

# A Neo-Avicennian Framework for the Foundational Integration of Naqli and Aqli Knowledge: Moving Beyond 'Islamization of Knowledge' and 'Sains Tawhidik'

Mohd Azmi Bin Mohd Razif

Islamic Science Institute, University Sains Islam Malaysia, Nilai, Malaysia

✉ Corresponding author: mohd.azmi@usim.edu.my  <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20838275>

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## ABSTRACT

The contemporary discourse on integrating science and religion in the Muslim world has largely been dominated by three paradigms: the "Islamization of Knowledge" (associated with IIUM), "Sains Tawhidik" (associated with UKM), and "Islamic Science" as a foundational integration (associated with USIM). This paper argues that while the former two represent necessary remedial or ethical interventions, they remain reactive to secular epistemologies. The USIM model employs a "Top-Down" Neo-Avicennian methodology where Naqli (revealed) knowledge serves as the ontological ground, defining the nature of reality and providing the axioms for Aqli (rational) inquiry. This rigorous four-stage process; Tanqiyah, Ta'sil, Taufiq, and Talfiq reconstructs scientific disciplines from a Tawhidic worldview, transforming inquiry into an act of 'ibadah (worship). We demonstrate that true integration moves beyond merely filtering secular knowledge or applying Islamic ethics by mandating the fundamental reconstruction of scientific inquiry from a distinct Tawhidic worldview. This foundational process ensures that Revelation provides the ontological axioms for all rational inquiry, thereby transforming the academic endeavor into an act of 'ibadah (worship).

**Keywords:** Integration of Knowledge; Islamic Epistemology; Naqli and Aqli; Neo-Avicennian Synthesis; Islamic Science

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The trajectory of the modern Muslim intellect is defined by a singular, traumatic fracture: the bifurcation of knowledge into the "religious" (Din) and the "secular" (Dunya). This dichotomy, an inheritance from the colonial encounter and the dominance of Enlightenment positivism, stands in stark contrast to the worldview of the classical Islamic tradition. In the era of the Abbasids, the study of optics or anatomy was not distinct from the study of theology; both were avenues toward the Marifatullah (Knowledge of God). Today, however, the Muslim academic operates within a cognitive dissonance, navigating a professional landscape defined by Western empiricism and a personal landscape defined by Revelation [1].

In response to this "spiritual malaise," three distinct intellectual movements have emerged in the Malay Archipelago, each attempting to suture this wound. These are the "Islamization of Knowledge" paradigm (historically associated with IIUM), the "Sains Tawhidik" approach (championed by UKM), and the "Islamic Science" integration model (pioneered by USIM). While all three share the ultimate goal of Tawhid (Unity), they differ fundamentally in their ontological starting points.

### 1.1 The Reconstructionist Paradigm:

Islamization of Knowledge (IoK) The "Islamization of Knowledge" (IoK), formulated largely by Ismail al-Faruqi and institutionalized by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), represents a methodological intervention. It is a response to the "crisis of the modern mind" [2].

Definition: IoK is defined as the process of recasting the corpus of modern human knowledge to conform to the Islamic vision of reality. It involves a systematic "Work Plan": mastering the modern disciplines, mastering the Islamic legacy, and then synthesizing the two by purging Western concepts that contradict Islamic ethics; such as secularism or Darwinian materialism; and infusing the discipline with Islamic values [3].

The Mechanism: This model operates effectively as a filter. It presumes the validity of modern disciplines (Sociology, Economics, Psychology) as structural containers but seeks to sanitize their contents. It is a project of compatibility, striving to prove that reason and revelation are not mutually exclusive by "Islamicizing" the output of the social and natural sciences [2].

### 1.2 The Axiological Paradigm:

Sains Tawhidik (ST) Distinct from the structural reconstruction of IoK, the "Sains Tawhidik" (Tawhidic Science) model, often associated with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), represents an axiological and exegetical approach.

Definition: Sains Tawhidik focuses on the values of the scientific process and the character of the scientist. As evidenced by curriculum modules developed at UKM, this approach relies heavily on Tafsir Ilmi (scientific exegesis), using empirical discoveries to affirm the signs (Ayat) of God found in the Qur'an (Yunus et al., n.d.). It posits that science is a neutral tool that becomes "Islamic" through the intent (Niyah) of the practitioner and the ethical application of its findings [4].

