

Islamic Educational Thought in Indonesia: Study of Azyumardi Azra's Thought

JAFFARY AWANG
M. ADIB FUADI NURIZ

ABSTRACT

Globalisation transformed Islamic education. In Indonesia, Islamic education contributed remarkably towards national growth. Nevertheless, it is not simple to accomplish the Islamic education goal due to its problem with the concept and method. This article examined the current Islamic educational thought, according to Azyumardi Azra. It studied the relevant literature and engaged it based on critical content analysis. The research discovered that Azyumardi Azra believed Muslims could meet the needs of modernity only by integrating the classical model of Islamic education and modern Western education. It is imperative to be administered so that Islamic education is more comprehensive, liberal, and democratic. His critics argued that modernisation of Islamic education established by Azyumardi Azra liberalised Islamic thought towards religious pluralism in Islamic education in Indonesia.

Keywords: modernization; Islamic education; liberal; democratic; Azyumardi Azra

ABSTRAK

Globalisasi memberi kesan terhadap pendidikan Islam. Di Indonesia, pendidikan Islam menyumbang secara signifikan terhadap pembangunan negara. Walau bagaimanapun untuk mencapai matlamat pendidikan Islam bukanlah satu perkara yang mudah justeru masalah berkaitan konsep dan metod pendidikan Islam. Artikel ini meneliti pemikiran semasa Azyumardi Azra berkaitan dengan pendidikan Islam. Ini berdasarkan ulasan letaratur yang sesuai dan dilakukan berdasarkan analisis kandungan secara kritis. Penulisan ini mendapati Azyumardi Azra percaya umat Islam dapat memenuhi tuntutan pemodenan hanya dengan mengintegrasikan model pendidikan Islam klasik dan pendidikan Barat moden maka pendidikan Islam akan lebih inklusif, liberal dan demokratik. Pengkritik beliau berhujah bahawa pemodenan pendidikan Islam yang digagaskan oleh Azyumardi Azra adalah ke arah meliberalkan pemikiran Islam ke arah pluralism agama dalam pendidikan Islam di Indonesia.

Katakunci: pemodenan; Pendidikan Islam; liberal; demokratik; Azyumardi Azra

INTRODUCTION

The globalised and contemporary world impact the social and cultural identity of the Muslim community. Muslims cannot shake the impressions of modernity and globalisation and must respond by advancing human resources and building an Islamic civilisation. Azyumardi Azra in his book entitled "*Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru*" (Islamic Education: Tradition and Modernisation to the New Millennium) stated that Muslims must survive and thrive amid the increasingly competitive atmosphere. Therefore, the revival of Islam must be done in line with the evolution of the times (Azyumardi Azra 2002: 43).

Fazlur Rahman (1997: 84) also argued that any form of Islamic revivalism with the focus on Islamic modernisation must begin from education. Islamic education will become one of the central themes in

the future agenda of the reformation because it is the foundation of spirit for Islamic thought. It grows and develops dynamically and progressively. Hence, the advancement of Muslims will be improbable without support from the progress of Islamic education. Nevertheless, it should be noted too that Islamic knowledge currently faces other dilemmas. It is confined to past ideas of Islamic thought and civilisation, while concurrently, it is forced to accept contemporary Western civilisation. It often creates the dualism of education between the West and Islam.

In this regard, according to Azyumardi, Islamic education must be developed through a dual approach strategy to integrate short-term situational approaches with long-term conceptual approaches. Since Islamic education is an endeavour to prepare Muslims to handle and respond to the problems of human life and evolution (Maimun Aqsha Lubis,

2015:65), the relationship between Islamic education and human life must be a partial and not an incidental relation (Mulyasa, 2002: 4). Azyumardi also stated that defending the “traditional” Islamic institutional thought will only extend the incapacity of Muslims to handle the current challenges. He argued that the Islamic education system must be able to provide the scientific discipline that can help its graduates to live fully, creatively and dynamically in the society and enable them to respond the developments of the time (Dede Rosyada 2004: 1).

