



Muhammad Abduh as a figure in the al-Azhar Education Revolution in Shaping the Face of Islamic Education in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This article contains a description of the thought figure of the Islamic Ulama Muhammad Abduh using a library research approach with a qualitative descriptive research type with data sources coming from books, related articles, scientific journals related to the thoughts of the Islamic Ulama Muhammad Abduh. Muhammad Abduh was a scholar and reformer of Islamic education who came from Egypt. With his moderate views and efforts in combining Islamic values with modern educational thinking. Education is the main foundation in building a better society. Muhammad Abduh's support for education that prioritizes balance between religious and world knowledge. For him, religious education plays an important role in shaping individual character and morals, while general education makes individuals adapt to the social and scientific changes that occur. Abduh believes that education is the key to social change, emphasizing the importance of societal progress through education. He also highlighted the balance between religious knowledge and world knowledge and promoted inclusive education that was accessible to all. The importance of critical thinking and freedom of opinion in education is also recognized by Abduh, with the belief that individuals must think independently. Even though his thinking originates from the 19th century, his ideas and principles are still relevant in the context of modern education. Through Abduh's thinking, the importance of education that is holistic, inclusive, and oriented towards individual development morally, intellectually, and socially is recognized. His thoughts can be a source of inspiration in designing an education system that suits the needs of our time.

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INTRODUCTION

An Islamic scholar and reformist thinker Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) who was born in Egypt (Asifa 2018). He is known to be one of the figures who played an important role in the Islamic reform movement in the 19th century (Asifa 2018). When his thinking covers a wide range of fields, including theology, politics, and education. Through his moderate and inclusive views, Abduh sought to address the challenges faced by Muslims of his time and find solutions that were relevant to his time.

The result of Muhammad Abduh's thinking about education has a significant influence (Pohan 2019). He believes that education is the key to bringing social change and progress for mankind. He emphasized the importance of balanced education between religious science and world science, (Baharun 2016) For him religious education is the provider of a strong moral and spiritual foundation, while general education makes individuals able to adapt to the development of the times and scientific progress.

The promotion of inclusive education with all levels of society must have equal opportunities in obtaining their right to education (Asep and Hori). Abduh rejected the separation between religious and regular education with his opinion that the two should complement each other and coexist (Arwen and Kurniyati 2019). Apart from that, he emphasized the importance of crisis thinking and freedom of opinion in education so that individuals can develop their potential and contribute positively.

In this article, we will review the thoughts of Islamic education figure Muhammad Abduh regarding Education in more depth and detail. Then in this paper, we will evaluate the relevance of his thinking in the context of modern education and how his contribution can be applied in the current context. By digging deeper into Muhammad Abduh's educational thoughts, can gain valuable insight into how the thoughts and views of a figure like Abduh can shape and influence the development of education in the Islamic world and beyond.

METHOD

This research is included in qualitative descriptive research (Muhammad 2021). This research uses an approach that is library research, where data results are obtained from several types of existing literature in the form of books, articles, and scientific journals related to Muhammad Abduh as a Revolutionary Figure of Al-Ashar Education (Yuliani 2018). This literature research is not conducted directly in the field but is carried out by reviewing data or sources of information obtained from texts that are still relevant to the study of the material to be discussed. In this study, the researcher chose descriptive research because it was to elaborate in more depth, with modern and comprehensive data collection techniques. Analysis by data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing in the study.

FINDINGS

Biography of Muhammad Abduh

Muhammad Abduh was born in a village in Lower Egypt in 1849. His father, Abduh Hasan Khaerullah, was originally from Turkey but had lived in Egypt for a long time, while his mother was of Arab descent from Umar bin Khattab (Iddian 2020). His family lived in Mahallah Nasr, and Muhammad Abduh grew up in a religious environment. During his childhood, Muhammad Abduh received basic education from his parents, including learning to read and write and memorize the Qur'an (Auliya 2024). At the age of 14, he was sent to the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Thantha to continue his studies. However, he was dissatisfied with the teaching method that only focused on memorization without deep understanding. His dissatisfaction with traditional education prompted him to seek a more rational and critical approach to understanding the teachings of Islam.

