The Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT: This study discusses the importance of seeking knowledge in Islam by conducting a literature review. The background of this research is the obligation in Islam to seek knowledge as part of worship. This study aims to explore an understanding of this obligation and the method of seeking knowledge in Islam. The method is to review the literature on the obligation to seek knowledge in Islam. The results of this study show that the search for knowledge in Islam is limited to not only religious science but also science and technology. The search for knowledge can also be done through various methods, such as formal study in educational institutions, discussions, readings, and observations. The contribution of this study is to provide a deeper understanding of the obligation to seek knowledge in Islam and the importance of developing oneself through lifelong learning.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, Islam, Al-Qur'an, Hadith, the Muslim community

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the teachings of Islam, one of the responsibilities that come with being a Muslim is the need to seek knowledge. It is reflected in several verses in the Quran and Hadith that exhort Muslims to continuously enhance their knowledge and gain a deeper comprehension of the religious teachings they are given. Because it can assist a person in obtaining benefits and success in both this world and the next, the requirement to seek knowledge is also seen as a particularly noble and virtuous form of charity in the eyes of the All-Mighty Allah (Esposito, 2011; Ramadan, 2007; Nasr, 2006). Within the framework of Islam, education is obligatory not only for males but also for women. Several narrations claim the female companions of the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wassalam (SAW) were very passionate about studying, and some even became experts in subjects such as tafsir, Hadith, and fiqh. It is supported by the fact that some of these narrations date back to the time of the Prophet (Al-Qurtubi, 2003; Al-Ghazali, 2004). Therefore, in Islam, it is obligatory to study, and the purpose of this requirement is not simply to acquire more information; instead, it is to serve as a method of drawing closer to Allah almighty and enhancing one's overall quality of life. It is of increasing significance for Muslims to maintain a passionate interest in learning more about the precepts of Islam and to develop a deeper grasp of these principles in this modern period when knowledge and information are readily available in large numbers and can be easily accessed by anybody.

A body of work addresses, among other topics, the Islamic need to pursue knowledge. One of them is a journal article written by Wikhdatun Khasanah that examines the need to study, similar to how it is presented in the literature review of this study (Khasanah, 2021). In addition, some theses explore the Islamic views on science and studying (Indra, 2009), Islamic perspectives on the morals of studying (Rustam, 2017), and the Islamic virtues of studying. According to the Hadith that Ibn Majah related, some individuals study the law and say either *fardhu ain* or *fardhu kifayah*. The obligation to study is known as *fardhu ain*, and it is the responsibility of society as a whole to fulfill the fardhu kifayah obligation by ensuring that sufficient numbers of its members are knowledgeable in the subject areas required to fulfill those obligations. Pursuing knowledge in Islam provides several advantages, including enhancing one's comprehension of Islamic doctrines, growing one's knowledge and capabilities in day-to-day living, and creating a constructive contribution to Islamic society and civilization. As a result, every Muslim needs to keep learning about religion and science, whether in an academic setting or a more casual setting (Khaldun, 1967).

In this article, we review the literature on the importance of seeking knowledge in Islam, including the scope of knowledge that must be studied, methods and strategies of seeking knowledge in Islam, and the contribution of the obligation to seek knowledge in the development of Islamic society and civilization. In particular, we focus on how the obligation to seek knowledge has contributed to the progression of Islamic society and civilization. We also explore the difficulties that modern Muslim cultures provide and the potential answers to these difficulties regarding the need to seek knowledge. Our sincere goal is that reading this

The Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam: A Literature Method

essay will help readers gain a deeper comprehension of the significance of acquiring knowledge in Islam and motivate them to continuously grow intellectually and spiritually.

II.   RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive research method (Creswell, 2018; Kim, 2017; Patton, 2015). This study's goals are to (1) investigate whether or not it is obligatory to seek knowledge in Islam through the study of literature and (2) understand the perspectives held by scholars and communities of Muslims regarding this issue. This research makes use of the approach of literature study, which entails gathering and analyzing previous work that has been done on the Islamic precept that one must seek knowledge (Hart, 2018; Fink, 2013; Jesson et al., 2011). The books of Hadith, tafsir, fiqh, and other types of Islamic literature, together with other types of Islamic writing, were used as the primary source of information for this study. The data collection process for the study consists of multiple stages, namely: a) Searching the Literature: When searching the literature, researchers go through a variety of sources, including books, journals, articles, and websites. b) The selection of relevant literature and high-quality academic material is what the researchers do throughout this step of the study process. c) Reading and analysis: The researcher reads and analyzes the chosen material to comprehend the perspectives and ideas held by academics and Muslim society regarding the requirement in Islam to seek knowledge. The data is gathered through a qualitative analysis using content analysis techniques (Neuendorf, 2016; Mayring, 2014; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In content analysis, the primary themes that become apparent from the data are identified and then analyzed to achieve a more profound comprehension of the Islamic precept that one must always endeavor to increase one's level of knowledge.

