

Reviving Dahlan's Vision: Integrating Tradition and Modernity in Islamic Education Today

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Abstract

This journal article explores the enduring legacy and relevance of K.H. Philosophy visionary Ahmad Dahlan in shaping contemporary Islamic education. Using a qualitative approach based on a literature research methodology, this study critically examines Dahlan's paradigm of thinking about integrative Islamic education. This article explains Dahlan's emphasis on nurturing individuals proficient in religious and secular science through a careful analysis of diverse sources of literature, including books, journals, and previous research. The core of Dahlan's vision is to integrate reason, critical thinking, and moral integrity within the framework of education. The article highlights Dahlan's goal of purifying Islam from heretical teachings, reforming the education system, and fostering socially responsible individuals who are devout to Allah and equipped with extensive knowledge. These findings underscore the relevance of Dahlan's vision in addressing the contemporary challenges facing Islamic educational institutions, as well as offering insights to inform pedagogical practices and policies.

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INTRODUCTION

A multifaceted tapestry of challenges and opportunities exists in the contemporary education landscape, particularly within Islamic pedagogy (Nor et al., 2024). As societies evolve and globalize, education dynamics undergo profound transformations, shaping the minds and ethos of future generations (Sinha, 2023; Ilin, 2023; Linyan & Boqing, 2023). Within this milieu, it becomes imperative to critically examine the prevailing educational phenomena that shape the discourse and practice of Islamic education today (Brooks & Ezzani, 2022). Amidst the myriad educational paradigms, Islamic education is a beacon of

tradition, philosophy, and spirituality, offering a holistic approach that transcends mere academic instruction (Reader et al., 2021). However, the current educational landscape is marked by a confluence of factors that demand a reevaluation of traditional approaches and a reinvigoration of pedagogical methodologies.

One of the primary challenges facing contemporary Islamic education is the integration of modernity with tradition, reconciling the timeless principles of Islam with the demands of a rapidly changing world (Davids, 2021; Rassool, 2023). In an era characterized by technological advancement, globalization, and cultural pluralism, educators are tasked with navigating a delicate balance between preserving Islamic values and engaging with the complexities of the modern age (Mohiuddin, 2023). Moreover, the emergence of alternative educational models, such as online learning platforms and secular institutions, poses a formidable challenge to the traditional methods of Islamic education (Faizi, 2022; Thameem et al., 2023). As students are increasingly exposed to diverse sources of knowledge and ideologies, the role of Islamic educators becomes paramount in fostering a robust understanding of faith and identity amidst the cacophony of competing voices.

Socioeconomic disparities and geopolitical tensions underscore the urgent need for equitable access to quality Islamic education, particularly in marginalized communities where educational resources are scarce (Lopes et al., 2022; Sanjani et al., 2023). Addressing these disparities requires a comprehensive approach that extends beyond the confines of the classroom, encompassing socio-political advocacy, community engagement, and grassroots initiatives (Ahmad & Islam, 2024; Herani et al., 2024). In light of these challenges and opportunities, it is imperative to critically assess the current state of Islamic education and explore innovative strategies to address the evolving needs of students and society (As'ad, 2021; Suroso et al., 2021). By examining the prevailing educational phenomena through a nuanced lens, we can glean valuable insights that inform the discourse and practice of Islamic education in the twenty-first century.

Central to understanding the contemporary landscape of Islamic education is an exploration of the seminal contributions of influential figures whose ideas continue to shape pedagogical discourse and practice (Ahmed, 2021). Among these luminaries stands K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, a visionary scholar whose thought paradigm offers profound insights into the essence and purpose of Islamic education in the modern era (Tualeka & Tsalitsah, 2023). K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, revered as a pioneering figure in the Islamic reform movement in the early 20th century, espoused a comprehensive vision of education rooted in the principles of Islam and tailored to the needs of his time (Amir, 2022; Hoesterey, 2022; Sadono et al., 2023). As the founder of Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations, Dahlan articulated a holistic approach to education encompassing religious instruction, moral development, and social empowerment.

