

# THE SPIRITUAL VALUES OF INTEGRATING NAQLI AND AQLI KNOWLEDGE IN INTEGRATED EDUCATION: RISALE-I NUR PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

Said Nursi in his struggle to elevate Islam as the primary basis of education realized that natural sciences and modern science must be integrated with religious sciences in the education of generations of this century. According to Said Nursi, the light of conscience is religious sciences (ulum diniyah) and the light of the mind is civilized sciences (ulum madaniyah). By mastering both of these sciences, a student is capable of benefiting the people and the nation through the continued preaching and sharing of knowledge. Furthermore, Said Nursi sees that the integration of these two sciences will be the core root to the birth of the scientific commentary of the Qur'an, which is recognized by Muslim scholars who have expertise in various sciences. Therefore, Said Nursi sees the importance of establishing *Medresetu'z Zahra* as a place for integrating naqli and aqli knowledge. Thus, the author will use the thematic and analysis method in this paper. The author firstly will gather all of Said Nursi's statements that are closely related to the above issue in *Risale-I Nur*, and then the author will examine secondly the spiritual values of integrating both sciences perspective Said Nursi in creating a holistic humankind, encyclopedic and integrative through integrated education across the ages.

**Keywords:** *Spiritual value; Integration of aqli and naqli science; Integrated education; Risale-I Nur*

## INTRODUCTION

Personalized Education is among the latest reformation involving many education reformer and integrated education. Said Nursi is Islamic reviver (mujaddid) in the field of iman (belief) as well as an educational reformer. Said Nursi intends to re-establish the fall of the Ottoman empire. According to him, the great challenge faced academicians at that time was solidifying the three educational systems, namely religious madrasah (Medrese), secular schools (Mektebs) and Sufi Tarekat (Takaya). Therefore, Nursi intends to set up *Medresetu'z Zahra* which will be the best model (platform) in integrating naqli and aqli sciences. However, he noticed that a good education would not have been obtained if it was built on a fragile basis. Therefore, he developed the suitable base -according to him- by giving understanding to Muslims about the importance and necessity of the spiritual values of education that must be, especially in the education system. Hence, the author finds many spiritual values that Said Nursi has shared and it is impossible to share everything in this paper. Therefore, the author will mention the most important of these values which may indeed include the following:

### Closeness to Allah (God Consciousness)

It means that Moslems should be close to God and believe in the truth that Allah is always with us. Psychologically, a human being has a desire to draw closer to Allah. However, sometimes humans lose their confidence in finding Allah. This case previously befell to the group of high-school students in Kastamonu who came to Said Nursi complaining about their school education secular system and saying:

*"Tell us about our Creator, our teachers do not speak of God"* (Said Nursi, 2011: 1/173)

In response, Said Nursi Said to them:

*"All the sciences you study continuously speak of God and make known the Creator, each with its own particular tongue. Do not listen to your teacher; listen to them. For example, a well-equipped pharmacy with life-giving potions and cures in every jar weighed out in precise and wondrous measures doubtless shows an extremely skillful, practiced, and wise pharmacist. In the same way, to the extent that it is bigger and more perfect and better stocked than the pharmacy in the market-place, the pharmacy of the globe of the*

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*earth with its living potions and medicaments in the jars which are the four hundred thousand species of plants and animals shows and makes known to eyes that are blind even—by means of the measure or scale of the science of medicine that you study- the All-Wise One of Glory, Who is the Pharmacist of the mighty pharmacy of the earth. Another examples: millions of electric lights that move and travel through a wondrous city, their fuel and power source never being exhausted, self-evidently make known a wonder-working craftsman and extraordinary talented electrician who manages the electricity, makes the moving lamps, sets up the power source, and brings the fuel; they cause others to congratulate and applaud him, and to love him. In just the same way, although some of the lamps of the stars in the roof of the place of the world in the city of the universe – if they are considered in the way that astronomy says- are a thousand times larger than the earth and move seventy times faster than a cannon-ball, they do not spoil their order, nor collide with one another, nor become extinguished, nor is their fuel exhausted. According to astronomy, which you study, for our sun to continue burning, which is a million times larger than the earth and a million times older and is a lamp and stove in one guest-house of the Most Merciful One, as much oil as the seas of the earth and as much coal as its mountains or as many logs and much wood as ten earths are necessary for it not to be extinguished. And however much greater and more perfect than this examples are the electric lamps of the palace of the world in the majestic of the universe, which point with their fingers of light to an infinite power and sovereignty which illuminates the sun and other lofty stars like it without oil, wood, or coal, not allowing them to be extinguished or to collide with one another, though travelling together at speed, to that degree –by means of the measure of the science of electricity which you either study or will study –they testify to and make known the Monarch, Illuminator, Director, and Maker of the mighty exhibition of the universe; they make Him loved, glorified, and worshipped.” (Said Nursi, 2011: 1/173-174)*

