

Tawheed, Knowledge, Ethics and Value in Islamic Science Study Trend

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Abstract

Islamic science must be used as a tool to find the truth and solutions to all problems that involve the needs of society as a whole and not just a part of it. The philosophy of Islamic science requires some principles and policies of Islam itself. It cannot be measured using modern scientific civilization. Islamic science also has many past scholar who are very critical, firm and with integrity in understanding nature. It also illustrates the greatness of the spiritual and intellectual elements of the Islamic discipline. Thus, this working paper carries two objectives. First of all, it seeks to identify the definition of philosophy of Islamic science and secondly, it intends to analyse the philosophy of Islamic science study trend. This library study reveals that the definition of Islamic science is more comprehensive than the modern counterpart. All of these carry the purpose of ensuring that the philosophy of Islamic science stays relevant from time to time.

Keywords: Islamic Science, Tawheed, Knowledge, Ethics and Value

Introduction

The philosophy of Islamic science requires some principles and policies of Islam itself. It cannot be measured using modern scientific civilization. Islamic principles are also not influenced by the history of human civilization. In general, Islamic science shows the unity and interconnectedness of the cosmos and everything that exists so as to be able to understand and get closer to the Creator of nature. Islamic science also has many past scientists who are very critical, firm and with integrity in understanding nature. It also illustrates the greatness of the spiritual and intellectual elements of the Islamic discipline (Nasr, 1986: 1-2 & 1995)

But the philosophy of Islamic science has its challenges as well. Majid (2007: 5-7) states that the challenge from within the philosophy of Islamic science is a disappointing reality. After the Muslims experienced the progress of science but due to the neglect of some aspects caused the progress of science to decline. Among the aspects is that Muslims tend to discuss polemical issues and trivial debates about faith, fiqh and others. Next influenced by the Western world which brings secularism as in Malaysia which separates religious education from modern education. Separation also occurs in the field of scholarship. Scholars usually refer to those who are experts in the field of religion, while scholars refer to those from other fields such as science and technology. Dualism in this field of knowledge has a negative impact on the development of Muslims.

According to Salleh (2007: 106), Islamic science researchers are more focused on building knowledge, while their sponsors are more focused on building and commercializing the products produced. Thus there are several other enduring issues in the world of scientific research such as, different tendencies between researchers and sponsors, focus only on marketing and profit, work culture that is individual versus group and many more. This paper is found to focus only on the field of academic and industrial research only.

As for the scientific issue, Samian and Mastor (2003: 132) stated, scientific cannot determine who is the Creator of this universe because it is beyond the logic of human reason. Next, scientific issues in the philosophy of Islamic science are also stated by Bakar (2008: 71) and Othman (2009: 84). In finding the truth, science uses a variety of research methods and paths. The diversity of these methods is complementary. One such method is scientific. The scientific methods used by modern science are similar to those used in Islamic science but the two have different epistemologies. According to Abdullah (2010: 246), the scientific method that is often used to understand the Qur'an is a good effort. Yet, more care is needed not only because the epistemology of scientific philosophy itself is shaky but causes the truth of revelation to be measured using science.

This is also agreed by Omar (2011: 59) and Ahmad (2008: xix). Today many Muslim scholars associate scientific discoveries with the Qur'an. It caused people's admiration for the Qur'an and gave birth to a high level of faith. However, the Qur'an is not a book of science that reports all the facts of science so as to deny that the Qur'an is actually a book of guidance. These aims and efforts are not meant to downplay science and technology but to 'enlarge' the limits of the reality of events and human reality. It will be an integrated and balanced philosophy of science. It will make science one of the fields of knowledge and not 'knowledge' as a whole. Thus, this library study carries two objectives. The first is to identify the definition of Islamic science and the second one is to analyse the study trend of Islamic science philosophy.