At the heart of Dahlan's educational philosophy lies a deep commitment to

integrating faith, reason, tradition, and modernity (Adiwibowo et al., 2024; Suyatno et al., 2022). Drawing upon the rich heritage of Islamic scholarship, he sought to imbue students with a profound understanding of Islamic principles while equipping them with the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world. Moreover, Dahlan emphasized the importance of contextualizing Islamic teachings within the socio-cultural realities of contemporary society, recognizing the dynamic nature of education and the need for adaptive pedagogical strategies. His emphasis on relevance and practical application resonates deeply with Islamic educators' challenges as they seek to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity in an ever-changing world.

Furthermore, Dahlan's holistic vision of education extended beyond the confines of the classroom, encompassing a commitment to social justice, community development, and nation-building (Khalid Ali, 2022). He sought to empower individuals and communities to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society through initiatives such as establishing schools, orphanages, and healthcare facilities (Lamido & Haneef, 2021). By elucidating the links between K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's thought paradigm and the principles of Islamic education, we can gain valuable insights into the enduring relevance of his ideas and their implications for contemporary pedagogy (Krissandi et al., 2023). As we navigate the complexities of the modern educational landscape, Dahlan's legacy is a guiding light, illuminating the path toward a more holistic, inclusive, and transformative approach to Islamic education.

The educational concept implemented by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is profound and transformative, rooted in the visionary notion of integrative Islamic education (Haq et al., 2022; Novriadi et al., 2023; Suyatno et al., 2022). In an era marked by political upheaval, cultural fragmentation, and colonial subjugation, Dahlan recognized the urgent need to transcend the dichotomy between secular and religious education (Barton et al., 2021; Novriadi et al., 2023). The prevailing educational, characterized by the stark division between Dutch-run secular schools devoid of religious instruction and traditional Islamic boarding schools devoid of modern knowledge, presented a formidable challenge. It was within this crucible of challenges that Dahlan's vision crystallized (Faizi, 2022), driven by a profound sense of urgency to nurture a new generation of "ulama-intellect" or "intellectual-ulama" – individuals fortified with both spiritual resilience and intellectual acumen.

Dahlan's approach was not merely a pragmatic compromise but a visionary synthesis born out of deep contemplation and strategic foresight (Arlini & Mulyadi, 2022). By integrating religious teachings into secular education and establishing schools that harmoniously blended religious and general knowledge, Dahlan sought to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, faith and reason.

Central to Dahlan's thought paradigm was the conviction that Islamic

education was not only essential for individual spiritual growth but also pivotal for the advancement and prosperity of the nation (Muryadi et al., 2023; Novriadi et al., 2023). His reformist ideas, rooted in a profound concern for the stagnation plaguing the Muslim world and exacerbated by Dutch colonial policies, sought to purify Islamic teachings from superstition and heresy while also liberating Muslims from the confines of traditional thinking.

Dahlan's intellectual journey, catalyzed by his transformative experiences during pilgrimages to Mecca (R. Dahlan et al., 2022), epitomized a relentless quest for renewal and revitalization within the Islamic tradition. His reform ideas, characterized by a dual commitment to purifying Islamic teachings and promoting critical reinterpretation, represent a beacon of hope amidst the tumultuous currents of the early 20th century. The legacy of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's reformist ideas transcends temporal and spatial boundaries, offering timeless insights into the transformative power of integrative Islamic education and the enduring quest for intellectual renewal within the Muslim world.

While acknowledging the profound impact of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's integrative Islamic education, it is imperative to critically assess the gaps in our understanding, offering a pathway for deeper scholarly inquiry and enriched comprehension (Basri, 2022; Sebastian & Othman Alkaff, 2024). Firstly, the socio-political milieu that shaped Dahlan's reformist ideas warrants meticulous examination beyond mere acknowledgment of Dutch colonial influence and broader socio-cultural factors. A critical analysis should delve into the power dynamics, ideological underpinnings, and subtle nuances of colonial policies, alongside indigenous resistance and agency, to unveil the intricate layers of influence on Dahlan's educational philosophy (Krissandi et al., 2023). By engaging in nuanced interrogation, scholars can uncover the complexities of Dahlan's thought paradigm, elucidating how socio-political exigencies intersect with his vision for educational reform.