Hence, it is really expected that by realizing this values, the students may: (i) Discern their Creator easily through the sciences, feel His presence and become very close to Him; and (ii) Enjoy sciences. Indeed, in the sciences, there are many signs of the existence of God.

#### **An Ability to Select the Right Thing (*At-Tamkin An-Nafsi*)**

It means that Moslems have an ability to see the truth and to avoid the astray path of life. In response to the question of the divine purpose of integrating naqli and aqli knowledge, He answered: “Cleanse the mind from the pollution of ideas that are not supported by strong arguments which are generally coming from corrupted understanding as shown below: (i) measuring the unmaterial things (spiritual) with the material things and accepting ideas of European scientists in matters relating to the spiritual, and belief; (ii) withdrawing the statements of Islam scholars in any religious matter without any reasons, simply because they did not master modern sciences; (iii) overconfident to himself in any matter of religion, simply because he is a quiet confidence in his knowledge of modern sciences; and (iv) defining the life of predecessors (salaf) with latter-day Moslems (khalaf), the past and the present modern era, then attacking and saying unparadonable comments, even vanity.

*“In addition, the integration extinguishes doubts and misunderstandings caused by bigotry or fanatic.” (Said Nursi, 2012: 8/401)*

Furthermore, Said Nursi said,

*“With a personalized education based on the integration of naqli and aqli knowledge, Moslems will be free from the shackles of false stories (israiliyat) and the abhorred bigotry, which all have been the cause of the sharp sword of Islam became blunt.” (Said Nursi, 2012: 8/404)*

Thus, it is ultimately indicated that this integrated knowledge value may conduct our student to the following important matters: (i) to avoid themselves from misunderstandings that are inherently derived from the books they learn; (ii) to see the truth even if intentionally obscured or closed by the propaganda of the enemies of Islam; and (iii) to correct clearly misunderstanding towards Islam which is intentionally displayed poorly that Islam encourages its people to commit so many unreasonable bad behaviors.

#### **Having a Spiritual Personality**

It means that the integrated knowledge of both science and revealed knowledge may produce the Moslem generations who have a spiritual personality. Hence, Said Nursi clearly states the importance of these two

sciences to be integrated in order to produce an integrative personality in our generation that has the excellence of mind in rebuilding the glories of Islamic civilization. Said Nursi says:

*“The light of the conscience is religious sciences (ulum-u diniye). The light of the mind is modern sciences (funun-u medeniye). Combining both manifests the truth. The student’s skills develop further with these two (sciences). When they are separated, the former breeds superstition and the latter breeds corruption and skepticism.”* (Said Nursi, 2012: 8/402)

Furthermore, Said Nursi sees that not only naqli and aqli knowledge need to be harmonized, but it is also necessary to harmonize the three educational systems within the *Medresetu-z Zahra* that would unite the most superior *mekteb* by the reason, the very best *medrese* by heart, and the most sacred *zawiye* by the conscience (Said Nursi, 2012: 2012: 8/404). He argued that if the students are taught in this method, those in the secular schools will be saved from being without religion, while those in the religious schools will be saved from bigotry (Said Nursi, 2012: 8/404; Muaz bin Hj. Mohd Noor & Faizuri Abd. Latif, 2012: p. 141).

Hence, throughout implementing these values in daily life, students are expected to: (i) keep their self from the disbelief offered by Islamic enemy propaganda; (ii) avoid the fanatic that may destroy a harmony and the unity of multi-ethnic and religiously plural society; (iii) solve any social problems intelligently and wisely; and (iv) bring a wealthness into society with a holistic approach and competitive leadership.

