

## Original Article

# Reclaiming *Tawhid* in Education: Advancing Global Citizenship, Digital Transformation and Human Rights through Policy Reform

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## Abstract

*Globalization and the digital era have fundamentally transformed how education engages with diversity, intercultural dialogue and human rights. However, many Muslim-majority contexts continue to rely on secular paradigms that fragment knowledge, weaken spiritual foundations and limit contributions to global citizenship. This study employs a conceptual-analytical qualitative design to propose a Tawhidic model of education management as a policy framework that reclaims education's divine purpose while addressing contemporary challenges of globalization and digital transformation. The analysis finds that positioning Tawhid as an epistemological core enables the ethical integration of GCED and digital transformation, providing a coherent normative framework for education policy in Muslim-majority contexts. The analysis reveals that by integrating Tawhidic principles with Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Islamic education can serve as a bridge between civilizational values and global human rights frameworks. The paper offers policymakers a pathway toward building inclusive, ethical and future-ready educational systems that advance sustainability in the digital age.*

**Keywords:** Digital; Education; Human Rights; Global Citizenship Education; Globalization;

## Introduction

Education has long been recognized as a catalyst for social change, cultural understanding and the promotion of global peace.<sup>1</sup> In the 21st century, the rapid acceleration of digital globalization and complex human rights challenges have redefined educational priorities, requiring learners to be ethically and socially responsible.<sup>23</sup> UNESCO's (2024) latest recommendations emphasize that education must empower individuals to act as global citizens who contribute to a just and sustainable world.<sup>4</sup> Despite these goals, education systems in many regions, particularly in Muslim societies,

<sup>1</sup> Abdelkarim Oubkkou, 'Building Global Bridges and Fostering Global Competence: The Role of Multicultural Education in Higher Education Institutions', in *Internationalization of Higher Education and Digital Transformation* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), pp. 69–87 <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76444-8\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76444-8_5)>.

<sup>2</sup> Ilinca STERIU and Alina STĂNESCU, 'Digitalization in Education: Navigating the Future of Learning', in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Virtual Learning - VIRTUAL LEARNING - VIRTUAL REALITY (18th Edition)* (The National Institute for Research & Development in Informatics - ICI Bucharest (ICI Publishing House), 2023), pp. 171–82 <<https://doi.org/10.58503/icvl-v18y202314>>.

<sup>3</sup> Boguslawa Denys and Boguslaw Klimczuk, 'International Cooperation Towards Digital Transformation and Digital Ecosystems in Education', in *2022 45th Jubilee International Convention on Information, Communication and Electronic Technology (MIPRO) (IEEE, 2022)*, pp. 589–93 <<https://doi.org/10.23919/MIPRO55190.2022.9803524>>.

<sup>4</sup> Meng-Leong How and others, 'Artificial Intelligence for Advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): An Inclusive Democratized Low-Code Approach', 2023, pp. 145–65 <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-21147-8\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-21147-8_9)>.



remain constrained by epistemological fragmentation.<sup>5</sup> The separation of moral and spiritual development from intellectual and technological progress has led to a state of value dissonance, where academic excellence is pursued without corresponding ethical depth. The contemporary educational crisis lies not in the lack of access to knowledge, but in the absence of moral integration and spiritual coherence, often resulting from the dualistic nature of modern education. Al-Attas argues that the true purpose of education is the cultivation of *adab*, which ensures that knowledge is used for the perfection of the human soul rather than just material gain. Despite global policy commitments to ethical and inclusive education, prevailing education models remain normatively fragmented, often prioritizing technical competence over moral and spiritual coherence.<sup>6</sup>

Within the Islamic intellectual tradition, the principle of *Tawhid* (divine unity) offers an epistemological foundation for holistic education.<sup>7</sup> *Tawhid* embodies the belief that all knowledge originates from and leads to the Creator, establishing a worldview that integrates faith, reason and action. From this perspective, education is not merely a process of acquiring information but an act of cultivating harmony between intellect (*'aql*), faith (*iman*) and moral character (*akhlāq*). This study explores how the *Tawhidic* worldview can enrich Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and digital transformation by embedding ethical consciousness into educational policy. It argues that a *Tawhidic* GCED model can bridge the gap between global educational frameworks and faith-based moral systems, aligning education with the higher purpose of human development.<sup>8</sup>