A comprehensive understanding of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's integrative Islamic education necessitates a review of previous scholarly endeavors, which have laid the groundwork for our current knowledge and identified avenues for further exploration. Previous studies have significantly contributed to elucidating various facets of Dahlan's educational philosophy, historical context, and legacy (Achmad, 2021; Amelia & Hudaidah, 2021; Faizi, 2022). Scholars have delved into the socio-political milieu of early 20th-century Indonesia, shedding light on the colonial policies, indigenous resistance movements, and cultural dynamics that shaped Dahlan's thought paradigm (Asman et al., 2021; Dewi et al., 2023; Zam Zami & Hafizh, 2023). By situating Dahlan within this broader historical context, researchers have provided valuable insights into the complex interplay of colonial domination, Islamic revivalism, and nationalist aspirations that influenced his educational vision.

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy has catalyzed a

transformative shift in Islamic education towards holistic pedagogy (Amir, 2022; Barton et al., 2021; Qosim et al., 2024). By advocating for well-rounded individuals proficient in both secular and religious knowledge, Dahlan aimed to bridge temporal and spiritual divides. His emphasis on educational objectives and methodologies reflects a commitment to nurturing enlightened Muslims capable of navigating modern complexities. Through curriculum reforms and institutional changes, Dahlan's philosophy addresses Islamic education's challenges, fostering social responsibility and nationalism (Baharuddin et al., 2024; Sudarmin et al., 2024). Dahlan's approach propels Islamic educational epistemology towards national enlightenment and prosperity by instilling moral development and societal engagement.

In contrast to other opinions, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's vision has profound relevance in contemporary Islamic education, exemplified by a holistic approach to cultivating individuals proficient in religious and secular knowledge (Asman et al., 2021; Mutaali, 2023; Saebani & Mustopa, 2023). Its goals of purifying Islam from misunderstandings, improving the education system, and strengthening the Muslim community are still relevant. Dahlan's concept emphasizes combining religious and general education, fostering critical thinking and moral integrity (Umar et al., 2021). By cultivating a modern Muslim society based on faith, adherence to religious principles, and broad intellectual engagement, Dahlan's philosophy promises to form morally upright and intellectually empowered individuals, encouraging societal progress and spiritual enlightenment.

In elucidating the profound impact of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy on contemporary Islamic education, it is essential to recognize the novelties that his vision brings to the discourse. At the heart of Dahlan's approach lies a synthesis of tradition and modernity, a departure from conventional dichotomies that have long characterized educational paradigms. One of the key novelties of Dahlan's philosophy is its emphasis on integrating religious and general education seamlessly, fostering a comprehensive understanding of both faith and worldly knowledge. This integration catalyzes intellectual empowerment and moral development, equipping students with the tools to navigate the complexities of the modern world while remaining grounded in their religious principles. By embracing these novelties, Dahlan's educational philosophy offers a transformative framework for Islamic education in the contemporary era, poised to shape individuals who are knowledgeable, compassionate, intellectually curious, and socially engaged.

To advance our understanding of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's profound impact on contemporary Islamic education, this article aims to achieve several key objectives. Firstly, it seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of Dahlan's educational philosophy, elucidating its core principles, historical context, and implications for modern pedagogy. Secondly, the article aims to critically analyze the relevance of Dahlan's vision in addressing the challenges faced by Islamic

