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# Islamic Education Management in the Thought of Ibn Sina: Between Rationality and Spirituality

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# **ABSTRACT**

Ibn Sina, as a prominent philosopher and Muslim scientist, offered profound thoughts on education that emphasize the balance between intellectual and moral aspects. According to Ibn Sina, education not only aims to enlighten the mind but also to shape the moral and spiritual character of students. This study aims to examine the concept of Islamic education management in the thought of Ibn Sina, focusing on the integration of rationality and spirituality as the foundation for managing education. Ibn Sina, as a prominent philosopher and Muslim scientist, not only made significant contributions in the fields of medicine and philosophy but also had profound thoughts on education. In his view, education must shape a person holistically, being intellectually sharp and spiritually mature. A qualitative approach is used in this study with a literature review method of Ibn Sina's major works, such as Kitab al-Shifa and Kitab al-Najat, as well as relevant secondary literature. The study's results show that Ibn Sina emphasized the importance of a logical and systematic teaching method, yet still framed within ethical and religious values. This thought is relevant in the context of contemporary Islamic education management, which faces the challenge of balancing the cognitive and affective aspects of students. Thus, Islamic education management based on Ibn Sina's thought offers an integrative model that combines intellect and spirituality in the educational process sustainably. The thought of Ibn Sina offers a holistic and sustainable model of Islamic education management. This model integrates rationality and spirituality, making it a strong foundation for building an educational system that not only focuses on intellectual achievement but also on the formation of a solid moral character. Thus, Islamic education management based on Ibn Sina's thought holds great potential to address contemporary educational issues that are often trapped in the separation between knowledge and spiritual values.

**Keywords:** Islamic education management; Ibn Sina; rationality; spirituality

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Islamic education holds a central role in shaping a civilized, knowledgeable, and moral society. Throughout its history, Islamic education has functioned not only as a means of transmitting knowledge but also as a medium for character and spiritual development of students. Education is not merely a process of cognitive transfer, but also the cultivation of the soul and human morality (Prasetiya et al., 2021). This aligns

with Islam's mission, which places human beings as stewards (khalifah) on Earth, bearing both intellectual and ethical responsibilities in their lives. In the modern era, Islamic education faces major challenges such as identity crises, the secularization of knowledge, and the commercialization of education. Many Islamic educational institutions tend to imitate Western management models without considering Islamic spiritual values as their foundation. As a result, although students may possess academic intelligence, they often lack in ethical and spiritual dimensions. This reality has become a growing concern for many who care about the direction of contemporary Islamic education. One proposed solution to this problem is to re-examine the rich legacy of classical Islamic thought. Muslim scholars of the past formulated educational principles that are not only philosophically relevant but can also serve as a conceptual foundation for developing modern Islamic education management. Among these scholars is Ibn Sina, a Muslim polymath with profound ideas in the field of education.

Ibn Sina is known not only as a scientist in medicine and philosophy but also as an educator who paid close attention to the psychological, methodological, and ethical aspects of the educational process. (Ulum, 2018). His views on the stages of child development, teaching methods, and the importance of morality in education are a valuable legacy worthy of further study. He regarded education as a means to guide humans toward achieving intellectual and spiritual perfection. According to Ibn Sina, education is a systematic process aimed at shaping the complete human being (insan kamil), one who integrates the power of reason with moral excellence (Darwis, 2013). Therefore, in Ibn Sina's view, education is not merely the learning of facts or information, but a holistic process of self-perfection. This is the meeting point between rationality and spirituality that characterizes his educational thought.

This concept is crucial to revive in today's discourse on Islamic education management. While education management is often discussed within technical and procedural frameworks, Ibn Sina's thought reminds us of the importance of philosophical foundations and spiritual values in every step of educational administration. Without these foundations, there is a concern that education management will produce a process that lacks meaning and fails to shape the whole human being (Ansari & Qomarudin, 2021). n recent decades, the dynamics of Islamic education have undergone significant shifts (Azra, 2012). Technological advancement, globalization, and educational competition have compelled Islamic educational institutions to pursue high standards in both academic and managerial aspects. Unfortunately, in the pursuit of such efficiency, the spiritual values that form the soul of Islamic education are often marginalized. Education becomes merely an instrument for achieving cognitive accomplishments without clear moral direction.