After undergoing a change of thinking under the guidance of his uncle, Sheikh Darwisy Khadhr, who instilled a love of science through Sufism, Muhammad Abduh continued his education at Al-Azhar in 1866 (Subaidi, Mardiyah, and El-Yunusi 2022). However, he found that the education system in Al-Azhar was very stagnant and conservative (Madyunus 2021). Therefore, he sought additional knowledge outside the official curriculum and studied philosophy, geometry, as well as the world sciences and politics from other intellectuals.

In 1877, Muhammad Abduh graduated with an alim degree from Al-Azhar and began teaching there, teaching kalam, logic, ethics, politics, and philosophy. He also taught at Darul Ulum University and Madrasah al-Idrah al-Alsu, where he encouraged critical and rational thinking and avoided fatalism.

Muhammad Abduh believed that the intellectual crisis that hit the Islamic world was caused by the dichotomy of science, which separated religious science from general science (Sari and Saefuddin 2019). To address this problem, he sought to improve the education system in Al-Azhar by proposing reforms that involved expanding the curriculum to include modern natural sciences (Putri and Nurhuda 2023). His efforts were supported by several scholars, including Shaykh an-Nawawi, and he succeeded in carrying out several important reforms in Al-Azhar.

In addition to educational reforms, Muhammad Abduh was also involved in various social and political activities, both in Egypt and in Paris, where he and Jamaluddin al-Afghani founded the al-Urwatul al-Wutsqo organization and published the magazine of the same name. He returned to Egypt and served as a judge of the High Court and as Mufti of State until his death in 1905.

Muhammad Abduh's thoughts on education not only influenced Egypt but also became an inspiration for reformers in the Islamic world (Zaini, Rahimi, and Juairiah

2023). He emphasized that there is no dichotomy in education, encouraging the development of educational institutions, improving the curriculum, and adopting teaching methodologies that are more modern and in accordance with the times. His thinking played a major role in the rise of Muslims in the early 20th century, including the establishment of the Muhammadiyah organization by KH. Ahmad Dahlan in Indonesia who was inspired by Abduh's thoughts.

Muhammad Abduh's Educational Thoughts

Nothing deviates from the vacuum like Muhammad Abduh's reforms (Hadi 2019). Many things motivated him to carry out reforms for the benefit of Muslims in Egypt (S. Bahri and Qomariyah 2023). These factors include: Social Factors Based on the biographical record above, there are two important things that can be used to analyze Muhammad Abduh's social factors. First, the status of Abduh's parents who joined early. Second, his social status as an independent and social institution such as Kuttab Al Qaryah and al Azhar where he participates in social and political activities. Then Sheikh Darwisy and Sayyid Jamaluddin al Afghani also strongly supported the change in Muhammad Abduh's attitude.

Muhammad Abduh sees the absurdity of the current education system. In the 20th century, there were two typologies of education, the first was a religious school with Al-Azhar as the university (Mahmudah 2022). At the same time, there are other types of modern schools, which were established by the Egyptian government and foreign countries (Arikarani 2019). The two types have nothing in common with each other and each is unique in meeting their needs and achieving their educational goals. Religious schools go beyond traditional lines in both curriculum and teaching methods. Western sciences were not taught in religious schools, so religious education at that time was not interested in intellectual development, whereas Islam taught to develop this side of the soul in parallel with the development of other sides of the soul.

On the other hand, the public school education system includes a curriculum that introduces western science in its entirety without adding religious knowledge to the curriculum (Afista, Hawari, and Sumbulah 2021). In addition to these events, educational dualism gave birth to two different intellectual social classes (Amirudin 2019). The first type of school produces scholars and community leaders who do not want to change or maintain traditions. The second type of school gave birth to a young generation of the elite class, which was the result of an education that began with western knowledge acquired in the 19th century (Madyunus 2021). Muhammad Abduh saw the negative aspects of both ways of thinking. He believes that the first idea will not survive anymore, because if it is not paid attention to, it will further alienate Muslims who are pushed out of the flow of modern life and thought. On the other hand, the second idea is precisely the danger that threatens the relationship between religion and morality, which is undermined by the modern thinking on which it is based. From

there, Abduh saw the importance of making improvements in the two agencies to close the big gap.

