The Application of UNESCO Educational Principles from an Islamic Perspective *Kaffah* during the Colonial Period (Pre-Independence)

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Abstract. Education plays a very important role in shaping morality, character, and self-esteem. Through Delors (1996), UNESCO outlines four pillars of modern education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together, which support human development. These principles have long been integrated into the Islamic educational tradition through the concept of Kaffah Islam, which encourages faith, knowledge, and charity. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relevance and integration of UNESCO's educational principles from the perspective of Kaffah and to analyze their implementation during the colonial era. Through a qualitative approach and literature review, the research findings show philosophical and practical agreement between the two paradigms. Islamic education during the colonial era not only served as a means of teaching religious knowledge but also as a means of fostering moral character, social solidarity, and a sense of responsibility in the face of a discriminatory education system. Thus, the integration of UNESCO and Kaffah Islam shows that Islamic education had adopted the concept of holistic education before the formation of modern UNESCO. To support civilized independent education, it is important to contextualize these values in order to strengthen national education that balances knowledge, skills, spirituality, and social solidarity.

Keywords: Colonial Period; Comprehensive Islamic Education; Islamic Boarding Schools; Islamic Humanism; UNESCO

Abstrak. Pendidikan memainkan peran yang sangat penting dalam membentuk moralitas, karakter, dan harga diri. Melalui Delors (1996), UNESCO menguraikan empat pilar pendidikan modern: belajar untuk mengetahui, belajar untuk melakukan, belajar untuk menjadi, dan belajar untuk hidup bersama, yang mendukung perkembangan manusia. Prinsip-prinsip ini telah lama diintegrasikan ke dalam tradisi pendidikan Islam melalui konsep Kaffah Islam, yang mendorong iman, pengetahuan, dan kedermawanan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis relevansi dan integrasi prinsip-prinsip pendidikan UNESCO dari perspektif Kaffah serta menganalisis implementasinya selama era kolonial. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dan tinjauan literatur, temuan penelitian menunjukkan kesepakatan filosofis dan praktis antara kedua paradigma. Pendidikan Islam pada era kolonial tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana mengajarkan pengetahuan agama, tetapi juga sebagai sarana menumbuhkan karakter moral, solidaritas sosial, dan rasa tanggung jawab di hadapan sistem pendidikan yang diskriminatif. Dengan demikian, integrasi antara UNESCO dan Islam Kaffah menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Islam telah mengadopsi konsep pendidikan holistik sebelum pembentukan UNESCO modern. Untuk mendukung pendidikan mandiri yang beradab, penting untuk mengkontekstualisasikan nilai-nilai ini guna memperkuat pendidikan nasional yang seimbang antara pengetahuan, keterampilan, spiritualitas, dan solidaritas sosial.

Kata kunci: Humanisme Islam; Masa Kolonial; Pendidikan Islam yang Komprehensif; Sekolah Islam; UNESCO

1. INTRODUCTION

Education has long been considered an important factor in encouraging the learning process and promoting human values. Education is the most important aspect of daily life and contributes to improving the standard of living of society (Sihab & Achmad, 2025). Through education, a nation not only prepares intellectually intelligent future generations, but also builds a sustainable moral, spiritual, and social foundation (Hasibuan, 2024). In various great civilizations, education has always been the main instrument for preserving culture, transferring knowledge, and shaping the collective identity of society (Soumokil, 2025).

Therefore, education has a strategic role in the historical journey of nations, including Indonesia, which experienced a long period of colonialism.Education is a fundamental instrument in shaping civilization, building character, and upholding human values. UNESCO has formulated four basic principles of modern education, namely *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together*, which aim to develop well-rounded individuals: intellectually intelligent, practically skilled, mature in personality, and adaptable in social life (Delors, 1996). These principles form the basis of a global education paradigm that emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, personality, and the ability to live harmoniously in diversity (Juliani & Widodo, 2019).

However, upon closer examination, these values have long been present in Islamic educational traditions through the concept of Islam *Kaffah* . Islamic education emphasizes not only cognitive aspects, but also spiritual, moral, and social aspects, thereby forming an integration between faith, knowledge, and action (Azra, 2019). Since the early 20th century, Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and Islamic educational institutions have internalized this principle of integration in the educational process. Thus, there is a conceptual meeting point between the principles of UNESCO and *Kaffah* Islamic education, even though they were formulated in different contexts and eras (Barizi, 2011).