The crisis of character and ethics occurring at various levels of education indicates that the current system has not fully succeeded in shaping the whole human being. Many students are academically intelligent but morally disoriented. This phenomenon signals a flawed perspective in the approach to Islamic education management. Education is not only about curriculum, infrastructure, and

accreditation; more importantly, it is about its orientation toward forming human beings who are complete both spiritually and intellectually.

This paradigm shift creates a need to reassess the managerial approach in Islamic education. Until now, management concepts in practice have largely been based on modern, secular, and pragmatic management theories. While technically beneficial, this approach often fails to align with the noble goals of Islamic education, which emphasize the balance between worldly and spiritual life, between knowledge and faith.

In this context, the thought of Ibn Sina becomes highly relevant to explore. As a Muslim scholar, Ibn Sina viewed education as a process of tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) and tahzib al-akhlaq (moral cultivation), which cannot be separated from the development of intellectual capacities (Udayani, 2021). Thus, according to Ibn Sina, education is not only aimed at sharpening the intellect, but also at purifying the heart and shaping a noble character.

Ibn Sina's thought can serve as a conceptual foundation for developing a more holistic model of Islamic education management (Arsyad et al., 2024). This approach is expected to fill the spiritual void in an overly technocratic education system. The concept of balance between rationality and spirituality offered by Ibn Sina serves as a proposed solution to restore the soul of Islamic education in the management of educational institutions. The relevance of Ibn Sina's thought is also evident in the leadership crisis within the education world. Many leaders of Islamic educational institutions lack an ethical and moral vision in carrying out their duties (Reza, 2014). Ibn Sina's thought, which emphasizes the importance of exemplary character and noble ethics in educational leadership, is crucial to adopt in shaping leadership that is just, wise, and responsible.

Therefore, this study aims to explore in depth how the concepts of education and management in Ibn Sina's thought can serve as a reference for developing a more meaningful Islamic education system. By using Ibn Sina as a foundational figure, it is hoped that a management model will emerge that is not only technically effective but also noble in values.

The main questions in this study are: how can Ibn Sina's ideas on education and ethics be integrated into contemporary Islamic education management? What are the key principles he offers, and how can they be applied within the context of modern educational institutions? These are the questions that this journal seeks to answer.

Islamic education management is a branch of management science that focuses on organizing education based on Islamic principles and values. In this theory, core management elements such as planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision are adapted to the goals of Islamic education—namely, to shape individuals who are devout, knowledgeable, and morally upright.

Therefore, Islamic education management cannot be separated from the dimensions of ethics, spirituality, and justice (Zulfahji, 2024). Islamic education management also emphasizes the central role of humans as both the subject and object of education. Students, teachers, and educational leaders each have their respective roles in shaping a harmonious system (Wijaya, 2016). This theory views that the effectiveness of management is not only determined by technical skills but also by the moral integrity and spiritual commitment of all those involved in education. In the context of the integration of knowledge and ethics, many classical Muslim thinkers have emphasized the importance of grounding spiritual values in education. Al-Ghazali, Al-Farabi, and certainly Ibn Sina are among the figures who laid the foundation for this integration. They agreed that knowledge not framed by ethics would lead humanity to arrogance, deviation, and the abuse of power (Nafsaka et al., 2023).

Ibn Sina viewed knowledge as a tool to attain the highest happiness, which in his terms is called "sa'adah." To achieve sa'adah, a person must not only master knowledge but also possess a pure soul and noble character (Junaedi, 2022). Therefore, education must be directed towards shaping a person who is perfect both intellectually and spiritually. This is the essence of the integration of rationality and spirituality in Ibn Sina's view. In his works, Ibn Sina divides education into two major stages: basic education for children and advanced education for prospective scholars. Each stage has a different methodological approach, but both must be based on principles of ethics and Islamic values. According to Ibn Sina, a teacher is not just an instructor but also a murabbi (educator) who nurtures moral and spiritual development (OK, 2021).