educational institutions today, including integrating religious and general education, fostering critical thinking, and nurturing socially responsible individuals. Thirdly, it explores the implications of Dahlan's philosophy for advancing Islamic educational epistemology, particularly in fostering national development and societal progress. Lastly, the article aims to stimulate further scholarly inquiry and dialogue on the enduring legacy of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, offering insights that can inform educational practice and policy in the ongoing pursuit of excellence in Islamic education. This article aspires to contribute to a deeper understanding of Dahlan's transformative vision and its implications for contemporary educational discourse through these objectives.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing library research as its methodological framework (Larivière-Bastien et al., 2022). Library research involves gathering data by comprehensively understanding and analyzing theories from many literature sources pertinent to the research topic. These sources encompass various materials, including books, journals, and previous research studies. The process involves meticulously searching for and synthesizing information from diverse references to construct a robust theoretical foundation (Adlini et al., 2022). Moreover, the library materials obtained from various sources undergo critical analysis to ensure depth and credibility in supporting the propositions and ideas posited in the research. Specifically, within the context of this study, the exploration of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's thought paradigm on Islamic education serves as a cornerstone of the research endeavor. By critically engaging with Dahlan's seminal ideas, the research seeks to elucidate their relevance and implications within the contemporary educational landscape, thus enriching the theoretical discourse on Islamic pedagogy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION (Written in with Open Sans 12)

Result

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, a towering figure in Islamic reform and education, articulated a visionary philosophy that continues to resonate profoundly. Integrative Islamic education is central to his thought paradigm, which transcends the dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge (Hamami, 2021; Novriadi et al., 2023; Rosyidin & Arifin, 2021; Sutopo et al., 2022). Dahlan emphasized the importance of nurturing individuals well-versed in religious teachings and proficient in worldly sciences (Hadinata, 2021). His vision aimed to cleanse Islam from erroneous teachings, reform the educational system, and uplift the social fabric of Muslim communities (Ramadhan et al., 2022; Sudarmin et al., 2024). Dahlan advocated for a holistic education approach grounded in reason, critical thinking, and moral integrity (Adiwibowo et al., 2024). Through his educational initiatives, he sought to cultivate a modern Muslim society devoted to Allah,

committed to practicing religious teachings and equipped with broad knowledge (Khalid Ali, 2022). Dahlan's thoughts remain relevant today, serving as a guiding light for Islamic educational institutions in navigating contemporary challenges and fostering individuals who are both morally upright and intellectually empowered.

Life History of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan was born in Yogyakarta in 1868 AD/ 1268. H Muhammad Darwis, the son of K.H. Abu Bakar Bin K.H. Sulaiman, is a preacher at the Sultan's Mosque in Yogyakarta. His mother's name is Siti Aminah Binti K.H. Ibrahim, a great prince in Yogyakarta (Janah et al., 2022; Wijayati & Habibi, 2021). In other sources, Muhammad Darwis was born in 1869. Muhammad Darwis was the fourth of 7 children. According to their genealogy, the brothers and sisters of Muhammad Darwis are 1) Nyai Khatib Arum, 2). Nyai Muhsinah, 3). Nyai H. Sholeh, 4). M. Darwis (K.H. Ahmad Dahlan), 5). Nyai Abdurrahman, 6). Nyai H. Muhammad Fakhri, 7). Muhammad Basir.

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan grew up in a tribal society; therefore, he was significantly influenced by the social traditions of that area (Elvira et al., 2023). This can be seen from his tenacious habits in deepening religious knowledge. K.H. Since he was a child, Ahmad Dahlan was not educated at a formal educational institution organized by the Dutch East Indies government because anyone who sent his child to that school would be considered an infidel because he had entered the pattern of Dutch infidel life (Faizi, 2022). Alternatively, his father, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, has educated himself through recitation. He was sent to study with several other Koran teachers when he was deemed to have sufficient Islamic knowledge. In the 19th century, a tradition developed of sending children to teachers to study. According to Steer Brink, there are five categories of teachers: teachers of the Koran, book teachers, Erekat teachers, teachers of the supernatural, and teachers who do not live in one place.

