



Spider-Web of Civilization: The Integrative–Interconnective Paradigm of Islamic Education in the Thought of Muhammad Amin Abdullah

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Article Info

Article history:

Received: April, 26, 2026

Revised: May, 28, 2026

Accepted: June, 29, 2026

Keywords:

Contemporary civilization;
Integrative-interconnective
paradigm;
Islamic education;
Spider web paradigm.

Abstract

Contemporary Islamic education faces a persistent epistemological challenge caused by the dichotomy between religious sciences and modern sciences. This separation limits its capacity to respond to complex civilizational issues that require textual understanding, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and philosophical reflection. This study aims to analyze M. Amin Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm by positioning the spider web metaphor as a conceptual framework for reconstructing Islamic education and strengthening its contribution to contemporary Islamic civilization. Using a qualitative library research design, this study examined Abdullah's major work on integrative-interconnective Islamic studies as the primary corpus, supported by his other writings and relevant scholarly literature on Islamic education, epistemology, knowledge integration, and civilizational renewal. Data were collected through documentation and critical literature review, then analyzed using content analysis and conceptual analysis. The findings show that the integrative-interconnective paradigm reframes the dichotomy of knowledge as an epistemological problem rather than merely a curricular issue. The spider web metaphor presents knowledge as a relational network in which religious sciences, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and philosophy interact dialogically. The study further identifies *hadārat al-nass*, *hadārat al-ilm*, and *hadārat al-falsafah* as mutually corrective domains that integrate textual authority, empirical inquiry, and critical reflection. Through conceptual synthesis, this study extends Abdullah's paradigm from an epistemological model into a civilizational framework for Islamic education. It concludes that the spider web paradigm provides a strong foundation for curriculum reconstruction, interdisciplinary learning, research culture, institutional transformation, and the formation of a knowledge-based Islamic civilization.

To cite this article: Abbas, N., Khafidoh., Faroq, M, U, A., Abdullah., Ahmadi. (2026). Spider-Web of Civilization: The Integrative–Interconnective Paradigm of Islamic Education in the Thought of Muhammad Amin Abdullah. *Al Qodiri: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial dan Keagamaan*, 24(2), 716-727.

INTRODUCTION

The development of contemporary civilization has placed Islamic education within an increasingly complex intellectual, social, and technological landscape. Scientific advancement, digital transformation, globalization, and the expansion of interdisciplinary knowledge have changed how education defines relevance, authority, and social contribution. In this context, Islamic education is expected not only to preserve religious values but also to respond critically to new civilizational challenges. However, one of the most persistent problems in Islamic education is the epistemological

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separation between religious sciences and modern sciences. Religious knowledge is often treated as a normative and sacred domain, whereas scientific knowledge is positioned as technical, secular, and external to Islamic intellectual traditions (Chande, 2023; Lutfi et al., 2025). This dichotomy limits the capacity of Islamic education to engage with contemporary issues that require ethical, scientific, philosophical, and social reasoning. Therefore, the reconstruction of Islamic education must begin with a renewed epistemological framework that can reconnect faith, reason, knowledge, and civilization.

The dichotomy of knowledge is not merely a theoretical concern; it has direct implications for curriculum design, learning orientation, research culture, and institutional transformation. Islamic education that relies only on textual transmission may strengthen normative understanding, but it often lacks analytical tools to address technological disruption, social inequality, ecological crisis, and cultural change. Conversely, modern education that adopts science without ethical and spiritual reflection may become technically advanced but morally fragile (Jenuri et al., 2025; Palahniuk & Fomin, 2023). This tension shows that Islamic education requires a model of knowledge that does not place religion and science in opposition. Instead, it needs an integrative approach that enables revelation, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and philosophical reflection to interact productively. Amin Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm offers such an approach by positioning Islamic studies as an open field of dialogue among religious sciences, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and philosophy (Adiyono et al., 2024; Qadafy & Yunita, 2025). Through this framework, Islamic education can move beyond disciplinary isolation toward a more holistic and transformative model of learning.

The urgency of this issue becomes clearer when Islamic education is viewed as part of the broader project of civilizational renewal. Historically, Islamic civilization developed through intellectual openness and interaction among religious, philosophical, rational, and empirical sciences. Classical Muslim scholars did not sharply separate theology, law, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and ethics; rather, they developed these fields within an integrated intellectual culture (Ashraf et al., 2023; Fancy et al., 2023). This historical experience demonstrates that Islamic civilization advanced when knowledge was understood as interconnected and ethically oriented. However, the decline of this integrative tradition and the later institutional separation between religious and rational sciences weakened the role of Islamic education as a producer of knowledge (Bhat & Bisati, 2025). As a result, Islamic education often struggles to contribute meaningfully to contemporary scientific and civilizational discourse. Reconstructing Islamic education is therefore not only a pedagogical agenda, but also an epistemological and civilizational necessity.

