity, and collective wellbeing. This alignment demonstrates that the Panca Cinta principles are structurally connected to broader Islamic ethical objectives rather than functioning merely as symbolic moral categories.

Table 2. Alignment Between Panca Cinta and Maqasid al-Shariah

Panca Cinta Principle	Maqasid Dimension	Educational Implication
Love of Allah and His Messenger	Hifz al-Din	Spiritual integrity and devotion
Love of Knowledge	Hifz al-'Aql	Intellectual transformation and wisdom
Love of Self and Others	Hifz al-Nafs	Compassionate ethics and human dignity
Love of the Environment	Hifz al-Mal	Ecological stewardship and responsibility
Love of the Homeland	Hifz al-Nasl	Civic responsibility and social solidarity

The findings presented in Table 2 indicate that the philosophical legitimacy of KBC becomes substantially stronger when interpreted through a Maqasid systems perspective. The curriculum no longer appears merely as a moral educational initiative, but as a coherent ethical framework grounded in classical Islamic teleology. Furthermore, the maqasid perspective enables KBC to avoid reduction into sentimental educational rhetoric because love becomes operationally connected to concrete dimensions of human flourishing, social ethics, and spiritual responsibility. This synthesis also demonstrates that Islamic curriculum theory possesses significant conceptual resources for integrating spirituality, citizenship, ecology, ethics, and intellectual development within a unified educational framework.

Comparative Paradigm Shift: From Technocratic Curriculum to Transformative Islamic Education

One of the most significant findings of this study concerns the epistemological shift produced by the SM-ESM framework in relation to dominant technocratic educational paradigms. The analysis found that technocratic curriculum systems generally conceptualise education through performative accountability, measurable productivity, competency standardisation, and cognitive efficiency. Within such paradigms, learners are frequently positioned as objects of performance optimisation rather than holistic human beings undergoing ethical and spiritual formation. In contrast, the SM-ESM framework conceptualises education as a transformative process directed toward holistic human flourishing and ihsan-oriented consciousness. This shift fundamentally alters how knowledge, teaching, learning, assessment, and educational success are understood within Islamic education. The findings further indicate that the proposed synthesis resists reductionist educational logic by repositioning spirituality and ethics as central rather than peripheral dimensions of curriculum design. Consequently, the framework provides an alternative educational paradigm capable of engaging contemporary educational complexity without surrendering to neoliberal or purely instrumental rationality.

Table 3. Comparison Between Technocratic Curriculum and SM-ESM Framework

Dimension	Technocratic Curriculum	SM-ESM Framework
View of Knowledge	Instrumental and measurable	Transformative and holistic
Role of Teacher	Instructional technician	Murabbi and ethical guide
Educational Purpose	Competency achievement	Human flourishing and ihsan
Learning Orientation	Cognitive performance	Spiritual and ethical transformation
Assessment Focus	Quantitative outcomes	Holistic formative development
Learner Identity	Productive individual	Ethical servant-khalifah
Curriculum Logic	Efficiency and standardisation	Meaning, purpose, and relationality

Table 3 highlights the fundamental paradigm shift emerging from the SM-ESM framework. The findings demonstrate that the proposed synthesis challenges dominant assumptions underlying technocratic educational systems by redefining the meaning and purpose of education itself. Within the SM-ESM framework, teachers are no longer positioned merely as instructional transmitters, but as murabbi responsible for nurturing intellectual, ethical, and spiritual growth. Similarly, learners are not treated as measurable performance units, but as holistic human beings undergoing processes of ethical becoming and spiritual refinement. This shift also transforms assessment logic because educational success can no longer be evaluated solely through standardised cognitive metrics. Instead, dimensions such as compassion, relational ethics, ecological awareness, and spiritual integrity become equally important indicators of educational development.

Operationalising the SM-ESM Framework in Madrasah Practice

The analysis additionally identified several operational implications for implementing the SM-ESM framework within madrasah and Islamic educational institutions. First, curriculum architecture requires thematic integration in which the Panca Cinta principles function as organising foundations across disciplinary learning rather than isolated moral subjects. Second, teacher formation programs must prioritise the development of murabbi-oriented pedagogy integrating spirituality, relational ethics, contemplative awareness, and transformative facilitation. Third, assessment systems require substantial reconstruction because dimensions such as ihsan, compassion, ethical responsibility, and spiritual maturity cannot be adequately measured through

conventional standardised testing alone. Instead, reflective portfolios, service-learning evaluation, relational observation, contemplative reflection, and community engagement become essential components of educational assessment. Fourth, institutional culture must shift from purely performance-driven educational environments toward ecosystems of relationality, empathy, ecological awareness, and spiritual wellbeing. The findings also indicate that many traditional pesantren pedagogies already embody aspects of the SM-ESM framework, particularly in relation to *subbah*, relational mentorship, and character formation. Therefore, contemporary curriculum reform may benefit substantially from re-engaging indigenous Islamic pedagogical traditions rather than relying exclusively upon imported educational models.



