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EXPLORING THE MEANING OF *TAFAQQUH FIDDIN* AS INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL *JIHAD*

Eva Sunarya & Komaruddin Sassi
Institut Agama Islam Al-Qur'an Al-Ittifaqiah Indralaya
evasunarya@gmail.com; sassikomaruddin@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Tafaquh fiddin in Islamic scholarship emphasizes the importance of comprehensive understanding and deepening of religious knowledge. This study aims to explore the meaning of *tafaquh fiddin* through the lenses of intellectual and spiritual jihad and assess its relevance to contemporary Muslim life. Employing a qualitative methodology, the research utilizes a literature review encompassing Qur'anic verses, hadith, and classical and modern Islamic texts. The findings reveal that *tafaquh fiddin* extends beyond theoretical religious study to embody a form of jihad that integrates the expansion of Islamic insight with the practical implementation of religious values in daily life. The study concludes that *tafaquh fiddin* serves as a critical foundation for cultivating intellectually, morally, and spiritually resilient Muslims, thereby maintaining its significance in addressing contemporary challenges.

Keywords: *Tafaquh fiddin*; Qur'an (Q.S. At-Taubah); Intellectual Jihad; Spiritual Jihad; Qur'anic Tafsir

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INTRODUCTION

From an Islamic perspective, Education is a vital means of disseminating knowledge, shaping character, and instilling moral values rooted in religion. The dissemination of knowledge is carried out through educational institutions such as madrasas and networks of scholars, which serve as vehicles for the development and transmission of knowledge. This activity is seen as a form of intellectual *jihad* integral to Islamic teachings, as *jihad* is not limited to physical struggle but also encompasses strengthening religious epistemology and fostering a generation that adheres firmly to the principles of enjoining good and forbidding evil (LaChette, 2015). These values serve as the primary foundation for the development of Islamic civilization.

One form of struggle emphasized in the Qur'an is *tafaqquh fid-din*, which means intensely studying religious knowledge. This concept is expressed in Surah At-Taubah, verse 122, which states that not all Muslims are required to go to war; instead, some are advised to focus on deepening their religious knowledge and issuing warnings to the community. It demonstrates that religious students play a strategic role in maintaining and spreading religious values, as well as safeguarding the spiritual well-being of the community.

Tafaquh fid-din, rooted in the word faqiha, meaning to understand or comprehend, encompasses not only an understanding of Sharia laws but also aspects of Islamic morality and spirituality (Machfudz, 2020). In this context, *tafaqquh fid-din* can be seen as an intellectual *jihad* which involves efforts to understand and master religious knowledge, as well as a spiritual *jihad* which aims to cleanse the soul and draw closer to Allah (Ramadhani et al., 22 C.E.). In line with this, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of intellectual responsibility in carrying out various activities.

In general, the discussion of the concept of *jihad* among exegetes is divided into two generations of interpretations, which reveal the interpretative tendencies of each era. First, in the context of classical interpretation in the book of interpretation Jami al-Bayan fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an in QS An-Nahl: 110 is related to the portion of war that is based on the principle of justice (*'adl*) and does not exceed defensive limits, as reflected in its explanation of the prohibition of fighting non-combatants and the importance of maintaining the ethics of war (adab al-harb) by the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Although acknowledging the importance of spiritual *jihad* (for example through QS. Al-Ankabut: 69), Al-Tabari emphasizes *jihad* more as a collective responsibility (*fard kifayah*) in defending religion and the

people, which reflects the political and social reality of the 3rd century AH/9 AD, the correlation of external relations and the consolidation of Islamic power became a priority (Wara et al., 2024).

Secondly, in the contemporary era (19th century), modernist commentators such as Rasyid Ridha's *Tafsir al-Manar* and Sayyid Qutub's *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an* reconstructed *jihad* as a response to colonialism, global injustice, and moral degradation. The emphasis on intellectual *jihad*, in the form of a spirit of educational renewal and social ethics, and *jihad* as resistance to the modern system of ignorance, are some of the products of interpretation in the contemporary period (Saragih, 2015). This development demonstrates that the interpretation of *jihad* is always dynamic, influenced by the context of the times, yet remains rooted in sacred texts interpreted through an adaptive methodology.