The Mechanism: This model operates as a compass. It does not necessarily alter the laboratory methods of physics or chemistry but directs their application toward Maqasid al-Shariah (Objectives of the Law). It emphasizes the "pious scientist" who sees nature as a trust (Amanah), aiming to humanize technology through Islamic ethics [4].

### 1.3 The Foundational Paradigm: Islamic Science (USIM)

While the IoK model filters knowledge and the ST model guides its application, the "Islamic Science" model championed by Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) proposes a foundational epistemological integration [5].

The Thesis: This paper argues that the IoK and ST models, while necessary historical developments, remain reactive. They treat the symptoms of secularism; one by filtering its errors, the other by curbing its excesses. In contrast, the USIM model returns to a "Top-Down" hierarchy of knowledge reminiscent of the Avicennian tradition. By positioning Naqli (Revealed) knowledge not merely as an ethical additive but as the ontological foundation for Aqli (Rational) inquiry [5], the USIM model offers a holistic reconstruction of science itself, rather than a mere Islamization of its products. This mirrors the classical admonition against being a "taker of faces" (akhidh al-wujuh); adopting forms without their essence [6]; by ensuring the metaphysical essence dictates the scientific form.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework proposed for the foundational integration of knowledge is conceptualized as a rigorous, four-stage process. It is through this systematic mechanism that the epistemological error of adopting forms without their essence; classically termed akhidh al-wujuh ("taker of faces"); is meticulously avoided [7]. Furthermore, this methodology is deeply anchored in a Neo-Avicennian cosmological architecture, wherein reality is understood to

emanate from the Necessary Being (Wajib al-Wujud) down to the contingent world. In this top-down hierarchy, empirical data is illuminated by Naqli (revealed) knowledge, much as the human mind is illuminated by the Active Intellect (al-Aql al-Fa'al). Without this ontological grounding, empirical observation is rendered "blind"; it is capable of describing the mechanisms of phenomena but remains entirely disconnected from their ultimate reality or purpose [7].

To ensure that the metaphysical essence dictates the scientific form, the methodology is executed through the following stages:

#### *Stage 1: Tanqiyah (Purification)*

First, a process of Tanqiyah is initiated. Rather than merely filtering the output of secular sciences, the foundational definitions of the discipline are rigorously purified. For instance, before the concept of "scarcity" is engaged within economics, it is stripped of the secular assumption that the world was created with insufficient resources, and it is subsequently redefined through the paradigm of Tawhid, acknowledging that creation is endowed with divine measure (Qadr) and blessing (Barakah).

Analogy: This stage is akin to "reverse engineering a contaminated alloy". Instead of simply polishing the surface, the process requires melting the material down to its constituent elements, separating the pure metal from the ideological dross (e.g., secularism, materialism) that was introduced during its modern forging, thereby recovering its pristine, Tawhidic elemental form.

#### *Stage 2: Ta'sil (Foundation)*

Second, the stage of Ta'sil is established. Here, the discipline is epistemologically re-rooted in Naqli sources. The scientific method is not discarded but is instead philosophically reframed and subordinated to Qur'anic imperatives, such as the command to "travel through the earth and observe" (Sīrū fi al-ard). This mirrors the Avicennian postulate that Naqli knowledge provides the fundamental worldview (Ru'yah) and ontological axioms, while Aqli (rational) knowledge supplies the exploratory tools.

Analogy: Following the purification (melting), Ta'sil is the act of "re-casting the purified elemental metal into a foundational ingot using a sacred mold". The material (knowledge) is now clean, and this stage structurally refines it, ensuring its entire crystalline structure; its core worldview and axioms; is perfectly aligned with the Tawhidic pattern (the mold).

#### *Stage 3: Taufiq (Adaptation)*

Third, the phase of Taufiq is undertaken. It is only after the conceptual definitions have been purified and ontologically grounded that modern empirical tools and methodologies are adapted for application. This ensures that scientific inquiry is no longer value-neutral in its method and merely ethical in its application, but is inherently aligned with the realization that existence itself is Good (Khayr).