Within the Indonesian context, M. Amin Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm has become one of the most influential proposals for reforming Islamic higher education. Abdullah criticizes the rigid separation between *hadārat al-nass*, *hadārat al-ilm*, and *hadārat al-falsafah*, namely textual tradition, scientific inquiry, and philosophical reflection. He argues that Islamic studies should not remain confined to a mono-disciplinary and normative-textual approach, but must engage historical, sociological, anthropological, philosophical, and scientific perspectives (Alsuhaymi & Atallah, 2025; Shameed, 2026). The spider web metaphor illustrates this epistemological relation by presenting knowledge as a network of interconnected disciplines. In this model, no discipline stands alone, and no single branch of knowledge should dominate the others. The strength of this metaphor lies in its ability to position Islamic education as a meeting point between religious commitment, scientific literacy, critical reasoning, and social transformation.

Recent scholarship has increasingly examined knowledge integration in Islamic education, but the focus remains uneven. Some studies emphasize the philosophical foundation of integrative-interconnective epistemology in Islamic studies (Rahmani et al., 2026). Others discuss the relevance of integration for curriculum development, religion-science dialogue, and interdisciplinary learning in Islamic higher education (Moslimany et al., 2024; Shaleh et al., 2024). Broader discussions on Islamic education also highlight the importance of *adab*, spirituality, ethical knowledge, and the historical legacy of Islamic civilization (Jalaldeen & Al-Hidabi, 2025). These studies show that Islamic education requires an integrative paradigm to overcome epistemological fragmentation. Nevertheless, much of the existing literature still treats integration as a normative ideal, curriculum discourse, or institutional reform agenda. It has not sufficiently developed the spider web paradigm

as a critical framework for linking epistemology, educational reconstruction, and civilizational renewal.

Despite these contributions, previous studies leave at least three important gaps. First, many studies explain Amin Abdullah's spider web paradigm as a model of interdisciplinary relation, but they do not sufficiently examine how this model can function as a framework for civilizational renewal. Second, the discussion of integration is often limited to curriculum reform or the relationship between religion and science, while its implications for institutional transformation, research culture, academic freedom, and ethical knowledge production remain underdeveloped. Third, existing studies tend to affirm the importance of integration without critically addressing the methodological tensions among textual authority, empirical science, social interpretation, and philosophical critique. This gap is important because an epistemological model that lacks civilizational and institutional translation cannot sufficiently guide Islamic education in responding to contemporary knowledge societies. Therefore, a more critical study is needed to reposition the spider web paradigm not merely as a metaphor of integration, but as a conceptual model for reconstructing Islamic education and strengthening its contribution to contemporary civilization.

Based on these gaps, this article aims to analyze the integrative-interconnective paradigm of Islamic education in the thought of M. Amin Abdullah by positioning the spider web metaphor as a civilizational framework. Specifically, this study examines how the paradigm addresses the dichotomy of knowledge, how it contributes to the reconstruction of Islamic educational thought and practice, and how it supports the formation of an Islamic civilization that is intellectually open, ethically grounded, and socially responsive. The theoretical contribution of this article lies in extending the discussion of the spider web paradigm from an epistemological model into a broader framework that connects knowledge integration, curriculum reconstruction, institutional transformation, and civilizational development. Practically, this study offers a basis for Islamic educational institutions to redesign curricula, strengthen interdisciplinary research, develop lecturer competence, and construct learning models that integrate textual understanding, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and ethical reflection. In this way, the article does not merely restate Abdullah's theory, but sharpens its relevance for the future of Islamic education in a rapidly changing world.

METHOD

Research Design and Context

This study employed a qualitative approach with a library research design. This design was selected because the study aimed to analyze the integrative-interconnective paradigm of Islamic education in the thought of M. Amin Abdullah, particularly through the spider web metaphor. The focus of the study was not to measure empirical variables, but to interpret, compare, and synthesize concepts found in scholarly texts. Library research is appropriate for examining ideas, theoretical constructions, epistemological assumptions, and conceptual relationships in written sources (Fife & Gossner, 2024; Masuku, 2024). The study was conducted as a conceptual and textual inquiry within Islamic education, Islamic epistemology, and interdisciplinary Islamic studies. The main analytical context was Islamic higher education, especially the need to overcome the dichotomy between religious sciences and modern sciences.