Rasyid Ridha's understanding of the concept of *jihad* is a multidimensional effort that encompasses not only physical warfare but also intellectual, social, and moral endeavors aimed at building a progressive Islamic civilization. The development of the meaning of *jihad* from the form of maximum effort to the activity of preaching the spread of Islamic values, educational reform to eradicate ignorance, poverty alleviation as a form of economic justice, and improvement of corrupt government systems. There are serious efforts to interpret the verses of *jihad* that are linked to the context of colonialism and the decline of Muslims in the early 20th century, where the renewal of thought and institutions is considered more urgent than militarism (Fauziah, 2021).

The contextualization of *jihad* in various tafsir books varies greatly and is influenced by time, place, and socio-cultural conditions. Classical exegetes tend to emphasize the physical and military aspects, while modern exegetes provide broader and more contextual interpretations, encompassing various aspects of life. These differences in interpretation demonstrate that the concept of *jihad* is living and dynamic, requiring continued study and relevance to the challenges faced by Muslims in every era.

The critical point in the concept of educational *jihad* and its relationship to the context of *tafaqquh fiddin* is comprehensively mentioned in Surah At-Taubah verse 122. The meaning of the division of *jihad* into two aspects encompasses the need to develop religious Education as part of the intellectual and spiritual struggle to internalize and practice Islamic values in depth. Therefore, researchers need to review comprehensively the meaning of *tafaqquh fiddin* as intellectual and spiritual *jihad* in Q.S. At-Taubah, verse 122.

Al-Maraghi provides an introduction to a more detailed understanding of the various forms of *jihad*, explaining them within the context of the fundamental values of *tafaqquh al-din*, which are built on the spirit of Islamic humanism. First, regarding *Jihad* (war), the law is *fardlu kifayah*, Second, studying religious knowledge, Third, the aim of studying religious knowledge, Fourth, the law of seeking religious knowledge and teaching it is obligatory, Fifth, the virtue of seeking knowledge which is as valuable as fighting to defend religion (Al-Maraghi, 1992). Discussions related to the relevance of *jihad* and Islamic intellectualism will lead to the pinnacle of spiritual achievement in Islam. It will gradually focus on the close relationship between divine awareness and noble morals. Furthermore, the example of the Perfect Man serves as a moral foundation for individuals in civilized society.

METHODS

In general, the writing in this article presents qualitative research that examines the meaning of *tafaquh fiddin* in the Al-Qur'an, based on text analysis from relevant literary sources (Sugiyono, 2017). More specifically, the method of presenting the results of this research employs a thematic approach (*maudhu'i*), namely by collecting verses from the Qur'an related to the theme of *tafaqquh fi al-din* and religious deepening, and then analyzing them within the framework of understanding the scope of religious Education.

The steps of the thematic approach in this research include: first, determining the central theme, namely *tafaqquh fiddin*, and its correlation with intellectual *jihad* and spiritual *jihad*. Second, collecting relevant verses, such as Q.S.Q.S. At-Taubah, verse 122, which specifically mentions the concept of *tafaqquh fiddin*. And, comprehensively collecting verses relevant to religious understanding in Surah Hud verse 91, and Surah Al-An'am verse 65. Third, analyzing the meaning of the verses based on the context of their revelation (*asbāb al-nuẓūl*), language structure, and both straightforward and implicit meanings, and fourth, synthesizing the meaning of the verses as a whole and linking them to the socioreligious reality in Indonesia. This method is used to demonstrate that the value of *tafaqquh fiddin* in the Qur'an extends beyond its theological significance to encompass substantial social value in forming an educational foundation based on spiritual values, through the implementation of intellectual *jihad*. It aligns with the vision of deepening religious understanding within the context of Indonesian nationalism.

RESULTS

Asbabun Nuzul and the Foundations of Intellectual *Jihad*

In verse 122 of Surah At-Taubah, it is explained, "It is not appropriate for all believers to go (to the battlefield). Why did not some of each group of them go (stay with the Messenger of Allah) to deepen their religious knowledge and warn their people when they returned, so that they could protect themselves?" (Kemenag RI, 2016).

