



Tadib and Islamization of Knowledge: Epistemological Dialectics of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

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Abstract

This article investigates the epistemological dialectics between Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, focusing on the concepts of Islamization of knowledge and *ta'dib* in twenty-first-century Islamic education. The study is motivated by enduring challenges such as the dichotomy of knowledge, secularization, curriculum fragmentation, digital disruption, and the crisis of *adab* in contemporary Islamic institutions. Using a Systematic Literature Review with thematic-comparative synthesis, it analyzes academic publications from 2020 to 2026 on Islamization of knowledge, *ta'dib*, *adab*, Islamic worldview, knowledge integration, curriculum reform, and decolonization of knowledge. The findings reveal that Al-Faruqi's contributions emphasize Islamization of knowledge, *tawhid* integration, disciplinary reconstruction, curriculum development, and institutional reform. In contrast, Al-Attas is more closely associated with *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, hierarchy of knowledge, and the formation of the civilized human being. Both thinkers critique secularized knowledge and the dichotomy between religious and modern sciences, yet their epistemological strategies diverge: Al-Faruqi advances an operational and institutional project, while Al-Attas provides a metaphysical and conceptual foundation. The study concludes that a critical synthesis is possible only if their fundamental differences are preserved, offering significant implications for curriculum reform, knowledge integration, and the renewal of Islamic educational philosophy in the digital era.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the 21st century faces a complex epistemological landscape, as it must respond to developments in modern science, digital transformation, and global professional demands, while simultaneously maintaining an orientation toward *tawhid*, *adab*, and the meaning of knowledge as the foundation for the development of well-rounded Muslim individuals.

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In Islamic higher education, this problem is evident in the persistent dichotomy between modern science and Islamic values, necessitating a curriculum model capable of integrating both without compromising the depth of modern academic disciplines (Fauzi et al., 2025). This issue is not merely technical or curricular in nature but also philosophical, as it concerns the sources, purposes, hierarchy, and legitimacy of knowledge within Islamic education.

In the epistemological discourse of Islamic education, Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas are two key figures who both critique the dominance of secular epistemology and seek to restore knowledge to the horizon of *tawhid*. However, the two have different orientations. Al-Faruqi places greater emphasis on the Islamization of knowledge as an operational, programmatic, and institutional project through the reconstruction of modern academic disciplines, curriculum integration, and the reform of Islamic educational institutions (Anshari & Wati, 2025). In contrast, Al-Attas places greater emphasis on refining the concepts of science, the Islamic worldview, *adab*, and *ta'dib* as the metaphysical foundation for shaping civilized human beings, particularly amid the challenges of digital education characterized by moral disorientation, digital distractions, and the commodification of knowledge (Solihutauafa, 2025). This difference underscores that Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas cannot be simplistically equated, as Al-Faruqi tends to approach reform from the perspective of systems and institutions, whereas Al-Attas focuses on refining the worldview and *adab* before institutional reform is undertaken (Firnanda & Husnaini, 2025; Kamalia, 2025).

Given this gap, this article employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, guided by the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, to systematically map, select, and synthesize academic literature (Page et al., 2021). This article seeks to answer four main questions: what are the trends in scholarship on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas in Islamic education from 2020 to 2026; what are the similarities and differences in the paradigms of Islamic education in their respective thought; how relevant are their ideas to 21st-century Islamic education; and how can the conceptual tension between Al-Faruqi's institutional-programmatic orientation and Al-Attas's metaphysical-conceptual orientation be understood without oversimplifying their fundamental differences. Thus, this article is expected to contribute to the development of a contemporary epistemology of Islamic education through a mapping of trends in the literature, a careful comparative analysis, and a critical synthesis between the Islamization of knowledge and *ta'dib* that preserves the epistemological tension between the two.

METHODS

This article employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design with a thematic-comparative synthesis approach. The objective is to examine the development of research on the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas in Islamic education during the 2020–2026 period. The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach was chosen because this study does not collect field data from participants but rather focuses on the systematic identification, selection, evaluation, and synthesis of relevant academic publications. This design directly addresses the research needs of mapping trends in the field, analyzing similarities and differences in paradigms, and examining the epistemological relevance of these two figures to 21st-century Islamic education.

In reporting the review process, this study follows the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. These guidelines provide a transparent framework for explaining the rationale for the review, search methods, selection process, eligibility criteria, and methods for synthesizing results in a systematic review (Page, McKenzie, et al., 2021). Although PRISMA 2020 was originally developed for systematic reviews in the health field, several of its items are highly useful for reviews in the social sciences, education, and conceptual studies because they emphasize transparency in reporting, replicability of procedures, and clarity in the literature selection process. In addition, this study also adheres to the PRISMA-S principles in reporting the literature search strategy. PRISMA-S focuses on the completeness of reporting the search strategy, the identification of databases used, search terms, search limitations, the documentation process, and technical information that enables the search process to be replicated by other researchers (Suprijanto & Nasution, 2026).

The thematic synthesis approach was chosen because the literature reviewed includes not only quantitative empirical findings but also conceptual, philosophical, and historical articles, as well as studies of thought. Thematic synthesis in this study does not aim merely to count the frequency of themes, but rather to interpret patterns of meaning that emerge in the literature, such as the Islamization of science, *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, the integration of knowledge, curriculum, the decolonization of knowledge, and critiques of the secularization of science. Thematic analysis was chosen because this approach allows researchers to systematically identify, organize, and interpret patterns of meaning in qualitative data, particularly when the data consists of academic texts and conceptual narratives (Abishev et al., 2025; Anidar et al., 2026; Efendi et al., 2026; Engkizar et al., 2022, 2024, 2026; Haramain, 2026; Jaafar et al., 2025; Kusumastuti, 2021; Nurjaman, 2026).

The research data consist of academic documents discussing the thoughts of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas in relation to Islamic education, Islamic epistemology, the Islamization of science, *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, the integration of knowledge, and the reform of Islamic education. The units of analysis in this study are not specific individuals, institutions, or communities, but rather journal articles, conference proceedings, chapters in academic books, and open-access scholarly works relevant to the research questions.

The primary data sources focus on publications released between 2020 and 2026. This timeframe was chosen to ensure that the review captures contemporary trends in the literature, particularly developments in the discourse on Islamic education amid issues such as digitization, the decolonization of knowledge, integrative curricula, and the crisis of *adab*. Primary works by Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas published before 2020 may still be used as foundational conceptual references, but they are not counted as part of the 2020–2026 publication trends.

The databases used in the literature search include: Scopus, Web of Science, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), Google Scholar, Crossref, Garuda (Digital Reference Guard), SINTA (Science and Technology Index), Semantic Scholar, and the portal for Islamic higher education journals in Indonesia. Multiple databases were used to broaden the scope of the search, given that studies on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas are scattered across international journals, accredited national journals, Islamic education journals, Islamic philosophy journals, and open-access publications. This multi-database strategy is crucial in a systematic review because relying on a single database may result in important literature not being adequately identified (Firnanda &

Husnaini, 2025; Thahir et al., 2026).

This study is guided by the following four research questions: RQ1: What are the trends in scholarship on the thought of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas in Islamic education during the 2020–2026 period? RQ2: What are the similarities and differences in the paradigms of Islamic education in the thought of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas? RQ3: How relevant are their ideas to 21st-century Islamic education? RQ4: How can the conceptual tension between Al-Faruqi’s institutional-programmatic orientation and Al-Attas’s metaphysical-conceptual orientation be understood without oversimplifying their fundamental differences?