The management theory in Ibn Sina's thought is also evident in his emphasis on orderliness and systematics in the teaching-learning process. He stressed the need for a gradual curriculum, methods that are appropriate to the intellectual development of children, and the importance of a learning environment that supports character formation. This shows that Ibn Sina's thought contains practical managerial elements (Salleh & Embong, 2017). In addition, Ibn Sina also taught the importance of role models in educational leadership. Educational leaders must be figures who can be emulated in terms of knowledge, deeds, and character. This aligns with the principle of Islamic management that emphasizes prophetic leadership: combining vision, mission, ethics, and action.

This research aims to explore further Ibn Sina's ideas on education, particularly those related to the management of Islamic education. The research is conducted using a qualitative approach through a literature review of Ibn Sina's key works, such as Kitab al-Shifa, Kitab al-Najat, and relevant contemporary references. The focus of the study is directed toward the integration of rationality and spirituality in Ibn Sina's thought, and how this can be applied in the context of managing modern Islamic educational institutions. By studying Ibn Sina's ideas, it is hoped that we can find a more balanced framework for Islamic education management one that is not only rational and structurally effective but also strong in values and ethics. This approach is essential to address the increasingly complex challenges of the times, while

simultaneously strengthening the identity of Islamic education as a means of shaping superior and dignified individuals. This theoretical study provides the foundation that Islamic education management cannot be separated from the integration of rational (knowledge) and spiritual (ethics) aspects. Ibn Sina's thought offers a holistic and contextual approach to building an education system that is not only competitive but also meaningful in moral and spiritual terms.

#### **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a type of library research. This approach is chosen because the main focus of the research is to explore and analyze the thoughts of the classical Islamic figure, Ibn Sina, regarding the concept of educational management. Library research is deemed relevant because the primary data sources come from texts and literature that directly discuss or interpret Ibn Sina's works. The primary data in this research are the major works of Ibn Sina, which are the sources of his philosophical and educational thoughts. In addition, secondary data such as books, scholarly journals, and articles discussing Ibn Sina's ideas and Islamic education management theory in general are also used. These literatures are analyzed to find the relevance of Ibn Sina's thoughts in the context of contemporary educational management. Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation, by identifying, reading, noting, and categorizing information from various relevant sources. All data are then selected and classified according to the focus of the study, namely: (1) the concept of education according to Ibn Sina, (2) managerial principles in his thought, and (3) the integration of rationality and spirituality in educational management.

Data analysis is performed descriptively-analytically, with steps including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The researcher interprets Ibn Sina's thoughts within the context of modern Islamic educational management theory and examines its implications for leadership and educational institution management. This analysis also considers the situation and challenges of contemporary Islamic education so that Ibn Sina's thoughts can be applied contextually and relevantly. The validity of the data in this study is maintained by conducting source triangulation, which involves comparing and verifying the accuracy of information through various sources of both classical and modern literature. In addition, a critical reading of the texts is carried out to ensure that the interpretation of Ibn Sina's thoughts is not detached from its historical and philosophical context (Moleong, 2019). With this approach and method, it is hoped that this research can provide a valid and in-depth scientific contribution in explaining how Islamic education management can be developed based on the integration of rationality and spirituality values as taught by Ibn Sina.

#### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Sina's thoughts in the field of Islamic education management provide a significant contribution to the development of a holistic, integrative, and human-centered educational model (Atabik & Fian, 2023). From his perspective, education is not only aimed at transferring knowledge rationally but also at shaping the morals and spirituality of students so they become complete individuals, knowledgeable and pious. This becomes an important foundation in addressing the various challenges of contemporary education, which tends to be fragmented between intellectual and moral aspects. Ibn Sina views that education must start from a deep understanding of human nature, a structured learning process, and the role of the teacher not only as an instructor but also as a spiritual guide. Rationality serves as a means to understand reality and develop human intellect, while spirituality becomes the direction and ultimate goal of education so that humans are not trapped in shallow materialism.