Based on Asbabunnuzul QS. At-Taubah verse 122 was explained by Wahbah Zuhaili. According. According to him, this verse was revealed when almost all the believers were very enthusiastic about participating in the troops sent by the Prophet. They left the Prophet in Medina with a handful of people. This verse came down, explaining to Muslims to divide their tasks between fighting and deepening their religious knowledge. Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Ikrimah, who said, "When the verse was revealed, 'If you do not go (to fight), Allah will surely punish you with a painful punishment." There was a group of people who did not go to war because they were teaching religious matters to their people. Then the hypocrites said, "There is a group of people in the desert. Indeed, the people of the desert will perish." Ibn Abi Hatim also narrated from Abullah bin Ubaidillah bin Umair, who said, "In the past, because the spirit of the believers was so passionate for *jihad*, when the Messenger of Allah sent an expedition to fight, they went out to the expedition and left the Prophet in Medina with a few people, then this verse was revealed." (Az-Zuhaili, 2013).

In QS At-taubah verse 122, it is explained that it is not appropriate for the believers to all go out to fight their enemies, just as it is not appropriate for them all to stay. Why not go out for war and *jihad* from each group of sufficient people and realize the benefit, the aim is so that the people who stay can deepen the religion of Allah and know the latest in the laws of Allah's religion and the revelations revealed to His messenger, so that they will later warn their people with the knowledge they learn when they return to their people. Hopefully, they will fear Allah's punishment by carrying out His commandments and avoiding His prohibitions (Indrawan & Abidin, 2022).

From the meaning of the At-Taubah letter, "Why do some of each group among them not go to deepen their religious knowledge, which can be interpreted that studying knowledge is also a good thing in the way of Allah SWT (Indrawan & Abidin, 2022). According to the Al-Azhar Tafsir, with the phrase *falaulaa*, meaning exaltation, Allah has recommended a division of labor. All believers are obligated to engage in *jihad* and are

required to go to war according to their respective capabilities, whether light or heavy. Therefore, with this verse, Allah also guides that *jihad* should be divided into armed *jihad* and *jihad* to deepen knowledge and understanding of religion. If those who go to the battlefield fight for their lives with the enemy, then those who remain in the rear lines deepen their understanding (*fiqh*) of religion, because the *jihad* they face is no less critical. Religious knowledge must be deepened. Not everyone will be able to study all religions scientifically. There are heroes on the battlefield, sword in hand, and there are also heroes in the rear lines contemplating the book. Both are important, and both fill each other. What is the fight on the front lines, if there is no one behind to fill the spiritual? One aspect of this verse that warrants attention is the recommendation to form separate groups, as there is likely to be one group that can benefit from a more profound understanding of religion (Hamka, 1984).

In verse 42, it is stated that if the call for war has come, you should go to war, whether light or heavy, young or old, single or married. If you look at it at a glance, there is a contradiction between verse 42 and verse 122. Because, as verse 122 explains, it is not good for believers to follow everything. However, these two verses do not contradict each other, and *Nasakh Mansukh* does not occur. It is still clearly explained in verse 122, as these groups leave when the call comes. They all came to the Messenger of Allah. Register yourself, light or heavy, young or old. However, from the many groups that at that time came in droves to the Messenger of Allah, there should be one group that was serious about deepening its knowledge in matters of religion.

What is clear is that all groups must fight for *jihad*, join in the struggle. But Rasulullah saw. Later, they will share their respective tasks—some fight on the front lines, and those who fight on the back lines. Therefore, small groups that deepen their knowledge about religion are also part of *jihad*. There are hadiths which give the position of a pious person in terms of religious people to be the same or as high as those who fight for *jihad fi sabilillah*. The Messenger of Allah said: "The people who are closest to the level of *nubuwwat* are experts in science and experts in *jihad*. As for experts in science, they are the ones who show people what the apostles brought, and as for experts in *jihad*, they are the ones who fight with their swords, carrying what the apostles brought." (HR. Abu Nu'aim from Ibn Abbas) (Sulam et al., 2023).

This verse emphasizes that in building a strong and pious society, a group of people is needed who are specifically trained in religion. In the modern context, this could mean

educating *ulama*, Muslim scholars, or educators who possess a deep understanding of religion and can effectively convey it to society. As explained in Surah Az-Zummar verse 9: (Are you, O polytheists, more fortunate) or is he who worships at night, prostrating himself and standing, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Indeed, only those who possess understanding are admonished (Kemenag RI, 2019).