RQ4 was added to ensure that the analysis does not stop at the general similarities between the two figures. This question is important because Al-Faruqi places greater emphasis on the Islamization of knowledge as an operational agenda, the integration of modern disciplines, and institutional reform, whereas Al-Attas places greater emphasis on refining the concepts of knowledge, *adab*, *ta’dib*, and the Islamic worldview before educational reform is implemented at the institutional level.

The literature search strategy employed a combination of terms in English and Indonesian. English terms were used because most international literature employs keywords such as “Islamization of knowledge,” “Islamic education,” “Islamic epistemology,” “Islamic worldview,” “*adab*,” and “*ta’dib*.” Indonesian terms were used to identify articles in national journals that use keywords such as “Islamization of knowledge,” “Islamic Education,” “Islamic epistemology,” “knowledge integration,” “*adab*,” and “*ta’dib*.”

The search framework also considers the SPIDER principle (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research type) because this study is qualitative-conceptual in nature and does not use a population-intervention scheme such as PICO. SPIDER is used to help formulate search elements in a qualitative review through the components of sample, phenomenon of interest, design, evaluation, and research type. Although SPIDER originates from the tradition of qualitative evidence synthesis, this framework helps conceptual studies such as this one to clarify the units of analysis and the phenomena under examination (Ummah, 2019).

Table 1. SPIDER Formulation in Research

SPIDER Element	Formulation in this research
Sample	Journal articles, academic proceedings, book chapters, and open-access scholarly publications on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas
Phenomenon of Interest	Epistemology of Islamic education, Islamization of knowledge, <i>ta’dib</i> , <i>adab</i> , Islamic worldview, knowledge integration, and decolonization of knowledge
Design	Systematic Literature Review, conceptual study, comparative study, study of Islamic educational philosophy
Evaluation	Literature trends, dominant themes, paradigm similarities, paradigm differences, 21st-century relevance, and conceptual tensions
Research Type	Qualitative, conceptual, philosophical, historical, and comparative literature

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to ensure that the literature analyzed was truly relevant to the focus of the study, and to ensure that the selection process was based not only on keyword proximity but also on the

substance of the articles.

Table 2. Literature Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Aspect	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Year of Publication	Publications 2020–2026	Publications before 2020, except primary works of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas as conceptual references
Research Focus	Discusses Al-Faruqi, Al-Attas, or both in the context of Islamic education and Islamic epistemology	Only mentions Al-Faruqi or Al-Attas briefly without substantive analysis
Theme	Islamization of knowledge, <i>ta'dib</i> , <i>adab</i> , Islamic worldview, knowledge integration, Islamic curriculum, decolonization of knowledge	Themes unrelated to Islamic education or Islamic epistemology
Document Type	Journal articles, academic proceedings, academic book chapters, and open-access publications	Popular opinions, blogs, non-academic essays, or documents without bibliographic information
Language	Indonesian, English, Malay, or Arabic	Languages beyond the researcher's analytical capacity and without sufficient metadata
Access	Open-access or verifiable academic metadata	Not accessible, lacking abstract, or unverifiable
Academic Quality	Published in reputable journals, accredited journals, or scholarly publications with academic structure	Does not meet minimum academic quality standards

Exclusion criteria also apply to articles that merely repeat biographical accounts without making any conceptual contribution to Islamic education. Articles discussing the Islamization of knowledge in general may still be included if they have direct relevance to the frameworks of Al-Faruqi or Al-Attas. Similarly, articles discussing *adab* and *ta'dib* may still be included if they explicitly link these concepts to Al-Attas or the epistemology of Islamic education.

The literature selection procedure was conducted through four main stages in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. First, identification: The researcher collected literature from predetermined databases using a combination of keywords and Boolean searches. Second, screening: Duplicate articles were removed, and titles and abstracts were reviewed to filter out and eliminate documents irrelevant to the research question (RQ). Third, eligibility: The full text of the articles was read to assess their eligibility based on their focus, methodology, and conceptual contributions. Fourth, inclusion: The final articles were designated as the literature corpus to be analyzed thematically and comparatively.

This workflow follows the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, which emphasize documenting the number of articles at each selection stage, the reasons for

exclusion, and the clarity of the process for determining the final articles to be analyzed (Page et al., 2021).

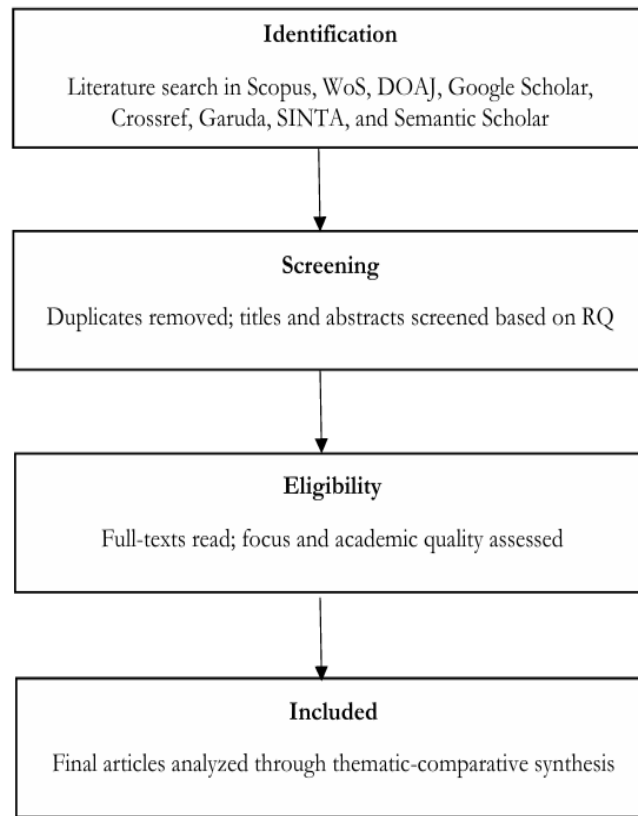


Fig 1. PRISMA-Based Literature Selection Flowchart

Figure 1 shows that the selection process was not conducted randomly but rather through a multi-stage process. Each article had to undergo a screening process at the metadata, abstract, and full-text levels, ensuring that the articles ultimately analyzed were the most relevant to the focus on the epistemology of Islamic education in the thought of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas. Data was extracted from each article that met the inclusion criteria using a data matrix. The purpose of data extraction was to ensure that key information from each source could be systematically compared. The extracted data included publication details, research focus, methodology, key concepts, findings, relevance to the research questions (RQs), and the article's position regarding Al-Faruqi or Al-Attas.

Table 3. Literature Data Extraction Matrix

No.	Extraction Component	Description
1	Author and year	Author's name, year of publication, and bibliographic identity
2	Article title	Full title of the article or publication
3	Journal/publisher name	Name of the journal, proceedings, or academic publisher
4	Index/reputation	Scopus, WoS, DOAJ, SINTA, Garuda, or other relevant indexes
5	Research focus	Al-Faruqi, Al-Attas, or both
6	Key concepts	Islamization of knowledge, <i>ta'dib</i> , <i>adab</i> , worldview, tawhid, knowledge integration
7	Research method	Conceptual study, literature review, comparative, historical, philosophical, or

SLR		
8	Main findings	Main arguments or results of the article
9	Relevance to RQ	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, or RQ4
10	Article gap	Limitations or gaps left by the article
11	Critical notes	Strengths and weaknesses of the article in analyzing Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

This matrix helps researchers avoid overly general interpretations. For example, an article on Al-Faruqi is not merely categorized as an article on the Islamization of science, but is also analyzed to determine whether it emphasizes curriculum, interdisciplinary integration, tawhid, institutions, or educational reform. Similarly, an article on Al-Attas is not merely categorized as an article on *adab* but is also analyzed to determine whether it emphasizes worldview, the concept of knowledge, *ta'dib*, the hierarchy of knowledge, or a critique of the secularization of knowledge.