The question is, what is the essence of Islamic educational thought of Azyumardi, and how is it implemented in Islamic education in Indonesia? In the recent Indonesian Islamic education thought, Azyumardi’s opinion regarding discussing the concept of liberal education, the constructing of the western concept of Islamic education, and the concept of integration between science and religion is inaccurate. It must be reviewed critically for criticising the different concepts of Islamic education between Azyumardi and other Indonesian scholars.

This research concentrated on the model of the reformation of Islamic education, according to Azyumardi. His thinking on Islamic education is accepted widely as a reference and applied in the Indonesian education system. Furthermore, his views on liberalism and religious pluralism are also deemed controversial.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Study on Islamic educational thought in Indonesia is primarily associated with several Muslim leaders and scholars such as Azyumardi Azra. Research on Azyumardi’s thoughts includes Rosmani Ahmad’s with the title “*Mengenal Azyumardi Azra Dalam Pemikiran Islam*” (Identifying Azyumardi Azra in Islamic Thoughts) in the Journal Analytical Islamica Volume 2 No 2 the year 2013 published in UIN North Sumatera Indonesia. In this research, the investigators discovered that his thinking in Islamic studies holds similarities with the Islamic mindset of Nurcholish Madjid in the context of Indonesian Islamic thought. Muhammad Heriyudanta’s writing with the title “*Modernisasi Pendidikan Pesantren Perspektif Azyumardi Azra*” (Modernisation of Education of *Pesantren* Perspective Azyumardi Azra) in the Journal Mudarrisa: Journal of Islamic Education Volume 8 No. 1 the year 2016. This research resulted in the Azyumardi view of the

education of *the pesantren* that is inseparable with national education. Pesantren is recognised as a social change agent. Azyumardi viewed that *Pondok pesantren* must remain playing its part actively and dynamically, and shedding ‘bright light’, giving a chance, and contributing significantly to improve the Muslim societies. However, in line with the developments of the epoch of globalisation, the pesantren now encounters predicaments. Consequently, pesantren are now regarded by many as second-class education. Therefore, in order for the pesantren to continue its role that is being the producer that produces knowledgeable, technologically advanced, skilled, and believing and virtuous human beings, it must be thoughtfully modernised following the framework of modernity.

Furthermore, according to Muhammad Irsyad’s research in *Tadbir: Journal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* Volume 4 No. 2 of 2016 entitled “*Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia Perspektif Azyumardi Azra*” (Islamic Education Reformation in Indonesia Perspective Azyumardi Azra) Azyumardi Azra’s interest in analysing Islamic education in Indonesia focused on the ability to adapt, safeguard the existence and nurture of identity amid the influence of modernisation of education experienced by Indonesia. Azyumardi analysed and rendered a solution that Islamic education institutions in Indonesia, such as to clarify the direction of Islamic education, pay more attention to the applied sciences, and better management.

Hastuti Baharuddin’s research, “*Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam Azyumardi Azra: Melacak Latar Belakang Argumentasinya*” (Azyumardi Azra on Islamic Education Reformation: Tracking the Background of the Argument) emphasised that the reformation of Islamic education must strive to abandon the old mindset that is conflicting with future-orientation and pursue the progress that resonates the advancement of times. The actual direction of Islamic education is to create a balance between the world and the hereafter, the balance between the knowledge of revelation and the knowledge of the human effort, and the balance between science and technology resulting in spiritual and material well-being.

From the preceding analysis, researchers viewed that the challenge of Islamic education in the global and the modern era is evident and necessitates research in order to build and develop Islamic education in line with current world evolution.

BIOGRAPHY OF AZYUMARDI AZRA

Prof. Dr Azyumardi Azra was born in Lubuk Alung, West Sumatera on March 4, 1955. After graduating from elementary school to secondary level in West Sumatera, he continued his education at the Faculty of Education IAIN State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta and graduated in 1982. He advanced his Master of Philosophy in the Department of History in 1990 and Doctor of Philosophy in 1992 at Colombia University. His thesis titled "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism in Indonesia: Network of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian" was published in Canberra (Allen Unwin and AAAS), Honolulu (Hawaii University Press), and Leiden, Netherlands (KITLV Press).