The books studied by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan are related to the science of *fiqh*, the science of *Nahwu*, the science of *falaq*, the science of *qira'ah*, and the science of Hadith (Husin, 2023). Some scholars he approached to serve as teachers were K.H. Muhammad Shaleh, K.H. Muhsin, and K.H.R. Dahlan. K.H. Mahfudz, Syaikh Khayyat Sattokh, Syaikh Amin and Sayyid Bakri. At a relatively young age, he could master various Islamic disciplines. His high intellectual sharpness made K.H. Ahmad Dahlan always feel dissatisfied with the disciplines he had studied and continued to try to deepen them further.

In 1870, as a teenager, Muhammad Darwis studied advanced Islamic knowledge. He studied jurisprudence from K.H Muhammad Saleh, studied nahwu from K.H. Muhsin, and other lessons he received from K.H Abdul Hamid in Lempuyangan and K.H Muhammad Nur. Before performing the first Hajj, the type

of book that K.H. Ahmad Dahlan focuses more (Arifin et al., 2024; Daulay & Dalimunthe, 2022) on the books of *Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah*, especially in the science of *Aqaid*, while from the Syafi'i school of thought in the science of jurisprudence and the sciences of Sufism from Imam Ghazali.

After completing his primary education at madrasas and Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta and surrounding areas, he went to Mecca for the first time in 1890 AD to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. He not only performed the Hajj but also expanded his knowledge. While studying, a teacher named Sayyid Bakri Syatha gave Muhammad Darwis a new name, Ahmad Dahlan (Husin, 2023; Janah et al., 2022). Apart from that, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan studied with Indonesian *Alim Ulama'* who already lived there, such as Shaikh Ahmad Khatib, a reformer from Minangkabau, West Sumatra, K.H. Makhfudz from Termas, K.H. Nakhrawi (Muhtaram) from Banyumas, K.H. Muhammad Nawawi from Banten, as well as to the Mecca Islamic scholars whom he already knew in Java.

About three years later, in 1903 A.D., he visited Mecca for the second time. This time, he stayed longer, namely for two years. It is believed that during his stay in the holy city of Mecca, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan met the ideas of Islamic reform pioneered by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rasyid Ridha (Husin, 2023; Wijayati & Habibi, 2021). K.H Ahmad Dahlan is not a writer like Muhammad Natsir. Therefore, he conveyed his ideas verbally and in real work. For this reason, he is better known as a doer than a thinker. K.H Ahmad Dahlan is also a preacher at the Yogyakarta Sultanate Mosque, besides being a teacher at government schools such as "*Kweekschool*" in Yogyakarta and OSVIA in Magelang. After he was 24 years old, K.H Ahmad Dahlan married Siti Walidah, his cousin who became known as Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (Elihami, 2022; Tantiasih et al., 2023). From his marriage, K. H. Ahmad Dahlan was blessed with six children. Before Muhammadiyah was founded, K.H Ahmad Dahlan had carried out various religious and *da'wah* activities. In 1907, he pioneered the *Alim Ulama* Conference. At the first meeting of the 1907 *Alim Ulama* Conference, Ahmad Dahlan expressed the opinion that the *Qibla* direction of the Yogyakarta Grand Mosque was incorrect. Since then, the direction of the *Qibla* of the big mosque was shifted to the actual Qibla by the students of K.H Ahmad Dahlan. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan died on February 23, 1923. His death was a significant loss for the Islamic movement in Indonesia, especially Muhammadiyah, the organization he founded and led. Even though he has died, his legacy of thought and contribution to the development of Islamic education and preaching remains a significant influence.

Perspective Islamic Education K.H. Ahmad Dahlan

K.H.'s view of Ahmad Dahlan in the field of Islamic Education can be seen in the educational activities carried out by Muhammadiyah (Rivadah et al., 2022). Dr. Abdul Mu'ti said very bravely that K.H. Ahmad Dahlan adopted the "Western"

system as developed in *Gubernamen* (government) schools. *Qismul Arqa* Madrasah, founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan around 1911, used tables and chairs as in Dutch schools. The curriculum composition includes "Religious sciences" and "Non-religious sciences". The teachers who teach are not only Muslim. Some subject teachers are Christians. Students come from various backgrounds, both from nobles and ordinary people (Ismunandar, 2021). K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is sad about education for all. Thus, educational institutions have a dual function: education and social reform or integration. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan has a comprehensive and open view. The openness of thinking and maturity in attitude are important factors that give birth to brilliant, enlightening ideas even though they were initially accused of being infidels and un-Islamic.