Literature quality assessment is conducted to ensure that the analyzed articles meet academic standards. Given the diversity of literature types used, the assessment is not conducted using a single quantitative instrument but rather through a combination of evaluations of relevance, methodological clarity, conceptual contribution, and traceability of sources.

For qualitative empirical articles or qualitative reviews, this study may adapt the principles of the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP). CASP provides a checklist to help researchers assess the quality of studies based on the clarity of objectives, appropriateness of methods, data collection strategies, the analysis process, and the value of research findings (CASP, 2022).

However, since most of the literature on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas consists of conceptual-philosophical studies, the quality assessment also considers four additional aspects: i) Does the article have an adequate foundation of primary or secondary references? ii) Does the article accurately distinguish between the ideas of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas? iii) Does the article present a consistent conceptual argument? iv) Does the article contribute to contemporary Islamic education, rather than merely repeating biographical or definitional accounts?

Table 4. Literature Quality Assessment Indicators

Assessment Dimension	Indicator
Relevance	The article directly discusses Al-Faruqi, Al-Attas, Islamic epistemology, or Islamic education
Clarity of Focus	The research objectives and conceptual focus are clearly stated
Methodological Quality	The study's methods, analytical procedures, or conceptual approaches are adequately explained
Source Traceability	The article uses primary or secondary sources that can be verified
Conceptual Contribution	The article provides new understanding, mapping, or critique of the scholars' thought
Comparative Accuracy	The article does not equate Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas simplistically
Contemporary Relevance	The article connects the scholars' thought with issues in 21st-century Islamic education

Data analysis was conducted in three stages: descriptive analysis, thematic synthesis, and comparative-philosophical analysis. First, descriptive analysis: this stage mapped the year of publication, article type, methodology, journal, country context, focus on key figures, and major themes emerging in the literature. This analysis was used to answer RQ1 regarding trends in studies

of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas during the 2020–2026 period. Second, thematic synthesis: the researcher codes the main concepts in the selected articles. Initial coding focuses on terms such as the Islamization of knowledge, tawhid, the integration of knowledge, curriculum, institutional reform, *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, the concept of knowledge, the loss of *adab*, and the decolonization of knowledge. Subsequently, these codes were grouped into major themes. Thematic analysis was employed because this approach enables researchers to construct themes based on patterns of meaning emerging from the text, rather than solely on the frequency of word occurrences (Hakim, 2020; Yunita, 2025). Third, a comparative-philosophical analysis: this stage compares the identified themes to identify points of convergence, differences, and epistemological tensions between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas. This analysis is used to answer RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4. Its primary focus is to distinguish Al-Faruqi's orientation which is more operational, programmatic, institutional, and interdisciplinary from Al-Attas's orientation, which is more metaphysical, conceptual, philosophical, and centered on worldview and *adab*.

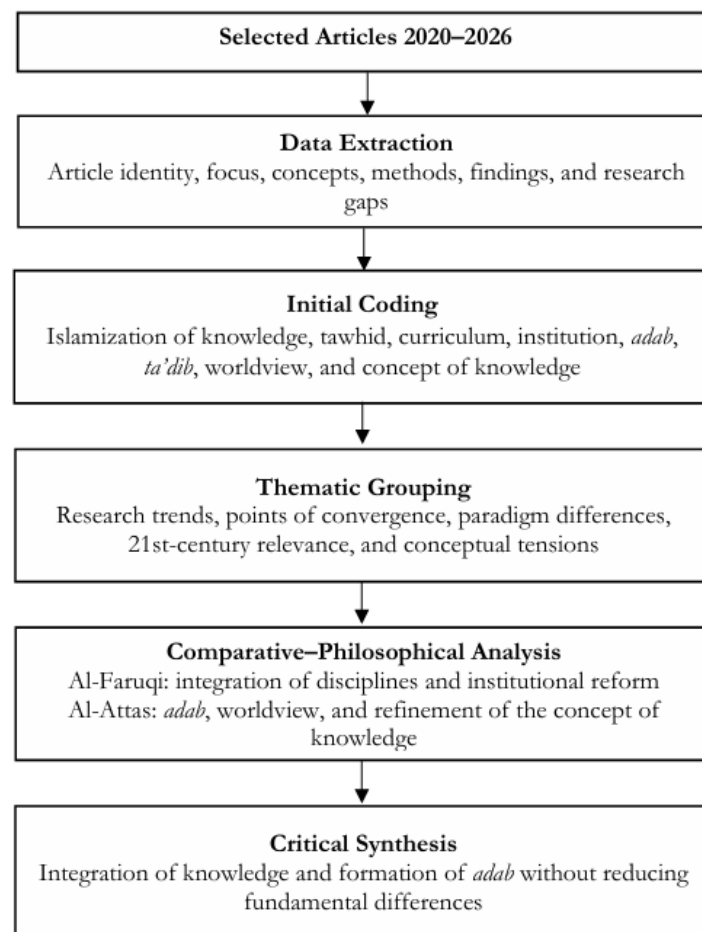


Fig 2. Thematic-Comparative Analysis Model

Figure 2 shows that the analysis is conducted in stages. The selected articles were not immediately summarized but were read, coded, grouped, compared, and then critically synthesized. In this way, the study was able to avoid two common pitfalls: first, merely presenting a list of references without synthesis; second, producing a normative synthesis that obscures the fundamental differences between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas.

The initial thematic categories were developed based on the research question (RQ) and the results of a preliminary review of the literature. These categories are flexible and may evolve during the analysis process.

Table 5. Initial Thematic Categories

Main Theme	Subtheme	Relation to RQ
Research Trends 2020–2026	Year of publication, methods, dominant themes, dominant scholars, national contexts	RQ1
Islamization of Knowledge	Tawhid, knowledge integration, reconstruction of disciplines, curriculum, institutions	RQ2, RQ3
<i>Ta'dib</i> and <i>Adab</i>	Worldview, loss of <i>adab</i> , concept of knowledge, civilized human, hierarchy of knowledge	RQ2, RQ3
Epistemological Convergences	Critique of secularization of knowledge, rejection of knowledge dichotomy, tawhid as foundation	RQ2
Paradigm Differences	Institutional–programmatic vs. metaphysical–conceptual	RQ2, RQ4
21st-Century Relevance	Digitalization, integrative curriculum, Islamic higher education, decolonization of knowledge	RQ3
Conceptual Tensions	Limits of synthesis, risk of reduction, critical dialogue between two reform models	RQ4

These categories serve as an initial guide, but the researcher remains open to the possibility of new themes emerging during the full-text reading process. Thus, the analysis remains guided by the research questions but is not closed off to findings that emerge from the literature. Validity in this study is ensured through transparency in the search procedures, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, documentation of the selection process, the use of a data extraction matrix, and reporting the reasons for excluding articles. The PRISMA 2020 principles emphasize the importance of transparent reporting so that readers can understand how the review was conducted and why certain literature was included or excluded (Page et al., 2021).

The reliability of the analysis is ensured through an audit trail consisting of search logs, a list of databases, keywords, search dates, the number of articles at each selection stage, and the data extraction matrix. During the thematic synthesis stage, researchers also ensure coding consistency by cross-checking initial codes, provisional themes, and key quotes or arguments from the analyzed articles. Quality principles in thematic analysis require that themes not merely serve as descriptive labels but truly represent patterns of meaning relevant to the research question (Nugroho et al., 2025).