QS. AZ-Zumar verse 9 explains the differences between the disbelievers and the pious who always perform worship to Allah SWT, and fear Allah's punishment in the afterlife, and who always hope for Allah's mercy (heaven). In a narration, it is stated that the person referred to at the beginning of the words "amman huwa qanitun" in Surah Az-Zumar: 9 is Uthman bin Affan (who always prostrated himself to Allah SWT at night).

The beginning of QS. Az-Zumar: 9, some read it as a question, while others read it as *amman*. The first is the Nafi' reading, as Ibn Kathir and Hamzah did. It consists of the letters alif and man, meaning who. The word man functions as the subject (*mubtada'*). At the same time, the predicate (*khabar*) is not included because it is already hinted at by the previous sentence, stating that the disbelievers invent partners for Allah and so on. The second reading, *Amman*, is the reading of the majority of scholars. It originally consisted of two words, namely am and man, which were then combined in the reading and writing. It has two meanings. First, the word "am" functions as a question: "Is the disbeliever who associates with Allah the same as the one who believes and is diligent in worship?" Second, the word am serves to move the explanation to another explanation, similar to the word even, "do not threaten them, but ask whether the one who associates with Allah is the same as the one who is diligent in worship?".

The word *qaanit* is derived from the word *qunuut*, which means perseverance in obedience accompanied by submission and sincerity. This verse describes both physical and spiritual attitudes. The physical attitude is described by the words *saajidan/sujud* (prostration) and *qaa'iman*/standing. In contrast, the spiritual attitude is described by the sentence "fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord." This verse emphasizes that mercy encompasses both worldly and Hereafter grace, while fear is confined to the Hereafter. It is explained that a believer should not feel fear in facing worldly life, because everything that happens to him in this world, as long as a person is pious, is not a problem. Such things can

lead to a person's elevated status in the Hereafter. In contrast to mercy, the mercy referred to is comprehensive, mercy in this world and mercy in the Hereafter (Shihab, 2012).

The word *ya'lamuun* is synonymous with *ilm*, meaning beneficial knowledge that enables a person to understand the essence of something and then align themselves and their actions with that knowledge. The word *yatadzakkaru* originates from the word *Dhikr*, meaning "lesson" or "remembrance." The addition of the letter "ta" indicates the numerous lessons learned by *Ulul Albab*. It means that others besides *Ulul Albab* will receive lessons, but not as many as *Ulul Albab*.

The term *ulul albab* comes from two words, namely *ulu* and *albab*. The word ulu means "possessor." Meanwhile, albab comes from the word *allubb*, which means "brain" or "mind" (intellect). *The albab* in question does not refer to the brain or mind of several or many people, but rather to the brain or mind of just one person. What is meant by *'Ulul Albab*' is someone who has a complex or layered brain. It can be concluded that *Ulul Albab* is someone with sharp abilities. This verse emphasizes the distinction between the two (someone who is obedient and someone who is sinful). It explains the virtues of knowledge and the importance of practicing based on the knowledge they possess. People who lack aql are those who do not know, because in their hearts, there is a veil that prevents them from understanding any advice. Then the conclusion of this verse is "People who have a healthy mind, and use it to think, will know the difference between those who know and those who do not know (Al-Maraghy, 1986).

Therefore, the researchers connect the concept of *tarbiyah* in the Qur'an and Hadith regarding the purpose of Education. The term "Education" in the Islamic context generally refers to the concepts of *al-tarbiyah, al-ta'lim,* and *al-ta'dib*. The word *al-Tarbiyah* in Arabic, "*Rabba, yarbu, tarbiyah*: has the meaning of "growing", "developing", growing (*nasya'a*), and becoming big or mature (*tara'ra'a*). It means that through Education (*tarbiyah*), the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of students will grow, making them more mature. The word "*Rabb*" is a comparison between God and humans. God as an educator and humans as students (Rahman, 2021).

It can also be understood that in *adab* and *ta'dib* as a concept of Education, it is not only limited to the concept of "recognition" but more than that, encompassing the substance of simultaneously "recognition and instillation" regarding absolute reality and the essence of truth. It means that if what is instilled is only the aspect of recognition, it indicates an error,

such as the reality of truth regarding science and Education based on the Islamic worldview (Komaruddin, 2020). It shows the importance of *adab ta'dib* as a requirement for knowledge because *adab* contains a harmonious combination of 'knowledge and charity'. In contrast, knowledge that encourages carrying out justice (*adl*) and wisdom (*hikmah*) are two primary components that are believed to be gifts from Allah SWT, while *ta'dib* has meaning apart from being a concept of the terminology of Islamic Education that is correct and true, at the same time *ta'dib* is also an ontology that clarifies past Education that has a monotheism paradigm.