On December 18, 1921, Muhammadiyah established the Muhammadiyah boarding school for religious teacher education. In this school, general lessons are given by teachers from teacher education, while K.H. Ahmad himself and several other teachers provide more in-depth religious lessons. Looking at this activity, it is clear that Muhammadiyah is using the same pattern as the activities carried out by Abdullah Ahmad in Padang. The similarities can be seen in these things (Effendi, 2021). First, there are *Tabligh* activities, namely teaching religion to groups of adults in a regular course. Second, a private school should be established according to the governor's education model, with the addition of several hours of religious lessons per week. Third, to form an organizational cadre of religious teachers, a Muhammadiyah Islamic boarding school was established in Padang in 1931.

Muhammadiyah succeeded in continuing the educational reform model because it faced a social environment that was limited to employees, teachers, and traders in the city (Junarti et al., 2021; Sudarmin et al., 2024). The middle class in the city is, in many ways, the dominant social background in Muhammadiyah. This group controls printing companies that are economically important in society. This group emphasizes Western-style education. Therefore, Muhammadiyah, by providing a Western education model coupled with religious education, has achieved good results in this circle.

This description shows the educational ideas put forward by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan as follows (Citraningsih, 2021). First, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan brought reform in establishing Islamic educational institutions, which were initially a boarding school system, into a school system. Second, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan included general lessons in religious schools or Madrasahs. Third, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan has made changes to more varied teaching methods. Fourth, with the Muhammadiyah Organization, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is one of the Islamic organizations that is fastest in developing more varied educational institutions. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan also introduced modern management in the education system. The ideals and efforts of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan are increasingly deprived at this time and have shown very

rapid progress.

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan was present amid the downturn in education in Indonesia (Sudarmin et al., 2024). He came with a wealth of understanding about religion, society, and education. With a sense of sincerity and devotion to the Indonesian nation, he tried to contribute to the world of education. Below, we will discuss K.H.'s thoughts more and more. Ahmad Dahlan about education.

According to K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, education is a strategic effort to save Muslims from static thinking patterns towards dynamic thinking. This definition is evident that the arrival of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan brought changes and reforms in people's thinking at that time, where people's mindset when the Dutch and Japanese colonialists controlled Indonesia, their mindset was static and difficult to develop. Whether we admit it or not, it was all a fabrication made by the colonialists so that the Indonesian people would not do things that the colonialists were worried about, such as resistance, etc.

Islamic Education Thought Paradigm K.H. Ahmad Dahlan

According to Islam K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, a basic description of the paradigm from an educational perspective is firmly based on the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith, which are adopted as the framework for educational goals (Basri, 2022; Hasan & Umiarso, 2023). According to K.H. Ahmad, Dahlan has a solid foundation in every life, especially in the world of education, namely the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. This foundation will be the ideal goal of education, both from a vertical and horizontal perspective. There are two sides to humans: 'abd Allah (servant of Allah) and caliph *fi al-ardh* (representative of Allah on earth).

For K.H. Ahmad, Dahlan creates obedient humans through the education process. Obedience surrounds the thoughts, attitude patterns, and behavior patterns manifest in each person as a reflection of the universe. Those who are not selfish always apply a social spirit (Rohim, 2022), blessing the entire cosmos (*rahmatul lil'alam*). The Muhammadiyah organization tends to have a mature character or attitude capable of becoming an excellent native and beneficial to the entire face of the earth. This is what needs to be cultivated as a servant as well as a caliph on earth. As caliphs, humans can maintain a balanced relationship between humans and their God, humans and humans, and humans and the natural surroundings. The essence of education is the creation of goodness and overall well-being, which continuously optimizes thinking and physical and emotional abilities.