Educational leadership, according to Ibn Sina, requires managerial skills based on ethical and spiritual values (Siddiq & Siregar, 2024). An ideal educational leader, according to him, is a figure who can serve as a role model in terms of knowledge, morals, and moral integrity, and who is capable of creating a conducive, inspiring learning environment that is oriented toward the welfare of the community. Such leadership is highly relevant to be applied in the modern era, which faces a moral crisis and a disorientation of values in the world of education. The peak of Ibn Sina's thought lies in the integration of rationality and spirituality in all aspects of educational management. He offers an approach that does not pit religious knowledge against rational knowledge, but rather combines both as a path toward the perfection of humanity. This model becomes an alternative to the modern technocratic approach that often neglects the spiritual dimension in education.

# Concept of Education in Ibn Sina's Thought

Ibn Sina views education as a process of the holistic development of human potential, encompassing physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects (Yaqin, 2022). In his view, humans are rational beings with the ability to think, and therefore, education must be directed to sharpen the intellectual potential. However, according to Ibn Sina, education is not merely rational; it must also touch upon moral and spiritual aspects. According to Ibn Sina, the main goal of education is to form a perfect human being (alinsan al-kamil), which means a human who is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses high ethics and spirituality. He emphasizes that education must produce individuals who are cultured and able to perform their social roles justly and wisely. Ibn Sina divides the stages of education into phases of age development. From an early age, children need to receive moral and religious education as the foundation for character development. In the adolescent phase, education focuses on the development of logic and rational sciences such as mathematics, physics, and philosophy. This phase demonstrates Ibn Sina's attention to adjusting the educational method to the psychological development of the students.

In the context of educational management, this concept implies the need for an integrative curriculum that combines religious knowledge and general sciences (Arim Irsyadullah Albin Jaya et al., n.d.). Ibn Sina did not make a strict distinction between the sciences of this world and the hereafter. For him, all knowledge can lead a person to the truth and devotion to God, if learned with the right intention. According to Ibn Sina, education must also be delivered gradually and systematically. The learning process needs to consider the intellectual capacity of the students (Uni, 2020). Therefore, he rejected the approach of mere memorization and encouraged an approach that involved deep understanding and philosophical discussions. The importance of character education in Ibn Sina's thought becomes a strong foundation for addressing the moral crisis in modern educational systems. He realized that intellectual intelligence without ethical foundations would actually become a tool for social destruction.

For this reason, he emphasized the need for habituation of good morals through the exemplary behavior of teachers and a supporting environment. Ibn Sina also stressed the importance of arts and sports in education. He believed that music, painting, and physical activities could develop the emotional side and balance of students' souls. This shows how holistic the education concept he offered was. In the ideal education system according to Ibn Sina, evaluation of learning not only measures cognitive aspects but also includes affective and psychomotor aspects (Rohman, 2013). He invites educators to assess to what extent students are able to apply knowledge in real life and demonstrate behavior that aligns with moral values. The entire concept of education according to Ibn Sina shows that education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but a process of shaping the whole human being. This idea becomes an important foundation in building an Islamic education management system that is not only administratively efficient but also spiritually meaningful.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Ibn Sina's concept of education is highly relevant for contemporary Islamic education. By integrating intellectual and spiritual dimensions, the proposed educational system is capable of producing individuals who are intelligent, ethical, and socially responsible

# Rationality as the Pillar of Educational Management

One of the main features of Ibn Sina's thought is the emphasis on the use of reason and logic in all aspects of life, including education. For him, reason is the highest gift from God that must be maximized to understand reality and achieve wisdom. Therefore, educational management must be based on rationality, both in planning, implementation, and evaluation. In terms of educational planning, Ibn Sina stressed the importance of rational and realistic goals. Educational goals should not be dogmatic but should be formulated based on the needs of students and society. According to him, good planning should be able to guide students to become productive individuals who contribute to society.