To avoid interpretive bias, this study employs the principle of comparative reading, which does not merge Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas into a single, overly uniform conclusion. Each article is analyzed by examining whether the author emphasizes the common ground, differences, or tensions between the two thinkers. With this strategy, the final synthesis is not aimed at forced harmonization but rather at a critical reading that acknowledges the epistemological differences between the two figures.

This study has several methodological limitations. First, the scope of the review is limited to publications from 2020 to 2026; thus, important classical articles in the history of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas's thought are not counted as part of the literary trends, although they are still used as conceptual references.

Second, the literature search is highly dependent on the databases used and the selection of keywords. Third, some publications on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas may not be available via open access, making it impossible to analyze them fully. Fourth, since this article employs thematic synthesis and philosophical analysis, the results are interpretive in nature rather than statistical generalizations.

These limitations do not undermine the study's position; rather, they highlight the need for caution when interpreting the review's findings. This study does not claim to cover all published literature on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas, but rather seeks to present a systematic overview of contemporary literature relevant to 21st-century Islamic education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of a thematic-comparative synthesis of key literature from the 2020–2026 period that discusses the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas on Islamic education. The findings are organized around four research questions: trends in scholarship, similarities in paradigms, differences in paradigms, 21st-century relevance, and conceptual tensions between Al-Faruqi's approach to the Islamization of knowledge and Al-Attas's concept of *ta'dib*.

The identified literature indicates that studies on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas during the 2020–2026 period no longer focus solely on biographical introductions or the repetition of classical ideas. Research has begun to address issues such as Islamic higher education, curriculum integration, the decolonization of knowledge, the crisis of *adab*, digital ethics, and the epistemology of contemporary Islamic education. Studies [Adinugraha & Khobir, \(2025\)](#); [Muslih et al., \(2018\)](#) position Al-Faruqi as an influential thinker on the Islamization of knowledge in Islamic education through the concepts of tawhid and the Islamization of Knowledge. Meanwhile, a study [Yunita, \(2025\)](#) positions Al-Attas as a relevant thinker for addressing digital disruption through the integration of science and *adab* in Islamic education.

Table 6. Core Literature Analyzed in the Thematic Synthesis (2020–2026)

No	Author and Year	Research Focus	Dominant Scholar	Method	Relevant Findings
1	(Amir, 2023)	Education in Al-Faruqi's perspective and Islamization of knowledge	Al-Faruqi	Library research	Islamic education is understood through Islamization of Knowledge, tawhid, and renewal of educational thought
2	(Nisok, 2024)	Islamization of knowledge and educational integralism	Al-Faruqi	Critical study	Islamization of knowledge is positioned as an effort to integrate Islamic values into all

					dimensions of education
3	(Nuryanti et al., 2025)	The urgency of Islamization of knowledge for Islamic education	Al-Faruqi	Literature review	Islamization of knowledge is interpreted as a response to educational dualism and the dichotomy between religious and modern sciences
4	(Qasim et al., 2025)	Epistemology of Islamization of knowledge in Al-Faruqi's thought	Al-Faruqi	Library research	Tawhid is placed as an epistemological principle rejecting the dichotomy of knowledge and value-free science
5	(Firnanda & Husnaini, 2025)	Theoretical foundations, contexts, and contemporary debates on Al-Faruqi's Islamization of knowledge	Al-Faruqi	Conceptual study	Islamization of knowledge is not understood as a rejection of modern science, but as reconstruction of its foundations, purposes, and ethical orientation
6	(Yunita, 2025)	Integration of knowledge and <i>adab</i> in Islamic education in the digital era	Al-Attas	Library research and philosophical hermeneutics	<i>Ta'dib</i> is understood as an educational framework uniting intellectual, moral, and spiritual development
7	(Nuryanti et al., 2025)	Islamization of knowledge in Al-Attas' thought	Al-Attas	Conceptual study	Tawhidic worldview, <i>adab</i> , hierarchy of knowledge, revelation, reason,

					intuition, and experience form the basis of Islamic epistemology.
8	(Nurjaman, 2026)	Islamic worldview as the foundation of Islamic educational epistemology	Al-Attas	Conceptual study	The Islamic worldview functions as an epistemological structure to determine the nature of knowledge, truth, and educational aims
9	(Subhan, 2024)	<i>Ta'dib</i> as an ethical framework for Islamic digital education	Al-Attas	Comparative study	<i>Ta'dib</i> is considered relevant as a conceptual solution to the digital ethics crisis among students
10	(Subhan, 2024)	Islamic higher education curriculum based on tawhidic framework	Knowledge integration context	Comparative study	Integration of knowledge and Islamization of knowledge are used to bridge the dichotomy between modern sciences and Islamic values in higher education
11	(Permadi et al., 2025)	Comparison of integration of Islam and science in Al-Faruqi, Al-Attas, and Amin Abdullah	Comparative	Library research dan content analysis	Al-Faruqi emphasizes Islamization of knowledge based on tawhid, while Al-Attas emphasizes purification of knowledge through <i>adab</i>
12	(Zainuddin et al.,	Epistemological synthesis	Comparative	Library research	Al-Attas emphasizes

2025)	of Al-Attas and Al-Faruqi	and hermene utic– philosop hical analysis	metaphysics and <i>adab</i> , while Al- Faruqi emphasizes curriculum reconstructio n and institutional reform
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Table 6 shows that the literature corpus is divided into three main clusters. The first cluster centers on Al-Faruqi, the Islamization of science, tawhid, the integration of disciplines, and curriculum reform. The second cluster centers on Al-Attas, *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, and criticism of the secularization of science. The third cluster is comparative in nature and seeks to bring the two together within the framework of contemporary Islamic education. This pattern is evident in the study (Permadi et al., 2025), which distinguishes Al-Faruqi as a thinker of the Islamization of science based on tawhid and Al-Attas as a thinker of the purification of science through *adab*. A similar observation is found in a study (Rauf et al., 2025), which states that Al-Attas emphasizes the metaphysical dimension and *adab*, whereas Al-Faruqi emphasizes curriculum reconstruction and institutional reform.

RQ1 Results: Trends in Studies on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas in Islamic Education, 2020–2026

The first trend indicates that studies on Al-Faruqi during the 2020–2026 period focused primarily on the Islamization of knowledge, the integration of knowledge, tawhid as an epistemological principle, Islamic education curricula, and higher education reform. Points out that Al-Faruqi’s educational ideas center on the Islamization of knowledge, the vision of tawhid, and his contributions to modern Islamic educational consciousness. Nisok, (2024) also positions Al-Faruqi’s Islamization of knowledge as the foundation of educational integralism that is, the effort to integrate Islamic values into all dimensions of education.

The second trend indicates that studies on Al-Attas have primarily focused on the themes of *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, the concept of knowledge, and the moral crisis in education. Yunita, (2025) demonstrates that Islamic education in the digital age faces problems such as moral disconnection, digital distraction, and the commodification of knowledge; consequently, Al-Attas’s concepts of knowledge and *adab* are positioned as the foundation for reconstructing digital Islamic education. It also indicates that Al-Attas’s concept of *ta'dib* can serve as a conceptual framework for addressing the digital ethics crisis, since education cannot be understood merely as a technological issue but must also be viewed as a matter of educational values and objectives.