Definition of Islamic Science

Generally, science functions as a tool to seek the truth about the universe and is presumed to consolidate the faith of its followers. More specifically, Othman (2009: 45) stated that the main aim of developing science was to ensure it afforded a sense of well-being to humans and this leads to the development of the world through scientific activities. However, these activities are not only processes that ensure humans understand nature and obtain benefits from it but humans should endeavour to achieve peace and tranquillity (sakinat) through self-

awareness and responsibility towards God. Bakar (2008: 81) stated that three fundamentals are necessary to achieve the basic aim, namely human intellect, nature and the al-Qur'an, when appreciating the wahyu from Allah SWT.

Science, from an Islamic paradigm, refers to a process that explains nature by using specific methods that are scientific in nature but does not overstep the reality of tauhid of Allah SWT (Othman, 1996: 69). According to Sardar (1992: 55); Nasr (2008), Islamic science comprises specific activities that seek the truth and solve problems. All these must operate within the structure of Islamic values. This means that objectives, tools, methods and processes should be Islamic-based. Hence, science is one of those tools used to appreciate the prowess of God but God cannot be explained by using science (Akdogan, 2008: 201; Awang, 2003: 4-5).

Science, according to Othman (1996: 69); Sardar (1992: 55); Nasr (2008), is more suitable and proper when used in this working paper. Science is a process that explains the phenomena of nature by using specific methods that are scientific in nature but based on the tauhid of Allah SWT. All these methods have to operate within the structure of Islamic values itself. This means that all tools, methods and processes should be fully based on Islam. The main aim of Islamic-based science is to seek well-being for humans in this world as well as the blessing of Allah SWT in the after-world.

From the aspect of epistemology, the word 'philosophy' originates a two-syllable Greek word which is 'philein' which means loving, and 'sophos' which means blessings (Hassan, 1989: 3). According to Ismail (2006: 45), if they combine into philosophia it means the profound love for knowledge and wisdom (Zain, 2000: 11). Knowledge is also associated with blessings that means any field of knowledge, understanding, moral practice, expression of opinions and attitude that leads to happiness (Earle, 1992: 2). According to Arabic, it is pronounced filosof or in its plural form, falasifah (Zain, 11: 2000) interpreted as the knowledge for those who love blessings with all their hearts (Ismail, 2006: 45). As Muslim philosophers, al-Farabi also defined blessings as the makrifat of Allah SWT (Long, 2008: 12).

This word emerged before the 6th century AD (Zain, 11: 2000) but some other writers stated that it came about in the 7th century AD. (Hassan, 1989: 3). Socrates also did not want to be seen clever, but he wanted to be known as someone who had the thirst for knowledge and wisdom (Jusoh, 2014: 21; Noordin, 2009: 121; Zain, 2000: 11). This word that came from Greek which is philosophia had been used widely by the Arab people with a slight alteration to the sound which is falsafah, while experts in the philosophical field termed it failasuf (Hassan, 1989: 3).

Sardar (1990: 1); Othman (2010: 23); Baharuddin (2007: 13) stated that the difference between civilizations has created various forms of science. The history of human civilization has shown that every civilization requires the manifestation of exclusive values in its own scope of tasawwur (worldview). For instance, in the era of scientific advancement in Europe, science refers to the natural philosophy and the Islamic civilization era represents science as having a wider scope of knowledge. Nonetheless, unlike the previous scientific philosophy as stated by Ismail (2006: 63), modern science has become a narrower area. The definition is limited to solely the science and technology studies.

According to Islam, science means a process explains the phenomenon of the universe using certain methods that are characteristically scientific, but which does not go beyond the boundary of tawheed of Allah SWT (Othman, 1996: 69). According to Sardar (1992: 55) and Nasr (2008), Islamic science encompasses some activities that are used to seek for the truth and resolve problems. All have to operate in the structure of Islamic values. This means that the aim, tool, method and process have to be based on Islam. Meanwhile, Ismail (2006: 179) pointed out that studying the law of the universe means that studying the law of Allah SWT and that is part of human activities. Meanwhile, Allah's decree serves as the main source in science. Experiments also serve as the second source to study sunnat Allah. This distinguishes modern science from Islamic science.