In the Indonesian context, education during the colonial period (pre-independence) faced very complex challenges. The education system developed by the Dutch colonial government tended to be discriminatory, dualistic, and more geared towards the political interests of the colonizers (Untung, 2013). Meanwhile, Islamic education played an important role as a moral bastion and center of cultural resistance against discriminatory and dualistic colonial education policies. The Dutch education system emphasized colonial political and administrative interests, while *Kaffah* Islamic education guided students toward becoming knowledgeable, moral individuals with a commitment to national struggle (Haris & Humaidi, 2025). However, the contribution of Islamic education has rarely been studied comparatively within the UNESCO framework.

On the other hand, Muslim communities sought to develop a more comprehensive Islamic-based education, as embodied in Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and public educational institutions. The tension between pragmatic colonial education and Islamic education that emphasized morals and spirituality is a historical fact that cannot be ignored (Rahim, 2025)

In a social and cultural context, Islamic education not only serves as a means of teaching religion, but also as a means of fostering collective awareness and a sense of identity among the general public (Sihab, 2024). Pesantren and madrasah play a very important role in instilling values of justice, social responsibility, and a spirit of togetherness in the face of discriminatory colonial pressure. Through community-based education, children are not only taught religious values but also social values, independence, and sensitivity to the education of the general public.

These principles are in line with the principle of "*learning to live together*" established by UNESCO, namely the ability to live harmoniously with one another, overcome differences, and foster human solidarity (Delors, 1996). Therefore, Islamic education during the colonial era had implemented humanistic education even before this principle was adopted globally. This shows that Islam has universal potential universal potential in creating a society centered on human welfare and justice.

The great hope of Islamic education at that time was the emergence of a generation that was not only intellectually intelligent, but also morally and spiritually strong to face colonialism. This was in line with UNESCO's principle of emphasizing the formation of well-rounded individuals, even though at that time the principle had not yet been formally formulated (Barizi, 2011). In practice, *Kaffah* Islamic education has attempted to integrate aspects of knowledge, skills, personality, and social life into a single entity, which ultimately contributed to the birth of the nationalist movement and the struggle for independence (Arizky, 2022).

However, there is a significant gap in terms of recognition and historical documentation. In his 2024 research, Maftuh Ajmain stated that the colonial government strongly emphasized the Dutch colonial public education system. This resulted in narratives and educational practices that were given more space, documented, and promoted compared to traditional Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and public education (Ajmain, 2024).

So far, colonial education narratives have mostly highlighted the Dutch education system, while the contributions of *Kaffah* Islamic education have often been marginalized. In practice, however, Islamic education has internalized principles that are now known as the pillars of UNESCO education (Alamin, 2023). Another gap is evident in the lack of studies that specifically link the UNESCO education framework with the experience of Islamic education during the colonial period.

This study aims to examine the implementation of UNESCO's educational principles from a Muslim perspective during the colonial era. This study can provide more detailed information on how Islamic education has developed in integrating universal educational principles that are applied globally. As a result, this study provides insight by explaining the philosophy of UNESCO education from a historical perspective, enabling the Islamic education community to continue to improve its relevance in the current global educational landscape. Based on the pre-independence framework, this study also explains that Islamic education is not only morally oriented but also serves as a catalyst for the nation's struggle.

The uniqueness of this study lies in its attempt to link UNESCO's educational philosophy with Islamic educational practices throughout the colonial era. Whereas previous research on colonial education has been *descriptive-historical* or focused solely on the theme of struggle, the aim of this study is to provide a comparative analysis that highlights the global relevance of Islamic educational principles. Therefore, this study not only examines the historical aspects of Islamic education but also highlights its contribution to contemporary international education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative with a *descriptive-analytical* approach based on literature studies (Haryono, 2023) (Ajmain, 2024). The research was conducted by examining various relevant literature sources, such as books, scientific journals, academic articles, and historical documents related to the application of UNESCO's educational principles from an Islamic *Kaffah* perspective during the colonial period (pre-independence) (Ardana et al., 2025). This approach was chosen because of the conceptual and historical nature of the research, which is more appropriately explored through *literature review* and written documentation which can be researched and is historical and conceptual in nature, and can be traced through written sources such as history books, scientific journals, scientific articles, and classical literature in the field of Islamic education, particularly on the principles of UNESCO education and *Kaffah* Islam.