His experience in the academic world began since he became an active writer in *Panji Masyarakat* magazine (1979-1985). He was a lecturer at Faculty of Adab and Faculty of Islamic Education IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta (1992-present), Professor of History at the Faculty of Adab IAIN Jakarta, and Deputy Rector I IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta (1998), and later became Rector of UIN Jakarta until 2006. In 2006, he was also the Director of Postgraduate School of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta. Azyumardi also obtained a Professor Fellowship from the University of Melbourne, Australia (2004-2009), a member of the Board of Trustees of International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan (2004-2009), Visiting Fellow at Oxford Center for Islamic Studies, Oxford University (1994-1995), Guest Lecturer at University of Philippines and University Malaya Malaysia (1997), and became an External Examiner at PhD Program University Malaya (1998-present).

Azyumardi Azra was active as the Chairman of the Senate of the Faculty of Tarbiyah IAIN Jakarta (1979-1982), Chairman of the Islamic Students Association (HMI) of Ciputat Branch (1981-1982), Member of the Selection Committee of Toyota Foundation & The Japan Foundation (1998-present), Indonesian Association for Social Sciences Development (HIPIS), Member of the International Association of Historians (1998-1999), Steering Committee SEASREP (Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program) of Asia (IAHA) (1998-present), Board Member of the Journal *Ulumul Quran Journal*, Board Member of the Islamic Editorial, Editorial board of *Journal Studia Islamika*, Deputy Director of Islamic Studies and Community Research Center (PPIM) IAIN Jakarta,

Member of Journalist of *Jurnal Quranic Studies*, SOAS / University of London and *Journal of Ushuludin University Malaya*, Kuala Lumpur.

The academic works that were published included "Jaringan Ulama" (1994), "Pergolakan Politik Islam" (1996), "Islam Reformis" (1999), "Konteks Berteologi di Indonesia" (1999), "Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan Modernisasi Menghadapi Millenium Baru" (1999), "Islam Substantif" (2000), "Historiography Islam Kontemporer" (1999), "Paradigma Baru Pendidikan Nasional" (2002), "Reposisi Hubungan Agama dan Negara" (2002), "Menggapai Solidaritas" (2002), "New Conflict between Civilizations, Nusantara Islam- Global and Local Networks and Surau; Traditional Islamic Education in Transition and Modernization "Esei-Esei Pendidikan Islam, dan Cendekiawan Muslim" (1999), "Renaissance Islam di Asia Tenggara" (1999), "Islam Substantif" (2000), "Historiografi Islam Kontemporer" (2002), "Paradigma Baru Pendidikan Nasional" (2002), "Reposisi Hubungan Agama dan Negara" (2002), "Menggapai Solidaritas" (2002), "Konflik Baru Antar Peradaban, Islam Nusantara- Jaringan Global dan Lokal, dan Surau; Pendidikan Islam Tradisional Dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi" (2003), "Shari'a and Politics" (2004).

Azyumardi Azra is a Muslim scientist with a field of history as his domain of expertise. He also specialises in religious studies such as philosophy, theology, modernist schools, politics, and education. Moreover, he is regarded as a professional, intellectual and is committed to the reform of Islamic civilisation, especially in Southeast Asia.

THE DIRECTION AND GOAL OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Azyumardi mentioned that the goal of Islamic education is divided into general purpose and special purpose. The purpose of Islamic education is inseparable from the primary objective of human life in Islam, which is to nurture those who believe in Allah, who is cautious and capable to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. The meaning of human life in Islam can be regarded as the purpose of Islamic education (Azyumardi Azra 2012: 8). Azyumardi also stated that Islamic education is not just the ideals of Islamic teachings in education alone but must be formulated in the expectations to be achieved in the stages of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motoric domination (Azyumardi Azra 2012: 9). Thus, it can be concluded that the quintessential

purpose of education is the realisation of the student who understands the Islamic sciences and practices them in daily life. In other words, the purpose of education in Islamic perspective is how to produce *insan kamil* (the ideal or perfect Moslem) with a comprehensive understanding about the origin of man and the actual direction of human life.

THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

The curriculum is a media of learning in educational institutions. Nevertheless, Azyumardi explained the concept of the curriculum as a medium of achieving educational goals and as a guideline in the teaching of all types and levels of education (Azyumardi Azra 2012: 16-19). Azyumardi also described that the curriculum is the achievement of more detailed purposes with the materials, methods and evaluation systems through the stages of mastering the student to various aspects; cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric (Siti Napsiyah Ariefuzzaman 2007: 46). This terminology of 'curriculum' according to Abudin Nata is corresponding with Crow and Crow's that mentioned curriculum is educational planning whose all of the subjects are systematically structured as a condition for completing a particular educational program (M. Arifin 1991: 28). If applied to the curriculum of Islamic education, the Islamic education curriculum works as an outlining model used by educators to lead the students towards the ultimate goal/purpose of Islamic education, which refers to the conceptualisation or perfect human development (Azmel Tayeb 2017: 14).

The educational plan for Muslim students either in majority Muslim countries or Muslim minorities demands a significant reformation in terms of the curriculum, particularly in structure and subject learning. Therefore, Islamic education planning must be based on two primary and constant values, namely; the fundamental unity of the Islamic society without the limited space and time, and the unity of the international community based on shared technology and culture of humanitarian values (Mujamil Qomar 2008: 17). In other words, any subject of learning delivered to the student must deal with two vital challenges: first, the mastery of science and technology; secondly, cultivation of an understanding of religious teaching experience.

Therefore, the discussion of the Islamic education curriculum is directed towards the purpose of the development of the students; the goal of the

social environment; and the goal of the development of science and technology (Siti Napsiyah 2007: 69). In this case, the development of the curriculum must provide direction and guidance to find out the needs of students based on their talents, interests, and abilities. Additionally, curriculum goals also focus on contributing to social development, so that its output answers the dilemma of society. Likewise, Islamic studies must be endowed with science which includes several subjects from various disciplines, including technology.

Azyumardi also emphasised that Islamic education curriculum is final and unequivocal. Besides having to focus on the development of religious values of the students, it must also give particular emphasis to the mastery of knowledge and technology. Only in this way, Islamic education can prepare and develop human resources who master science and technology and practises religion as well. Only in with this approach and systematically planning may produce an advanced country (Mohammad Yamin 2009: 140).

Azyumardi also hoped that now everyone must have more concern and seriousness in handling the Islamic education system, by striving to achieve Islamic educational purposes and goals based on the Islamic education curriculum, which ideally serves to build and prepare educated people, technology, skilled, and at the same time have a belief in God and doing good deeds.

THE DEMOCRATISATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

The Indonesian government ruled by a democratic system. Democracy implies that the parliament with the power in the hands of the people. This democracy also applies to the field of education. The democratisation of education means perception or thought that emphasises the equal rights, obligation and treatment by educators towards the student or community in the education process (Ramayulis 2011: 334).

According to Azyumardi (2012: 31), democratisation is the process of democracy, while the democratisation of education itself is a process of democracy in education. The aim of the democratisation of Islamic education is building a democratic, clean, and moral society adhering to the value of civilisation. The characteristics of democratisation of Islamic education, according to him, are as follows:

1. The dynamic curriculum provides space for student creativity by having the spirit of social change.
2. The changing of a paradigm in Islamic education from authoritarian to democratic, from exclusive to inclusive, and from doctrinaire to participation.
3. Building relationships and cooperations between Islamic educational institutions and the community (Siti Napsiyah Ariefuzzaman 2007: 69).

The concept of democratisation in Islamic education of Azyumardi Azra contains the essence of liberalism in Islamic education and opens opportunities for values of other religious teachings into the Islamic education system. If the curriculum of Islamic education is open to diverse directions and purposes for any reason of creating the inclusive and creativity of educational institutions, then what will be happening is the difference that leads to the dispute between the concepts. It will raise the chaos in the world of Islamic education. The researcher argued that the direction, concepts, models, curriculum, methods and approaches that apply to Islamic education should own similarity and uniformity so that they can meet mutual expectations in line with their ultimate goals.