Figure 2. Transformative Orientation of the SM-ESM Framework

Figure 2 demonstrates the transformative trajectory proposed by the SM-ESM framework. The findings indicate that technocratic educational systems frequently produce fragmented forms of human development in which intellectual achievement becomes disconnected from spirituality, ethics, relationality, and ecological awareness. In contrast, the proposed synthesis repositions curriculum as a holistic process of human formation integrating cognitive, ethical, spiritual, social, and environmental dimensions within a unified educational paradigm. The framework therefore represents not merely curriculum modification, but a broader epistemological reconstruction concerning the meaning and purpose of Islamic education itself.

Repositioning Islamic Education Within Global Curriculum Discourse

The final major finding concerns the broader international significance of the SM-ESM framework within contemporary curriculum discourse. The analysis demonstrates that the proposed synthesis contributes not only to Indonesian Islamic education reform, but also to wider global discussions concerning post-technocratic education, contemplative pedagogy, ethics-based curriculum transformation, and spiritually grounded learning. The framework challenges neoliberal assumptions reducing educational success to productivity, performativity, and measurable achievement by repositioning education as a process of ethical, spiritual, and relational becoming. Importantly, the findings indicate that Islamic educational philosophy possesses substantial conceptual resources for engaging contemporary educational crises without abandoning intellectual rigor or global relevance. The integration of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid systems thinking demonstrates that Islamic curriculum theory can function not merely as a reactive adaptation to modernity, but as a constructive alternative paradigm capable of contributing meaningfully to global educational transformation. Nevertheless, the study also acknowledges that operationalising spiritually grounded curriculum frameworks within modern bureaucratic systems remains a complex institutional challenge requiring further empirical exploration. Despite these limitations, the findings strongly suggest that the future development of Islamic education depends not merely upon curriculum innovation, but upon deeper reconstruction of the epistemological assumptions through which knowledge, ethics, spirituality, and human flourishing are educationally understood.

Discussion

The findings of this study fundamentally demonstrate that the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) represents more than a pedagogical reform initiative because it embodies an epistemological intervention against the growing dominance of technocratic rationality within contemporary Islamic education. The formulation of the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM) reveals that educational transformation in Islamic contexts cannot be achieved solely through curriculum restructuring or methodological innovation unless accompanied by a reconstruction of the philosophical assumptions governing knowledge, learning, and human formation. This finding critically challenges dominant educational paradigms that reduce curriculum to measurable competencies, behavioural standardisation, and performative productivity detached from ethical and spiritual meaning. Within the SM-ESM framework, love is repositioned not as symbolic moral rhetoric or sentimental discourse, but as an ontological principle structuring the relationship between knowledge, spirituality, ethics, and human flourishing. Such reconstruction substantially extends existing debates concerning transformative and contemplative education because it situates Islamic curriculum theory within broader international critiques of neoliberal schooling and instrumental educational logic (Chapman & Miller, 2022; Leonardi, 2025). The findings also support arguments advanced by Daliri-Ngametua and Hardy (2022), who contend that contemporary education increasingly prioritises managerial efficiency over existential and relational human development. However, unlike previous studies that primarily critique technocratic education normatively, this study contributes a philosophically operational framework capable of translating spiritual ontology into curriculum architecture, pedagogical orientation, and institutional transformation. Consequently, the study positions Islamic educational philosophy not merely as a reactive tradition responding to modernity, but as a constructive epistemological alternative capable of reimagining the future direction of global educational discourse.