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Basics of the Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam

According to the teachings of Islam, the need to seek knowledge is known as *fardhu 'ain*, which translates to "it is obligatory for every Muslim," including both men and women (Khasanah, 2021; Qudsyi, 2021). The Hadith and the Quran both provide the foundation for this theory.

> "O, people who believe! If it is said to you, "Make room in the assemblies," then make room for it; undoubtedly, Allah will make space for you. If it is told to you, "Make roomy in the assemblies," then make room for it. Moreover, when it is stated, "Stand up," then rise, and Allah will raise (degrees) those who believe among you and those who are given wisdom by degrees. And Allah is Fully Aware of everything that you do." (QS. Al-Mujadilah: 11).
> " And say: "O my Lord, add knowledge to me." (QS. Ta-Ha: 114)

In addition to being taught through the Quran, Muslims are instructed through the Hadith of the Prophet on the significance of acquiring knowledge. The Prophet is quoted as saying the following in several hadiths that discuss the value of acquiring scientific knowledge in Islam:

> "Seeking knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim." (Hadith narrated by Ibn Majah)
> "Whoever takes a path to seek knowledge, Allah almighty will facilitate for him the way to heaven." (Hadith narrated by Muslim)
> "Seeking knowledge for an hour is better than doing worship for a thousand years." (Hadith narrated by Ibn Majah)

Because Allah has stated in the Qur'an that whoever goes to study would be lifted, and because the Prophet also indicated that by studying or walking to seek knowledge, Allah would facilitate his route to heaven, the postulates above explain why Muslims are obligated to study. Every human being is believed to be responsible for educating themselves and fulfilling this obligation (Baroroh, 2021). It is because, through education, a person can improve their knowledge and awareness of religion and the wider world.

In Islam, the tawhid principle is the idea that Allah Almighty is the only God who deserves to be worshipped. The pursuit of knowledge is connected to this principle in several ways. When engaging in the pursuit of knowledge, a Muslim is obligated to ensure that any information received comes from legitimate and permissible sources. In addition, it teaches that the pursuit of knowledge is a form of worship that must be performed to submit oneself to Allah the Almighty (Saeed, 2006; Taymiyyah, 2001).

The religion of Islam says that every Muslim should exhibit wisdom in all aspects of their lives, including their pursuit of knowledge. A Muslim must select the knowledge that is beneficial to him and in line with the requirements of his life, and it must be done correctly and adequately so that it does not cause harm to either himself or others

B. Education and Teaching

The Islamic religion places a strong emphasis on learning and instructing others. Because Islam is a religion that encourages its followers to seek out new information and expand their existing knowledge, its educational history is extensive and varied. Islam generally sees the pursuit of knowledge and the acquisition of information as a requirement for every Muslim, regardless of

gender. This obligation applies to both male and female Muslims. According to Islamic belief, Allah, the Highest, created man as a rational being capable of acquiring knowledge and further developing his potential. One of the tenets of Islamic education is that students should be exposed to both spiritual and practical parts of the world throughout their formative years. Real-world education seeks to develop the capacity of reason, skills, and practical abilities in everyday life, whereas spiritual education focuses on developing an appreciation for the teachings of many religions and the value of learning and appreciating them (Roslan & Malim, 2014; Yasin & Jani, 2013; Hashim & Langgulung, 2013; Halstead, 1995)

The Islamic concept of education is referred to as "t*arbiyah*," which can be translated as "coaching" or "nurturing." When discussing education, the term *tarbiyah* refers to learning within the context of families, schools, and communities. The goal of the discipline known as tarbiyah is to cultivate in its students the traits of being noble, knowledgeable, and helpful to society. In the annals of Islamic history, the concept of education may be traced back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). His friends were instructed in Islam and how to conduct themselves by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). In addition, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the education of children and women throughout his lifetime.

In addition, there has been a formal education system in place ever since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. At that time, the Companions acquired their education directly from the Prophet Muhammad SAW and studied in the mosques. Following that period, Islamic nations significantly expanded their educational infrastructure. The Al-Azhar University in Cairo and the Al-Qarawiyyin University in Morocco are two examples of the world's oldest Islamic universities still in operation. Other examples include other Islamic universities in countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia. According to Islam, education is viewed as an investment with long-term advantages, both for the individual and society. As a result, an emphasis is placed in Islam on education and instruction, with the expectation that it will be studied carefully and put into practice in daily life.

