

The Integrity Of Science From The Perspective Of Islamic Fiqh Studies: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Scientific integrity has become an increasingly urgent issue in contemporary academia due to the rise of ethical violations such as data manipulation, plagiarism, and the misuse of technology. This article examines scientific integrity from the perspective of Islamic fiqh through a systematic literature review of classical and contemporary scholarly sources. Departing from dominant value-neutral approaches, the study conceptualizes knowledge (‘ilm) in Islam as a moral and spiritual mandate (amānah) that entails ethical accountability before God and society. Islamic fiqh and uṣūl al-fiqh provide a comprehensive framework integrating revelation, rational inquiry, and empirical observation in guiding scientific conduct. The study finds that scientific integrity in Islamic fiqh is rooted in core principles such as honesty (ṣidq), accountability (amānah), justice (‘adl), and public benefit (maṣlaḥah), which are further reinforced by the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah). This framework challenges value-neutral approaches to science by emphasizing ethical intentionality and societal impact. Distinct from general studies of scientific ethics that focus primarily on procedural norms or professional codes, this article contributes a fiqh-based scientific integrity model that systematically integrates epistemological validity, moral intention, and maqāṣid-oriented social responsibility into a unified normative framework. Ultimately, the fiqh-based perspective offers a holistic model for fostering ethical scientific practices that contribute to both academic credibility and the moral well-being of society.

INTRODUCTION

Science has long been recognized as a fundamental pillar for the advancement and sustainability of human civilization. Within the Islamic worldview, however, knowledge (‘ilm) is not merely understood as the accumulation of data, empirical facts, or technological mastery, but rather as a moral trust (amānah) that entails spiritual, ethical, and social responsibilities (Mulyani, 2023; Priatna, 2023). Islamic scholarship emphasizes that knowledge serves as a means to fulfill humanity’s role as khalīfah on earth, requiring that scientific inquiry be oriented toward public benefit (maṣlaḥah) and ethical accountability before God (Fristika & Nuril, 2025; Hakim, 2025). Consequently, maintaining scientific integrity is not optional within Islamic thought, but an inherent requirement to ensure that knowledge production remains aligned with sharī‘ah principles and moral values (Nisa, 2025).

In contemporary academic discourse, scientific integrity has emerged as an urgent global concern due to the increasing prevalence of research misconduct, including data manipulation, fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism (Paryzhak & Vári, 2024; Weber-Mandrin et al., 2024). Institutional pressures such as the “publish or perish” culture have been widely identified as key drivers of unethical research behavior, incentivizing quantity-oriented output at the expense of rigor and honesty (Khot et al., 2024; Poutoglidou et al., 2022). These conditions have significantly undermined the credibility and reliability of scientific knowledge, contributing to a reproducibility crisis across disciplines and eroding public trust in academic institutions (Alba et al., 2020; Jain, 2025).

The ethical challenges surrounding scientific integrity are further intensified by rapid technological advancements, particularly the integration of artificial intelligence in research and academic writing. While AI-based tools offer efficiency and innovation, they also raise serious concerns related to plagiarism, authorship ambiguity, and the replication of existing works without proper attribution (Ekmekçi et al., 2025; Kasani et al., 2024). Scholars argue that conventional ethical frameworks are increasingly inadequate for addressing these technologically mediated risks, highlighting the need for ethical paradigms that emphasize moral intention, accountability, and responsibility beyond procedural compliance (Koçak, 2024; Ramos-Castañeda et al., 2025). This situation underscores the necessity of rethinking scientific integrity through value-based and normative perspectives.

Islam offers a comprehensive worldview that integrates knowledge (‘ilm) and morality (akhlāq), rejecting the notion of value-neutral science and instead promoting an ethical vision of knowledge production (Agustono & Inayah, 2024; Murtadho et al., 2024). Foundational Islamic sources such as the Qur’an and Hadith emphasize that knowledge must lead to ethical conduct, justice, and social responsibility, framing learning as an act of worship rather than a purely intellectual pursuit (Andrabi, 2025; Ismail et al., 2024). Classical scholars like al-Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyyah further reinforced the inseparability of epistemology and ethics, arguing that knowledge devoid of moral guidance risks causing harm rather than benefit (Hasan, 2025; Irfan & Sain, 2024).