In the view of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, most leaders only cultivate the interests of their respective camps, so there is a need for thinking that places responsibility on the common welfare. Truth and piety are expressed in equal distribution of prosperity (Ahmed, 2021). In order to realize this, there is a need for familiarization with confessional culture, namely the process of realizing unity in

diversity. The diverse realities of life require the unification of ethnic, tribal, cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity, which will dominate every other person's behavior. Therefore, in the author's view, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan needs to be aware of embracing every difference spread by always responding to a positive view of humanity as we would like to be treated by others.

The equality applied by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, who, as his focus, took *al-Ma'un's* letter (Sita & Haryanto, 2022) by establishing a business charity, orphanages, educational institutions, and hospitals. Every development in it implies the creation of the values contained in Surah *Al-Ma'un*. Often, repeated statements in it state the importance of humanity. Humans are universal and apply everything to their respective camps, which should be from every attitude of good action without distinction, which can bring about the common benefit. Likewise, the motto of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is as follows in Figure 1.

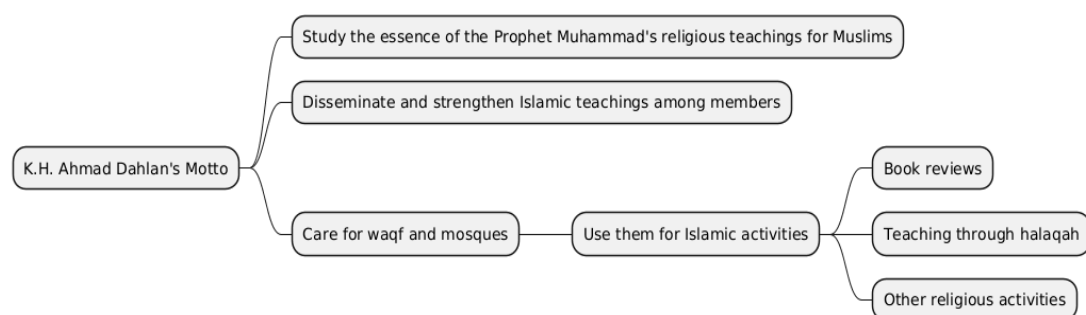


Figure 1. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's motto

The aim of Islamic education in the view of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, namely by prioritizing the cultivation of Islam within each of his followers, prioritizes the primacy of worshipping Allah SWT, remembering life in the afterlife by not dominating worldly thinking.

Perspective School System Education K.H. Ahmad Dahlan

Based on Presidential Decree Number 657 of 1961, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan was designated as one of the national heroes who awakened the people's consciousness and renewed their thoughts in every movement (Rohim, 2022; Tentiasih et al., 2023). The inspiration for this view includes the involvement of Budi Utomo. Teaching in this institution deviates from the learning structure used in Islamic boarding schools, which only dominates the lecture method of forming *halaqah* with one-way information. In this case, this is a change that is a form of progress in education with the existence of madrasas, which have many conjunctions of tools for each continuity of the learning process. However, many criticisms have emerged that the education process is idolatrous with the help of inspiration from the Western world.

However, this needs to be clarified by whether all the attributes used are natural and done without any intervention. When you took the train here, wasn't that also considered idolatry? You have to go back on foot if that is the case. The education system that combines religious knowledge material with general knowledge and a classical system is based on the hadith of the Prophet (Muqowim & Lessy, 2021), "You should learn the language of your enemies so that your enemies will not be deceived." The words of the Prophet, "Seek knowledge even if you go to China."

The education system developed by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is a modern school system, namely learning with benches, chairs, blackboards, and classical infrastructure (Sita & Haryanto, 2022; Suripto, 2023). Of course, a system like this was something foreign at that time because usually, the learning system known (Daulay & Dalimunthe, 2022) then was the *sorogan*, *bandongan*, etc., system in mosques. Meanwhile, the Dutch colonialists widely used the classical system in schools specifically for Dutch and native descendants. Partners and educational institutions specifically for indigenous people. Renewal of the Islamic education system as a result of the thoughts of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is developing a form of education from the Islamic boarding school model by applying the *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and *wetonan* methods to becoming a madrasa or school by applying classical learning methods which are oriented towards the formation of human morals.