This study thus explores how the *Tawhidic* worldview can enrich Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and digital transformation by embedding ethical consciousness and human dignity into educational policy and practice. It argues that a *Tawhidic* GCED model can bridge the gap between global educational frameworks and faith-based moral systems, aligning education with the higher purpose of human development and social justice.<sup>9</sup> Global Citizenship Education emerged as a response to global challenges such as inequality, conflict and environmental degradation.<sup>10</sup> It seeks to nurture values of empathy, respect and shared responsibility. GCED aligns closely with the *Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7*, which calls for education that promotes sustainable development and global cooperation. GCED extends beyond cognitive learning to include affective and behavioral dimensions that encourage students to engage in social justice, environmental sustainability and cultural pluralism.<sup>11</sup> *Tawhid* represents the Islamic doctrine of divine unity a worldview that perceives all forms of knowledge and existence as interconnected manifestations of the Creator's will.<sup>12</sup> Scholars such as al-Faruqi emphasize that a *Tawhidic* framework redefines education as a moral enterprise that seeks harmony between intellect and revelation.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Yahia Baiza, 'Are Contemporary Islamic Education and Their Pedagogical Approaches Fit for Purpose? A Critique and Way Forward', in *Supporting Modern Teaching in Islamic Schools* (London: Routledge, 2022), pp. 17–30 <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003193432-3>>.

<sup>6</sup> Mei Liu, 'Research on Moral Education Design of College English under Mixed Teaching Mode with the Tool of Co-Matrix', in *2021 2nd International Conference on Big Data and Information Education (ICBDIE)* (IEEE, 2021), pp. 457–60 <<https://doi.org/10.1109/ICBDIE52740.2021.00110>>.

<sup>7</sup> Ampuan Hj Brahim bin Ampuan Hj Tengah, Pengiran Hajah Siti Norainna Pengi Besar and Dayangku Nurul Faten Nazurah binti Amlı, 'Tawhidic Worldview and Islamic Aesthetics in the Art of Bruneian Tenun (Woven Textile)', in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Brunei* (London: Routledge, 2022), pp. 311–23 <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003020431-25>>.

<sup>8</sup> 'The Tawhidi Methodology with Implications on Islamic Economics as an Embedded Socio-Scientific System: Contra-Islamic Neoclassical Reasoning', in *God-Conscious Organization and the Islamic Social Economy* (Routledge, 2016), pp. 70–91 <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315585321-12>>.

<sup>9</sup> Hamdy Abdullah and others, 'Developing Tahfiz Empowerment Index Based on Maqasid Shariah', *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management*, 18.5 (2025), 1066–91 <<https://doi.org/10.1108/IMEFM-06-2024-0317>>.

<sup>10</sup> Nicolás J. C. Aguilar Forero, 'Videoactivismo y Trabajo Por Proyectos: Una Experiencia de Educación Para La Ciudadanía Mundial En Colombia', *Educação e Pesquisa*, 45 (2019) <<https://doi.org/10.1590/s1678-4634201945191009>>.

<sup>11</sup> Nonkanyiso Pamela Shabalala, 'Global Citizenship Education as a Strategy for Social, Justice and Identity: Achieving Balance for Meaningful Social Impact', *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 2025, 1–13 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2025.2537371>>.

<sup>12</sup> Masudul Alam Choudhury, 'Comparative Understanding of the Socio-Scientific Process: Islam and Occidentalism', in *Methodology of Islamic Economics* (Routledge, 2019), pp. 221–50 <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429320804-10>>.

<sup>13</sup> I. R. Al-Faruqi, 'Islamization of Knowledge General Principles and Work Plan', 1988, pp. 1–91.



Recent studies reaffirm Tawhid as an epistemological foundation for educational reform. *Tawhidic* philosophy of education aligns moral, spiritual and rational faculties, providing an antidote to value fragmentation.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, propose an *inclusive Tawhidic epistemology* that promotes tolerance and pluralism while maintaining faith-based integrity. Digital transformation has reshaped pedagogy, governance and human interaction.<sup>15</sup> Yet, it introduces ethical challenges such as digital inequality, misinformation and data exploitation. UNESCO's Global Education Coalition emphasizes that digital innovation must be guided by human rights principles and inclusive ethics (UNESCO, 2023). Integrating digital literacy with ethical literacy ensures that learners use technology responsibly in the Muslim world. Studies of higher education institutions in Palestine and Malaysia show that while digital readiness is increasing, ethical and spiritual dimensions are often underdeveloped. The *Tawhidic* GCED framework aims to reconcile this gap by embedding spiritual awareness in digital education.