When it comes to the reality of the situation of Indonesia now, the diversity of Islamic institutions in Indonesia will be influenced by a plurality education or eventually embrace from the exclusive system into pluralism model. For example, Paramadina Islamic School tends to be inclusive of other religions.

MODERNISATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

The notion of modernising Islamic education refers to the concern for Muslims to develop and modernise. According to Azyumardi, Islamic education must be reformed following the framework of modernisation (Azyumardi Azra 2002: 31). Azyumardi emphasised the call for modernisation in the Muslim societies live, particularly concerning thought which is the foundation for all activities and ideas. The framework of thinking must evolve and adapt to the development of the times. An open mind is required with broad insights and adjusts to being capable of selecting lifestyle trends and developments. With its wide-ranging thinking and insight, it can convey the development and advancement of appropriate technologies as a part of service to society.

The relationship between modernisation and education in Azyumardi's view, on the one hand, is seen as a modernised variable which is a prerequisite and an absolute condition for society to run programs and achieve modernisation goals. Nevertheless, education is regularly regarded as the object of modernisation. In this regard, some countries running modernisation programs are generally seen fall behind in many aspects. Therefore, they cannot be expected to meet and support the modernisation program. Consequently, education must be updated and revived to meet the expectations (Azyumardi Azra 2012: 31-32).

In his many points of view of the inputs of the Islamic education world, which should be affected by modernisation, Azyumardi gave an overview:

1. The input of the community into the education system.
 - a. Ideology: Certain ideological orientations expressed in the national norms require the educational system to expand and reinforce the student's national vision.
 - b. Political mobilisation: The need for modernisation and development demands the education system to educate, prepare and produce modern and innovative leadership that can nurture and even increase the momentum of coaching.
 - c. Economic mobilisation: The need for a workforce to demand the education system to prepare students into superior human resources and able to fill the various jobs created in the development process. In this case, Islamic education institutions are not merely the mediums and transmitters of Islamic sciences, but at the same time must also implement skills and abilities.
 - d. Social mobilisation: The increased expectations for social mobility in modernisation demanded education to provide access and venue in that purpose. Thus, Islamic education is not solely to fulfil the obligation to pursue knowledge but must provide capital so that the possibility of access to social enhancement.
 - e. Cultural mobilisation: The modernisation that creates cultural changes according to the education system to be able to maintain balance and develop a cultural heritage conducive to development.

2. Output for the community

- a. Changing of value system by expanding the student's cognitive map, education instils values that differ traditional value systems.
- b. Political output: Modern and innovative leadership that is directly generated by the education system can be measured by the development of quantities and the strengths of civilian-military bureaucracy, intellectuals and other political administration cadres, recruited from educational institutions, especially at medium and high levels.
- c. Economic output can be measured from the level of human resource availability or trained and ready to use.
- d. Social output can be seen from the level of social integration and mobility of the student into society as a whole.
- e. Cultural output reflected on scientific behaviour, rational and innovative cultural development efforts, increased religious integrative role and education, language development (Azyumardi Azra, 2002: 35-36).

Within the framework of modernity, Islamic education is expected to answer the needs of the modern world. The existence of an Islamic educational institution that is centred on modernity forms professional human resources and can provide access to social mobility.

THE CONCEPT OF THE REFORMATION IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Since Islamic education holds a quintessential role in enhancing human resources and its ideal function is to improve the quality of human resources, then the Islamic education system must always be oriented towards fulfilling the needs and challenges of society. In this regard, Azyumardi (2012: 67) mentioned that today's Islamic education is still inefficient in responding to the changes and tendencies of present and future societies. The Islamic education system is still more inclined to be oriented towards the past than future-oriented.