Ibn Sina also emphasized the importance of logical teaching methods. He rejected dogmatic teaching methods that force understanding without reasoning. Teachers, according to him, must be able to guide students to think critically and independently. This aligns with the principles of active learning in modern educational theory. From a classroom management perspective, Ibn Sina proposed a conducive and dialogical learning atmosphere. Teachers should not be authoritarian but facilitators who help students discover the truth. The relationship between teachers and students should be based on mutual respect and openness to thinking.

Rationality is also reflected in the way Ibn Sina organized the curriculum. He classified knowledge in a logical sequence, starting from basic sciences to philosophy and spirituality. This approach reflects a systematic and organized way of thinking. Time and resource management also received attention in Ibn Sina's thought. He suggested that learning time should be adjusted to the level of student concentration and include rotations between intellectual and recreational activities. This aligns with modern management principles that consider efficiency and mental health of students. Rationality in educational management is also reflected in his view on evaluation. Evaluation should be done objectively, based on students' achievements and efforts, not solely on final results. This emphasizes the importance of the process in education, not just the outcome.

Ibn Sina recognized that good education requires educational leaders who can think strategically and make decisions based on data and analysis. Therefore, educational management should be carried out with the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency. The application of rationality in education, according to Ibn Sina, is highly relevant in the modern era, where decision-making based on data and logic is essential. This makes Islamic educational management competitive with global educational systems. Thus, the principle of rationality offered by Ibn Sina provides a solid foundation for a professional, well-planned, and adaptive educational management system to the changes of the times.

# Spirituality in Educational Leadership

Ibn Sina not only emphasized rationality in education but also placed spirituality as the foundational principle in the formation of educational leaders' character. According to him, an educational leader is not merely an administrator or manager, but a role model who can guide educational institutions toward the perfection of ethical and religious values. In his works, Ibn Sina explains that the human soul must be directed toward true goodness, and education is one of the most important means to achieve this goal. In the context of educational leadership, spirituality does not mean abandoning practical aspects but rather becoming the essence of every managerial action. An educational leader must possess moral awareness and responsibility for the holistic development of students. Ibn Sina believed that a leader who lacks spiritual depth tends to misuse power and neglect human values in their educational policies.

Ibn Sina linked the role of leadership in education with the prophetic traits (nubuwwah). Although not all leaders are prophets, they are expected to emulate prophetic qualities such as trustworthiness, honesty, justice, and patience. These qualities form the spiritual pillars in running Islamic educational management. The educational leader should be a model of ethics for both teachers and students, and facilitate a morally and intellectually conducive learning environment. Spirituality in leadership also includes an inner motivation to do good and encourage the progress of the educational institution. A spiritual leader works not out of personal ambition but as a soul-driven calling to educate the community and improve society. Values such as sincerity, humility, and steadfastness become the main supports for leadership motivation and actions. Ibn Sina also highlighted the importance of spiritual development within educational institutions. Leaders must ensure that all elements of the institution - teachers, students, and administrative staff - are involved in cultivating a strong spiritual culture. This can be done through religious programs, habituation of worship, and actively integrating spiritual values into the teaching and learning process.

Ibn Sina's concept of spirituality is not passive or escapist from the world but is active and oriented toward change. A spiritual leader must be able to design educational strategies that are not only academically successful but also succeed in forming pious individuals. Therefore, spirituality in Islamic educational management is not just an additional element, but a core aspect in shaping the direction and policies of education. The challenges of modern education, such as moral crises, the degradation of ethics, and the dehumanization of educational systems, increasingly strengthen the urgency of Ibn Sina's thought regarding the importance of spirituality in leadership. Today's educational world tends to overlook the spiritual aspect and places too much emphasis on academic achievement, rankings, and certification. As a result, education loses its true meaning as a means of shaping a perfect human being.

In this framework, Ibn Sina's thought provides an alternative and corrective proposal for contemporary educational management practices, which are often technocratic and detached from spiritual values. Modern educational leaders need to revive the spirit of spirituality as the foundation for thinking and acting, not just as religious symbolism. This is an important step in forming transformative Islamic educational institutions with divine value.