## Method

This study adopts a conceptual-analytical qualitative design, which is particularly appropriate for theory-building and normative inquiry in the fields of educational philosophy, policy studies and religious epistemology. Unlike empirical methods, this inquiry emphasizes the critical synthesis of ideas, interpretive reasoning and philosophical reflection to reconcile theological and pedagogical dimensions.<sup>16</sup> The study draws upon primary categories of data philosophical texts by foundational scholars such as *al-Attas, al-Faruqi, Nasr*, contemporary academic articles, UNESCO publications (2023–2024), official policy documents from Malaysia, Indonesia and the Middle East. Rather than testing hypotheses empirically, the study aims to construct an integrative theoretical framework that reconciles Islamic epistemology (Tawhid) with Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and contemporary challenges of digital transformation. The proposed framework is intended to inform policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators and educational leaders in Muslim majority contexts, while remaining conceptually relevant to broader global education stakeholders. Analytically, the study proceeds through an iterative process of interpretive reading and thematic synthesis. Core concepts related to unity of knowledge, ethical citizenship, moral responsibility and digital ethics are identified across the literature and examined in relation to one another. These concepts are then comparatively integrated to explore points of convergence and tension between Islamic educational philosophy and dominant global frameworks. Through this process of synthesis and comparison, a conceptual model the "*Tawhidic* GCED Model" emerges as a normative structure that positions *Tawhid* as the central axis integrating civic ethics and technological responsibility.

This design is therefore suitable for advancing theoretical clarity and informing future empirical research. *First*, key concepts were identified from literature on Tawhid, GCED and digital transformation. *Second*, a thematic synthesis was conducted to group similar constructs such as "unity of knowledge" and "ethical literacy". *Third*, comparative integration was used to juxtapose Islamic educational philosophy with global frameworks to identify synergies. Finally, the framework development stage resulted in a conceptual model illustrating how *Tawhidic* principles inform global citizenship and digital ethics. This approach was chosen to construct a normative educational model rooted in Islamic ethics yet relevant to universal human concerns. Conceptual analysis serves here as a foundational step in theory-building, offering a normative and philosophical basis upon which future empirical investigations may be developed. Accordingly, the findings of this study should be understood as analytically generative rather than empirically conclusive, with subsequent research encouraged to operationalize and test the proposed framework in applied educational contexts. Following the logic of a mini-research, this study identifies a normative problem in contemporary education, analyses relevant conceptual and policy texts, interprets their implications through a *Tawhidic* lens and synthesizes the findings into a coherent educational framework.

<sup>14</sup> Mikhail I. Mukhin, 'Spiritual and Moral Education as the Cornerstone of Human Personality Formation', *Perspectives of Science and Education*, 71.5 (2024), 10–29 <<https://doi.org/10.32744/pse.2024.5.1>>.

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Clarke and Craig Ashhurst, 'Making Collective Learning Coherent: An Adaptive Approach to the Practice of Transdisciplinary Pedagogy', in *Transdisciplinary Theory, Practice and Education* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), pp. 151–65 <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93743-4\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93743-4_11)>.

<sup>16</sup> Hristo Valchev, 'Empirical Conceptual Analysis: An Exposition', *Philosophia*, 50.2 (2022), 757–76 <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-021-00389-5>>.



## Results and Discussions

The analyzed data consist of philosophical texts, policy documents and scholarly literature, which are interpreted to generate normative insights rather than empirical measurements in this conceptual study. The conceptual synthesis produced a framework that redefines the relationship between spirituality, technology and global citizenship. A primary finding reaffirms *Tawhid* as the unifying principle of knowledge, where education is viewed as a spiritual act of self-purification and social contribution. In practical terms, this requires curricula that merge scientific studies with moral education, situating technology within a framework of divine accountability where knowledge is treated as a trust.<sup>17,18</sup> Furthermore, GCED provides the civic scaffolding that aligns with the *Tawhidic* worldview, as aims of justice and peace are conceptually compatible with Islamic ethics when interpreted through the lens of *maslahah* (public good) and *adl* (justice).<sup>19</sup>