Data Sources and Literature Selection

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary literature. The primary corpus was M. Amin Abdullah's *Islamic Studies di Perguruan Tinggi: Pendekatan Integratif-Interkonektif*, which was selected because it systematically presents the integrative-interconnective paradigm, the spider web model, and the epistemological reform of Islamic studies (M. A. Abdullah, 2006; Jauzaa' & Ibrahim, 2025). Other works by Abdullah on religion, science, culture, Islamic studies, and interdisciplinary approaches were also used as supporting primary sources (Abdullah, 2014; Riwanda, 2023). Secondary sources included books, peer-reviewed journal articles, proceedings, and academic research reports discussing Islamic education, knowledge integration, Islamic epistemology, curriculum reform, religion-science dialogue, and Islamic civilization.

The literature search focused on sources published between 2000 and 2026, with priority given to studies published from 2021 to 2026 to ensure engagement with recent academic debates. Earlier works were included when they served as foundational texts for understanding Islamic

education, knowledge integration, and Islamic civilization. The literature was identified through academic databases and repositories using keywords such as “integrative-interconnective paradigm,” “spider web Amin Abdullah,” “Islamic education epistemology,” “knowledge integration in Islamic education,” “religion and science in Islamic education,” and “Islamic civilization and education.”

Table 1. Literature Selection Criteria

Component	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Topic relevance	Studies discussing M. Amin Abdullah, integrative-interconnective paradigm, spider web model, Islamic education, Islamic epistemology, or knowledge integration	Studies discussing integration only in a general sense without clear connection to Islamic education or epistemology
Source type	Books, peer-reviewed journal articles, proceedings, academic research reports, and recognized scholarly publications	Popular articles, opinion pieces, blogs, non-academic essays, and sources without academic references
Publication period	Sources published between 2000 and 2026, with priority on 2021–2026 studies	Sources outside the period, except foundational works that are theoretically necessary
Conceptual relevance	Works contributing to the analysis of curriculum reconstruction, interdisciplinary Islamic studies, religion–science dialogue, or Islamic civilization	Works unrelated to the research questions or not contributing to conceptual analysis
Bibliographic clarity	Sources with identifiable authors, publication year, title, publisher or journal, and DOI/URL when available	Sources with incomplete or unclear bibliographic information
Duplication	The most complete and academically reliable version of a source	Duplicated records or repeated versions of the same work

Table 1 presents the criteria used to select and exclude literature in this study. These criteria were designed to ensure that the analyzed sources were academically reliable, conceptually relevant, and directly connected to the research questions. The table clarifies the scope of the literature in terms of topic relevance, source type, publication period, conceptual contribution, bibliographic completeness, and duplication control. By applying these criteria, the study maintained transparency in source selection and reduced the risk of using irrelevant, repetitive, or academically weak references.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through documentation and critical literature review. The procedure consisted of five stages. First, Abdullah’s *Islamic Studies di Perguruan Tinggi: Pendekatan Integratif-Interkonektif* was identified as the principal text of analysis. Second, other relevant writings by Abdullah were traced to clarify the development of his thought on integration, interconnection, Islamic studies, and interdisciplinary approaches. Third, secondary literature was searched using the keywords stated above and screened based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Fourth, relevant concepts, definitions, arguments, and theoretical positions were recorded in analytical notes. Fifth, the notes were classified according to four analytical focuses: critique of knowledge dichotomy, structure of the spider web paradigm, reconstruction of Islamic education, and contribution to civilizational renewal.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using content analysis and conceptual analysis. Content analysis was used to identify recurring concepts, categories, and arguments in Abdullah’s works and related literature. This technique is appropriate for examining textual materials systematically and producing valid interpretations from written data (Chigbu et al., 2023; Imran & Almusharraf, 2023). The analysis began with close reading of the primary corpus to identify key terms such as integration, interconnection, spider web, *hadārat al-nass*, *hadārat al-‘ilm*, and *hadārat al-falsafah*. These concepts were then coded based on their function in Abdullah’s epistemological argument. The codes were grouped into broader themes, including epistemological integration, interdisciplinary dialogue, curriculum reconstruction, institutional transformation, and civilizational orientation.