A third trend highlights the emergence of comparative studies that begin to directly juxtapose Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas. Zainuddin et al., (2025) compare the two within the framework of the Islamization of knowledge, *adab*, and the decolonization of contemporary knowledge, and assert that while they share common ground in their critique of the epistemological crisis in Islamic education, they differ in their focal points regarding reform. Permadi et al., (2025) also compare Al-Faruqi, Al-Attas, and Amin Abdullah within the discourse on the integration of Islam and science, concluding that Al-Faruqi is more focused on the Islamization of knowledge based on tawhid, whereas Al-Attas is more focused on the purification of knowledge through *adab*.

The fourth trend shows that the issue of 21st-century Islamic education is increasingly linked to higher education, integrative curricula, and the need to bridge the dichotomy of knowledge. Subhan, (2024) indicates that Islamic higher education curricula in Indonesia and Malaysia face the challenge of the dichotomy of knowledge, and both the integration of knowledge and the Islamization of knowledge are employed to bridge the gap between modern knowledge and Islamic values. These findings indicate that the ideas of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas are not only viewed as classical thought but are also used to interpret contemporary issues in Islamic educational curricula and institutions.

Table 7. Research Theme Trends 2020–2026

Theme Cluster	Most Prominent Scholar	Direction of Study	Examples of Contemporary Focus
Islamization of Knowledge	Al-Faruqi	Reconstruction of modern sciences based on tawhid	Knowledge integration, curriculum, Islamic higher education
<i>Ta'dib</i> and <i>Adab</i>	Al-Attas	Formation of civilized humans through the Islamic worldview	Digital ethics, moral crisis, integration of knowledge and <i>adab</i>
Islamic Worldview	Al-Attas	Refinement of metaphysical foundations and concept of knowledge	Educational aims, hierarchy of knowledge, critique of secularization
Integrative Curriculum	Al-Faruqi and Islamic Higher Education Context (PTKI)	Institutionalization of knowledge integration and Islamic values	Islamic higher education curriculum in Indonesia–Malaysia
Comparative Synthesis	Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas	Examining epistemological convergences and differences	Decolonization of knowledge, contemporary Islamic epistemology

Based on table 7, trends in the literature show that Al-Faruqi is cited more frequently when the discussion focuses on system design, curriculum, disciplinary integration, and institutional agendas. Conversely, Al-Attas is cited more frequently when the discussion focuses on the meaning of knowledge, *adab*, worldview, and the formation of civilized human beings. This difference in trends serves as an important basis for understanding the epistemological tension between the two.

RQ2 Results: Similarities in the Paradigm of Islamic Education in the Thought of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

The most fundamental similarity between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas lies in their critique of the secularization of knowledge. Both reject the view that knowledge is value-neutral and can be separated from metaphysical, ethical, and spiritual orientations. In a study Qasim et al., (2025), Al-Faruqi's epistemology of the Islamization of knowledge is understood as a project that establishes tawhid as the principle governing the production, validation, and application of

knowledge, while simultaneously rejecting the dichotomy between secular and religious knowledge. In the study by [Nugroho et al., \(2025\)](#), Al-Attas also rejects epistemological secularism and the dichotomy of science through the worldview of tawhid, *adab*, and the integration of revelation, reason, intuition, and experience.

The second similarity is that both place tawhid at the foundation of Islamic education. For Al-Faruqi, tawhid serves as an integrative principle that connects modern knowledge, Islamic values, moral responsibility, and the reform of academic disciplines. For Al-Attas, tawhid serves as the foundation of a worldview that defines the nature of knowledge, truth, humanity, the purpose of education, and the role of *adab* in intellectual life. Points out that the Islamic worldview in Al-Attas’s thought functions not only as a theological framework but also as an epistemological structure that defines the nature of knowledge, truth, and the purpose of education.

The third similarity is that both view Islamic education as a civilizational project, not merely a process of information transfer. Al-Faruqi sees education as part of the renewal of the ummah through the Islamization of knowledge, mastery of modern disciplines, mastery of the Islamic heritage, and the search for a creative synthesis between the Islamic heritage and modern science. [Nuryanti et al., \(2025\)](#) demonstrate that Al-Faruqi formulated the goal of the Islamization of knowledge through mastery of modern disciplines, mastery of the Islamic heritage, determining the relevance of Islam to modern disciplines, the search for a creative synthesis, and the orientation of Islamic thought toward the will of Allah.

The fourth similarity is that both reject the dichotomy between religious knowledge and secular knowledge. [Subhan, \(2024\)](#) points out that Islamic higher education still faces the challenge of this dichotomy, and both the model of the Islamization of knowledge and the model of the integration of knowledge are aimed at bridging the gap between modern knowledge and Islamic values. In this context, both Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas are relevant because they reject a sharp separation between religious knowledge and rational-empirical knowledge, even though they propose different solutions.

Table 8. Epistemological Common Ground Between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

Dimension of Similarity	Al-Faruqi	Al-Attas	Meaning for Islamic Education
Critique of Secularization of Knowledge	Rejects modern knowledge detached from tawhid	Rejects knowledge that loses the Islamic worldview and <i>adab</i>	Islamic education must reject the neutrality of knowledge that ignores transcendent values
Tawhid as Foundation	Tawhid as the principle of integration of disciplines	Tawhid as the basis of worldview and hierarchy of knowledge	Knowledge must be directed toward unity of meaning, not fragmentation
Rejection of Knowledge Dichotomy	Integration of religious and modern sciences	Purification of the concept of knowledge from secular elements	Curriculum should not rigidly separate religious and general

sciences				
Education as a Civilizational Project	Islamization of knowledge directed toward reform of the ummah and institutions	<i>Ta'dib</i> toward formation of civilized humans	directed the of	Islamic education must not merely produce workers, but knowledgeable and civilized individuals
Ethics of Knowledge	Knowledge must be directed toward moral responsibility	Knowledge must be placed within <i>adab</i> worldview	must within and	Knowledge must foster spiritual, moral, and social responsibility

Table 8 shows that the common ground between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas lies not in similar strategies, but in a shared general diagnosis that Islamic education is facing an epistemological crisis. Both argue that the crisis facing the Muslim community cannot be resolved simply by increasing the number of educational institutions, expanding access, or updating learning technologies. This crisis must also be addressed through a renewal of the meaning of knowledge, the orientation of the curriculum, the foundations of tawhid, and ethical responsibility in education.

RQ2 Results: Differences in the Paradigms of Islamic Education in the Thought of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

The main difference between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas lies in the starting point of epistemological reform. Al-Faruqi begins with the need to Islamize modern academic disciplines through a systematic work program, mastery of modern knowledge, mastery of the Islamic heritage, and the pursuit of creative synthesis. [Nuryanti et al., \(2025\)](#) demonstrate that Al-Faruqi's ideas involve methodological stages that position the Islamization of knowledge as a concrete academic endeavor within the reform of the global knowledge system. [Firnanda & Husnaini, \(2025\)](#) also emphasizes that Al-Faruqi's project should not be understood as a rejection of modern science, but rather as a reconstruction of the foundations, objectives, and ethical orientation of knowledge through tawhid, revelation, reason, empirical inquiry, and moral responsibility.

Al-Attas starts from a different point. He does not primarily emphasize institutional reconstruction or academic disciplines, but rather the refinement of the concepts of knowledge, worldview, and *adab*. [Nugroho et al., \(2025\)](#) demonstrate that the true Islamic paradigm in Al-Attas's thought is built upon a monotheistic worldview, the positioning of *adab* as an epistemological foundation, and the understanding of knowledge as an instrument for knowing oneself, God, and reality. [Nuryanti et al., \(2025\)](#) also asserts that the Islamic worldview in Al-Attas's philosophy of education determines the goals of education and directs education toward the formation of cultured individuals through *ta'dib*.