Analogy: Building on the foundational ingot, Taufiq is the process of "forging high-precision tools from that sacredly-cast metal". The material (knowledge) is structurally sound, and this stage shapes it into instruments (modern methodologies) that are functional and perfectly calibrated to only cut, measure, or process according to the inherent goodness (Khayr) established by the ingot's foundation.

#### *Stage 4: Talfiq (Integration)*

Finally, the methodology culminates in Talfiq. A seamless synthesis is achieved wherein the artificial bifurcation between "religious" and "scientific" knowledge is entirely dissolved. Consequently, phenomena such as human psychology are not approached by superimposing an Islamic label onto Western concepts. Instead, the anatomy of the soul (Nafs) is first

reconstructed using Naqli evidence, and only then are Aqli instruments utilized for treatment and analysis.

Analogy: Talfiq represents the “construction of a self-sustaining, intricate machine entirely from the sacredly-forged components”. The purified metal, the foundational ingot, and the high-precision tools all come together to form a unified, coherent system (the integrated Islamic discipline) that operates seamlessly without internal friction or the need for external, secular energy.

The methodological approach employed here is crucial for avoiding what can be termed the "Taker of Faces" error. This error occurs when scholars or practitioners merely adopt the surface-level constructs, terminology, and theoretical framework; the "face"; of a dominant paradigm, such as Western Psychology, and then hastily apply an Islamic-sounding label or a superficial Islamic veneer to it. Such a practice fails to genuinely integrate Islamic principles and often results in a fractured, inconsistent, and ultimately un-Islamic application.

Instead, our methodology insists on a fundamental process of intellectual and ontological reconstruction. This begins with establishing the foundational anatomy of the human soul (Nafs). This reconstruction is not derived from contemporary psychological theories, but is built rigorously upon *Naqli* evidence; that is, the revealed texts of the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah. These sources provide the authoritative, primary blueprint for understanding the soul's nature, its innate disposition (*fitrah*), its components, its various states, and its ultimate purpose.

Once this authentic, *Naqli*-based anatomy of the soul is firmly established, we then utilize *Aqli* tools; intellectual reasoning, critical thinking, empirical observation, and appropriate psychological techniques; to effectively diagnose, treat, and nurture it. Therefore, the *Naqli* evidence determines *what* the soul is and *what* constitutes its healthy and diseased states, setting the ultimate objectives. The *Aqli* tools, conversely, function as the appropriate methods and means for addressing the soul within that defined, Islamic framework. This ensures that the practice of Islamic Psychology is rooted in revelation and is not merely an imitation or translation of secular thought.

By subordinating the rational to the revealed, this passive, structural approach facilitates the resurrection of the modern Hakim (the Sage); a polymath in whom the artificial barrier between the seminary and the laboratory is comprehensively dismantled. a polymath who has completely broken down the artificial division between religious study and scientific inquiry.

### 3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We have demonstrated that the paradigms of "Islamization of Knowledge" (IoK) and "Sains Tawhidik" (ST), while vital historical interventions, remain ontologically insufficient.

IoK as Triage: The IoK model serves as a filter, necessary for immediate decontamination but incapable of producing a new vessel. It leaves the secular structure of modern disciplines intact, merely sanitizing their content [2].

ST as Regulation: The ST model serves as a compass, guiding the ethical application of science but failing to address the metaphysical assumptions embedded within scientific methodology itself [4].

In contrast, the Islamic Science (USIM) model represents the only path toward a genuine foundation. By institutionalizing the integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge, USIM restores the classical hierarchy where Revelation provides the ontological axioms for rational inquiry [5]. This is not "Science plus Islam"; it is Science derived from the Islamic worldview.

The superiority of the USIM model lies in its ability to produce the "Polymath" (Hakim). By mandating that students master Turath (Islamic heritage) alongside modern science, it dissolves the artificial barrier between the seminary and the laboratory.

The Contrast:

- IoK seeks to **Islamicize the Output** (content filtering) [2].
- ST seeks to **Islamicize the Application** (ethical guidance) [4].
- USIM seeks to **Reconstruct the Science Itself** from its metaphysical roots using the four-stage methodology (Tanqiyah, Ta'sil, Taufiq, and Talfiq) to ensure the metaphysical essence dictates the scientific form, avoiding the error of *akhidh al-wujuh* ("taker of faces") [6].