Islamic Education encompasses the Education of the whole person, including their mind and heart, their spirit and body, as well as their morals and skills. Another opinion states that Islamic Education is all efforts to maintain and develop the natural qualities of the whole person (*insan kamil*) based on Islamic norms. Islamic Education is also an effort to guide the body and spirit in developing human nature based on Islamic law towards the formation of a person with a Muslim personality. Thus, the goal of Islamic Education is to realize Islamic values in a student, which the teacher attempts through the educational process to achieve the formation of a whole person who possesses faith, piety, and knowledge, who can become a devout *'Abdullah*.

The goals of Islamic Education, as stated in Surah Az-Zumar, verse 9, are oriented towards four objectives. First, to become a person who obeys Allah SWT and His Messenger at all times and in all places, even in the middle of the night. Second, to change, a person must, of course, change for the better in their pursuit of knowledge. It is addressed in the verse "*saajidan wa qaaiman*." Third, to be deeply afraid of punishment in the afterlife, and every action in this world is always directed towards the afterlife. Because, according to him, true happiness is happiness in the afterlife. He will abandon all activities that could sacrifice his happiness in the afterlife. Fourth, to hope for God's mercy. When someone increases their outward good deeds, such as prayer, *Hajj*, almsgiving, Islamic brotherhood, and other virtuous actions, they correlate them with their inner deeds (mood), which is solely to hope for God's mercy (Batubara, 2021).

Tafaqquh Fiddin **and the Scope of Intellectual** ***Jihad***

The ultimate goal of Education is to transform a Muslim's behavior and attitude, thereby developing and nurturing their full potential, enabling them to fulfill their obligations

as leaders on earth (*khalifah fil ardh*) solely to worship Allah SWT. In this process, teaching is essential. In other words, teaching is one means to achieve educational goals. The ultimate goal of Islamic Education, as per QS Az Zumar, verse 9, is to develop students into intellectual and pious individuals (*Ulul Albab*) (Wahidah, 2019). Of course, achieving this requires effort. The way we must take it is to be serious, especially in the learning process. In the book *Ta'lim Muta'allim*, sincerity in learning means having a clear intention and being oriented towards Goodness, as well as striving hard and persistently in seeking knowledge. This sincerity does not only mean trying hard, but also means having a clear goal and being oriented towards Goodness. According to the book *Ta'lim Muta'allim*, sincerity in learning is also associated with having high ideals and being oriented towards Goodness, as well as striving hard and persistently in seeking knowledge. This sincerity is considered the most essential capital for achieving success in learning, and it does not only mean striving hard, but also means having a clear goal and being oriented towards Goodness (Nabila & Martyo, 2024).

In the book Ta'lim Muta'allim, the principles of learning proposed by Sheikh Az-Zarnuji encompass several aspects related to motivation, activity, repetition, direct involvement, challenges, and individual differences. Some of the principles of learning contained in the book are: First, sincerity. Success in learning can be achieved with sincerity, which involves adopting a transparent and good-intentioned approach, as well as striving diligently and continuously to seek knowledge. Second, perseverance: Success in learning can also be achieved through perseverance, which involves having patience and tenacity in facing the tests and difficulties that arise on the journey of seeking knowledge. Third, high ideals: Success in learning can be achieved with high ideals, which means having a clear and good-oriented goal, as well as striving hard and continuously in seeking knowledge (Mahbubi, 2015).

The book *Ta'lim Muta'allim* emphasizes sincerity, perseverance, and high ideals as essential learning principles for achieving success in learning (Ichsan, 2019). Therefore, seekers of knowledge must be sincere and continue to do so, as is the guidance of Allah SWT in QS Al-Ankabut verse 69: *And those who strive for (seek the pleasure of) Us, We will truly show them Our ways. And verily, Allah is truly with those who do good* (Kemenag RI, 2011b). From the verse above, Zamakhsyari wrote back the interpretation of Abi Sulaiman Al-Darani in the book of tafsir al-Kasyaf: "Whoever strives (serious in learning) in the way of Allah, Allah will show him something that he does not yet know."