Through this method, the research focuses on recording, analyzing, and describing educational phenomena during the colonial period, particularly in examining the relevance of UNESCO's educational principles, which include *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together* with the practice of *Kaffah* Islamic education. Thus, this study not only describes historical aspects but also relates them to educational discourse, both

classical and contemporary, within the framework of integrating Islamic values with global educational developments.

Identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion are some of the stages in the search process. This set of guidelines follows the PRISMA (*Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses*) guidelines. PRISMA is a theoretical framework designed to assist authors in describing systematic reviews and meta-analyses that evaluate the effectiveness of a phenomenon. PRISMA focuses on providing guidance for authors to ensure transparent and comprehensive reporting in this type of research (Sastypratiwi & Nyoto, 2020).

To ensure transparency and integrity of the methodology in this systematic literature review, the authors developed a research design diagram based on the PRISMA framework, which identifies four main stages: identification, research, analysis, and intuition (Putra, 2022). In the identification stage, the authors reviewed the first articles from various online sources using keywords relevant to the research topic in the field of sociology, with a publication time frame between 2020 and 2025. The next step in the screening process was to evaluate the abstracts and titles to eliminate articles that did not meet the topic or context criteria.

At the beginning of the process, the initially selected articles were carefully examined to ensure the quality of the knowledge contained therein, especially by selecting articles that had undergone a peer review process. The conclusions specifically encourage the selection of articles that are highly relevant and adhere to academic standards for more in-depth analysis. This entire process is carried out in compliance with scientific ethical principles, detecting plagiarism, maintaining objectivity, and ensuring transparency in research results.

To maintain academic integrity and scientific ethics, each step of the process is carried out by detecting plagiarism, checking the validity of sources, and ensuring transparency in student work. To illustrate the systemic constraints discussed in this study, the following study diagram is presented in tabular form:

Table 1. Systematic Phases of the Research Process.

Research Phase	Activity Description
Identification	Searching for articles from online databases using relevant keywords and spanning the years 2020-2025.
Screening	Removing duplicate articles and assessing suitability based on title and abstract.
Eligibility	Reviewed the full content of the article, evaluated the methodology, and ensured topical relevance.
Inclusion	Selected relevant and quality final articles for further analysis.

Source: research The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021).

The search period for journals was specifically set for journal publications between 2020 and 2025. The search was conducted based on indices generated from the keywords used. This systematic review was limited to studies published in the form of articles that had undergone peer review and publication. In managing articles obtained from online databases, the author used the Zotero tool. Zotero is a computer and web-based program developed by Elsevier to manage and share research papers, search for research data, and collaborate online. The Zotero application integrates Zotero Desktop, reference management and PDF software, with versions of Zotero for Android and iOS as well as Zotero Web.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Context of Islamic Education during the Colonial Period

During the colonial period, Dutch East Indies education policy could not be separated from the political and economic objectives of the colonial government. In several studies that have been conducted This was done, as Irwan et al. (2024) emphasized, because the colonial government was more focused on developing Western-based secular schools to produce a loyal workforce, so that religious education, especially Islam, was almost neglected in the formal education system (Irwan et al., 2024). Education in the colonial definition was not intended to build the autonomy of the general public, but rather to produce low-level administrative and bureaucratic personnel who could improve the conditions of colonial rule for the benefit of the colonizers rather than the colonized people themselves (Ajmain, 2024).

Historical studies of education place the development of this policy in the context of the influence of Western humanism and modernization that came with ethical politics. The result was a need for schools that focused on the needs of society rather than the welfare of local communities, even though education is the most important aspect of life and improving the standard of living of the community (Sihab & Achmad, 2025).