Results and Discussion: Tawheed, Knowledge, Ethics and Value In Islamic Science Study Trend From the observation on previous studies, there are three main themes that have been identified. The first one is, the study about Islamic science ontology. The second one is, the study about Islamic science epistemology and the third one is the Islamic science axiology. The discussion on the studies will be established in the following section.

The Study of Tawheed in Islamic Science

Tawheed means the study of Islamic Scientific Philosophy related to the existence of God, humans and the surroundings (Abdullah, 2010). Among the scholars who have discussed the existence of God from the tawheed point of view are (al-Attas, 2011; Bakar, 2011; Othman, 2014; Jusoh and Muhammad, 2007; Jumali., 2014). Researchers find that the study discussion done by al-Attas (2011); Bakar (2011); Othman (2014) and Jusoh and Muhammad (2007) is more comprehensive and covering issues in the Islamic Scientific Philosophy. They have put forth the principle of tawheed science that has become the mainstay of natural and social sciences. In the meantime, the work by Jumali (2014) only focuses on tawheed study in science education.

The explanation about the existence of the universe created by Allah SWT is equally given attention by several scholars. It relates inextricably with science and technology at par with the demand of modernization. There are several studies that show in prominence the consistency between religion and science. The works include those by Yahya (2001); Bucaille (1997); Abidin (2014); Naik (2014) also (Tawfik, 2008). The studies have proven that the truth behind the Quran and science is similar to the existence of the sky and the earth, the biological existence of humans, the truth behind alcohol being haram and pigs, the advantages of sunnah dietary and many more. Researchers found that there are two effects to the studies. The first is that these studies are able to show the greatness of the Holy Quran and secondly, it is able to answer the orientalist's accusations towards Islam and the Quran itself.

In the meantime, the work done by Ibrahim, Abas and Cheok (2009) only focuses on the advantages of solat scientifically. The advantages are stated in detail and involve all solah movements whether individually or collectively. Apart from that, there are other studies that appear to be more focused such as those by Ismail (2016); al-Dawamy (1999). Ismail (2016) and al-Dawamy (1999) shed light on the secrets of the cosmos. Al-Qur'an often states that whether directly or not, the earth, the galaxy, the sky and others do leave an impact on the knowledge of the astronomy, calendar, seasons and sailing at sea. In the meantime, the study carried out by Amir, Noor and Helmi (2012), interpreted the tafseer of al-Ayat al-Kawniyyah

fi al-Qur'an al-Karim written by Zaghlul El-Najjar. The book is one that debates the verses of the Quran using two methods, namely classic and scientific methodologies.

The Study of Knowledge Theory

The theory of knowledge in the Islamic Scientific Philosophy refers to the position and hierarchy of the Islamic science knowledge (Abdullah, 2010). The works by Katanegara (2016) and Misbahudin (2015) prove that the knowledge epistemology based on the al-Qur'an in an integrated manner causes humans to know Allah SWT better and everything He has created. Unlike the western knowledge that places the sensory capability as the main knowledge source, Islam places another knowledge source that is far greater and absolute which is the decree or wahyu. Between both studies, the work by Misbahudin (2015) relates knowledge epistemology and Islamic science more. Consistent with the works by Katanegara (2016) and Misbahudin (2015), the study done by Tamuri (2014) also makes al-Qur'an the source of knowledge. Nevertheless, the work done by Tamuri (2014) is more detailed, with regard to the al-Qur'an and the universe- both of which have become the source of scientific knowledge in the field of education.

The work by Shah (2010) dealt with epistemology from a different angle which is the challenge faced in the epistemology of Islamic science. The confusion about epistemology has led to the disharmony of science with the framework of Islamic thoughts. Looking at the challenges of the epistemology, the study of Azhar (2013) also talked about the same issue but the details rest more on the history, science and technology that have expanded and how they are influenced by both the epistemology and methodology.

Unlike the studies mentioned previously, the work done by Mahdi (2014) involves the contribution of thought of Ibn Khaldun only. Ibn Khaldun is not only regarded as the pioneer of science humanity philosophy only, but it also greatly contributes towards the Islamic Scientific Philosophy. Next, there are other historical studies of Islamic science that only focus on the medical field, namely from Omar (2007). Meanwhile, the work by Rahman and Sidek (2015) ponly concentrate on the history of the medical field, but it also looks into the impact of Islamic science history towards astronomy.