### **Social Integrity**

It means that students who had an integrative knowledge are open-minded and willing to live with intentional integrity in social life as well as academic life. What worries Said Nursi is the attitude of mutual hatred among scholars who may indeed threaten a harmony and social unity. He says, “Beware! Surely the hatred among the scholars is a great disaster.” (Said Nursi, 2012: 8/405). According to Nursi, the student of the integration of naqli-aqli will be an academic figure that is easy to integrate with social societies, prioritize public interest rather than personal interests, and avoid conflicts that may harm the society. The key master of it according to Nursi is that integrative students are used to sitting together and working together. So, the ulama are used to working together with scientist brotherly and lovely. Said Nursi says:

*“The benefit of the educational curricula of the Medresetu'z Zahra pointed out that 'it would ensure the future of the ulama in the eastern provinces, at the same time it would be a step towards the unification and reform of general system. So it would deliver Islam from the bigotry, superstitions, and false beliefs which had encrusted parts of it over the centuries. And, importantly, would be a means of introducing modern learning into the medreses in a way which would allay the ulama’s suspicions concerning modern science. Also, it would open the door to spreading the beneficial aspects of constitutionalism.”* (Said Nursi. 2012: 8/404)

Moreover, Nursi described the harmful effects of the illicit understanding towards nationalism by saying:

*“Actually, a hatred among Muslims because of ethnic and the wrong perception of nationalism is a great destruction. In fact, all elements of the Muslim community need each other, to reduce the burden of suffering from oppression, indifference, poverty, and the intervention of enemies. All of these social epidemics are ravaging their lives. Therefore, the attitude of the nationalists towards one another with hatred is a great misfortune. In fact, their attitude towards others is similar to the insanity of a crazy man just because he is stirred by mosquito bites, without taking care of the vicious snakes around him.”* (Said Nursi, 2013: 2/415)

Finally, this value is expected to be the best control for students in: (i) maintaining harmony and unity in the multi-ethnic society with a religious diversity; (ii) avoiding selfish traits, such as hatred and animosity; and (iii) giving an equal appreciation to the ulama and scientists without bias.

### **Showing Mercy for All Creatures Being**

The integrative students of knowledge and worldview have the absolute love for all living entities without exception. The secret is according to Nursi because they understand the sacred duty of each entity which is indeed to worship Allah in accordance with the nature of their creation.

Said Nursi says:

*“If you want to observe those elevated truths closer, ask a stormy sea or the quaking earth: “What are you saying?” You will hear them repeat: “O the All-Majestic! O the*

*All-Majestic! O the All-Glorious and Mighty! O the All-Compelling!" Ask small creatures and their young who are maintained on the land and the sea with care and compassion: "What are you saying?" They will hymn: "O the All-Gracious! O the All-Gracious! O the All-Gracious!" Then listen to how the heavens sing: "O the All-Majestic One of Grace!" Listen to the earth, which says: "O the All-Gracious One of Majesty!" Pay attention to animals and hear them invoke: "O the All-Merciful! O the All-Providing!" When you ask the spring, you will hear it reciting such Names as: "O the All-Kind and Caring! O the All-Merciful! O the All-Compassionate! O the All-Munificent! O the All-Subtle and Benevolent! O the All-Affectionate! O the All-Fashioning! O the All-Illuminating! O the All-Favoring! O the All-Adorning!" (Said Nursi, 2011: 2/377)*

Therefore, Said Nursi - according to the narratives of his students - has never been found to have done injustice to anyone, even to ants. When he and his students were overwhelmed by the extremely cold weather at Mount Arak. The bad weather forced them to set up emergency tents. However, the place that they are wherein is the ant kingdom. Every time they dig a pit to plant tent masts, they find a lot of ants. Seeing that, Said Nursi asked his students to stop digging the ground. "Why did you, Ustaz, suddenly forbid us digging the ground?" Asked his disciples. Said Nursi replied, "Can I build a house by destroying another house? Do not destroy these animal houses! Try re-digging somewhere else!" (Said Nursi, 2013: 9/587). Said Nursi - as a scholar who has personal integrity - has proven it when asked to give support to the rebellion of Sheikh Said over the ruling, he refused the request by writing to Sheikh Said:

*"Indeed, the revolution that you are struggling is pushing someone to kill his own brother and will not bring any results. The Turks have sacrificed a thousand martyrs for their religion. Therefore, the sword is not lifted to kill the descendants of these very brave people who have sacrificed much for Islam. I will never lift this sword to the Turks." (Said Nursi, 2013: 9/243)*

Hopefully, this compassionate values will come out with a good result for students as follows: (i) student abuse at schools can be avoided, at least the number of abuse can be reduced; and (ii) as well as reducing a data manipulation.

