



The “Comprehensive Ijtihad” Method in the Production of Islamic Educational Knowledge (Rationale, Nature, and Process)

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Abstract

One of the most fundamental branches of the humanities that plays a foundational role in the comprehensive development of societies is the science of education. Islam, as a school of thought concerned with human formation, accords special significance to education and possesses its own distinctive theories and models in this regard. Extracting these theories from Islamic sources requires the use of a valid and comprehensive methodological framework.

This study, employing a descriptive–analytical approach, describes the conventional methods of producing Islamic educational knowledge and introduces the “Comprehensive Ijtihad” method. It further analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the existing methods, critiques their limitations, and examines the evidences, advantages, processes, and outcomes of the Comprehensive Ijtihad approach.

Findings indicate that the prevalent methods—such as the purificatory and joining approach (which removes elements conflicting with religion from Western sciences without altering their structural foundations), the normative jurisprudential approach (which focuses solely on legal obligations and prohibitions), and the rational–philosophical approach (Producing knowledge solely based on reason without reference to religious texts)— Each lacks the required comprehensiveness for some reason. In contrast, the Comprehensive Ijtihad method, by integrating both descriptive (explaining the nature and rationale of educational phenomena) and normative (deriving binding rulings) approaches and by utilizing all authentic Islamic sources—the Qur’an, the Sunnah, and reason—possesses the capacity to systematically derive Islamic educational knowledge. For example, in the case of

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