Within this holistic framework, Islamic fiqh occupies a central position as a discipline that encompasses legal, epistemological, and ethical dimensions of human action. Fiqh, particularly through its methodological foundations in uṣūl al-fiqh, provides principles that govern intention, accountability, justice, and the ethical consequences of human behavior (Majid & Zukhruf, 2024; Nisa, 2025). Core fiqh values such as amānah (trustworthiness), ṣidq (truthfulness), ‘adl (justice), and mas’ūliyyah (accountability) align closely with contemporary standards of scientific integrity while extending them through the concept of divine accountability (ḥisāb) (Hussein et al., 2024; Sunarno, 2024). Thus, fiqh offers a robust normative lens for evaluating ethical scientific conduct.

Despite this rich ethical tradition, the modern Muslim intellectual landscape continues to face a persistent dichotomy between religious sciences and empirical or applied sciences. Scholars argue that the dominance of secular paradigms in education and research has marginalized Islamic ethical values such as adab, responsibility, and moral restraint, weakening the epistemological unity of Islamic knowledge systems (Hakim, 2025; Mulyani, 2023). This fragmentation risks reducing science to mere utility and economic function, detached from its ethical and spiritual purposes. In this context, the framework of maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah provides a critical integrative approach, ensuring that scientific

practices contribute to the preservation of intellect, life, dignity, and social welfare (Mokodenseho et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025).

Accordingly, examining scientific integrity from the perspective of Islamic fiqh studies is both timely and significant in addressing contemporary ethical crises in global science. This study aims to synthesize classical and contemporary literature to identify fiqh principles relevant to ethical scientific conduct and to explore their applicability at individual, institutional, and policy levels (Diwanta et al., 2024; Rahmani, 2025). By situating scientific integrity within Islamic legal-ethical frameworks, this research seeks to demonstrate that fiqh offers not only moral guidance but also a comprehensive foundation for developing scientifically rigorous, ethically grounded, and socially responsible knowledge production in the modern era (Ali, 2025; Salman, 2025).

Despite the growing body of literature on scientific integrity and research ethics, most existing studies remain dominated by secular and procedural frameworks that emphasize compliance with professional codes, institutional regulations, or methodological rigor, often treating ethics as an external or instrumental dimension of scientific practice. Meanwhile, studies that discuss Islamic perspectives on knowledge ethics tend to remain normative and fragmented, without articulating a systematic fiqh-based framework that can function as a conceptual model for scientific integrity in contemporary academia. This gap indicates the absence of an integrated Islamic jurisprudential approach that connects epistemological validity, moral intentionality, and societal responsibility within a single analytical framework. Therefore, this study aims to examine scientific integrity through the perspective of Islamic fiqh by synthesizing classical and contemporary sources, and to formulate a fiqh-based scientific integrity framework grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* that can contribute theoretically to debates on research ethics and practically to the development of ethical scientific practices.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative literature review approach grounded in the epistemological and methodological framework of Islamic fiqh, particularly *uṣūl al-fiqh*, to examine the concept of scientific integrity within Islamic legal-ethical discourse (Arif et al., 2025; Fauzi et al., 2025). The literature review is designed to synthesize normative fiqh principles and contemporary academic discussions on research ethics and scientific integrity. Data collection was conducted through systematic library research. Primary sources consist of classical fiqh and *uṣūl al-fiqh* texts that discuss knowledge (*ʿilm*), ethical responsibility, intention (*niyyah*), accountability (*masʿūliyyah*), and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). Secondary sources include peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books addressing scientific integrity, research ethics, academic misconduct, and the relationship between science and religion. The literature search was carried out using academic databases such as Google Scholar and indexed journals, employing keywords including scientific integrity, research ethics, Islamic fiqh, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, and ethics of knowledge.

The selection of sources was guided by several criteria. First, the literature had to be relevant to the themes of scientific integrity, Islamic epistemology, or fiqh-based ethics. Second, priority was given to authoritative classical Islamic texts and peer-reviewed contemporary publications. Third, the sources were limited to works published primarily within the last ten years for contemporary studies,

while classical sources were included based on their foundational relevance rather than publication date. Sources that lacked academic credibility or clear relevance to the research focus were excluded.