This is the "Top-Down" emanation. It does not seek to "marry" religion and science as if they were two strangers; it recognizes that they are siblings, born of the same Truth (Haqq).

### 3.1 The Holistic Necessity and the Restoration of the Hakim

The divergence between the models of "Islamization of Knowledge" (IoK), "Sains Tawhidik" (ST), and "Islamic Science" (USIM) is not merely semantic; it is a divergence in the ultimate goal of education. While the former two seek to produce a "pious professional"; a sociologist who prays, or a biologist who is ethical; the USIM model seeks to resurrect the Hakim (the Sage). This section discusses the three critical implications of adopting the foundational Naqli-Aqli integration model.

#### 3.1.1 Resolving the "Schizophrenia" of the Modern Mind

The primary affliction of the modern Muslim academic is a form of intellectual dualism. As Osman Bakar [1] elucidates, the secularization of science has severed the link between the "Book of Nature" and the "Book of Revelation."

The Failure of Coexistence: Under the IoK or ST models, a student often holds two contradictory worldviews simultaneously. In the laboratory, they operate under the assumption of material causality (where matter is dead and purposeless); in the prayer hall, they operate under the assumption of Divine Will (where matter is alive with Tasbih).

The USIM Solution: By establishing the Naqli worldview before engaging in Aqli science, the USIM model dissolves this dichotomy. The student does not "switch codes" between religion and science. Instead, the scientific inquiry becomes a form of Ibadah (worship) because the object of study has been ontologically redefined as a Sign of God (Ayat). Science is no longer a rival to theology; it is its servant [5].

#### 3.1.2 From Regulatory Ethics to Ontological Ethics

A profound limitation of the "Sains Tawhidik" (ST) approach is its tendency to treat ethics as a regulation; a set of "brakes" applied to scientific progress.

The Regulatory Flaw: In the ST model, one might ask, "Is cloning permissible?" This is a legalistic (Fiqh) question. It assumes the science of cloning is neutral, and only the act requires judgment.

The Ontological Shift: The USIM model, by integrating Naqli knowledge at the root, posits that ethics are intrinsic to the definition of reality. If the human being is defined via Revelation as Bani Adam (honored creation) and not merely a "biological machine," then certain manipulations are not just "forbidden"; they are scientifically "false" because they violate the nature of the object [3]. Thus, ethics moves from being a "post-production filter" to a "pre-production design parameter."

### 3.1.3 Intellectual Sovereignty: From Consumer to Producer

Perhaps the most significant implication of the USIM model is its potential to decolonize the Muslim mind.

The Consumer Trap: The "Islamization" (IoK) model often leaves the Muslim scholar as a consumer of Western knowledge, perpetually busy "cleaning" and "filtering" theories developed elsewhere. They are forever reactive.

The Producer Paradigm: By returning to the Avicennian hierarchy where Naqli sources provide the axioms, the USIM scholar is empowered to formulate original hypotheses. Instead of asking "How do I Islamize Freud's theory of the soul?", the USIM scholar asks "What is the theory of human psychology derived from the Qur'an?" and then uses empirical methods to test and expand it. This shifts the agency from "filtering the West" to "producing from the East" [5].

### 3.1.4 The USIM Model: Forging the "Polymath" (Hakim) through Integrative Knowledge

The fundamental superiority of the Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) educational model lies in its deliberate design to cultivate the "Polymath," or *Hakim* (Sage). This is achieved through a radical yet essential mandate: requiring students to attain mastery in *Turath* (the foundational Islamic heritage) concurrently with modern, specialized sciences. This dual mastery is not a mere additive process; it is a synthesis that systematically dismantles the artificial and detrimental barrier that has historically separated the religious seminary (*madrrasah*) from the secular laboratory.