Conceptual analysis was used to examine the meaning, scope, and theoretical contribution of the integrative-interconnective paradigm. This stage did not merely describe Abdullah's ideas, but also evaluated their relevance for Islamic education and contemporary civilization. The analysis compared Abdullah's paradigm with broader discourses on knowledge integration, Islamization of knowledge, Islamic educational reform, and civilizational renewal. Through this comparison, the study identified the specific contribution of the spider web paradigm, particularly its emphasis on dialogical relations among religious sciences, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and philosophy. The final stage of analysis produced a conceptual synthesis linking epistemological integration, curriculum reconstruction, institutional transformation, and the formation of knowledge-based Islamic civilization.

Trustworthiness and Research Ethics

The trustworthiness of the study was ensured through credibility, consistency, and transparency of interpretation. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing Ediyanto main work with his other writings and with secondary literature from different scholars (Ediyanto et al., 2025; Mat Zin et al., 2022). Interpretive consistency was maintained by linking each major interpretation to textual evidence from the selected sources. Peer-reviewed and academically recognized sources were prioritized to strengthen the scholarly basis of the analysis. Negative case reading was also applied by considering studies that expose limitations or challenges in implementing integrative-interconnective epistemology. This strategy prevented the analysis from becoming merely affirmative and allowed the study to develop a more critical interpretation.

This study did not involve human participants, personal data, interviews, surveys, or classroom observations. Therefore, informed consent, participant anonymity, and confidentiality procedures were not applicable in the same way as empirical research. Nevertheless, the study followed academic ethical principles by using credible sources, citing all referenced works properly, avoiding data manipulation, and presenting interpretations transparently. The researcher distinguished between Abdullah's original arguments, interpretations from previous studies, and the analytical position developed in this article. All sources were used only for academic purposes, and the analysis was conducted with attention to accuracy, fairness, and scholarly integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of M. Amin Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm produced four major findings. First, the paradigm emerges as a critique of the epistemological dichotomy between religious sciences and modern sciences in Islamic education. Second, the spider web metaphor represents knowledge as a dynamic network in which different disciplines maintain their identities while remaining connected to one another. Third, the paradigm positions textual tradition, scientific inquiry, and philosophical reflection as mutually corrective epistemological domains. Fourth, the paradigm has implications for reconstructing Islamic education and strengthening its contribution to contemporary Islamic civilization. These findings show that Abdullah's thought should not be understood merely as a proposal to combine religious and general subjects, but as an epistemological framework for redesigning the structure, orientation, and purpose of Islamic education.

Integrative-Interconnective Paradigm as a Critique of Knowledge Dichotomy

The first finding shows that Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm is rooted in his criticism of the separation between religious sciences and modern sciences. In this paradigm, Islamic studies cannot remain confined to a normative-textual approach because religious life is always connected with historical, social, cultural, philosophical, and scientific realities. The separation between religious knowledge and modern knowledge creates a fragmented educational system. Religious sciences may become isolated from contemporary social problems, while modern sciences may lose ethical and spiritual orientation. Abdullah's paradigm therefore attempts to shift Islamic education from a binary model of knowledge toward a relational model of knowledge.

This shift is important because Islamic education is expected to produce graduates who are not only religiously literate, but also intellectually adaptive and socially responsive. A mono-disciplinary model tends to make Islamic education defensive, closed, and less capable of addressing contemporary problems. By contrast, the integrative-interconnective paradigm encourages Islamic

education to develop intellectual openness while maintaining its ethical and spiritual foundation. The paradigm does not reject classical Islamic scholarship. Rather, it criticizes the isolation of Islamic scholarship from contemporary knowledge systems. This finding confirms that Abdullah's major contribution lies in proposing a dialogical epistemology that connects religious texts, empirical realities, social analysis, and philosophical reflection.

Spider Web Paradigm as a Network Model of Knowledge

The second finding concerns the meaning and function of the spider web metaphor. The spider web represents knowledge as an interconnected structure in which each discipline has its own identity but remains related to other disciplines. Religious sciences, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and philosophy do not stand as separated compartments. They form a network of knowledge that interacts continuously. This model differs from a hierarchical model that places one discipline above others. It also differs from a secular model that separates science from ethical and spiritual values.

The spider web paradigm is conceptually strong because it avoids two extreme positions. On the one hand, it avoids the domination of religious knowledge over all other forms of knowledge. On the other hand, it avoids the separation of modern science from ethical and spiritual responsibility. The paradigm encourages dialogue rather than domination. It also allows each discipline to contribute according to its method, object, and epistemic function. However, the spider web should not be treated as a complete technical model for curriculum development. It functions primarily as an epistemological map that still requires operational translation into curriculum structure, learning outcomes, teaching strategies, research design, and institutional policy.