Students who are serious about their studies are those who are highly motivated, which will drive them to achieve their learning goals. Students need to be diligent, consistent, and patient in learning and understanding knowledge. Likewise, educators must be serious, consistent (continuous), and patient in imparting knowledge (Tahmida & Masruddin, 2024).

According to Ibn Kathir's interpretation, if someone experiences obstacles that prevent them from reaching a certain level of faith, the primary cause is a lack of will. This lack of will is rooted in weak faith, which is often caused by the absence of a guiding Influence. Scholars who are knowledgeable about Allah are those who act as guides to His path. Therefore, anyone who is aware or is made aware by others must pay attention to the conditions that must be prioritized. The Qur'an is guidance from Allah SWT, so it is recommended to study it thoroughly, understanding the interconnectedness (munasabah) and the reasons for its revelation (*asbabun nuzul*) of each verse, and complementing this with an understanding of the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) (Tammulis & Arsyad, 2021).

Allah SWT. Judging his servant's actions not solely from the results, but from the process of achieving them, whether they were done with sincerity or not. Allah SWT truly loves people who act sincerely and will always provide a solution to every problem faced by His creatures. Rasulullah SAW said, "*Indeed, Allah SWT loves people who do their job optimally and with full sincerity*" (HR. Thabrani). The current crisis is a severe issue that affects all dimensions of society. It encompasses economic, social, political, educational, cultural, moral, and ethical crises. It even involves a crisis of trust. Therefore, seriousness and commitment are necessary to address and overcome it, involving all elements of the nation. Arrogance, pretense, and apathy must be banished. We are deeply concerned that if this competition for good is not addressed with complete sincerity, it will worsen to a worse state than previously anticipated.

The verse discusses individuals who strive to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT, and Allah will guide them on the right path. In this context, if someone has the desire to try with the intention of seeking Allah's approval, then they will be shown the right path; therefore, we as humans are encouraged to try because, in essence, Allah himself will help us in things that we did not expect (Yusuf, 2023).

Research shows that the concept of *tafaquh fiddin* has strong relevance in the context of contemporary Muslim life. One of the main findings of this study is the clear division of roles in the modern world, which aligns with the understanding of Surah At-Taubah, verse

122. In today's world, not all individuals need to be social activists at the forefront of the *da'wah* struggle. Some individuals play a more significant role in academia, Education, or religious scholarship. For example, students who choose to study religious studies on campus have a role just as important as those who directly engage in da'wah or community social activities. It highlights the importance of contributions from various sectors in fostering a more civilized and informed society.

Furthermore, other findings in this study underscore the urgency of religious Education in the face of the moral crisis and the rapid development of information technology, which can introduce values that conflict with Islamic teachings. In this context, the role of Islamic scholars, religious teachers, and Islamic educators is crucial. They are responsible for conveying and adapting Islamic teachings in a contextual and relevant manner to the challenges of the times. It includes religious Education activities through short-term Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren kilat*), regular religious studies, and the increasingly widespread digital *da'wah* (Islamic outreach). As a concrete form of religious Education that plays a role in preserving Islamic values amidst globalization, these activities constitute a form of *jihad* that is no less noble (Muis et al., 2024).

Another crucial finding is the awareness of the importance of *tarbiyah* (traditional Education) and *ta'dib* (religious guidance) in contemporary Education. Current Education, which often emphasizes cognitive intelligence, must be combined with moral and character development. In this regard, Islamic Education, which combines general knowledge with moral development, makes a significant contribution to the character development of children and the younger generation. Therefore, Islamic Education must aim not only to achieve academic excellence, but also to produce individuals who are prepared to become *khalifah fil ardh* (vicegerents on earth), playing an active role in improving social and humanitarian conditions, as taught in Islam (Abdullah et al., 2019).

DISCUSSION

Analyzing the meaning of Verse Q.S. At-Taubah: 122 in the Contextualization of Intellectual *Jihad*

1. Text and literal meaning of Q.S. At-Taubah: 122

   "It is not appropriate for all believers to go (to war). Why didn't some of each group of them go (stay with the Messenger of Allah) to deepen their religious knowledge

and warn their people when they returned, so that they could protect themselves?" (Kemenag RI, 2011a).