The analysis employed a thematic and normative approach. Thematically, the selected literature was examined to identify recurring concepts related to scientific integrity, such as honesty (*ṣīdq*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), accountability (*mas'ūliyyah*), justice (*ʿadl*), and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). Normatively, these themes were analyzed using *uṣūl al-fiqh* principles and evaluated in light of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*), particularly the preservation of intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), justice, and social welfare. To ensure methodological rigor, the study emphasizes transparency in source selection, consistency in analytical procedures, and coherence between methodological steps and normative conclusions. By integrating qualitative literature review standards with *fiqh*-based ethical analysis, this method seeks to maintain both academic rigor and normative integrity, enabling the formulation of a *fiqh*-based framework for scientific integrity that is conceptually grounded and methodologically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Conception of Knowledge and the Ethical Foundations of Scientific Integrity

In Islamic epistemology, knowledge (*ʿilm*) is not conceived as a value-neutral entity but as a moral and spiritual trust (*amānah*) entrusted to humanity. The acquisition, production, and dissemination of knowledge are therefore inseparable from ethical responsibility and accountability before God and society. This worldview fundamentally contrasts with dominant secular paradigms that often detach scientific inquiry from moral and spiritual considerations. Within Islamic thought, knowledge is not merely instrumental for technological progress but serves as a means to uphold justice, truth, and public welfare. Consequently, scientific integrity in Islam is rooted in internal moral consciousness rather than reliance solely on external procedural regulations or institutional compliance mechanisms.

Central to this ethical foundation are sincerity of intention (*niyyah*) and truthfulness (*ṣīdq*), which function as prerequisites for legitimate knowledge production. Scientific activities motivated primarily by personal ambition, institutional ranking, or publication metrics are considered ethically problematic within Islamic ethics. Contemporary empirical research demonstrates that competitive academic environments significantly contribute to misconduct such as plagiarism, data fabrication, and selective reporting (Ayikobua, 2025; Singh & Singh, 2024). These practices, while often addressed through administrative sanctions, reflect deeper moral failures that procedural solutions alone cannot resolve. From an Islamic perspective, such misconduct represents not only professional negligence but also a violation of moral trust and spiritual accountability.

Conceptually, Islamic scientific integrity may be articulated through an ethical scheme consisting of *niyyah* (ethical motivation), *ṣīdq* (honesty), *amānah* (responsibility), and *maṣlaḥah* (public benefit). This framework emphasizes that the legitimacy of scientific knowledge depends on both epistemic validity and ethical orientation. For instance, research that employs rigorous methodology but deliberately suppresses unfavorable findings undermines ethical integrity despite technical correctness. The framework also highlights that social impact is a critical dimension of

scientific value. As such, integrity becomes an intrinsic epistemic virtue embedded within the Islamic conception of knowledge itself.

The principle of *tawhīd* further reinforces the inseparability of epistemology, ethics, and purpose in Islamic scientific thought. By rejecting the compartmentalization of science and morality, Islam views the contemporary crisis of scientific integrity as a manifestation of moral and spiritual disengagement. Empirical studies indicate that inadequate ethical literacy among researchers, particularly graduate students, correlates with increased tolerance of misconduct (Hofmann et al., 2023). This condition underscores the limitations of compliance-based ethics that neglect moral formation. Islamic epistemology, therefore, offers a holistic and applicable ethical foundation capable of addressing integrity crises across disciplines and cultural contexts.

Fiqh as a Scientific Discipline: Ontological and Epistemological Foundations

Ontologically, *fiqh* conceptualizes human beings as *mukallaf*, morally accountable agents whose actions carry ethical and legal consequences. This understanding embeds integrity within the very nature of human action, including scientific and academic practices. Unlike descriptive sciences that focus solely on empirical observation, *fiqh* inherently evaluates actions through moral and normative lenses. Scientific research, as a deliberate human endeavor, is therefore subject to ethical judgment within *fiqh*. Integrity, in this sense, is not an optional attribute but an essential characteristic of responsible knowledge production.