Spiritual leadership also has implications for the relationship between the leader and staff or teachers. This relationship should not be rigidly hierarchical but should be based on compassion, trust, and two-way communication. A spiritual leader will find it easier to build loyalty, work motivation, and a harmonious collaborative culture in the educational institution. Thus, spirituality in educational leadership, as taught by Ibn Sina, is a key element in building an Islamic education system that is not only structurally effective but also morally noble and transcendently meaningful. This thought offers a new direction for the development of educational management that balances the worldly and the otherworldly, the rational and the spiritual

# Integration of Rationality and Spirituality in Islamic Educational Management

The pinnacle of Ibn Sina's thought on educational management is the importance of integrating rationality and spirituality. For Ibn Sina, these two dimensions do not contradict each other but rather complement one another in forming a holistic and comprehensive educational system. Rationality provides a logical, methodological, and scientific framework, while spirituality provides values, direction, and ethics. Ibn Sina rejected the dichotomy between religious knowledge and rational sciences. In various works, he emphasized that all knowledge, whether empirical or metaphysical, leads to one goal: to know God and perfect the human soul. Therefore, Islamic educational management must be designed to accommodate all these dimensions of knowledge harmoniously and proportionally.

This integration is reflected in Ibn Sina's view of the curriculum. He proposed a curriculum encompassing the sciences of language, logic, mathematics, natural sciences, philosophy, and religious knowledge. The goal of this integration is to shape individuals who are critical thinkers, productive, and at the same time, obedient to moral and spiritual values. Such a curriculum would equip students with the holistic competencies needed in both the modern world and the hereafter. In the context of management, this integration implies the need for a system that is not only administratively efficient but also oriented towards ethical values and humanity. For example, in decision-making, a school principal or educational leader should not only consider data and achievement targets but also take into account the moral and social impact of the decision on students and the community.

The implementation of this integration should also address the relationships among individuals in the educational environment. The relationship between teachers and students, or between leadership and staff, should not be based solely on power, but on principles of compassion, justice, and moral responsibility. This approach will create a healthy and productive atmosphere within educational institutions. Ibn Sina also asserted that the integration of rationality and spirituality in education would create a balanced personality. Students would not only grow to be intelligent and innovative individuals but also have noble character and transcendental awareness. This is the ultimate goal of education from Ibn Sina's perspective, and it should also be the direction of the entire process of Islamic educational management.

In practical terms, this integration can be realized through teacher training that not only hones pedagogical and technological skills but also strengthens spiritual personality. Teachers should be seen as central figures in transforming these values into the classroom and students' real-life experiences. Ibn Sina demonstrated that the excellence of education should not only be measured by academic results but also by the quality of character and the social usefulness of its alumni. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions must be bold in implementing managerial transformations that align scientific and value-based approaches.

By integrating rationality and spirituality, Islamic educational management will not only be academically and socially relevant but will also serve as a strategic solution to the challenges of a fast, complex, and materialistic world. This is a significant contribution from the legacy of Ibn Sina's thought that needs to be explored and applied contextually. Ultimately, the integration of intellect and faith, knowledge and action, management and morality becomes a solid foundation for a future Islamic education that is more meaningful, liberating, and empowering. Ibn Sina's thought bridges the gap between intellectual excellence and spiritual depth in the management of comprehensive education.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The study's results show that Ibn Sina emphasized the importance of a logical and systematic teaching method, yet still framed within ethical and religious values. This thought is relevant in the context of contemporary Islamic education management, which faces the challenge of balancing the cognitive and affective aspects of students. Thus, Islamic education management based on Ibn Sina's thought offers an integrative model that combines intellect and spirituality in the educational process sustainably. The thought of Ibn Sina offers a holistic and sustainable model of Islamic education management. This model integrates rationality and spirituality, making it a strong foundation for building an educational system that not only focuses on intellectual achievement but also on the formation of a solid moral character. Thus, Islamic education management based on Ibn Sina's thought holds great potential to address contemporary educational issues that are often trapped in the separation between knowledge and spiritual values.

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