A second major contribution emerges from the reconstruction of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) through the tri-yaqin epistemological ascent consisting of 'ilm al-yaqin, 'ayn al-yaqin, and haqq al-yaqin. The findings reveal that dominant HOTS frameworks within contemporary education remain conceptually insufficient because they privilege analytical cognition while marginalising spiritual consciousness, ethical embodiment, and existential transformation. Through the integration of Sufi epistemology, the study demonstrates that authentic higher-order thinking within Islamic education extends beyond cognitive sophistication toward transformative awareness grounded in ihsan-oriented consciousness. This finding significantly modifies conventional educational taxonomies because cognition is no longer positioned as the highest educational achievement; rather, intellectual understanding becomes meaningful only when integrated with reflective awareness, moral responsibility, and spiritual refinement. Theoretically, this argument expands transformative learning discourse by introducing an Islamic epistemological hierarchy in which knowledge progresses from conceptual acquisition toward existential embodiment and ethical becoming. Such findings resonate with studies conducted by Goswami (2025) and Khan et al. (2025), which emphasise the importance of contemplative awareness and spiritual intelligence within meaningful learning processes. Nevertheless, the present study advances beyond previous scholarship because it operationalises spiritual cognition within a coherent curriculum framework directly linked to pedagogy, assessment, and educational objectives. This reconstruction also implicitly critiques the secular fragmentation embedded within many modern educational systems where intellectual achievement is frequently disconnected from ethical accountability and social responsibility. Therefore, the tri-yaqin framework contributes a novel conceptual model positioning Islamic education as a holistic epistemology of human transformation rather than merely a mechanism of cognitive performance enhancement.

The alignment between the Panca Cinta principles and the Maqasid al-Shariah framework further reveals that KBC possesses substantially deeper teleological coherence than previously articulated within official curriculum discourse. The findings indicate that each dimension of Panca Cinta corresponds systematically with maqasid objectives concerning spiritual integrity, intellectual flourishing, human dignity, ecological stewardship, and collective social wellbeing. This synthesis is theoretically significant because it transforms KBC from a moralistic educational initiative into a philosophically grounded framework rooted in the classical Islamic conception of holistic human flourishing. The study therefore supports recent developments in Maqasid systems theory that

reposition maqasid beyond legalistic discourse toward dynamic ethical and civilisational applications (Auda, 2025; Al-Turabi & Auda, 2025). At the same time, the findings extend previous research conducted by Abdullah et al. (2025) and Sulaeman et al. (2025), which explored maqasid integration within educational leadership and policy reform but did not sufficiently address the epistemological processes through which ethical transformation occurs pedagogically. Importantly, the present study demonstrates that maqasid principles become educationally transformative only when connected to spiritual epistemology and relational pedagogy rather than functioning merely as abstract ethical objectives. This argument is particularly relevant because many contemporary curriculum reforms fail precisely due to the absence of coherent philosophical architectures capable of resisting bureaucratic reductionism and symbolic institutional appropriation (Bozkurt, 2026; Macpherson, 2025). Furthermore, the findings suggest that Islamic curriculum theory possesses untapped conceptual resources for integrating citizenship, ecology, spirituality, and ethical responsibility within a unified educational framework without reproducing fragmented disciplinary logic. As such, the study contributes conceptually by redefining maqasid not simply as educational goals, but as interconnected civilisational orientations shaping how educational meaning itself is constructed.

Another critical finding concerns the paradigm shift generated by the SM-ESM framework in relation to dominant technocratic curriculum systems. Contemporary educational governance increasingly operates through performative accountability, standardised metrics, and market-oriented notions of educational success that conceptualise learners primarily as productive human capital. In contrast, the SM-ESM framework repositions education as a process of ethical and spiritual becoming in which learners are understood as holistic beings possessing intellectual, relational, ecological, and transcendental dimensions. This shift fundamentally alters curriculum logic because educational success can no longer be evaluated exclusively through measurable cognitive outcomes or competency attainment. Instead, dimensions such as compassion, spiritual integrity, relational responsibility, contemplative awareness, and ecological consciousness become equally central indicators of educational development. Such findings align with contemporary critiques of neoliberal education advanced by Mayseless and Kizel (2022), who argue that modern schooling increasingly generates existential fragmentation through excessive emphasis on performative productivity. However, the present study extends this critique further by demonstrating that technocratic education is not merely pedagogically problematic but epistemologically reductionist because it narrows the meaning of human flourishing to quantifiable performance indicators. Within the SM-ESM framework, teachers are consequently repositioned from instructional technicians into murabbi responsible for ethical mentorship, relational guidance, and spiritual facilitation. This transformation also implies that curriculum reform cannot remain confined to methodological innovation because the crisis confronting Islamic education originates from deeper assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge, humanity, and educational purpose. Therefore, the proposed synthesis contributes to global curriculum discourse by articulating an alternative educational paradigm capable of resisting both neoliberal instrumentalism and superficial spiritual romanticism simultaneously.