Fiqh does not merely regulate external behavior but also evaluates intention, purpose, and social consequences. Legal reasoning within *fiqh* prioritizes justice, responsibility, and moral coherence, ensuring that actions align with ethical objectives. In contemporary academic contexts, this implies that research should not be assessed solely based on outputs such as publications or citations. Practices such as selective data interpretation or publication bias, even when institutionally tolerated, conflict with *fiqh*'s moral standards. Thus, *fiqh* offers a critical framework for assessing the ethical dimensions of modern research culture.

Epistemologically, *fiqh* is grounded in a structured interaction between revelation (*naql*), reason (*ʿaql*), consensus (*ijmāʿ*), and analogical reasoning (*qiyās*). This methodological plurality affirms rational inquiry while maintaining ethical boundaries. Transparency in reasoning, clarity of argumentation, and authenticity of sources are fundamental epistemic requirements. In modern research terms, these principles resonate with demands for methodological rigor, reproducibility, and accountability. Any form of data manipulation or misrepresentation constitutes both epistemic failure and moral transgression within *fiqh*.

The objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*) serve as an overarching ethical compass in evaluating knowledge claims. Scientific conclusions must promote justice, protect human dignity, and contribute to societal welfare while preventing harm. Knowledge that contradicts these objectives is considered epistemologically incomplete, regardless of technical sophistication. This approach challenges secular epistemologies that separate facts from values and often overlook ethical consequences. By integrating ethics into knowledge production, *fiqh* preserves both scientific legitimacy and moral coherence.

Scientific Integrity in Islamic Fiqh: Methodological, Ethical, and Axiological Dimensions

Methodologically, scientific integrity in *fiqh* is grounded in strict adherence to *uṣūl al-fiqh*, which governs valid reasoning and evidentiary standards. Scholars are required to employ authentic sources, coherent argumentation, and transparent analytical processes. The practice of *ijtihād* demands intellectual honesty, methodological discipline, and accountability for conclusions drawn. Any deviation from these standards, such as selective use of evidence, compromises scholarly credibility. In this sense, methodological integrity is both an epistemic and moral obligation. The use of weak, unauthenticated, or manipulated sources constitutes a serious violation of *fiqh*-based integrity. Scholars are ethically required to verify the reliability, relevance, and context of evidentiary materials. Contemporary studies indicate that data fabrication and falsification remain significant challenges in various scientific fields, particularly medicine and social sciences (Arif, 2025; Poutoglidou et al., 2022). Such practices erode trust in scientific knowledge and institutions. From a *fiqh* perspective, negligence in sourcing undermines both academic legitimacy and moral responsibility.

Ethically, *fiqh* emphasizes virtues such as honesty (*ṣidq*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), and justice (*ʿadl*) as foundational to scholarly conduct. Research misconduct, including plagiarism and authorship manipulation, is regarded as moral wrongdoing rather than mere procedural error. Empirical evidence confirms that plagiarism remains the most prevalent form of academic misconduct globally (Othman et al., 2025). These practices violate societal trust and distort knowledge transmission. Integrity, therefore, is inseparable from moral character in Islamic scholarship. Axiologically, scientific activity must contribute to public benefit and moral good. The principle of *jalb al-maṣlahah wa dar' al-mafṣadah* functions as an evaluative standard for scientific outcomes. Knowledge that causes social, environmental, or ethical harm is unacceptable regardless of technical merit. This framework aligns scientific inquiry with ethical purpose and human well-being. Consequently, *fiqh* positions science as a moral enterprise oriented toward collective welfare.

Contemporary Challenges to Scientific Integrity and Fiqh-Based Responses

Modern academic systems face structural pressures that undermine scientific integrity, particularly publication demands and performance-based evaluation metrics. These systems often prioritize quantity over quality, incentivizing questionable research practices. Empirical studies demonstrate a strong correlation between publication pressure and increased misconduct (Khot et al., 2024). As a result, public trust in scientific institutions has significantly declined. These challenges reveal systemic weaknesses that cannot be resolved through regulation alone. Islamic *fiqh* critiques this environment by emphasizing sincerity of intention (*niyyah*) in knowledge production. Research pursued solely for career advancement contradicts Islamic ethical principles. Ethical intentionality is central to maintaining integrity and scholarly authenticity. By reframing success as moral responsibility rather than numerical productivity, *fiqh* offers a corrective ethical perspective. This approach addresses the root causes of misconduct rather than its symptoms.