In this context, Islamic education experienced systemic marginalization, both in terms of policy and access to resources. Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren and madrasah were not accommodated in the official education structure of the colonial government (Subhan, 2012). On the contrary, schools established by the Dutch, such as *the Europeesche Lagere School (ELS), Hollandsch-Inlandsche School (HIS),* and *Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (MULO),* were positioned as "modern" educational institutions that represented Western intellectual and cultural progress (Deliar Noer, 1994). Meanwhile, Islamic

boarding schools were considered a form of traditional education that only taught religious knowledge without providing *"practical benefits"* for colonial interests.

This situation created *an epistemological dualism*: on the one hand, the *rationalistic-empirical* scientific paradigm brought by the colonial education system developed, and on the other hand, the scientific paradigm based on revelation and Islamic tradition persisted (Ajmain, 2024). The struggle between these two systems gave rise to an identity crisis among the educated indigenous population. Many students educated in the colonial system experienced a disconnect from their religious and cultural roots, while santri and ulama continued to uphold the values of *Kaffah* Islam as a form of resistance to Western cultural penetration (Azra, 2019).

In this situation, Islamic boarding schools and madrasas are not only centers for the transmission of religious knowledge, but also arenas for the formation of national consciousness and scientific spirituality. Islamic education teaches the values of honesty, independence, social responsibility, and anti-colonialism through an integrative approach between faith, knowledge, and charity (Sihab & Achmad, 2025). The role of the Kiai and Ulama in guiding the santri makes these institutions the moral bastions of the nation and a forum for cultural struggle against colonial domination.

Therefore, the struggle for Islamic education during the colonial period was not merely a matter of institutional existence, but also a battle of scientific identity between knowledge directed towards power and knowledge directed towards service. The colonial education system instilled utilitarian and secular logic, while the *Kaffah* Islamic education system instilled the values of monotheism, morality, and universal humanity (Shidiq, 2021). At this point, it is clear that colonialism sought to dictate the direction of education, while Islamic education sought to maintain the spiritual and intellectual independence of the nation.

In the given context, Islamic education during the colonial period was not only considered an alternative system but also a cultural pillar that served as a space for cultural resistance that helped develop the moral and intellectual capacity of society (Ajmain, 2024). Kiai and ulama developed transformative educational methods by instilling the values of monotheism, social ethics, and national spirit (Steenbrink, 1994). These values became the foundation for the development of noble and upright character, and showed that Islamic education had a broader social function than simply imparting religious knowledge. Through prayer, halaqah, and religious activities, Islamic boarding schools serve as a means to foster a sense of universal identity and deep respect for Buddha and religion (Sihab, 2024).

Islamic education today emphasizes the value of knowledge as a guide for learners rather than as a means to achieve social status or power (Duryat, 2021). This is a holistic concept of knowledge that emphasizes the intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions of a person's life. Islamic educational institutions strive to maintain a balance between reason and faith, between outward progress and inner purity, as well as approach. According to the views of Islamic scholars, true independence does not only come from political action but also from intellectual and spiritual reflection (Nuraini, 2025).

Therefore, while the colonial education system promoted individualistic and materialistic values, Islamic education fostered a sense of brotherhood, social responsibility, and moral sensitivity towards others (Irwan et al., 2024). After independence, this change in orientation ultimately became a catalyst for the emergence of national education, which was greatly influenced by comprehensive Islam. Therefore, the history of Islamic education during the colonial era cannot be viewed as a period of stagnation, but rather as a phase of collective awareness that emphasized the importance of education as a means of educating the entire community, both through ignorance and oppression.

UNESCO's Principles of Education and Their Relevance to Islam Kaffah

Through Delors (1996), UNESCO outlined four basic principles of education that currently form the basis of curricula and education systems around the world, namely *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together*. The above principles highlight the importance of education that focuses on human development in order to develop critical thinking skills, practical skills, character building, and harmonious living in a multicultural society (Delors, 1996). Conceptually, these principles challenge the holistic education paradigm that limits educational reform to the cognitive or academic domain.

However, when viewed historically and philosophically, the values contained in UNESCO's educational principles have long been present in Islamic educational traditions. Islam *Kaffah* argues that education should aim to unite faith, knowledge, and action as a sign of perfect loyalty to Allah SWT, in addition to teaching students to master knowledge (*'ilm*) (Arizky, 2022). This is emphasized in the Qur'an (QS. Al-Mujadilah: 11), which states that Allah will raise the status of those who believe and have knowledge, indicating that knowledge in Islam is not merely a rational instrument, but a means of moral and spiritual formation for humans (Hanafi & Sofa, 2024). Thus, the UNESCO holistic education concept and *Kaffah* Islamic education are both based on the principle of integration between knowledge, skills, and human values.