Despite its transformative potential, the study also reveals significant tensions and institutional complexities surrounding the operationalisation of spiritually grounded curriculum frameworks within modern educational systems. One important challenge concerns the possibility of symbolic spirituality, namely the institutional tendency to reduce concepts such as love, compassion, and spirituality into administrative slogans disconnected from authentic pedagogical transformation. This finding is particularly critical because many contemporary educational reforms adopt ethical language while preserving fundamentally technocratic structures of assessment, governance, and accountability. The study therefore argues that without epistemological reconstruction, KBC risks being absorbed into performative educational bureaucracy rather than functioning as a genuinely transformative curriculum paradigm. Such concerns support critiques proposed by Habibi (2024) and Bozkurt (2026), who warned that educational reforms frequently fail due to the persistence of managerial rationality beneath humanistic discourse. Furthermore, the findings indicate that institutional resistance may emerge because spiritually grounded educational models often conflict with standardisation-oriented policy systems demanding quantifiable evidence of learning outcomes. This tension becomes especially visible in assessment practices where dimensions such as *ihsan*, ethical maturity, and spiritual awareness cannot be adequately captured

through conventional testing instruments. Consequently, the study implicitly challenges dominant assumptions within evidence-based educational governance that equate educational validity exclusively with measurable performance metrics. Rather than rejecting accountability altogether, the SM-ESM framework proposes a broader understanding of educational evaluation incorporating reflective portfolios, relational observation, contemplative practice, and community engagement as legitimate indicators of transformative learning. These tensions demonstrate that implementing post-technocratic Islamic education requires not only curriculum innovation but also institutional courage capable of redefining the meaning of educational quality itself.

The findings additionally demonstrate that many indigenous pesantren traditions already contain pedagogical elements closely aligned with the SM-ESM framework, particularly in relation to *subbah*, *adab* formation, ethical mentorship, contemplative learning, and communal spirituality. This observation is theoretically important because it challenges assumptions that educational modernisation necessarily depends upon the uncritical adoption of imported Western pedagogical models. Instead, the study reveals that classical Islamic educational traditions possess sophisticated epistemological resources capable of engaging contemporary educational crises while remaining globally relevant. Such findings support previous studies by Chowdury (2025) and Hidayat et al. (2025), which highlighted the transformative potential of Sufi-oriented pedagogy for strengthening moral awareness, empathy, and spiritual intelligence among Muslim learners. Nevertheless, the present study advances beyond earlier scholarship because it systematically integrates these pedagogical traditions into a curriculum framework compatible with contemporary educational discourse, including HOTS development, transformative learning, and ethics-based education. This synthesis is particularly significant because many Islamic educational reforms remain trapped between two problematic extremes: rigid traditionalism disconnected from contemporary educational realities and uncritical modernisation detached from Islamic epistemological foundations. The SM-ESM framework offers a mediating alternative capable of preserving spiritual depth while simultaneously engaging global educational complexity. Furthermore, the findings imply that the future relevance of Islamic education depends not on abandoning classical intellectual traditions, but on reconstructing them critically within contemporary curricular and institutional contexts. Therefore, the study contributes to international curriculum discourse by demonstrating that non-Western educational philosophies can function as active theoretical contributors rather than peripheral cultural adaptations within global educational transformation.

Ultimately, this study positions the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model as a significant conceptual intervention within contemporary debates concerning post-neoliberal education, transformative pedagogy, and spiritually grounded curriculum reform. The integration of Sufi epistemology and Maqasid systems thinking demonstrates that Islamic educational philosophy possesses substantial capacity to address crises of alienation, ethical fragmentation, ecological disconnection, and performative exhaustion increasingly visible within global education systems. Unlike many existing educational alternatives that remain normatively aspirational yet philosophically fragmented, the SM-ESM framework offers a coherent epistemological architecture connecting spirituality, ethics, cognition, relationality, and social responsibility within a unified paradigm of human flourishing. This contribution is particularly important because global curriculum discourse increasingly recognises the inadequacy of purely technocratic education yet continues struggling to formulate philosophically rigorous alternatives capable of balancing intellectual excellence with ethical and existential depth. By positioning love as an epistemological principle rather than merely an emotional category, the study redefines curriculum as a transformative process through which learners cultivate intellectual clarity, ethical consciousness, spiritual awareness, and relational responsibility simultaneously. The findings therefore extend contemporary scholarship on contemplative education, ethics-based pedagogy, and transformative learning by introducing an integrative Islamic framework grounded in both metaphysical coherence and pedagogical operationality. At the same time, the study challenges the global dominance of neoliberal educational assumptions equating educational quality exclusively with productivity, competitiveness, and measurable efficiency. Consequently, the SM-ESM framework should be understood not merely as a localised curriculum proposal for Indonesian Islamic education, but as a broader philosophical contribution to the reconstruction of educational meaning within an increasingly fragmented post-technocratic world.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) requires a coherent epistemological foundation in order to function as a genuinely transformative paradigm within contemporary Islamic education. The findings demonstrate that the dominance of technocratic rationality, performative accountability, and competency-oriented educational systems has gradually weakened the ethical, spiritual, and relational dimensions of learning. In response to this condition, the study successfully formulated the Sufi-Maqasid Epistemological Synthesis Model (SM-ESM) through the integration of Sufi epistemology, Maqasid al-Shariah systems thinking, and transformative pedagogy into a unified curriculum framework. The proposed synthesis positions love not merely as a moral slogan or emotional value, but as an ontological and pedagogical principle shaping the meaning of knowledge, spirituality, ethics, and human flourishing within Islamic education. The findings further reveal that spirituality, cognition, ethical responsibility, ecological awareness, and social solidarity should not be treated as fragmented educational domains, but as interconnected dimensions of holistic human formation. Consequently, the study argues that meaningful Islamic educational reform cannot be achieved solely through curriculum modification or methodological innovation, but requires deeper reconstruction of the philosophical assumptions underlying educational purpose itself. Through this contribution, the SM-ESM framework offers a philosophically grounded alternative capable of repositioning Islamic education beyond the limitations of technocratic modernity.