C. Methods and Strategies for Seeking Knowledge in Islam

Methods and tactics for acquiring knowledge in Islam are crucial to gaining a more excellent grasp of the teachings of Islam. These methods and strategies can also assist a Muslim in deriving the maximum advantage possible from the knowledge he has learned. The followings are some approaches and methods that can be used to learn about Islam (Ismail et al., 2013; Coles, 2004; Lubis et al., 2011; Hassi, 2012, Yaakub, 2011). 1) One of the most effective ways of acquiring knowledge in Islam is to engage in self-study: A Muslim can increase their grasp of the teachings of Islam on their own by independently reading books, articles, and other sources such as websites. A Muslim must have self-discipline and perseverance to continue studying and seek a more profound understanding when engaging in self-study. 2) Participating in Religious Studies and Classes Participating in religious studies and classes is another excellent approach to gaining information about Islam. A Muslim can pick up knowledge from religious scholars and have meaningful conversations about religious concerns with other Muslims while studying religion. 3) Engaging in conversation with other Muslims can also assist a Muslim in developing a deeper comprehension of the tenets of Islam. Muslims can broaden their understanding of Islamic doctrine by conversing with other Muslims, exchanging views, and sharing their experiences. 4) Stay current with technological advances: Today, when everything is digital, using technology to learn about Islam might be efficient. A Muslim can use social media, websites, or mobile apps to learn about the teachings of Islam from reputable sources and get answers to any queries they may have about the religion. 5) Interact with the environment around us: When obtaining knowledge in Islam, the environment around us can also be an essential source of information and wisdom. An individual who identifies as Muslim is responsible for making the most of every chance to engage with the world around them and gain wisdom from their experiences.

Self-study, attending classes and religious studies, conversing with other Muslims, keeping up with technology changes, and engaging with one's immediate environment are some of the methods and strategies that can be used to seek knowledge in Islam. As a result, a Muslim can improve his comprehension of the doctrines of Islam and obtain the most excellent possible value from the information he has acquired.

D. The Relationship between Religion and Science

Religion and science both take unique approaches to the task of comprehending the universe and the realities it entails. Most of the world's religions, especially Islam, believe that the Qur'an is the book from which Allah Almighty directly revealed knowledge and truth. As a result, people look to the teachings of their respective religions as a way to navigate life and make sense of the cosmos. Religion also teaches that knowledge of the universe and life should be used for the good and profit of man and that this should be the primary motivation for pursuing such knowledge. In the meantime, scientific research is moving in a new direction. The scientific method is an empirical and rational investigation of the world using methods that have been tried and tested. The goal of scientific inquiry is to deepen people's comprehension of the world and their place in it by producing new information in a way that is both consistent and ongoing. Although religion and science take very different methods to comprehend the universe, they can still mutually enrich one another and even coexist. Religion can offer an in-depth perspective on one's life goals and moral ideals, whereas science can offer a precise and objective understanding of the universe and how it operates. These two perspectives can provide a more holistic and all-encompassing knowledge of the world and the reality it presents (Santalia, 2015; Evans & Evans, 2008; Ecklund et al., 2011; Ecklund & Park, 2009; Vans, 2011).

The Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam: A Literature Method

Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, and Al-Farabi are just a few of the prominent personalities in Islamic history who were known for combining religious thought and scientific inquiry in their writings. They recognize that the goals of religion and science are the same: to search for the truth and make people happy. In today's world, the question of how religion and science relate to one another is still very topical and the subject of ongoing debate. Many Muslim scientists continue researching the cosmos and developing new technologies beneficial to humankind. At the same time, Muslim academics are working to develop a deeper understanding of religion and to provide crucial moral and spiritual insights for living a human life.