More specifically, the principle *of learning to know* in the perspective of *Kaffah* Islam is not only interpreted as an effort to understand empirical phenomena, but also as a way to know Allah as the source of all knowledge (QS. Al-'Alaq: 1–5) (Hanafi & Sofa, 2024). The principle *of learning to do in Kaffah Islam* means the application of knowledge in righteous deeds that are beneficial to social and humanitarian life (QS. Al-Baqarah: 177). Meanwhile, *learning to be* emphasizes the importance of identity and character building, as stated by Al-Ghazali that the true goal of education is the purification of the soul and the strengthening of character (*tahdzib al-nafs)* (Irawan & Rohman, 2025). *Learning to live together* has a perspective in the values *of ukhuwah Islamiyah* and *rahmatan lil 'alamin,* where Islam guides humans to live in peace, respect each other, and work together in diversity (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13) (Soneli et al., 2025).

According to contemporary research conducted by Aslan & Setiawan (2020), UNESCO's educational principles can be constructively integrated into Islamic education, especially by reaffirming the importance of social justice, principles of justice, and human rights (Setiawan & Deni, 2024). This integration shows that Islamic education is not a rigid system, but rather an adaptive paradigm for global development without sacrificing its basic principles. In other words, Islamic education has a philosophical foundation that is compatible with UNESCO's vision, as both place humans at the center of development and the advancement of civilization.

When contextualized in the colonial period (pre-independence), values in line with UNESCO principles were actually implemented by Islamic scholars and educators in the archipelago. They instilled intellectual and moral awareness in the learning process that took place in Islamic boarding schools and prayer rooms, by teaching religious knowledge integrated with character building and social skills (Azra, 2019). This system shaped a generation that was not only spiritually intelligent, but also had a strong social awareness and nationalism, a holistic education model that actually predates the formulation of modern UNESCO education.

Thus, it can be concluded that UNESCO's educational principles have deep relevance to Islam *Kaffah* , both philosophically and practically. Both emphasize education as a means of shaping well-rounded individuals who are knowledgeable, moral, and actively involved in building a just society (Arizky, 2022). The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to bring together two global educational paradigms (UNESCO) and theological paradigms (Islam *Kaffah*) within the historical framework of the colonial period, to show that the roots of true

holistic education were firmly rooted in Islamic tradition long before the emergence of modern Western formulations.

The connection between UNESCO principles and comprehensive Islamic principles is also evident in the overall educational process. In the Islamic tradition, education focuses not only on the development of intellectual skills, but also on the development of the moral, social, and spiritual qualities of individuals (Sihab, 2024). The goal of education is to develop intelligent and kind-hearted individuals and *perfect human beings* who can respect life as a prayer and tribute to Allah and humanity (Sihab & Imawan, 2025). This began with UNESCO, which highlighted education as a means to create a peaceful, prosperous, and resilient world. Therefore, both Islam and UNESCO recognize human dignity and social progress as by-products of the educational process.

The integration between UNESCO and Islamic law emphasizes that education must be able to balance cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions (Dalle & Tobroni, 2025)Islam encourages the study of *the spiritual* and *the worldly*, both of which must work together to ensure that humans are not only highly moral but also fully human. In this context, Islamic education has clearly applied the concept of *"learning to live together"* before UNESCO adopted this principle (Alamin, 2023). Educational practices in Islamic boarding schools, for example, foster social responsibility, independence, and togetherness through a collective lifestyle under the guidance of the Kiai. These principles are not merely theoretical but are embodied in the lives of santri as specific moral and spiritual training.

By understanding this shared paradigm, it can be concluded that Islamic education has great potential to become a model of education that balances intelligence and humanity. Although influenced by modernization and globalization, Islamic teachings provide guidance for education so that it does not lag behind technological advances but rather supports human development. Therefore, integrating UNESCO principles into *Kaffah* Islamic education is not a sign of academic weakness, but rather a strategic approach to building a more humane, inclusive, and peaceful education system that respects humans as moral and intellectual beings (Alamin, 2023).