Epistemological Domains of Knowledge Integration

The third finding shows that Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm is structured through three epistemological domains: *hadārat al-nass*, *hadārat al-'ilm*, and *hadārat al-falsafah*. *Hadārat al-nass* refers to textual tradition grounded in the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic sources. *Hadārat al-'ilm* refers to scientific inquiry, including empirical, historical, sociological, and natural-scientific approaches. *Hadārat al-falsafah* refers to philosophical and critical reflection that examines the assumptions, values, methods, and implications of knowledge. These three domains do not function separately or hierarchically. They are designed to interact dialogically.

This finding is significant because knowledge integration does not simply mean placing religious and general subjects side by side. Integration requires interaction among textual authority, empirical evidence, social interpretation, and philosophical critique. Textual understanding needs historical and social analysis so that religious interpretation does not become detached from reality. Scientific inquiry needs ethical and spiritual reflection so that knowledge does not become value-free. Social sciences need philosophical awareness so that contextual interpretation does not fall into excessive relativism. Philosophy helps clarify the relationship among these domains by examining their assumptions and limits.

Table 1. Epistemological Domains in the Integrative-Interconnective Paradigm

Epistemological Domain	Main Orientation	Function in Islamic Education	Expected Contribution
Hadārat al-nass	Textual and normative understanding	Provides religious foundation, ethical direction, and normative meaning	Strengthens spiritual orientation and moral responsibility
Hadārat al-'ilm	Empirical, historical, social, and scientific inquiry	Connects Islamic education with social realities, scientific development, and contemporary problems	Develops scientific literacy, analytical capacity, and contextual awareness

Table 1 presents the three epistemological domains that shape the integrative-interconnective paradigm. The table shows that each domain has a distinct orientation, but none of them is sufficient when isolated. *Hadārat al-nass* gives Islamic education its normative and ethical foundation. *Hadārat al-'ilm* enables Islamic education to understand empirical realities and contemporary social changes. *Hadārat al-falsafah* provides critical reflection so that the relationship between religious texts and scientific knowledge can be examined carefully. The table also clarifies that the strength of the paradigm lies not in the existence of these domains separately, but in their dialogical relationship.

Critical Position of Abdullah's Paradigm

The fourth finding reveals that Abdullah's paradigm differs from approaches that merely Islamize modern knowledge. The integrative-interconnective paradigm does not simply attach Islamic labels to modern science. It seeks to build an interactive and dialogical relationship among different disciplines. The goal is not to subordinate science under religious authority or to detach science from religious values. Instead, the paradigm attempts to create a mutually corrective relationship among religious knowledge, scientific inquiry, social sciences, humanities, and philosophy.

This critical position gives Abdullah's paradigm a more open academic character. It allows Islamic education to engage with modern sciences without losing its ethical orientation. At the same time, it enables religious studies to avoid intellectual closure by entering into dialogue with empirical and social realities. However, this openness also creates a conceptual challenge. The paradigm must explain how religious norms can guide knowledge without reducing scientific autonomy. It must also clarify how empirical science can contribute to Islamic education without weakening its normative identity. Therefore, the integrative-interconnective paradigm should be understood as an open epistemological framework that requires continuous methodological negotiation.

Implications for Islamic Education Reconstruction

The fifth finding concerns the implications of the spider web paradigm for reconstructing Islamic education. The paradigm requires curriculum reform that connects Qur'anic studies, Hadith, fiqh, philosophy, social sciences, science, technology, and contemporary social analysis. This does not mean that all disciplines must be merged into one subject. Rather, it means that the curriculum must be designed to create meaningful connections among disciplines. Islamic education should not only transmit religious knowledge, but also develop students' ability to interpret texts, analyze realities, evaluate ethical issues, and propose contextual solutions.

The paradigm also encourages a shift from memorization-based learning toward problem-based, research-based, and interdisciplinary learning. Students need to be trained to understand religious texts in relation to real social problems. Lecturers need to develop interdisciplinary literacy and collaborate across academic fields. Research in Islamic education should address concrete issues such as social inequality, environmental ethics, technological disruption, religious moderation, and cultural transformation. In this sense, the spider web paradigm provides a conceptual foundation for transforming Islamic education from a closed disciplinary system into an open knowledge system.