Development of Educational Institutions

It was explained earlier that Abduh's attention to education is very high and has even become the main concern in the development of Egyptian education in general and Al Azhar University in particular (Rahman and Setia 2021). Muhammad Abduh established a state high school to produce experts in various fields (Iddian 2020). Namely, management, military, health, industry etc. Muhammad Abduh tried to include the study of Islamic religion, history and culture. In addition, schools and madrassas are also developed under the guidance of al Azhar.

Abduh disagrees that Muslims accept Western knowledge without filtering or criticizing it (Damanhuri and Ulum 2023). According to him, how can Islamic education be effective if the seeds sown are foreign (Mulyani 2023). Abduh championed a functional education system that was not imported and included universal education for all children, boys and girls. Everyone should have basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic. Everyone should receive a religious education that ignores sectarian differences

Curriculum

The purpose of education is to train the mind and soul and encourage them to the limit of their ability to achieve happiness in life here and there (Yaya, M, and Faharuddin 2021). So that true education does not only consist of intellectual education, but synergistically realizes spiritual education to give birth to a generation that is able to think, have noble character and have a holy spirit. He incorporated these educational goals into the curriculum from elementary to advanced levels. The curriculum are Al-Azhar Curriculum, elementary school level, and top level.

First, Al-Azhar Curriculum. The curriculum of Al-Azhar Higher Education was adjusted to the needs of the community at that time. In this regard, he incorporated philosophy, logic and modern science into the al-Azhar curriculum. This effort is made so that the out-put can become modern scholars.

Second, Elementary School Level. According to him, the foundation for the formation of a religious soul must start from childhood. Therefore, religious subjects must be made the core of all subjects. This position refers to the understanding that religious teachings (Islam) are the basis for the formation of the soul and personality of Muslims. Thanks to the spirit of Muslim personality, the Egyptian people have a spirit of togetherness and nationalism to develop a better outlook on life and at the same time achieve success.

Third, Top Level. He established a public high school to produce experts in various fields of government, military, health, industry, etc. Through the institution,

Abduh felt the need to include materials, especially religious education, Islamic history, and Islamic culture. Abduh teaches logic, philosophy and Tawheed in madrassas under the auspices of Al-Azhar, while Al Azhar considers logic and philosophy haram. At his home, Abduh also taught *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* Ibn Maskawayh and the French history of European civilization translated into *Arabic al-Tuḥfah al Adabiyyah fī Tārīkh Tamaddun al-Mamālik al-Awrūbiyyah*.

In the field of teaching methods, he also brought a new way in the world of education at that time. He sharply criticized the application of the memorization learning method that was generally used in schools at that time, especially in religious schools (Umam 2020). He did not explain in his writing what methods should be applied, but from what he practiced while teaching at Al-Azhar, It seems that he uses the discussion method to provide a deep understanding to his students (Shalahuddin and Mu'adz 2020). He emphasized the importance of understanding in every lesson he taught. He reminded teachers not to teach their own students, as this only undermines reason, as he experienced when he studied at the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Tanta.

Muhammad Abduh has a modern style of thought, politics, nationality, social society, theology and philosophy. Muhammad Abduh's educational thinking is also based on rational theological thought, philosophy and history (Zuhri et al. 2023). Muhamad Abduh's thoughts on education are considered the beginning of the rise of Muslims in the early 20th century (Wahyudi and Zaenab 2023). Abduh's thoughts, which were disseminated through his writings in al-Manar and al-Urwat al-Wutsqa magazines, became a reference for reformers in the Islamic world (Fitriana and Syahidin 2021). So that in various Islamic countries the idea of establishing schools using the curriculum as pioneered by Abduh emerged. Including the establishment of a muhamadiyah organization by KH. Ahmad Dahlan was influenced by Abduh's thoughts in the magazine al Manar.

According to Abduh, among the factors that brought about the decline of the Islamic world was due to the dichotomous view embraced by Muslims, namely the dichotomy or contradiction between religious science and general science (M. A. Bahri 2020). To overcome such a dichotomy problem, Muhammad Abduh proposed that it be carried out across disciplines between the madrasah curriculum and schools, so that the gap between scholars and modern scientists will disappear. This idea was applied in al Azhar by rearranging the educational structure in al Azha.

Teaching Methodology

According to Abduh, teaching methods that have so far only relied on memorization need to be equipped with rational and insight methods (Jamaluddin, Laili, and Rosyid 2019). Thus, in addition to memorizing a subject material, students can also understand it critically, objectively and comprehensively. Abduh proposed reviving the munadzarah (discussion) method and scientific habits and making Arabic

the language of science. Two aspects of educational methodology studied by Muhammad Abduh are about micro-scale methodology (teaching method) and macro-scale (methodology as a system).