### **Having a Right Vision, Mission and Values**

It means that the true Moslem should have clear visions in the world, know the true goal of life and find the best way to the final destination which is indeed being closely related to Allah. If the students of naqli and aqli integration are asked questions about their real-life goals, they, according to Nursi, may answer the following details:

My real-life goals can be summed up in the following nine matters:

**The first:** It is weighing on the scales of my body's senses the bounties stored in Divine Mercy's treasuries and offering universal thanks.

**The second:** It is opening with the keys of all instruments placed in my nature the hidden treasuries of the Divine Sacred Names and recognizing the All-Holy One through those Names.

**The third** is consciously displaying through my life before all creation in this place of exhibition the amazing art that the Divine Names have attached to me and their subtle manifestations in my being.

**The fourth** is proclaiming my worship and servanthood to the Court of my Creator's Lordship, verbally and through the tongue of my disposition.

**The fifth:** I should enhance myself with the human qualities in order to understand the manifestation of Asmaul Husna towards me, and reveal it in the presence of the Almighty God.

**The sixth:** I was supposed to ponder over the *tasbih* of living beings and take a divine wisdom from them. Because the *tasbih* is the formulation of his life. Furthermore, I testify that they are always worshipping The Almighty God.

**The seventh:** I should use my defective attributes (e.g., partial knowledge, power, and will) as units of measurement to recognize the Majestic Creator's absolute Attributes and sacred Qualities.

**The eighth:** I should perceive how each being proclaims in its own language the Creator's Oneness and the Maker's Lordship.

**The ninth:** I should try to infer the degrees of the Divine Power's and Richness' manifestations From my impotence and weakness, poverty and need (Said Nursi, 2011: 1/136-137).

Hence, through acknowledging the real-life goals perspective Nursi, the integrative student's vision-mission are expected to: (i) know their relationship with God as a servant and their relationship with other living beings as khalifah in the true understanding; (ii) have a balanced, holistic and broad-minded personality of integrity.

### Having a Right Worldview on Happiness

As we know that happiness is in the real purpose of human being in this life. Many people claim to have found happiness, but then, in reality, it is nothing, it is a false happiness. Hence, Said Nursi shares the true meaning of happiness. The happiest person, for him, is the person who can read Asmaul Husna's manifestation of life from every existing life entity in the universe.

Said Nursi says:

*“As for the perfection of your life in happiness, it is to perceive and love the lights of the Eternal Sun pictured in the mirror of your life, to display ardor for Him as a conscious being, to be enraptured with love of Him, and to establish His Light’s reflection in the center of your heart.”* (Said Nursi, 2011: 1/137-138; Said Nursi, 2011: 6/271; Said Nursi, 2011: 3/168).

Hopefully, under the control of this noble values, Students of naqli aqli integration may: (i) know the true nature of happiness, the happiness that comes from God through a good understanding of the meaning Asmaul Husna emitted by every living entity; (ii) recognize that every name of Asmaul Husna has not only one level of happiness, but in various and different between one and the other based on our understanding towards the manifestation of all those divine names.

## CONCLUSION

From the above issue, The integrated educational system needs for two prominent things: (i) islamic sciences which are performed by integrating both parts of knowledge; the naqli and the aqli part; (ii) generating spiritual values of education applied in all educational systems. This is the basis that must be corrected first, and this is what Said Nursi emphasized. We believe that implementing an integrated education and practicing spiritual values of education may produce graduates whose a holistic personality, a balanced leadership, and high-spirited. This is the ultimate goal of education that Said Nursi fought all his life. Hence, the 21st-century education world is now seen to be taking seriously the initiative of the spiritual values of education shared by Said Nursi in order to withdraw the moral impairment that may afflict our students.

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