Table 2. Main Findings and Educational Implications of the Spider Web Paradigm

Main Finding	Critical Interpretation	Implication for Islamic Education
Abdullah rejects the dichotomy between religious and modern sciences	The paradigm offers a strong epistemological critique, but requires operational translation	Islamic education must redesign curriculum beyond disciplinary separation
The spider web metaphor presents knowledge as an interconnected network	The metaphor is conceptually strong, but not yet a complete technical model	Curriculum should promote interdisciplinary dialogue and collaborative learning
Religious knowledge, science, social sciences, humanities, and philosophy have complementary roles	Integration must avoid both religious domination and secular reductionism	Learning should combine ethics, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and critical reflection
The paradigm supports civilizational renewal	Civilizational revival requires more than conceptual integration	Islamic institutions must build research-based, problem-oriented, and ethically grounded education
Implementation depends on institutional readiness	The paradigm may remain normative without policy, competence, and academic culture	Institutions need curriculum mapping, lecturer development, interdisciplinary research, and academic freedom

Table 2 summarizes the main findings and their implications for Islamic education. The table shows that Abdullah's paradigm is not only an abstract epistemological idea, but also a framework with practical consequences. The rejection of knowledge dichotomy demands curriculum reform.

The spider web metaphor demands interdisciplinary learning. The complementary role of different knowledge domains demands ethical, empirical, social, and philosophical integration. The civilizational orientation of the paradigm demands institutional transformation. The table also highlights that implementation is the most critical challenge because the paradigm cannot produce educational change without institutional readiness.

Institutional Conditions for Translating the Paradigm into Practice

The sixth finding shows that the contribution of the spider web paradigm depends on the ability of Islamic educational institutions to translate epistemological integration into concrete academic practices. Conceptual integration alone is not sufficient to revive Islamic education or Islamic civilization. The paradigm requires institutional policy, lecturer competence, interdisciplinary research culture, curriculum mapping, academic freedom, and evaluation systems that reflect integrated learning. Without these conditions, the spider web paradigm may remain a normative discourse that is admired conceptually but weak in implementation.

Institutional transformation must begin with curriculum structure. Courses should be designed not only according to disciplinary boundaries, but also according to thematic and problem-oriented connections. Lecturer development is equally important because interdisciplinary education requires educators who understand their own field while being able to communicate with other disciplines. Research culture must also be strengthened by encouraging collaboration across Islamic studies, social sciences, humanities, and empirical sciences. Evaluation should measure students' ability to connect textual mastery, scientific reasoning, ethical judgment, and social problem-solving. These institutional conditions determine whether the spider web paradigm can function as a transformative framework or remain only an epistemological ideal.

Synthesis of the Findings

Overall, the findings show that Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm offers a strong epistemological foundation for reconstructing Islamic education. The paradigm addresses the dichotomy of knowledge by replacing a binary model with a network model. It positions the spider web metaphor as a framework for connecting textual tradition, scientific inquiry, social analysis, humanities, and philosophical reflection. It also expands the role of Islamic education from religious instruction to intellectual, ethical, and civilizational formation.

However, the findings also show that the paradigm is not a ready-made technical model. It requires operational development in curriculum design, pedagogy, research, institutional governance, and learning evaluation. The main value of the paradigm lies in its capacity to guide Islamic education toward a more dialogical, interdisciplinary, and civilization-oriented model. Therefore, the spider web paradigm can be understood as both an epistemological critique and a constructive framework for developing Islamic education that is relevant to contemporary civilization.

Discussion

The first finding shows that Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm is significant because it reframes the dichotomy between religious sciences and modern sciences as an epistemological problem rather than merely a curricular problem. This means that the weakness of Islamic education does not only lie in the absence of scientific subjects in religious institutions, but in the deeper separation between textual authority, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and philosophical reflection. This finding supports the argument that Islamic education cannot respond adequately to contemporary civilization if it remains confined to a mono-disciplinary and normative-textual orientation (Chande, 2023; Lutfi et al., 2025). It also extends previous discussions by showing that integration should not be understood as the mechanical combination of religious and general sciences. Rather, integration must be understood as a transformation of how knowledge is organized, justified, and used to interpret reality. This position is consistent with studies that emphasize the need for Islamic education to engage more seriously with contemporary social and scientific challenges (Jenuri et al., 2025; Palahniuk & Fomin, 2023). The implication is that Islamic education needs epistemological reform that enables religious knowledge to remain normative while also becoming intellectually open, socially contextual, and scientifically responsive.