On that foundation, there is a necessity for reform and development efforts in the Islamic education system. The word 'reformation' in the Indonesian Dictionary means the process, the way, the act of renewing. According to Muljono

Damopolii (2011: 34), the reformation embraces the principle of dynamics that are always present in the movements of human life that demand continuous change. In Azyumardi's view, the efforts to rearrange established and outdated social, political, educational and scientific structures, including the structure of Islamic education, are a form of reform in Islamic thought and institutionalism (Azyumardi Azra 1999).

Azyumardi described that in Islamic education must develop a dual approach strategy to integrate short-term situational approaches with long-term conceptual approaches. Since Islamic education is an effort to prepare Muslims to address and respond to the demands of human life and human advancement, therefore, the relationship of Islamic education with problems and the challenges of life must be a principle of relationship, not as a partial one. Accordingly, it is necessary to develop inventive approaches to educational efforts based on the collective good of humanity (Azyumardi Azra 1998: 23).

Ramayulis (2011: 346) also argued that there is a demand for the ability and innovative capabilities of all Islamic education personnel in capturing future trends based on the prevailing in society. Hence, Islamic education requires reformation, which is adapted to the dynamics of society and to face the demands and expectations of modern society (Ramayulis, 2011: 350).

There are five programs for an educational institution in facing the challenges of the global and modern era:

1. Islamic educational institutions must enhance their competitiveness so that they are eligible to compete internationally.
2. Islamic education institutions must provide a variety of study programmes.
3. Islamic education institutions must strengthen their future-oriented and critical functions.
4. Islamic educational institutions must be accountable.
5. Islamic education institutions must carry out continuous and ongoing evaluations to ensure quality assurance (Ramayulis 2011: 352).

Azyumardi argued that attempts to reform and develop the Islamic education system were not comprehensive since most Islamic education systems were not managed professionally. Most Islamic education institutions are still governed by a traditional system based on the spirit of sincerity.

According to him, without sacrificing the spirit of sincerity and devotion, the Islamic education systems and institutions must be conducted professionally, not just in terms of salary, honour, benefits or administrative and financial management. There is an indispensable demand for professionalism in the plan, preparation of teachers, curriculum, and education process (Azyumardi Azra 2002: 60).

The Azyumardi's view is supported by Harun Nasution, who argued that reformation is not done by leaving the religion. Reformation is transforming a tradition that is contrary to the development of the times. Islam does not impede the reformation as long as it does not violate the provisions of revelation (Harun Nasution 1992: 209). Thus, the reformation of Islamic education must be done not only to survive during increasing global competition but also to improve society. The reformation of Islamic education began from the Islamic education systems and institutions based on the principles of modernity. This view to modernising Islamic education is part of the concept of a "wider mandate" by Azyumardi Azra to change the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) to State Islamic University (UIN).

THE CONCEPT OF "WIDER MANDATE" AND THE CONTEMPORARY THE RELEVANCE OF AZUMARDI AZRA THOUGHT

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that at the core of Azyumardi's thought on Islamic education is how to take it into the 21st century by reforming Islamic education and restructuring the institution and changing the perspective between the science and technology (Siti Napsiyah Ariefuzzaman 2007: 45).

Azyumardi's view on the concept of Islamic education intended to develop a complete personality to meet the growing needs of the Muslim community. It is a manifestation of belief in Allah (Taqwa). Azyumardi viewed students as God's creatures who have the potential of nature, religion, and divinity for outer and inner life (M. Arifin 1991: 28). The Islamic educational institution should be reformed in line with the framework of modernity. The act of defending traditional Islamic institutional thought will only prolong the incapacity of the Muslims in facing the modern world. Azyumardi's idealism influenced this position in order to remove the dichotomy of sciences.

Azyumardi's thought on the emergence of modernisation of pesantren and madrasah is seen as

an attempt to consolidate Islamic education into the mainstream of the National Education system. For Napsiyah (2007: 69), this idea of modernisation of Islamic education is not only discourse but also must be accurate and followed. Azyumardi's idea must be built together because, with this approach, an idea can be benefited. Hence, when Azyumardi became a Rector of IAIN Jakarta, he emphasised IAIN graduates to be more rational, modern, democratic and tolerant, not to separate religious knowledge with science, not to understand religion literally, and not to be fanatic to one madzhab.