2. The general meaning of the form of *jihad* in QS. At-Taubah 122

Ahmad Musthofa Al-Maraghi, in his interpretation "Al-Maraghi," provides a pretty straightforward interpretation of this verse. It can be categorized as follows: First, regarding *Jihad* (war); *Jihad* is *fardlu kifayah*, except that the Messenger of Allah had ordered the Muslims to join the war, or the Messenger of Allah himself took part in the war. So in this case, the law of war becomes obligatory *'ain* (must be followed by all Muslims in the area who are *mukallaf*) (Al-Maraghi, 1974).

About this verse, the war that occurred was sufficient for a small number of Muslims, and the Prophet Muhammad himself did not go to the battlefield at that time. The Prophet Muhammad remained only in Medina. Therefore, it was not appropriate for the believers to go to the battlefield entirely, because the war that occurred was sufficient for a small number of Muslims to face.

Second, pursue religious knowledge. Believers who did not go to war were supposed to study with the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), understanding and deepening their religious knowledge. It was because revelations continued to descend upon the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Likewise, hadith, consisting of words and deeds, always explain these revelations, which are still *mujmal* (generalized), allowing for a clear understanding of their laws and wisdom.

Third, the aim of studying religion. The aim is not to pursue rank (position), possessions, oppress other people, or imitate the wrongdoers. Still, the aim of seeking religious knowledge is to guide one's people, teach them and warn them about the consequences of ignorance and not practicing what they know, with the hope that they will fear Allah and be careful of the consequences of disobedience, in addition to ensuring that all believers know their religion, can spread its message and defend it and explain its secrets to all humanity.

Fourth, the law demands religious knowledge and teaches it. From this verse, there is an *ibrah* (lesson) about the obligation to deepen one's religious knowledge and the willingness to teach it in residential areas, as well as to understand other people's perspectives on religion to the extent possible. The public is often unaware of the laws that every believer must know: Fifth, the priority of knowledge for students. People who

study religion are among those who are fortunate and obtain a high position in the sight of Allah and are no less high than the warriors who sacrifice their wealth and souls in exalting the word of Allah, defending religion, and its teachings. Even students of religious knowledge may be more critical than fighters in situations other than when defending one's religion becomes obligatory for everyone.

3. Direction of implementation in the scope of *jihad* in QS. At-Taubah 122

In Surah At-Taubah, verse 122, the Qur'an establishes the principle of balance between the obligation of physical *jihad* and strengthening intellectual and religious capacity as two integral aspects of building a holistic Islamic society. This verse explicitly emphasizes that not all believers are obligated to go to the battlefield; some must remain committed to deepening religious knowledge to provide a comprehensive understanding to the community. According to the classical exegetical perspective, as presented by Al-Ṭabarī in Jāmi‘ al-Bayān, this division of roles reflects a divine strategy to ensure the continuity of knowledge transmission and post-conflict social stabilization (Mahmud, 2015).

Furthermore, the contemporary interpretation of Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbāh* emphasizes that *jihad* in this context is not dichotomous, but rather synergizes between the physical and intellectual dimensions, with an emphasis on priorities according to the needs of society. Thus, the implementation of *jihad* in this verse leads to the formation of a dynamic community structure, where self-defense activities and the strengthening of religious epistemology run parallel as a manifestation of *maqāṣid al-shari‘ah* in maintaining religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) and reason (*ḥifẓ al-‘aql*) (Shihab, 2012).

QS. At-Taubah: 122 reveals that the implementation of *jihad* is not limited to direct participation in warfare, but also includes the preparation of a cadre of scholars who serve as guardians of the authenticity of Islamic doctrine. Historical-sociological facts show that the Prophet Muhammad often delegated some of his companions, such as Ibn 'Abbas, to focus on the study of sacred texts, while others engaged in physical *jihad*. It suggests the existence of a hierarchy of responsibility that adapts to the prevailing social conditions. According to Ibn 'Ashur in *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, the essence of this verse lies in the principle of *al-tanāṣur* (mutual support) between elements of society, where non-combatant groups are obliged to fill educational spaces to prevent a

knowledge vacuum (Ikhwatul et al., 2022). In the contemporary context, Fazlur Rahman interprets this intellectual *jihad* as a bulwark against the distortion of religious understanding, as well as a preventative solution to extremism. Thus, the direction of the verse's implementation is flexible, emphasizing that the success of *jihad* is measured not only by military victory but also by the sustainability of socio-intellectual transformation rooted in the values of *tawḥīd* and justice (Ichsan et al., 2023).