The second difference lies in the orientation of praxis. Al-Faruqi is more programmatic and institutional because his ideas are directed toward the agenda of Islamizing academic disciplines, curriculum design, the production of textbooks, and the development of academic institutions. [Nuryanti et al., \(2025\)](#) note that Al-Faruqi founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought in 1981 as a research center to realize the Islamization of knowledge within a modern educational curriculum integrated with contemporary science. In contrast, Al-Attas is more metaphysical and conceptual, as his ideas focus on redefining the meaning of knowledge, the loss of *adab*, and the Islamic

worldview as the foundation of an educated person. Yunita, (2025) demonstrates that the integration of knowledge and *adab* in Al-Attas's thought forms the philosophical foundation of Islamic education, which emphasizes not only the acquisition of knowledge but also moral and spiritual awareness.

The third difference lies in how the two understand the crisis in Islamic education. In Al-Faruqi's interpretation, the crisis is primarily evident in the dualism of the educational system, the separation of religious knowledge and modern knowledge, and the dominance of secular knowledge that is not grounded in tawhid. In Al-Attas's interpretation, the crisis is primarily evident in the loss of *adab*, the confusion surrounding the concept of knowledge, and the corruption of the worldview, which prevents people from properly situating knowledge, the self, and reality. Studies Yunita, (2025) identify the erosion of *adab* as the root of the crisis in Islamic education in the digital age, while a study Qasim et al., (2025) positions Al-Faruqi's Islamization of knowledge as a rejection of value-free knowledge and the dichotomy of knowledge.

Table 9. Differences Between the Paradigms of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

Dimension	Al-Faruqi	Al-Attas	Conceptual Tension
Starting Point of Reform	Reconstruction of modern disciplines	Refinement of the concept of knowledge and worldview	Should reform begin with institutions-disciplines or with metaphysical awareness?
Key Concepts	Islamization of Knowledge, tawhid, knowledge integration	<i>Ta'dib</i> , <i>adab</i> , Islamic worldview, loss of <i>adab</i>	Is Islamization of knowledge a program or a purification of the meaning of knowledge?
Orientation	Operational, programmatic, institutional	Metaphysical, conceptual, philosophical	Does Islamic education require system design first or the formation of civilized humans first?
Main Problem	Knowledge dichotomy and dominance of secular sciences	Loss of <i>adab</i> and confusion of the concept of knowledge	Is the educational problem structural or spiritual-conceptual?
Strategy	Integration of modern disciplines with Islamic heritage	Purification of worldview and internalization of <i>adab</i>	Synthesis risks being superficial if strategic differences are ignored
Scope of Contribution	Curriculum, institutions, disciplines, textbooks	Educational aims, hierarchy of knowledge, ethics of	Al-Faruqi is stronger in system-building; Al-Attas is

knowledge, stronger in
civilized humans foundational
meaning

Table 9 confirms that the differences between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas are not merely variations in terminology, but rather differences in epistemological orientation. Al-Faruqi is more closely aligned with the project of institutional reform and the reconstruction of academic disciplines; Al-Attas is more closely aligned with the project of worldview reform and the formation of civilized human beings. Therefore, unifying the two should not be done by erasing the fundamental differences between the project of disciplinary integration and the project of worldview purification.

RQ3 Findings: The Relevance of Al-Faruqi's and Al-Attas's Thought to 21st-Century Islamic Education

Al-Faruqi's relevance to 21st-century Islamic education lies primarily in his ability to provide a framework for the integration of knowledge. Modern Islamic education faces the challenges of knowledge fragmentation, the separation of religious and secular disciplines, and the need for a curriculum capable of linking professional competencies with value-based orientation. (Subhan, 2024) indicates that Islamic higher education curricula in Indonesia and Malaysia face the challenge of the dichotomy of knowledge, and that the integration of knowledge as well as the Islamization of knowledge are employed to bridge modern science with Islamic values. In this context, Al-Faruqi is relevant as a conceptual source for designing integrative curricula, interdisciplinary research, and Islamic educational institutions that are not subject to the secularization of knowledge.

Al-Faruqi's relevance is also evident in the need for Islamic education not merely to add verses or moral values to modern science, but to reconstruct the epistemological orientation of science. [Firnanda & Husnaini, \(2025\)](#) points out that Al-Faruqi's Islamization of science must be understood as an effort to reconstruct the foundations, goals, and ethical orientation of science, not as a rejection of modern science. This finding is important because 21st-century Islamic education cannot merely adopt modern science in a technical sense but must also evaluate its assumptions, objectives, and ethical implications.

Al-Attas's relevance to 21st-century Islamic education lies primarily in his critique of the crisis of *adab* and the conceptual confusion surrounding science. In the digital context, education is often driven toward being fast-paced, technical, market-centric, and competency-output oriented, yet it pays insufficient attention to the cultivation of *adab* and spiritual depth. [Yunita, \(2025\)](#) indicate that the challenges of digital Islamic education include moral disconnection, digital distraction, and the commodification of knowledge; thus, the integration of knowledge and *adab* as proposed by Al-Attas becomes relevant for designing an education that remains rooted in the Islamic worldview.

Al-Attas's relevance is also evident in the need to develop a digital ethics grounded not only in technical rules but also in a worldview and *adab*. [Solihutauafa, \(2025\)](#) demonstrates that Al-Attas's concept of ta'dib has the potential to serve as a strategic foundation for a value-oriented digital ethics that addresses the challenges of Islamic education in the digital age. Thus, Al-Attas helps Islamic education resist the reduction of education to mere technological literacy, as education must continue to guide students toward recognizing the proper place of knowledge, humanity, reality, and God.

Table 10. The Relevance of Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas to 21st-Century Islamic Education

21st-Century	Contribution of	Contribution	Implications
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Challenge	Al-Faruqi	of Al-Attas	for Islamic Education
Knowledge Dichotomy	Integration of modern sciences and Islamic heritage	Structuring the hierarchy of knowledge within the Islamic worldview	Curriculum must connect religious sciences, natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities
Secularization of Knowledge	Reconstruction of the foundations of knowledge through tawhid	Critique of the secular worldview	Knowledge must be guided by transcendent values
Digitalization of Education	Integrative framework for technology and Islamic values	<i>Ta'dib</i> as the basis of digital ethics	Technology should strengthen <i>adab</i> , not replace educational aims
Moral Crisis among Students	Knowledge directed toward social responsibility	<i>Adab</i> as the core of education	Character education must be rooted in Islamic epistemology
Islamic Higher Education	Reform of disciplines, curriculum, and institutions	Formation of civilized humans and Islamic worldview	Islamic universities must unite academic excellence with spiritual consciousness
Decolonization of Knowledge	Critique of the dominance of Western secular sciences	Purification of the concept of knowledge from secular elements	Islamic education must build epistemic autonomy

Based on table 10, Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas are both relevant to 21st-century Islamic education, but at different levels. Al-Faruqi is more relevant for developing a system of knowledge integration, curriculum design, and academic institutionalization. Al-Attas is more relevant for ensuring that the integration of knowledge does not lose its sense of *adab*, worldview, and spiritual orientation. Contemporary Islamic education requires both, but the need for both does not mean their epistemological differences can be simplified.