The transformation from IAIN to UIN in Azyumardi's view is the right step towards achieving that goal. When he initiated the expansion of the campus, he wanted that the development of academic discourse must have an Indonesian knowledge, and the approaches of religion were not based on fanaticism for anyone's school or madhhab. Nevertheless, after the efforts and changes that were made, until now, IAIN / UIN was unable to change the majority attitude of the students. The campus and its teaching environments do not achieve a supportive relationship with the broader community. It is evident from only a few numbers of UIN graduates who engaged with the social environment. The standard for an efficient education is when graduates partake in society and community and become the agents of transformation (Moh. Yamin 2009: 140).

Azyumardi's thoughts on the issue of Islamic education at IAIN are similar to the discussion of Amrullah Achmad (1991) in the book "*Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia: Antara Cita dan Fakta*" (Islamic Education in Indonesia; between Hope and Fact). Based on the latest developments of religion in the world, there is no reason to be concerned about the future of Islamic educational institutions. Nonetheless, the Islamic education system and its content must be intensified to satisfy the needs of the modern world. With developments, Islamic education contributes better to humanity.

Improving the quality of human resources through education is one of the most potent methods to reduce poverty, although this may take a lengthy time. Education is imperative to building a close relationship between students and the environment. In many ways, education is used as an instrument for change in political and economic systems. The emergence of modern Islamic education in Indonesia is linked to the idea of Islamic modernism. The idea of Islamic modernism in education developed from the establishment of modern educational institutions that adopted the Dutch colonial

education system. These modern organisations were originally established by Jami'at Khair, al-Irsyad, Muhammadiyah and others.

The researchers also argued that the system of Islamic higher education institutions must be reformed and the curriculum must be enhanced by organising diverse and exciting topics. Some aspects of Islamic teachings and heritage can be viewed as the main branches of humanities whose areas of study include religion, philosophy, ethics, spirituality, language, art, archaeology and history. It also supports the spread of Islamic studies into other social sciences.

The general education system still applies "the banking concept of education" where education only holds knowledge rather than solves problems (M. Yamin 2009: 163). Azyumardi would like to see IAIN position itself as an Islamic learning centre that connects Islamic studies in all three regions (Western Europe, Middle East and Asia) to produce a Muslim scholar who specialises in seeing, understanding and explaining Islam to answer the challenges of the new era.

Azyumardi's idea of transforming IAIN into UIN was realised in the following stages. First, the stages of IAIN's transformation in UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, which was designed by Prof. Dr Harun Nasution as the rector. As a modern and rational scholar, Harun Nasution regarded that the present IAIN was irrelevant to the current challenges. Since the founding of IAIN as ADIA in 1957 through the 1980s, many changes occurred in the fields of social, economic, political, cultural, scientific advancement, and work patterns. Now, we live in a modern industrial epoch. It entails mastery of science, technology, skills, and graduates with modern vision who are innovative, creative, progressive, democratic, hardworking, appreciative of the time, have the foresight and dynamic. If IAIN wants to stay relevant among the Ummah of Islam, then it must transform into a university.

Second, the development since Prof. Dr H.M. Qurais Shihab as rector. Azyumardi Azra, as the Deputy Rector of Academic, drafted a UIN's proposal to build a new faculty and a complete building facility to provide more all-embracing access to higher education to madrasah graduates. With many students joining UIN, hopefully, in the future, they can improve multiple fields. It is not necessarily concerned only in the field of religion, such as medicine, economy, industry, management,

as well as banking. Thus, UIN can heighten the dignity of Islamic Universities in Indonesia and the world.

Third, the development of faculties and departments, complementing educational facilities, building a research centre by working with various world-class universities, as well as improving the welfare of lecturers and employers.