Muhammad Abduh argued that learning in Thanta and al-Azhar where the way of teaching by training children to read and memorize certain books without understanding the content of the content is an ineffective learning method (Hidayatullah 2023). Therefore, Muhammad Abduh wants to apply a new method with an understanding of concepts, question and answer methods, and also training or experience as well as exemplary methods and story methods.

The teaching method is also by explaining the meaning of the book text being read. Until students are able to understand the purpose of what is taught, this method is considered not to make students easily bored in learning. The use of the question and answer method between teachers and students regarding lessons that are not yet understood by students. The method of experience, example and story is very necessary because according to him, students need to be trained to worship, and even teachers are needed to demonstrate it in front of the class as an example of the implementation of prayer. So this method introduced by Muhammad Abduh in the learning process is a way to develop the thinking skills of students, this is useful to support the achievement of the desired educational goals.

DISCUSSION

Talking about the analysis and results of thinking in education, according to Muhammad Abduh with several aspects that he revealed significantly. First, there is a balance between religious science and world science. Muhammad Abduh's main contribution is his emphasis on the importance of balance between religious education and general education. His thinking reflects his understanding of the need for a strong understanding of religion and good morality, but still recognizes the need for knowledge and skills relevant to his social and scientific development.

Second, the influence of an inclusive approach in education, Abduh emphasized that education must be inclusive and available to all elements of society regardless of their social status or gender. This inclusive approach can reflect his determination to expand access to education for individuals, so as to provide equal opportunities for personal development and social progress.

Third, freedom of income and critical thinking, one of the most important aspects of thinking echoed by Muhammad Abduh is the importance of critical control and freedom of opinion in education. Muhammad Abduh believes that individuals must be encouraged to be able to think independently, be able to analyze information, and be able to develop a deeper understanding. This can help individuals to develop deep

understanding, it can help individuals to develop critical thinking skills and the ability to form their own views.

Fourth, the role of educators where Muhammad Abduh pays special attention to the role of educators in education. For him, educators must be facilitators in learning that will inspire so that they can encourage students' personal development. Education must be able to create an inclusive learning environment, encourage critical thinking, and be able to provide freedom of opinion to students.

Fifth, the social impact of the educational approach, the educational approach proposed by Abduh has a significant social impact, by through education that is inclusive, balanced, and oriented to critical thinking, each individual can become a better member of society, who is able to contribute positively and adapt to social changes that occur.

The results of this analysis in Muhammad Abduh's educational thought can find out its contribution in forming a holistic, inclusive, and critical thinking approach to education. Muhammad Abduh's thoughts remain relevant in the context of modern education, and can be a source of inspiration in designing an education system that encourages personal development and balanced social progress.

Muhammad Abduh was a key figure in the Islamic education revolution, especially through the reform of al-Azhar which prioritized the modernization of curriculum and teaching methods. His influence reached as far as Indonesia, where Islamic education reform there was inspired by his thoughts. The reforms initiated by Abduh have helped shape the face of Islamic education to be more progressive and inclusive, in accordance with the challenges of modern times.

CONCLUSION

So it can be concluded in this paper as a result of Muhammad Abduh's thoughts on education, some important points that can be concluded are Education as the key to social change where Abduh believes that education has an important role in bringing social change and progress to society, There is a balance between religious and world sciences where Abduh emphasizes the importance of education that includes religious and world sciences in a balanced manner, inclusive education and access for all where Abduh promotes inclusive education, where all levels of society must have equal opportunities to get education. Having critical thinking and freedom of opinion where Abduh acknowledged the importance of critical thinking and freedom of opinion in education where he believed that individuals should be encouraged to think independently, there is relevance in the context of modern education even though Abduh's thinking was developed in the 19th century, many of his ideas and principles remain relevant in the context of modern education. Through Muhammad Abduh's educational thought, we can recognize the importance of education that is holistic,

inclusive, and oriented towards the development of individuals who are morally, intellectually, and socially balanced. His thoughts can be a source of inspiration and guidance in designing an education system that meets the needs and challenges of our time.

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