The Study of Ethics and Moral Theory

Theory of ethics and values in the Islamic Scientific Philosophy is normally a study that discusses things that will give benefit or otherwise, whether materially or spiritually, and so on. Conclusively, the theory of values is characteristically objective or subjective (Abdullah, 2010). The discussion of the theory of value and ethics in the research method can be found in the study done by Isa (2009 & 2013). According to the study, to ensure that the biotechnology field research is at par with the current fiqh, bioethics is given due attention so that it can resolve ethical issues in science and technology advancement. This is different from the study done by Mastor (2009) that centers more on the ethics of the Muslim scientists themselves. Following the study, Muslim scientists have to bear two responsibilities which are those responsible in fulfilling their duties towards Allah SWT and secondly, serving the people for their benefits.

Bioethics comes from the combination of two words- "bio" and "ethics". "Bio" as in "biology" means scientific studies about living things or life science, whereas "ethics" means the norm.

Thus “bioethics” is defined as a field related to the implication on the ethical system, laws, social and culture from scientific and biotechnological applications. Next, biotechnology means any process that uses live organisms as a whole, or part or small part of it to make, or to modify the products or improve or develop plants, animals, or microorganisms for certain purposes. Biotechnology is one of the scientific fields that can improve humans’ life quality such as in the fields of agriculture, medicine and environmental quality (Working paper of the Ulama Muzakarah MABIMS, 1995).

Next, the work by Alias (2016) with regard to free values in scientific studies, especially in research that is Islamic-oriented. The issues in scientific research have also attracted other scholars, as there were several issues that emerge in the philosophy or application in either research or study. For instance, the work by Adebayo (2015); Salleh and Baharuddin (n.d.) also Badrusyamsi (2015) elaborated on the importance of Islamizing science and its impact on the greatness of Islamic science. This is vital to prevent it from being influenced by modern science. Meanwhile, the work by Badrusyamsi (2015) is slightly different where it only established the importance of spiritual and theology on the scientific aspects of Islam in general.

Meanwhile, a study was done by Amir (2016) with regard to the analysis towards tafsir al-Sya’rawi composed by Muhammad Mutawalli al-Sya’rawi who is one of the Islamic science thinkers. Following the study, the concept of scientific elements in the al-Qur’an encompasses three main parts which are Divine Science, Social Science and Natural Science. Apart from that, al-Sya’rawi was also consistent in using the method of al-’Ilmi al-Naqli al-Ijtima’i in the interpretation of scientific verses. Meanwhile, Azhar and Abdul Rahim (2010) gave their contribution of study towards the integration of scientific thinking and shari’a study especially in Malaysia. According to the study, there is a need to apply the element of scientific thinking in the current shari’a study as it is an urgent requirement in this era of globalisation. Therefore, the concern of the Muslim fuqaha’ to offer solutions in addressing Islamic issues is very timely.

Based on the observation on previous studies, there are three things that are often discussed. The first is on how the contribution of ideas and thoughts of these prominent figures is able to place the Islamic Scientific Philosophy back in its place. Secondly, the effort to combine Islam and science; and thirdly, the prominence of al-Qur’an also can be proven through scientific discoveries, as well as explaining the difference in the theory of values and morals in the philosophy of Islamic science. Hence, all its benefits and benefits are known to humans

Conclusion

The emergence and development of the scientific knowledge discipline in Islam do have a very noticeable impact until today. Although today, Islamic knowledge research and study are not like the golden years of Islam in the government of Bani Abbassiyah centuries ago, but it still helps to develop Islam theoretically or practically. All the fields contribute to the development of civilization, at the same time, signifying the achievement of Islamic Science that drives humans towards nobility. There are three important elements that need to be addressed in Islamic philosophy of tawheed, wahyu as the main source of knowledge and morals and values that human beings need.

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