RQ4 Findings: Conceptual Tension Between the Islamization of Knowledge and *Ta'dib*

The main tension between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas can be formulated as a tension between institutional-disciplinary reform and metaphysical-*adab* reform. Al-Faruqi addresses the problem of educational dualism and the dominance of modern secular disciplines, then offers the Islamization of science as a systematic program to integrate modern science with the Islamic tradition. Al-Attas addresses the problem of the loss of *adab* and the chaos in worldview, offering *ta'dib* as a means to redefine the meaning of science, humanity, and reality. [Zainuddin et al., \(2025\)](#) explicitly point out that Al-Attas emphasizes metaphysics and *adab*, whereas Al-Faruqi emphasizes curriculum reconstruction and institutional reform.

The second tension is that between the programmatic and conceptual approaches. Al-Faruqi can be seen as a thinker who offers a work agenda, methodological steps, mastery of modern disciplines, and a creative synthesis between the Islamic heritage and modern science. [Nuryanti et al., \(2025\)](#) demonstrate that Al-Faruqi's Islamization of science involves methodological steps that make it a concrete academic endeavor to reform the global knowledge system. Al-Attas, by contrast, does not primarily begin with programmatic steps but rather with the re-examination of key concepts such as science, *adab*, worldview, humanity, and the purpose of education. [Thahir et al., \(2026\)](#) demonstrate that Al-Attas constructs an Islamic paradigm through a monotheistic worldview, *adab* as an epistemological foundation, and the integration of revelation, reason, intuition, and experience.

The third tension is the risk of an overly harmonious synthesis. Several comparative studies suggest the possibility of a synthesis between Al-Attas's philosophical depth and Al-Faruqi's practical methodology. [Zainuddin et al., \(2025\)](#) state that a synthesis of the two could produce an epistemological framework that integrates philosophical depth with practical methodology. However, the results of the synthesis in this article indicate that such a synthesis must be tempered by critical awareness: Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas do indeed converge in their critique of the secularization of science, but they differ in their starting points, priorities for reform, and ways of understanding the crisis in Islamic education.

The fourth tension is that between "building a system" and "shaping human beings." Al-Faruqi helped Islamic education develop a more integrative academic system, while Al-Attas cautioned that an educational system that appears Islamic can still lose its way if it is not rooted in Islamic *adab* and worldview. In the context of digital education, [Yunita, \(2025\)](#) argues that technology should reinforce the Islamic worldview, rather than pushing education toward a new form of secularization. In the context of higher education curricula, [Subhan, \(2024\)](#) argues that the integration of knowledge must produce graduates who possess both academic excellence and Islamic values and intellectual awareness.

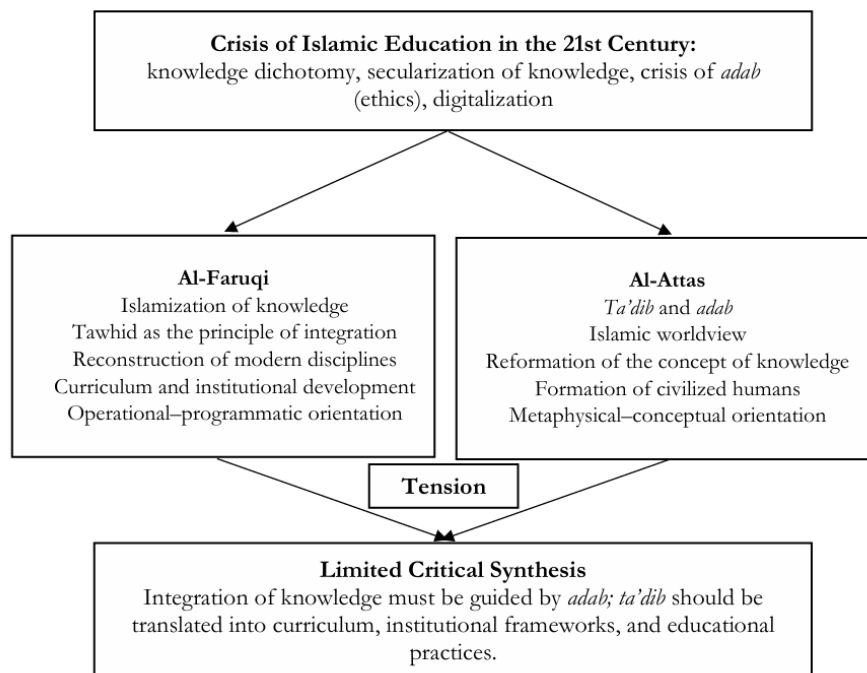


Fig 3. Map of the Epistemological Tension Between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas

Figure 3 shows that the tension between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas need not be eliminated, because it is precisely from this tension that a space for critical synthesis emerges. Al-Faruqi can strengthen the institutional dimension, the curriculum, and the reconstruction of academic disciplines. Al-Attas can strengthen the dimensions of worldview, *adab*, the concept of knowledge, and the goals of education. A productive synthesis is not about equating the two, but rather a dialogue that preserves their differences: the integration of knowledge requires *adab*, while *ta'dib* requires operational translation so that it can be incorporated into the educational system.

Thematic Synthesis of Findings

The findings of the synthesis reveal four major themes. First, the literature on Al-Faruqi focuses heavily on the Islamization of knowledge, tawhid, curriculum, and Islamic higher education. Second, the literature on Al-Attas focuses heavily on *ta'dib*, *adab*, worldview, the concept of knowledge, and the moral-digital crisis. Third, comparative literature has begun to view the two as Islamic epistemological thinkers who can enrich one another's work. Fourth, a valid synthesis of the two can only be achieved if the fundamental differences between Al-Faruqi's programmatic approach and Al-Attas's metaphysical approach are acknowledged.

Table 11. Thematic Synthesis of Research Findings

Synthesis Theme	Pattern of Findings	Conceptual Meaning
Islamization of Knowledge Reconstruction Disciplines	of Al-Faruqi's literature emphasizes tawhid, knowledge integration, curriculum, and institutional reform	Islamic education requires academic structures capable of integrating modern sciences with Islamic values
<i>Ta'dib</i> as Worldview Refinement	Al-Attas' literature emphasizes <i>adab</i> , concept of knowledge, worldview, and civilized humans	Islamic education must begin with the refinement of the meaning of knowledge and human orientation
<i>Tawhidic</i> Convergence	Both reject secularization of knowledge and the dichotomy of sciences	Tawhid serves as a shared foundation, but functions differently within each system
Epistemological Tension	Al-Faruqi is more programmatic—institutional, while Al-Attas is more metaphysical—conceptual	Synthesis must not erase differences in reform strategies
21st-Century Relevance	Both are relevant for integrative curriculum, digital ethics, decolonization of knowledge, and the crisis of <i>adab</i>	Islamic education needs to combine integrative systems with the formation of <i>adab</i>

Thus, the results of this study show that Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas remain two important references in the epistemology of contemporary Islamic education. However, both must be interpreted through a non-reductive approach. Al-Faruqi cannot be reduced to merely a figure of the integration of knowledge, as his project also possesses dimensions of tawhid and ethics. Al-

Attas also cannot be reduced to merely a figure in character education, as his ideas on *adab* are rooted in Islamic metaphysics, worldview, and the concept of knowledge. The tension between the two actually opens up the possibility of a more holistic renewal of Islamic education: an educational system that is scientifically integrated, yet also spiritually, morally, and epistemologically refined.

The Significance of the 2020–2026 Literary Trend: From the Islamization of Knowledge to the Crisis of *Adab*

The results of this synthesis indicate that scholarship on Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas during the 2020–2026 period has shifted from merely introducing these figures to examining contemporary issues in Islamic education. Crucial issues such as the dichotomy of knowledge, integrative curricula, the decolonization of knowledge, digital ethics, and the crisis of *adab* have become the primary focus. This shift indicates that the thought of these two figures is still regarded as a relevant conceptual framework for analyzing the challenges facing Islamic education in the 21st century. Studies [Muslih et al., \(2018\)](#) place Al-Faruqi within the context of the Islamization of Knowledge and its impact on Islamic education, while [Yunita, \(2025\)](#) situates Al-Attas within the context of reconstructing digital Islamic education through the integration of science and *adab*.