CRITICISM OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION THOUGHTS AZYUMARDI AZRA

The concept of Islamic education by Azyumardi Azra contains liberalism and pluralism. It can be seen in Azyumardi's thinking that as an academic institution. However, IAIN is limited to providing Islamic education to its students; the Islamic studies in UIN Jakarta should be developed by the influence of the western framework in Islamic studies. IAIN does not teach sectarian fanaticism or Islamic figures but examines Islamic sects and figures with contemporary western frameworks, perspectives and methodologies. In an attempt to support that, the student of IAIN was invited to study other religions other than Islam. It took place in a fair, open, and without prejudice environment. Comparative religion becomes the main subject for IAIN students (Azyumardi, 2002: 117). This statement encourages students to reason and invites them to use Western arguments and approaches in Islamic studies. He asserted that Islamic studies in IAIN opened the student mind from *pesantren* and *madrasah* to understand the significance of the contemporary model of Islamic studies. Islamic Studies, with the approach of liberalism in IAIN, also grew the students' perception of science as a whole (Azyumardi 2002: 117).

If in *pesantren* they understand the dichotomy of science: Islamic Science (naqliyah and religious science) and general science (secular science), then in IAIN this understanding does not more exist. In IAIN, students learn that study of sociology, anthropology, history, psychology, is as essential as a study of *Tafsir* of the Quran and the Hadith. Those sciences can be used to supplement students' recognition of the interpretation. Azyumardi also stated that IAIN does not teach "Islamisation of knowledge" because all the knowledge is equally positioned and means for human life (Azyumardi 2002).

Azyumardi's statements present a case of liberalisation of Islamic thought. He affirmed that "these McGill alumni, with different backgrounds and expertise, in turn, contributed significantly to the development of the academic discourse of Islamic studies and bureaucratic worlds in the homeland" (Azyumardi 2002: vii-viii) which is proof that the liberal movement in Indonesia commenced with the return of graduate scholars at the Institute of Islamic Studies of McGill University. They are educated from distinguished Islamic Studies professors such as Charles J. Adam, an expert in Islamic history; Wilfred Cantwell Smith (historian of Islamic civilisation and comparative religion), N. Barkes (Turkish expert and secularist Muslim world), Herman Landolt (philosopher, Sufism, and Shiite expert) and Wael Hallaq (an Islamic law expert).

It proves a planned and structured effort; the institutional migration from IAIN to UIN is the same as the shift change of the Da'wah board into an academic institution. IAIN was initially an institution of Islamic Da'wah and was accountable for the religious and Sharia within Indonesian society.

The current implication of this thought can be seen in the methodology of Islamic studies. For instance, Quranic studies employed a hermeneutical method in understanding the text. It is an orientalist approach. Unlike the scholarly tradition formed by the ulama network, which tends to follow and disseminate the thinking of his master scholars, Western scientific traditions concentrate on the approach of a particular thought. In addition to the methodological aspects, the empirical social approach in religious studies was also developed (Azyumardi 2002: xi).

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Azyumardi's thought, was an imperative influence toward the contemporary development of Islamic studies in Indonesia. His doctrine of Islamic education is the result of his thinking about the quality of Islamic education, on how to develop the purpose and curriculum of Islamic education. He is thinking about democratisation and modernisation in Islamic education, achieving the dignity of Islamic educational institutions that produce high-quality output. Nonetheless, the reformation of Islamic education involved the shifting paradigm of Islamic education from Islamic da'wah orientation

to a scientific institution.

Ergo, Islamic education thought of Azyumardi necessitates an exhaustive criticism in another aspect, particularly in the development of the curriculum and methods. This study also recommends the importance of studying the Islamic knowledge methods of UIN Jakarta and other UINs to find out more about the extent to which the liberalisation of Islamic belief develops.

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AUTHORS

- Assoc. Prof Dr. Jaffary Awang (Corresponding author)
Faculty of Islamic Studies
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
43600 Bangi
Selangor, Malaysia
Jaffary@ukm.edu.my
- M. Adib Fuadi Nuriz
Universitas Darussalam (UNIDA)
Gontor
adeeb_gontor@yahoo.com
adeebgontor@unida.gontor.ac.id