The USIM approach offers a profound contrast to other attempts at reconciling faith and academic inquiry:

- **The Integration of Knowledge:** The USIM methodology is distinctively Integrative and represents a "Top-Down" emanation of knowledge. It rejects the notion of simply fusing two disparate strangers; religion and science; as a forced *marriage*. Instead, it recognizes them as siblings (*taw'am*), born from the same singular, unchangeable Truth (*al-Haqq*).
  - The USIM Scholar's Perspective (Integrative): "I do not merely study the physical realm; I study the *Sunnatullah* (The Laws of God) as manifested in the cosmos and human experience. I use the Qur'an and Sunnah not as secondary references, but as the foundational epistemological framework that defines the very *nature* and *purpose* of reality. The microscope, the telescope, and the statistical model are then employed to observe, measure, and understand the intricate *details* of this God-defined reality." The USIM graduate seeks not just to *know* but to *understand* within a Divine context, achieving *Hikmah* (wisdom).
- **Contrast with Other Models:**
  - **The IoK Scholar (Defensive):** This approach, common in institutions of Islamization of Knowledge (IoK), is fundamentally defensive and reactive. "I study Sociology, or Psychology, or Economics, but I must constantly be vigilant to identify and reject the parts; the theories, the hypotheses, the conclusions; that appear to contradict Islam." The focus is on purification and censorship, operating on the premise that the modern field is inherently flawed or antagonistic, requiring continuous theological vetting. The IoK scholar is an **apologist** first, a scientist second.
  - **The ST Scholar (Devotional):** This approach, often found among pious scholars in modern Science and Technology (ST) institutions, is primarily

devotional and compartmentalized. "I study Biology, and the more complex the cellular structure I find, the more I use my findings to praise God's awesome creative power (*Subhanallah*)." While laudable, this perspective treats faith as an emotional or spiritual add-on *after* the scientific observation is complete. It does not allow the tenets of faith (like *Tawhid*) to fundamentally shape the way research questions are framed, the *ethics* of the methodology, or the ultimate *interpretation* of the data. Faith becomes a conclusion of science, rather than its premise.

In summary, the USIM model moves beyond mere conflict resolution or spiritual affirmation. By grounding the study of physical laws (*Sunnatullah*) within the metaphysical framework provided by Divine Revelation, it transforms the academic endeavor into an act of *'ibadah* (worship) and *khilafah* (stewardship), producing the intellectual architecture for a truly holistic civilization [8]. The Polymath thus emerges as a specialist in a modern field who is simultaneously rooted in the *Rabbani* (Divine) worldview, capable of addressing contemporary challenges with both scientific rigor and profound wisdom.

### 3.2 The Restoration of the Hierarchy

The ultimate goal of this intellectual project is to avoid the error of the *akhidh al-wujuh* ("taker of faces"); the scholar who adopts the forms of modern knowledge without understanding their essence [6]. The USIM model ensures that we do not merely mimic Western universities with Islamic labels. Instead, it demands a return to the "Top-Down" emanation of knowledge, where the study of the physical world is a descent from the knowledge of the Divine (*Marifatullah*).

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

We stand at a precipice. The core affliction of the modern Muslim intellect is the fracture of knowledge into the religious and the secular, leading to cognitive dissonance and an incomplete worldview [1, 4]. This study demonstrated that the existing paradigms; "Islamization of Knowledge" (IoK) and "Sains Tawhidik" (ST); serve as necessary but reactive measures, filtering secular outputs or regulating application, but failing to correct the underlying secular epistemology [2, 4]. In contrast, the USIM model offers the sole path to foundational reconstruction by employing a Neo-Avicennian, "Top-Down" hierarchy where Naqli (revealed) knowledge ontologically defines and provides the axioms for Aqli (rational) inquiry [5, 4]. This rigorous four-stage methodology; Tanqiyah, Ta'sil, Taufiq, and Talfiq; avoids the error of *akhidh al-wujuh* ("taker of faces") and transforms inquiry into an act of *'ibadah* (worship) [4, 6]. The broader implication of this foundational integration is the resolution of intellectual dualism, the establishment of ontological ethics, and the shift from being a knowledge consumer to a knowledge producer, ultimately resurrecting the Hakim (Sage) [3, 5, 4]. Future scholarship should focus on the systematic application of this methodology to reconstruct specific modern disciplines, thereby producing the intellectual architecture for a unified, Tawhidic civilization [8, 4].

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