E. Challenges and Solutions in Fulfilling the Obligation to Seek Knowledge in Modern Muslim Societies

In contemporary Muslim societies, many obstacles exist to fulfilling these commitments. The following are some of the difficulties that may be encountered and some solutions to these difficulties that may be utilized (Kalyvas, 2000; Vidyasagar & Rea, 2004; Schielke, 2010; Ayyub, 2000). 1) A competition with a time limit. As a result of modern Muslim countries' typically hectic daily lives, there is often little time for the study of science and religion. One approach to overcoming this obstacle is utilizing spare time to educate oneself in science and religion, such as by reading books, listening to podcasts or online lectures, or using other information technology. 2) Difficulties associated with high costs. Education and the advancement of scientific knowledge frequently call for a significant financial investment, mainly if the desired educational establishment is prestigious. One strategy for overcoming this obstacle is to apply for financial aid through scholarships or fee assistance programs offered by specialized institutions or organizations. Some examples of these kinds of establishments and organizations include zakat institutions, educational foundations, and government agencies. In addition, we can use local resources, such as libraries or information centers, which may provide access to information and learning tools at no cost or a reduced cost. 3) The difficulty presented by unfavorable influences from culture and social media. The ever-expanding culture of consumerism and hedonism in today's modern world frequently causes people to lose sight of how important it is to continue their quest for knowledge. In addition, both social media and the internet are potential sources of information that is erroneous and leads to confusion. Putting Islamic principles and teachings at the forefront of one's life and cultivating an enabling atmosphere in which to pursue studies in both science and religion are two effective strategies for overcoming this obstacle. In addition, a person needs to be able to select helpful and high-quality information and analyze and assess the material they have gotten. 4) The difficulty comes from people not knowing the importance of pursuing information. There is a possibility that certain members of contemporary Muslim cultures are ignorant of the significance of furthering one's education, not just for the individual but also for the community as a whole. One strategy for overcoming this obstacle is to raise awareness and comprehension of the necessity of seeking information and the advantages of doing so for both individuals and society. It can be accomplished through various types of education, including official and informal education, the development of education and training programs, and social campaigns.

The solution to meet the responsibility of seeking knowledge in modern Muslim communities is to cultivate awareness, skills, and a proper understanding of the value of seeking information and make good use of the time and resources available to study knowledge.

F.   The Contribution of the Obligation to Seek Knowledge in the Development of Islamic Society and Civilization

In Islam, seeking knowledge is not only a personal requirement but also significantly contributes to the growth of Islamic society and civilization. The Islamic precept that it is obligatory to seek knowledge has several benefits, including those listed below (Khan, 2010; Kechichian, 2013; Miller, 1975). 1) Increasing the caliber of the available human resources. The pursuit of knowledge can contribute to an improvement in the caliber of the human resources available in Islamic communities. Individuals can increase their productivity and competitiveness in the work market by acquiring the expertise and skills to enhance their knowledge's breadth and depth. 2) Enhancing the overall standard of living of individuals. The overall standard of living in an Islamic society can also be improved by increasing its members' levels of education and intellectual curiosity. Communities can construct better infrastructure, enhance their health and well-being, and boost access to beneficial technology and information if community members acquire the appropriate knowledge and skills and put them to use. 3) Strengthened abilities in both analytical and critical thinking. The pursuit of knowledge can also assist Islamic communities in developing their capacities for critical and analytical thinking. Individuals can understand and analyze the social, political, economic, and cultural realities of the world around them more critically and rationally if they study science and religion in an integrated approach. 4) The advancement of Islamic scientific research and technological practice. Educating oneself is also a significant factor in the progression of Islamic scholarship and innovation in science and technology. Islamic academics and scholars can make innovations and discoveries that are valuable for Muslims and humans in general if they study science and religion in an integrated manner. 5) The expansion of Islam's sphere of influence and its positive reputation in the wider globe. Acquiring new knowledge is another way to contribute to expanding Islam's international influence and reputation. Muslims have the potential to obtain recognition and admiration from the rest of the world's population if they can demonstrate that Islam is a religion that encourages the advancement of science and intellectualism.

The Importance of Seeking Knowledge in Islam: A Literature Method

The Islamic precept that one must make it their goal to increase their level of knowledge has been a significant factor in the evolution of Islamic culture and civilization. Islamic communities can achieve advancement and achievement in various spheres of life and construct a high-quality and competitive civilization internationally if they sincerely and consistently seek knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

The pursuit of knowledge is considered a religious obligation for every Muslim. Both the Qur'an and the Hadith emphasize the significance of education as how individuals and society may better their living standards by acquiring the information and comprehension necessary for this. The history of Islam demonstrates, among other things, the significance of education and study to adherents of this religion. In our modern era, Muslims need to fulfill their religious obligations, including the requirement to continue their education. However, many obstacles must be conquered to accomplish the goal of providing equal opportunities and access to education and knowledge for all people. As a result, it is vital to keep promoting and fighting for everyone's right to education and fighting for education reforms that aim to improve the quality of education worldwide.

This literature review has the potential to contribute to better comprehending the significance of education within the Islamic tradition. This literature review gives thorough information and knowledge of the need to study Islam to contribute to Islamic studies and education development. This literature review might also be a helpful reference tool for students and scholars interested in Islamic studies and education. This evaluation of the relevant literature also has the potential to offer something valuable to the general audience. This literature review contains a wealth of facts and knowledge that can encourage readers to further their education in scientific fields to enhance the quality of their lives. This literature study can also broaden access to information and knowledge and promote the notion that it is everyone's right to be educated and have access to information. As a result, this literature evaluation can contribute to promoting educational reforms aimed at enhancing the overall quality of education worldwide.

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