Integration of UNESCO Principles and Kaffah Islam

Philosophically, the educational principles developed by *UNESCO "learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together"*emphasize that education should aim to create balanced individuals who are capable of intellectual, moral, practical, and social development (Delors, 1996). According to Delors, education is a comprehensive process that develops critical thinking skills, ethical awareness, life skills, and the ability to live together,

not merely the transfer of knowledge (Delors, 1996) The significance of this statement lies in the normative framework it offers for evaluating other educational traditions, such as the *Kaffah* Islam tradition.

When we read Islam *Kaffah* from an educational perspective, we find substantive similarities with Delors' values. Islam *Kaffah* education places knowledge as a mandate that guides individuals to understand reality (*learning to know)*, apply knowledge in good deeds (*learning to do)*, shape mature character and identity (*learning to be)*, and teach social responsibility and communal solidarity (*learning to live together)* (Arizky, 2022). Azyumardi Azra explains that Islamic boarding schools in the archipelago not only teach religious knowledge but also shape the morals and character of students through daily social life (Azra, 2019). Education in Islamic boarding schools is not merely moral theory but a real practice that instills values of morals, responsibility, and togetherness in society share the same concern for human dignity and character building.

However, to understand this integration, it is necessary to look at the historical colonial context: Dutch education policy placed colonial schools at the center of the reproduction of colonial administration and modern culture, which in practice resulted in educational dualism and shifted formal recognition away from Islamic institutions (Irwan et al., 2024). Research by Deliar Noer and Karel A. Steenbrink shows that the colonial system was oriented more towards the formation of an administrative workforce and educated elite associated with Western values, while madrasas and Islamic boarding schools grew outside of state recognition, so that their contributions were often not recorded in official statistics or narratives (Steenbrink, 1994). This condition confirms why Islamic education at that time often operated *"outside"* the official structure, a position that made it vulnerable but also enabled it to play a role as a space for cultural resistance and national character building.

Adapting academic terminology, the integration of UNESCO principles into *Kaffah* Islamic practices during the colonial period can be interpreted as a form of *epistemological resistance* (Arizky, 2022). This means that Islamic education claims authority over values and ways of thinking, not merely rejecting modernity, but offering a version of modernity rooted in transcendent and communal values. Empirical evidence shows that ulama and kyai not only taught religious texts, but also shaped critical thinking and solidarity, which then contributed significantly to the nationalist movement (for example, the role of santri in social mobilization and the struggle for independence) (Syukur & Rohman, 2024). Contemporary historical studies position pesantren as productive spaces that produce agents of social change, not merely places for the conservation of tradition.

The implications for humanity and education policy are clear. *Kaffah* Islamic education explains that the educational process can also develop intellectual capacity and integrity, two aspects that are often overlooked in education models that are always technically and results-oriented (Alamin, 2023). Therefore, reintegrating the principles *of Kaffah* Islam into the development of the post-independence education system is very important and reconstructive. This effort is not only historical but also normative, as it provides guidance for policymakers that education that is based on and adhered to must balance knowledge, skills, spirituality, and social solidarity (Irwan et al., 2024). Delors himself emphasized the importance of this humanistic vision in facing the challenges of the times. The reconciliation between the global foundation (UNESCO) and local tradition (*Kaffah Islam)* offers a strong normative basis for a humane "*independent*" education (Delors, 1996).

The idea that UNESCO principles and *Kaffah* Islam can be integrated as the basis for independent education is supported by three main points. *First*, both share similar ethical and humanitarian values that emphasize respect for human dignity. *Second*, the practice of Islamic boarding school education during the colonial period is concrete evidence of how moral and social values were consistently instilled in the learning process. *Third*, historical studies show that Islamic education played a major role in shaping national consciousness and identity amid colonial pressure. By reviving this heritage, today's education can be developed to be more civilized, relevant, and contextual to the challenges of modern times.

In the context of education, the integration of UNESCO principles and Islamic teachings is not only conceptual but also practical, providing a foundation for the development of a national education system (Juliani & Widodo, 2019). The principles of *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together* are rooted in Islamic teachings about human integrity, which is characterized by harmony between morality, action, and reason. In Islamic education, knowledge is not only a means to achieve material success but also a means to develop spiritual awareness and social sensitivity (Irawan & Rohman, 2025). The relevance of *Kaffah* education is as follows: education does not only focus on cognitive abilities, which results in a reduction in integrity and moral character.