The pandemic has accelerated access but widened the ethical divide in the context of digital transformation.<sup>20</sup> Integrating *Tawhidic* ethics with digital literacy ensures that technological advancement strengthens moral integrity, as the digital world is viewed as part of creation governed by divine moral order.<sup>21</sup> Learners and educators are encouraged to develop *ihسان* (excellence) and *taqwa* (God-consciousness) in their use of technology.<sup>22</sup> The analysis indicates that integrating *Tawhidic* principles into educational governance significantly strengthens the moral dimension of human rights education and global policy.<sup>23</sup> Policy analysis indicates that the integration of *Tawhidic* principles into educational governance can significantly strengthen the moral dimension of human rights education. While contemporary secular discourses often center primarily on individual autonomy, a *Tawhidic* framework grounds human rights in the concepts of mutual responsibility and divine servanthood.<sup>24</sup> This alignment supports the development of inclusive, spiritually enriched educational policies that transcend narrow ideological boundaries. By framing rights through the lens of *Amanah* (trust), policy reform can provide a shared moral vocabulary for intercultural dialogue, ultimately serving as a bridge between Islamic civilizational values and global humanitarian standards.<sup>25</sup>

This synthesis culminates in the proposed *Tawhidic* GCED Model, which functions as a transformative framework for 21st-century education.<sup>26</sup> The *Tawhidic* model is structured around three interrelated domains like on Figure 1. *First*, spiritual Unity (the *Tawhidic* core); *Second*, Civic Ethics (the GCED dimension; and *Third*, Technological Ethics (the digital dimension). The model ensures that civic participation and digital engagement are not merely technical skills, but expressions

<sup>17</sup> Husein Inusah, 'Rethinking AI Ethics through an Akan Ontology: Advancing an Ethics of Becoming for Sustainable AI', *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines*, 59.3 (2025), 457–74 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2025.2524342>>.

<sup>18</sup> Kathryn A. Johnson, Morris A. Okun and Jordan W. Moon, 'The Interaction of Faith and Science Mindsets Predicts Perceptions of the Relationship between Religion and Science', *Current Research in Ecological and Social Psychology*, 4 (2023), 100113 <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cresp.2023.100113>>.

<sup>19</sup> Hye Seung Cho and Jacqueline Mosselson, 'Neoliberal Practices amidst Social Justice Orientations: Global Citizenship Education in South Korea', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 48.6 (2018), 861–78 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2017.1364154>>.

<sup>20</sup> Lucy Shackleton and Rosanna Mann, 'COVID-19 and the Digital Divide in Higher Education: A Commonwealth Perspective', in *Libraries, Digital Information, and COVID* (Elsevier, 2021), pp. 149–58 <<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-88493-8.00015-X>>.

<sup>21</sup> Uthman Mohammed Mustapha Kanne and AbdulGafar Olawale Fahm, 'Exploring The Ethical Governance of Artificial Intelligence from An Islamic Ethical Perspective', *Jurnal Fiqh*, 22.1 (2025), 134–61 <<https://doi.org/10.22452/fiqh.vol22no1.5>>.

<sup>22</sup> Abrar Adhani and others, 'The Independent Mosque Movement in Improving Empowerment Towards the Welfare of Muslims in Medan City, Indonesia', *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 2024 <<https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.23>>.

<sup>23</sup> Siavash Saffari, 'Tawhid Paradigm and an Inclusive Concept of Liberative Struggle', *Religions*, 14.9 (2023), 1088 <<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14091088>>.

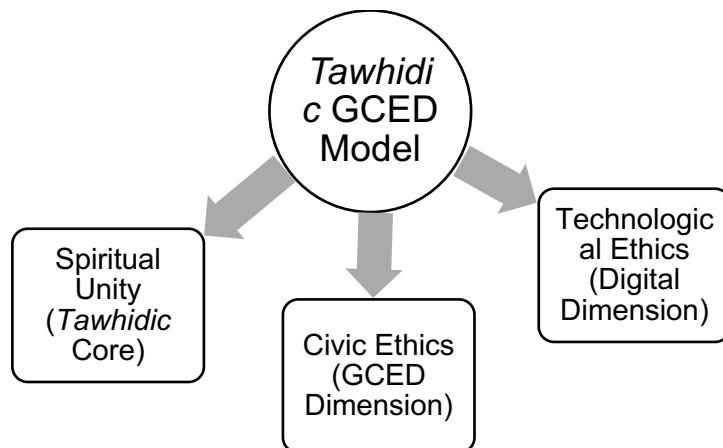
<sup>24</sup> Ánxela Bugallo-Rodríguez and María Cristina Naya-Riveiro, 'Educação Para La Ciudadanía Global (ECG): Comprendiendo Lo Internacional a Través de Lo Local', *Revista LUSófona de Educação*, 2018, 139–51 <<https://doi.org/10.24140/issn.1645-7250.rle41.09>>.