The second finding demonstrates that the spider web metaphor provides a conceptual alternative to binary and hierarchical models of knowledge. In Abdullah's paradigm, knowledge is not arranged as a rigid hierarchy in which one discipline dominates the others, but as a relational network in which each discipline contributes according to its own function. This finding supports previous studies that describe the integrative-interconnective paradigm as a framework for interdisciplinary Islamic studies (Qadafy & Yunita, 2025; Rahmani et al., 2026). However, this study goes further by arguing that the spider web metaphor should not be treated only as a symbolic illustration of integration. Its more important contribution lies in its capacity to explain how Islamic education can move from disciplinary separation toward disciplined dialogue among religious sciences, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and philosophy. This interpretation differs from studies that tend to present integration as a normative ideal or curriculum discourse without examining its methodological consequences (Moslimany et al., 2024; Shaleh et al., 2024). The spider web paradigm therefore expands the existing theory of knowledge integration by emphasizing relationality, mutual correction, and epistemological negotiation. Nevertheless, it remains an epistemological map that requires institutional translation before it can meaningfully influence curriculum design, teaching practice, and research culture.

The third finding confirms that *hadārat al-nass*, *hadārat al-'ilm*, and *hadārat al-falsafah* form the core mechanism of Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm. *Hadārat al-nass* provides Islamic education with textual and normative foundations, *hadārat al-'ilm* connects education with empirical and social realities, and *hadārat al-falsafah* enables critical reflection on assumptions, methods, and values. This finding is important because it prevents integration from becoming superficial. Islamic education cannot become integrative simply by adding science or technology courses to religious curricula. It becomes integrative only when textual understanding, empirical analysis, and philosophical critique interact in shaping learning outcomes, research orientation, and ethical judgment. This interpretation supports broader discussions on Islamic education that emphasize *adab*, spirituality, ethical knowledge, and intellectual responsibility (Jalaldeen & Al-Hidabi, 2025). At the same time, it extends the literature by showing that philosophical reflection is not an additional element, but a necessary mediator between textual authority and scientific autonomy. Without this mediating function, Islamic education may fall either into rigid textualism or into uncritical scientism.

The fourth finding indicates that the integrative-interconnective paradigm has practical implications for reconstructing Islamic education, especially in curriculum reform, interdisciplinary learning, lecturer competence, and research culture. This finding shows that the paradigm should not remain at the level of epistemological discourse; it must be translated into institutional practices. Previous studies have highlighted the relevance of integration for curriculum development and religion-science dialogue (Moslimany et al., 2024; Shaleh et al., 2024). However, the present study argues that curriculum integration will remain weak if it is not supported by institutional policy, academic freedom, lecturer development, and problem-oriented research. The reason is clear: integration requires not only conceptual agreement, but also organizational capacity. A curriculum may use the language of integration, but if teaching remains mono-disciplinary and research remains fragmented, the paradigm will not produce meaningful transformation. This finding therefore expands previous studies by connecting epistemological integration with institutional readiness. Its practical implication is that Islamic higher education institutions must design curricula, learning models, and research agendas that connect religious texts with social problems, scientific reasoning, ethical reflection, and civilizational responsibility.

The fifth finding positions the spider web paradigm as a civilizational framework rather than merely a model of interdisciplinary learning. This is the main conceptual contribution of the study. Earlier discussions often focused on the spider web paradigm as an epistemological or curricular model, while this study shows that its broader significance lies in connecting knowledge integration, educational reconstruction, institutional transformation, and the formation of a knowledge-based Islamic civilization. This position is consistent with historical studies showing that Islamic civilization advanced when knowledge was cultivated through intellectual openness and interaction among religious, philosophical, and empirical sciences (Fancy et al., 2023; Bhat & Bisati, 2025). Nevertheless, this study also offers a critical refinement: civilizational renewal cannot be achieved by invoking classical Islamic intellectual glory alone. It requires a contemporary educational system

capable of producing graduates who are religiously grounded, scientifically literate, philosophically reflective, and socially responsive. In this sense, the integrative-interconnective paradigm contributes to global debates on Islamic education by offering a model of knowledge that avoids both religious isolation and secular reductionism. The proposed synthesis can be illustrated in Figure 1.