In the context of modern education, this integrative approach can be the basis for a more humanistic and contextual curriculum reform. The spiritual and social dimensions of students are often affected by an education system that continuously emphasizes cognitive and academic skills. As stated in the principle of According to UNESCO principles and Islamic teachings, humans are distinguished not only by their ability to work together, but also by their moral character, teamwork skills, and kindness towards others (Arizky, 2022). Therefore,

independent education must address this issue as a key focus when evaluating curriculum, pedagogy, and student behavior.

UNESCO and *Kaffah* Islam can be integrated through the application of ethical principles in the educational process, community participation in educational activities, and the development of spiritual identity in the context of globalization (Alamin, 2023). This kind of value-based education will produce a generation that is not only intelligent but also emotionally and morally mature. Therefore, independent education is not only about freedom of thought; it is also about responsible freedom, or the ability to use knowledge to understand one another and maintain social harmony. Together, the universal principles of UNESCO and the teachings of Islam form the foundation for the development of an education system that is sensitive, respectful, and focused on human welfare.

Integration of UNESCO Principles and Kaffah Islam

In addition to its role in spreading religious knowledge, Islamic education during the colonial period also served as a strategic tool to strengthen national identity. Pesantren and madrasah played an important role in upholding moral principles, fostering national character, and raising social awareness within the framework of the colonial education system (Azra, 2019; Steenbrink, 1994). Through community-based education, these institutions served as a bridge for a new generation that was not only religiously oriented but also had strong social values and a sense of togetherness.

Colonial education, which emphasized a scholastic orientation, had resulted in an epistemological dichotomy between revelation and rational knowledge. In this situation, scholars and clerics were willing to strengthen the bond between reason and faith through educational activities that emphasized intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions. Social values such as friendship, kinship, and empathy were practiced routinely in pesantren environments, which emphasized the importance of role models and habit formation.

Therefore, the Islamic education system during the colonial era not only focused on normative education but also served as a guide for developing individuals who are independent, have character, and are active in their social lives. According to UNESCO, this guide emphasizes the importance of learning to live side by side, which includes developing peaceful ways of life, encouraging diversity, and fostering human solidarity within the framework of civility.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of the relevance of UNESCO's educational principles to the concept of Kaffah in Islam, it can be concluded that this study successfully addresses the issues raised, particularly the relationship between UNESCO's universal educational principles and the integral principles of Islamic education. The results of the study show that there are significant differences between the two in terms of developing a holistic and humanistic educational paradigm. The principles of learning to know are closely related to the Islamic concept of "*thalabul ilmi,*" which emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge as a path to truth; *learning to do* is in line with the value *of righteous deeds* that teach the application of knowledge in real actions; *learning to be* reflects the formation of a moral and faithful personality; while *learning to live together* is in line with the principle of ukhuwah Islamiyah and universal human values.

In addition, this study notes that Islamic education during the colonial era had adopted the principles of holistic education before UNESCO established the four pillars of education. Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and Islamic organizations were not only places for the dissemination of religious knowledge; they were also places for character development, fostering nationalism, and rejecting social hegemony. This shows that Islamic education has a strong philosophical foundation for creating moral, honest, and noble human beings.

As a result, the findings of this study are in line with the researcher's objective to demonstrate that the basic principles of Islam can serve as a foundation for developing an education system that is in harmony with UNESCO's vision while fostering a flexible and relevant Islamic educational identity amid globalization. All of this also shows that Islamic teachings are not only relevant from a theological point of view, but can also be applied in the context of contemporary education that emphasizes harmony between intellectual, moral, and social aspects.

Further research is expected to develop this study through empirical and comparative approaches, by examining the implementation of *comprehensive Islamic* values and UNESCO principles in formal and non-formal educational institutions. Researchers can also expand the study by looking at how the integration of these two concepts is applied in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum or Islamic educational institutions in various countries. Thus, the results of subsequent research are expected to make a real contribution to strengthening a holistic, contextual Islamic education system that is in line with universal human values.

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