The study further demonstrates that the reconstruction of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) through the tri-yaqin framework fundamentally redefines intellectual excellence within Islamic educational discourse. Unlike dominant cognitive taxonomies that emphasise analytical performance and measurable achievement, the SM-ESM framework conceptualises higher-order thinking as a transformative process progressing from conceptual understanding toward reflective awareness and ultimately ethical-spiritual embodiment. Within this framework, knowledge becomes educationally meaningful only when integrated with ihsan-oriented consciousness, moral responsibility, and relational awareness. The findings additionally confirm that the Panca Cinta principles possess stronger teleological coherence when systematically aligned with the Maqasid al-Shariah framework, particularly in relation to spiritual integrity, intellectual flourishing, human dignity, ecological stewardship, and collective wellbeing. This synthesis significantly strengthens the philosophical legitimacy of KBC because the curriculum is no longer positioned merely as a symbolic moral initiative, but as a coherent paradigm of transformative Islamic education grounded in classical Islamic epistemology and contemporary educational relevance. Furthermore, the study contributes to broader international curriculum discourse by demonstrating that Islamic educational philosophy possesses substantial conceptual resources for addressing global educational crises associated with alienation, ethical fragmentation, performative exhaustion, and neoliberal instrumentalism. Therefore, the SM-ESM framework should be understood not merely as a local curriculum proposal, but as a broader epistemological contribution to the reconstruction of educational meaning in the post-technocratic era.

At the practical level, the findings indicate that implementing the SM-ESM framework requires substantial institutional transformation extending beyond curriculum documentation and classroom methodology. Teacher formation, assessment systems, institutional culture, and pedagogical orientation must be reconstructed in order to cultivate spiritually grounded, ethically responsive, and relationally conscious learning environments. Teachers within this paradigm are repositioned as murabbi responsible not only for instructional delivery but also for ethical mentorship, contemplative facilitation, and spiritual guidance. At the same time, the study acknowledges that implementing spiritually grounded curriculum systems within modern bureaucratic educational structures remains highly complex due to the continuing dominance of measurable accountability and standardised performance mechanisms. Despite these challenges, the study strongly argues that the future of Islamic education depends upon its ability to integrate intellectual rigor with ethical consciousness, spiritual depth, and humanistic relationality simultaneously. Although the present study is conceptual-hermeneutic in nature and therefore requires further empirical validation, the proposed framework provides an important theoretical foundation for future curriculum

experimentation, institutional reform, and transformative Islamic educational practice. Ultimately, this study affirms that reconstructing the philosophical foundations of education is no longer optional, but essential for developing educational systems capable of nurturing holistic human flourishing within an increasingly fragmented contemporary world.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

M Isroul Laili conceptualized the study, developed the primary theoretical framework, conducted the philosophical and hermeneutic analysis, and prepared the original manuscript draft. Ahmad Burhan Jazuli contributed to the development of the conceptual synthesis model, theoretical interpretation, and critical review of Islamic educational philosophy. Muhammad Fodhil participated in curriculum analysis, literature investigation, and comparative interpretation of transformative pedagogy and Maqasid al-Shariah perspectives. Moh Saiful Mustofa contributed to the methodological design, conceptual validation process, and analytical refinement of the epistemological framework. Luthfi assisted in data interpretation, integration of Sufi educational perspectives, and manuscript editing. Ahmad Thohir contributed to the critical review of classical Islamic sources, philosophical consistency, and theoretical strengthening of the discussion section. Imad Syauqi participated in manuscript revision, academic proofreading, language refinement, and final validation of the article for publication. All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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