Implementation of Intellectual *Jihad* and Spiritual *Jihad* in the Concept of *Tafaqquh Fiddin*

The concept of *tafaqquh fiddīn* (religious deepening) in the study of tafsīr necessitates the implementation of intellectual and spiritual *jihad* as two complementary pillars in forming a holistic understanding of religion. Theoretically, intellectual *jihad* is manifested through critical and interpretive efforts in understanding sacred texts (*al-tafsīr al-ma'nawi*), contextualizing doctrines, and responding to modern challenges based on authentic Islamic epistemology. Meanwhile, spiritual *jihad* refers to self-ascent (*riyāḍah nafsāniyyah*) through purification of the heart (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and strengthening the transcendental relationship with Allah (*taqarrub ilā Allāh*), as emphasized in QS. Al-Hadid: 16 regarding the urgency of gentleness of heart in accepting the truth. According to Al-Zarkasyī in *al-Burhān fī ʿUlūm al-Qur'ān*, these two dimensions are symbiotic: deep intellectual understanding must be accompanied by moral integrity to avoid being trapped in literary reductionism or ideological deviation. Contemporary, Quraish Shihab in *Wawasan Al-Qur'ān* emphasizes that *tafaqquh fiddīn* is not merely a cognitive activity, but a transformative process that combines rational reasoning (*'aql*) and spiritual appreciation (*qalb*) (Shihab, 2013). Its implementation within the framework of *jihad* demands a balance between the development of scientific capacity (*taḥṣīl al-'ilm*) and the strengthening of individual and collective piety (*iḥsān*), in line with the *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, which safeguard religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) and the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*).

A historical-hermeneutical study of the practice of *tafaqquh fiddīn* reveals that intellectual and spiritual *jihad* have been a dynamic axis in shaping the Islamic scientific tradition. The facts show that classical scholars, such as Imam Al-Syafi'i, not only mastered *fiqh* rationally but also underwent spiritual *riyāḍah* through asceticism and contemplation, as recorded in Ibn Qāḍī Syuhbah's *Ṭabaqāt al-Syafi'iyyah*. A similar pattern is seen in Al-Ghazālī, who in *Iḥyā Ulūm al-Dīn* united the disciplines of logic (*manṭiq*) with Sufism to overcome the

crisis of meaning in his era. Ibn ‘Āsyūr’s analysis in *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah al-Islāmiyyah* explains that this synergy aims to prevent the dichotomy between shari’ah (formal law) and ḥaqīqah (spiritual essence), while also addressing the challenge of moral decadence. In the contemporary context, Fazlur Rahman in Islam and Modernity criticized the Tendency of the community to separate intellectual *jihad* (such as Islamic research) from the spiritual dimension, thus giving rise to disorientation. Socioreligious data shows that communities that integrate these two aspects—such as Islamic boarding schools that combine the study of yellow books with the practice of *ṭarīqah*—tend to be more resilient in the face of radicalism and secularism (Shihab, 2013). *Tafaqquh fiddīn*, as a form of comprehensive *jihad*, emphasizes that religious sustainability is only achieved through a dialectic between intellectual intelligence, spiritual depth, and a commitment to social transformation.

CONCLUSION

Islamic Education is an integral process of seeking knowledge, practicing religious values, and a commitment to spreading Goodness. The Qur’an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, provides clear guidance on the importance of studying and teaching religion, as stated in Surah At-Taubah, verse 122, which emphasizes the need for some Muslims to deepen their religious knowledge so they can warn the wider community. Furthermore, Surah Az-Zumar, verse 9, emphasizes the superiority of those who possess knowledge over those who do not. It suggests that knowledge is not only an individual's provision for worldly life, but also a means of drawing closer to God. Knowledge in Islam is seen as a light that illuminates life, which must be accompanied by sincerity and devotion. Finally, Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 69, emphasizes that all forms of sincerity in the path of God, including jihad through knowledge, will be rewarded with guidance and help from Him. These three verses complement each other in describing the role of knowledge and struggle in Islam. Therefore, Muslims should make knowledge a part of holy jihad, play an active role in *da'wah*, and continue to strive to practice religious teachings amidst the challenges of the times.

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