Every development of human intellectual abilities through the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith, for example, the expression: *afala tatafakkarun*, *afala yukminun*, *ulul albab*, etc. This includes the impact of the progress (Suripto, 2023) of Islamic civilization, hence the importance of interpretation by individuals or groups of people so that it can be applied in everyday life as an increase in intellectual intelligence to foster creativity, which has implications for the spirit of reforming *tajdid* in Islamic education for Muhammadiyah members.

Development of the Muhammadiyah education curriculum (Nurisman & Mahendra, 2022) by exploring actual truth with rational thinking, opening *ijtihad*, and closing *taqlid*. This differentiates the path of struggle from the national figures of his time; K.H. Ahmad Dahlan focuses his service through education by marrying the Western education system and the Islamic boarding school education model. Implementing the ethical and political policies of the colonial government in 1901, the Dutch designed a new pattern of long-term colonialism to shift Islamic educational institutions. At that time in Indonesia, there were only two models of education, namely Dutch secular educational institutions, which did not recognize religious teachings, and Islamic boarding school-style educational institutions, which only taught religion.

The implementation of the combination of the school and madrasa model education systems by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan applies contextual learning methods

(Setiawan et al., 2024). This is reflected in the learning methods applied when he teaches Surah Al-Maun verses 1-7. By studying the letter repeatedly, K.H Ahmad Dahlan will only change or add new material once his students understand, comprehend, and practice it after teaching Surah *Al-Ma'un* for three months. He taught that religion is praxis and does not just stop at cognitive understanding. This aligns with the three domains of education in Benjamin S Blomm's taxonomy (1913-1999), namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. So, after the students have carried out the commands in Surah Al-Ma'un, the material for the following letter is replaced. This is where Muhammadiyah educational (Nurisman & Mahendra, 2022; Setiawan et al., 2024) institutions are required to carry out transformational reforms, not stop at the form and results of their ideas, which are sometimes trapped in operational technicalities but need to remember about innovation, collaboration, and adaptation in the midst of every competitive change.

Through a comprehensive exploration of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's views and initiatives in Islamic education, this research underscores several vital conclusions and contributions to the scholarly discourse. Firstly, Dahlan's multifaceted approach, encompassing *tabligh* activities, establishing private schools, and forming religious teacher cadres, reflects a holistic vision aimed at nurturing individuals grounded in Islamic teachings and equipped to navigate the challenges of contemporary life. Secondly, Dahlan's emphasis on placing Islamic teachings at the core of education while integrating modern and traditional approaches and employing contextual learning methods highlights the dynamism and relevance of his educational paradigm. Thirdly, the research demonstrates the enduring significance of Dahlan's philosophy in addressing contemporary educational challenges and fostering the holistic development of Muslims and society at large. By critically engaging with Dahlan's thoughts and initiatives, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the transformative potential of Islamic education. It offers insights for enhancing educational practices and policies in the modern era. Through its nuanced analysis and synthesis of diverse perspectives, this research paves the way for further scholarship and dialogue on the intersection of Islamic education, tradition, and modernity, ultimately enriching educational discourse and informing pedagogical approaches in diverse contexts.

CONCLUSION

K.H Ahmad Dahlan's views in the field of Islamic education are (1) *Tabligh* activities, which are activities carried out using regular teaching or courses to groups of adults, (2) the establishment of private schools with the *Guberman* education model and additional weekly lesson hours, (3) the establishment of the Muhammadiyah lodge in Padang in 1931 as an effort to form an organizational

cadre of religious teachers. Meanwhile, the fundamental conception of Islamic education thought by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan places Islamic teachings as the center and leading guide in forming a holistic educational paradigm, responding to the challenges of life in this world and the hereafter. By combining modern and traditional approaches and adopting contextual learning methods, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan tries to create an education system that is comprehensive, relevant, and positively contributes to the development of Muslims and society at large.

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