Through a *maqāṣid*-based framework, *fiqh* enables holistic evaluation of scientific practices. Research that undermines human dignity, social justice, or environmental sustainability is ethically deficient. Moral evaluation is not supplementary but integral to scientific legitimacy. This perspective broadens integrity beyond administrative compliance to include ethical impact. It also aligns scientific goals with broader societal values. Institutionally, *fiqh* encourages transparency, accountability, and ethical education. These principles align with global integrity frameworks that emphasize responsible

research conduct (Nguyen & Tuamsuk, 2024). Ethical governance, supported by moral education, can reduce misconduct and restore trust. Integrating fiqh-based ethics into institutional policies strengthens sustainability without rejecting scientific progress. Thus, fiqh-based responses are both constructive and forward-looking.

Implications of Fiqh-Based Scientific Integrity for Contemporary Academia

Epistemologically, fiqh-based integrity promotes balanced integration of revelation, reason, and empirical inquiry. This integration prevents epistemic absolutism that ignores ethics and relativism that undermines truth. Knowledge is evaluated holistically, considering accuracy, intention, and moral impact. Integrity thus becomes a core epistemic value rather than an external constraint. This approach strengthens the credibility of scientific knowledge. In higher education, fiqh-based ethics support curriculum reform and ethical literacy. Research ethics education should cultivate accountability, transparency, and social responsibility. Empirical studies show that ethics-integrated education enhances integrity awareness among graduate students (Hofmann et al., 2023). Ethical literacy contributes to long-term scholarly character formation. This is particularly important in research-intensive environments.

Institutionally, research evaluation systems must shift from excessive reliance on quantitative metrics toward meaningful and ethical contributions. Fiqh-based frameworks emphasize quality, benefit, and responsibility over numerical productivity. Such a shift reduces incentives for misconduct and supports sustainable scholarship. Institutions that prioritize ethical contribution are more likely to gain public trust. Integrity thus becomes an institutional value rather than an individual burden. Socially, scientific integrity safeguards public welfare by preventing the dissemination of misleading or harmful knowledge. In Islamic ethics, the prevention of harm (ḍarar) is a moral obligation. Knowledge that misguides policy or endangers society violates this principle. Ultimately, fiqh positions scientific integrity as both a moral and spiritual obligation. This paradigm offers a sustainable and globally relevant vision for the future of ethical science.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that scientific integrity from the perspective of Islamic fiqh constitutes a comprehensive ethical, epistemological, and normative framework governing the production and application of knowledge. In Islamic thought, knowledge (‘ilm) is inseparable from moral responsibility, positioning scientific integrity as a spiritual and ethical obligation that transcends technical compliance with academic standards. Fiqh and uṣūl al-fiqh provide structured principles that integrate epistemological validity, ethical intentionality, and social accountability within scientific practice. Beyond summarizing normative arguments, this article makes an original contribution to the study of Islamic education and scientific ethics by formulating a fiqh-based scientific integrity framework grounded in maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah. This framework systematically connects core fiqh values such as amānah, ṣidq, mas’ūliyyah, and maṣlaḥah with contemporary challenges in academic research, offering an alternative to value-neutral and procedural models of scientific ethics. As such, the study extends existing discussions by demonstrating that Islamic jurisprudence can function not only as moral guidance but also as a coherent conceptual model for ethical scientific governance.

In terms of practical implications, this framework can be translated into a policy-oriented model for Islamic higher education. At the curricular level, scientific integrity should be institutionalized through the integration of fiqh-based research ethics into undergraduate and postgraduate training. At the institutional level, research governance and evaluation systems should prioritize ethical quality, transparency, and societal contribution over purely quantitative performance indicators. At the leadership and policy level, Islamic higher education institutions are encouraged to adopt maqāsid-oriented integrity policies that embed accountability, public benefit, and moral responsibility into research management and academic culture. Ultimately, by positioning scientific integrity as both an academic and moral enterprise, this fiqh-based model offers a sustainable ethical foundation for higher education institutions seeking to respond to the contemporary crisis of scientific integrity. Future research may build upon this framework through empirical studies or policy analysis to assess its implementation and impact within diverse academic contexts.

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