<sup>25</sup> Mark Halstead, 'An Islamic Concept of Education', *Comparative Education*, 40.4 (2004), 517–29 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/0305006042000284510>>.

<sup>26</sup> Bugallo-Rodríguez and Naya-Riveiro.



of a learner's moral identity by positioning Tawhid as the central axis. This synergy provides a holistic pathway for educational institutions to produce citizens who are globally competent, technologically adept and spiritually grounded, thereby answering the call for a more integrated approach to global sustainability and peace.



**Figure 1.** *Tawhidic GCED Model*

The diagram illustrates a three-layered epistemic-ethical framework in *first*, Spiritual Unity (*Tawhid*) forms the foundational core. As the *Tawhidic* center, it represents the principle of divine unity that prevents the fragmentation of science and religion. *Tawhid* affirms that knowledge, faith, and morality are inseparable, positioning education as a sacred trust (*amanah*) rather than a neutral or secular accumulation of information. Anchoring all educational processes in a single metaphysical axis, the model insists that both social and technical learning must reflect the learner's moral and spiritual identity. As articulated by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the modern desacralization of knowledge has precipitated environmental and spiritual crises, whereas a *Tawhidic* worldview restores the sacred dimension of scientific inquiry. *Second*, Civic Ethics, represented through the lens of Global Citizenship Education (GCED). This layer operationalizes *Tawhidic* values into concrete social responsibilities. It emphasizes justice (*'adl*), cooperation, and sustainability as expressions of the learner's duty toward the environment and the global community. Under this paradigm, global citizenship is not reduced to a secular or political construct; rather, it becomes an embodiment of *maslahah* (public good), where individuals act as khalifah, stewards entrusted with maintaining harmony and balance on earth. *Third*, Technological Ethics, which addresses the ethical imperatives of digital transformation. This layer ensures that technological tools remain subservient to human and spiritual values. Grounded in *ihsan* (excellence) and *taqwa* (God-consciousness), digital engagement is framed as an ethical competency rather than merely a technical skill set. Learners are thus expected to navigate data, algorithms, and innovation with accountability to a divine moral order. By offering ethical guardrails that promote responsible innovation, the model positions digital literacy as an extension of moral conduct, aligning technological advancement with the pursuit of ethical and spiritual integrity.<sup>27</sup>

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the crisis of education in the digital age is fundamentally a crisis of ethical direction caused by the separation of knowledge from spirituality. The proposed *Tawhidic* GCED framework offers a philosophical remedy by integrating faith-based ethics with global citizenship and digital literacy. Through the principle of unity, education becomes a sacred trust that nurtures holistic individuals who are intellectually competent and socially responsible. Such integration aligns with Islamic epistemology while complementing international human rights and sustainability agendas. Based on this analysis, several recommendations are proposed. *First*, curriculum reform should integrate Islamic ethical principles into GCED and digital literacy modules at all levels. *Second*, teacher professional development must include *Tawhidic* Pedagogy training to

<sup>27</sup> Rinat A. Zhanbayev and others, 'Demoethical Model of Sustainable Development of Society: A Roadmap towards Digital Transformation', *Sustainability*, 15.16 (2023), 12478 <<https://doi.org/10.3390/su151612478>>.



balance technological proficiency with spiritual guidance. *Third*, national policies should define ethical standards for digital education grounded in *ibsan* and *amanah*. *Fourth*, partnerships between Islamic and non-Islamic institutions should be promoted to foster intercultural understanding based on shared values. Finally, future research should employ mixed methods to empirically test the effectiveness of the *Tawhidic* GCED model in real-world educational contexts. This paper advances the GCED discourse by introducing a *Tawhidic* governance-oriented model that integrates spiritual ontology into digital ethics an aspect largely absent from prevailing secular GCED frameworks.

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