This trend reflects the shift in contemporary Islamic educational discourse toward two interrelated needs: first, building an educational system capable of integrating modern science with Islamic values; second, ensuring that this integration does not stop at the formal curriculum structure but extends to the formation of cultured individuals. In the context of Islamic higher education, [Subhan, \(2024\)](#) demonstrates that the integration of knowledge and the Islamization of knowledge aim to bridge the dichotomy between modern science and Islamic values, which contributes to the fragmentation of graduates' competencies.

This finding underscores that 21st-century Islamic education cannot simply focus on the modernization of institutions, accreditation, digitization, or competency-based curricula. Islamic education must also examine the epistemological foundations of the knowledge being taught, how that knowledge is constructed, the goals toward which it is directed, and the kind of individuals it aims to produce. This is where Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas become relevant once again. Al-Faruqi helps us consider how modern knowledge can be reconstructed within the framework of *tawhid*, while Al-Attas helps us consider how knowledge is situated within the Islamic worldview and guided by *adab*.

The Tawhid Common Ground: A Shared Diagnosis of the Crisis in Islamic Education

The fundamental commonality between Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas lies in their diagnosis that the crisis in Islamic education is an epistemological crisis. Neither views the problems of Islamic education merely as issues of facilities, management, or technical competence, but rather as a crisis closely tied to the concept of knowledge, sources of knowledge, the goals of education, and value orientation. A comparative study [Zainuddin et al., \(2025\)](#) shows that both figures respond to the epistemological crisis in contemporary Islamic education through the idea of the Islamization of knowledge, although they differ in their emphases and reform strategies.

Tawhid serves as the primary common ground between the two. In Al-Faruqi's thought, *tawhid* functions as an integrative principle that guides modern academic disciplines so they do not stray from Islam's moral, spiritual, and social objectives. In Al-Attas's thought, *tawhid* serves as the foundation of a worldview

that determines the nature of science, the hierarchy of knowledge, the goals of education, and the formation of civilized human beings. Thus, for both thinkers, tauhid is not merely a theological doctrine but an epistemological foundation that governs the understanding and application of knowledge. However, this common ground in tauhid must not obscure their fundamental differences. While Al-Faruqi and Al-Attas both reject the secularization of knowledge and the dichotomy in education, they do not follow the same path. Al-Faruqi places greater emphasis on the reconstruction of academic disciplines and educational institutions, while Al-Attas places greater emphasis on the reform of worldview, *adab*, and the concept of knowledge. Therefore, their common ground should be interpreted as a shared basic orientation, not a shared model of reform.

Al-Faruqi: The Strength of the Institutional-Programmatic Approach

Al-Faruqi's main strength lies in his ability to frame the Islamization of knowledge as an operational academic project. He not only critiques the secularization of knowledge but also advocates for the need to master modern academic disciplines and the Islamic tradition, assess Islam's relevance to modern disciplines, and build a creative synthesis. Recent literature on Al-Faruqi is frequently cited in discussions of Islamic education, the integration of knowledge, curriculum, and the reform of academic institutions.

Al-Faruqi's approach is particularly important for 21st-century Islamic education because Islamic educational institutions cannot rely solely on normative narratives about the importance of knowledge. Islamic educational institutions require curriculum design, program structures, instructional material development, research models, and institutional strategies capable of integrating modern knowledge with Islamic values. In this context, Al-Faruqi provides a framework that is relatively closer to the needs of educational policy, curriculum design, and institutional development.

However, Al-Faruqi's institutional-programmatic approach also has its limitations. If the Islamization of knowledge is interpreted merely as adding an "Islamic" label to modern disciplines, incorporating verses into teaching materials, or a symbolic blending of religious and secular knowledge, then the project risks becoming purely formalistic. This risk arises when curriculum reform is not accompanied by a reevaluation of perspectives on knowledge, humanity, truth, and the goals of education. It is here that Al-Attas's thought serves as an important corrective to the potential for programmatic reductionism in the project of the Islamization of knowledge.

Al-Attas: The Strength of the Metaphysical-Conceptual Approach

Al-Attas's primary strength lies in his conceptual depth in interpreting the crisis in Islamic education as a crisis of *adab* and worldview. Al-Attas does not begin with technical questions about curriculum design, but rather with fundamental questions regarding the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, how humans understand reality, and how knowledge should guide humans toward recognizing the proper place of God, the self, and nature. A study Yunita, (2025); Husni & Hayden, (2024) confirms that Al-Attas's concepts of knowledge and *adab* are relevant for reconstructing Islamic education in the digital age, as education faces digital distractions, the commodification of knowledge, and moral disconnection.

Al-Attas's approach is crucial because 21st-century Islamic education is often trapped in a performative logic: competency achievements, digital efficiency, accreditation standards, research outputs, and market competitiveness. While these aspects are important, they are insufficient if education loses its *adab* orientation. From Al-Attas's perspective, education aims not only to produce intelligent or skilled individuals, but also cultured individuals

capable of properly situating knowledge within the framework of Islamic meaning. Al-Attas's critique is also vital in addressing the digitization of education. Digitization can expand access to knowledge, but it can also accelerate the superficialization of knowledge if students become mere consumers of information without the discipline of *adab*. Therefore, *ta'dib* can be understood as an ethical and epistemological framework to ensure that educational technology does not shift the goals of Islamic education to merely learning efficiency.

However, Al-Attas's metaphysical-conceptual approach also presents challenges. The concepts of *adab*, worldview, and *ta'dib* need to be translated into curriculum design, pedagogy, learning assessment, faculty development, and academic culture. Without operational translation, Al-Attas's ideas may remain merely as powerful philosophical ideals that are difficult to implement institutionally. This is where Al-Faruqi can serve as a critical partner to Al-Attas, reminding us that epistemological renewal also requires institutional strategies.

CONCLUSION

This article demonstrates that the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas remains an important reference in the epistemology of contemporary Islamic education, particularly as 21st-century Islamic education faces the dichotomy of science, the secularization of knowledge, a crisis of *adab*, digitalization, and demands for curriculum reform. Through a Systematic Literature Review approach based on thematic-comparative synthesis, this study finds that the literature from 2020–2026 tends to associate Al-Faruqi with the issues of the Islamization of science, the integration of modern disciplines, *tawhid*, curriculum, and institutional reform. In contrast, Al-Attas is more frequently associated with *ta'dib*, *adab*, the Islamic worldview, the concept of knowledge, the hierarchy of knowledge, and the formation of civilized human beings.

The main findings of this article confirm that both thinkers share common ground in their critique of the secularization of science, their rejection of the dichotomy between religious and modern science, and their positioning of *tawhid* as the epistemological foundation of Islamic education. However, these similarities should not obscure the fundamental differences between them. Al-Faruqi places greater emphasis on the Islamization of science in an operational, programmatic, and institutional sense, oriented toward the reconstruction of modern academic disciplines. Meanwhile, Al-Attas places greater emphasis on *ta'dib* which is metaphysical, conceptual, and philosophical in nature and is oriented toward reforming the worldview, the concept of knowledge, and *adab* before institutional reform is undertaken. Thus, the tension between the two is not a theoretical weakness but rather a productive space for the renewal of Islamic education that combines Al-Faruqi's systemic strength with Al-Attas's depth of *adab*.

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