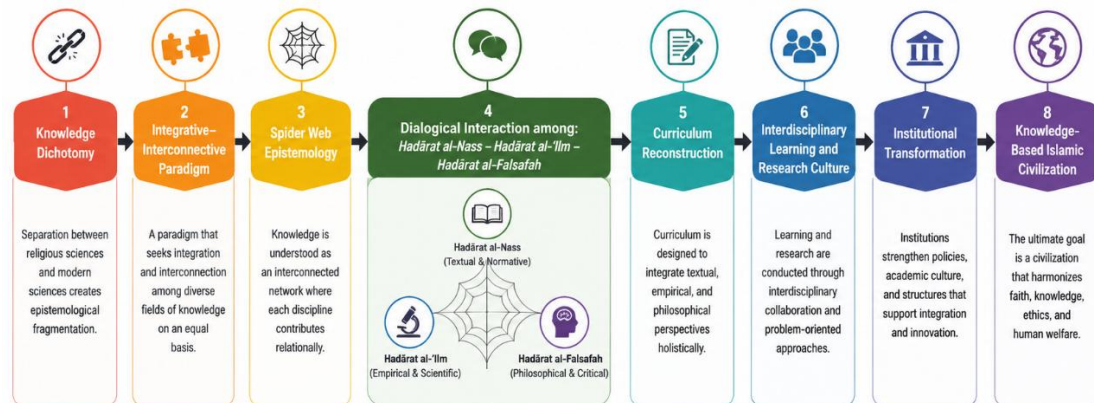


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Translating the Spider Web Paradigm into Islamic Education Reconstruction

Figure 1 presents the conceptual synthesis developed from the findings of this study. The figure shows that the starting point of the analysis is the dichotomy of knowledge, which creates separation between religious sciences and modern sciences. The integrative-interconnective paradigm responds to this problem by offering spider web epistemology as a relational model of knowledge. The core of this model lies in the dialogical interaction among *hadarat al-nass*, *hadarat al-'ilm*, and *hadarat al-falsafah*. This interaction must then be translated into curriculum reconstruction, interdisciplinary learning, research culture, and institutional transformation. The final orientation is the formation of a knowledge-based Islamic civilization that integrates religious commitment, scientific literacy, ethical responsibility, and social responsiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that M. Amin Abdullah's integrative-interconnective paradigm provides a strong epistemological foundation for reconstructing Islamic education in response to the persistent dichotomy between religious sciences and modern sciences. The paradigm shows that Islamic education cannot remain confined to a mono-disciplinary and normative-textual orientation because contemporary civilization requires the integration of textual understanding, empirical inquiry, social analysis, and philosophical reflection. Through the spider web metaphor, knowledge is understood as a relational network in which different disciplines interact dialogically without losing their respective identities. This study also confirms that *hadarat al-nass*, *hadarat al-'ilm*, and *hadarat al-falsafah* function as the core epistemological domains that enable Islamic education to connect religious authority, scientific reasoning, and critical reflection.

The main contribution of this study lies in positioning the spider web paradigm not only as a model of interdisciplinary knowledge, but also as a conceptual framework for Islamic educational reconstruction and civilizational renewal. The findings indicate that the paradigm has practical implications for curriculum reform, interdisciplinary learning, lecturer competence, research culture, institutional transformation, and academic freedom. However, the paradigm cannot produce meaningful change if it remains only an abstract epistemological discourse. It must be translated into concrete educational policies, curriculum structures, problem-oriented research agendas, and learning evaluations that measure textual mastery, scientific literacy, ethical judgment, and social problem-solving. In this sense, the integrative-interconnective paradigm offers a way to develop Islamic education that is religiously grounded, intellectually open, ethically responsible, and socially responsive.

Future studies should examine the implementation of the integrative-interconnective paradigm in specific Islamic educational institutions, including Islamic higher education, madrasah, and pesantren. Empirical research is needed to evaluate how this paradigm is translated into curriculum design, teaching practice, interdisciplinary research, and institutional governance.

Comparative studies across different Muslim educational contexts would also strengthen understanding of how knowledge integration operates in diverse cultural, institutional, and epistemological settings. Such studies will help move the spider web paradigm from conceptual discourse toward practical transformation in Islamic education.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Ngatmin Abbas conceived the study, developed the research framework, designed the methodology, conducted the conceptual analysis, interpreted the findings, prepared the original manuscript draft, and coordinated the overall research process. Khafidoh contributed to the refinement of the research methodology, literature review, validation of the conceptual framework, and critical revision of the manuscript. Muhammad Umar Al Faroq participated in the literature investigation, formal analysis, interpretation of the findings, visualization of the conceptual framework, and manuscript revision. Abdullah contributed to the theoretical validation, critical evaluation of the analytical framework, and refinement of the conceptual interpretation. Ahmadi supervised the overall research process, critically reviewed and edited the manuscript, provided academic guidance throughout the study, and approved the final version for publication. All authors contributed substantially to the development of the study, discussed the findings critically, reviewed and approved the final manuscript, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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