



**FROM PHILOSOPHY TO PRAXIS: RELEVANCE OF CHARLES S.
PEIRCE'S PRAGMATISM IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatism and its relevance to the Islamic Education paradigm. This qualitative study is in the form of a literature review. Content analysis was used in this study. Data was obtained through documentation techniques. The results of the study show that pragmatism is a school of thought in philosophy which assumes that the truth value of a concept or theory is determined by its usefulness in practice. Meanwhile, the pragmatic approach in Islamic education can be implemented by providing students with real experiences so that they can hone their critical and creative thinking skills. This research contributes to the understanding that the philosophical thoughts of Charles S. Peirce, especially in the field of pragmatism, have great potential to enrich and expand education in Islam

Keywords: *Charles Sanders Pierce, Pragmatism, Islamic Education*

A. Introduction

Thinking is a gift to humans, other creatures are not given the ability to think like humans. It is this ability that distinguishes humans from other creatures. In addition to thinking, humans are also given other potentials such as feelings (affection), will (conation), and actions (action); or often referred to as creativity, taste, intention, and work. With these various potentials, when humans encounter something, they will question, doubt and answer it. The things that are questioned are related to the meaning and position of God, humans and the universe. Humans are not satisfied with answers that come from customs, traditions, fairy tales, myths and legends. This is because the answers provided by traditions, myths and legends do not conform to the rules of thinking or contradict human common sense or reason. Thinking is something that triggers the birth of philosophy and science. Therefore, thinking is the core of philosophy. However, not all thinking can be called philosophy. Thinking that can be called philosophy is thinking that has certain characteristics, namely radical, systematic and universal thinking. Philosophising is thinking that has a purpose, namely to discover the truth. Thus, through philosophising, humans can arrive at the truth (Ali Maksum, 2016: 11)

Among the various schools of thought in philosophy, there is a school of pragmatism that is widespread in modern philosophy. Pragmatism is the core of pragmatic philosophy, which determines the value of knowledge based on its practical use. (Lorens Bagus, 2002: 877) Charles Sanders Peirce is the founder of the school of pragmatism, which may contribute to the field of education. The main emphasis of pragmatism in education is based on the idea that students are not objects, but subjects who have experiences. Each student is an individual who experiences things, thereby developing and taking the initiative to overcome the problems they face in life. (Bagas Mukti Nasrowi, 2015: 32)

The purpose of this study is to describe Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatism and its relevance to the Islamic Education paradigm. This qualitative study is in the form of a literature review. Content analysis was used in this study. Data was obtained through documentation techniques.

Pragmatism was chosen because it is one of the many schools of thought in modern philosophy. As a philosophical school of thought, pragmatism seeks to mediate between the traditions developed by empiricism and idealism. Pragmatism strongly adheres to scientific methods and rejects abstraction. Charles Sanders Pierce's thinking is an important contribution to the field of pragmatic philosophy. According to him, pragmatism is a school of thought that emphasises the importance of practical thinking and experience as well as the consequences of a belief or action. In the context of Islamic education, Charles's thinking can be implemented to understand and develop education in accordance with the needs and demands of the times. Pragmatism in Islamic education can be applied in various aspects,

including the objectives of Islamic education, the position of students, the curriculum, teaching methods and their implementation.

B. A Brief Biography of Charles Sanders Peirce

Charles Sanders Peirce was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1839. He was the second son of Benjamin Peirce, a professor of mathematics and astronomy at Harvard University and a leading figure among mathematicians at that time. Charles S. Peirce had extraordinary abilities in both philosophy and science, and had received training in chemistry laboratories.

At the age of 13, Charles had already read Whitely's book on logic entitled 'Elements of Logic'. Then, in 1855, Charles S. Peirce began his first education at Harvard and graduated in 1859. (M. Amin Abdullah, 2012: 129). After completing his education at Harvard University, Charles Sanders Pierce chose to pursue a career as a staff member at a government agency. This agency was known as the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey. He joined in 1861 and served at the agency for approximately 30 years. In addition, in 1869, Charles Sanders Pierce also worked at the Harvard Observatory for several years.

Although his educational background and training were in chemistry, his contributions to other disciplines were also impressive. Pierce made many contributions in the fields of logic, philosophy, mathematics, and semiotics. Among his many contributions, one of the most famous was the development of pragmatism. Thanks to this great innovation, his name is still remembered by many people. (Shorichatul Munawwaroh, et al., 2024: 3-4).

C. The Concept of Pragmatism in the View of Charles Sanders Pierce

Pragmatism is a type of philosophical movement originating in America that only emphasises things that have practical value and considers the value of something from the perspective of its consequences. Pragmatism can be defined as a type of personal attitude and way of thinking that only takes into account things that have functional value and usefulness. It is a type of thinking that pays attention to what is useful and also considers that scientific truth lies in the practical value that can be given to life. This philosophical movement officially began in 1870 in the United States. In 1970, thanks to Robert Brandom, Philip Kitcher, and How Price, this movement gained greater popularity. The latter representative is considered the forerunner of modern or neoclassical pragmatism. (Wulan Pratiwi, 2024).

Pragmatism is often referred to as practical philosophy or practical application philosophy. The origin of this name for the philosophy comes from the American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914 AD). The name is taken from the Greek word *pragma*, which means work or action. (Fuad Farid Isma'il and Abdul Hamid Mutawalli, 2003: 168). However, pragmatism did not gain much influence until William James introduced it and made it famous through lectures that

were later published as a book entitled *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907). James understood pragmatism from a more psychological and existential perspective. He believed that truth is changeable and highly dependent on how well an idea can help individuals live more satisfying lives. According to him, an idea is considered true if it is useful, functional in practice, and supports the development of human life experiences. The main points of Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatism are as follows.

1. Theory of Meaning

This theory discusses how words acquire meaning, which is central to Peirce's pragmatism. According to him, a clear and definite idea can have meaning if it can be applied in practice (in reality). The meaning of a word can be determined by an operational formula; if A, then B. This means that concept A has the capacity to have a direct impact on that concept. When the words spoken refer to a specific object but have no practical impact, we can conclude that those words mean nothing. This theory actually attempts to challenge Descartes' rationalism. According to Descartes, all theories of knowledge originate from ideas that depend on reason. Rationalism places all thinking within the realm of individual reason (closed), reason as a theoretical instrument, always functioning separately from its surroundings. Based on Peirce's opinion, thought always takes place in a certain context, not in a completely isolated state. Interpretation and meaning can only be obtained through experience or experimentation, not through instinctive feelings. In other words, the meaning of words never belongs to a particular person, but is collective property, both in society and in general.

2. The Role of Trust

Peirce explains that there are three methods for building trust. First, there is a 'firm' or "sustained" attitude, which removes doubt and creates new beliefs based on personal arguments. Second, 'relying' on a certain authority, such as the authority of a superior, to provide assurance to subordinates regarding their words and actions, because they have power. This method is better known among idealist-rationalist philosophers, because their basis of thinking is the power of logic. Trust is seen as the result of a rational thought process, because everything that can be proven by logic can be believed. Peirce did not agree with all of these methods.

The first method is considered irrational, the second method eliminates all possible arguments, while the third method relies solely on the power of logic and ignores thoughts derived from specific experiences. These three methods do not take into account the relationship between experience and behaviour. Instead, Peirce prefers a scientific approach, because science always starts from a fact-based foundation, namely experience. Knowledge is built on the hypothesis that there is a

real world with characteristics that are completely independent of the subject's mind, not limited to the thinking subject. This belief can be proven and is not an individual action but an action carried out collectively.

3. Science as the Basis of Belief

There are three factors why Peirce chose science as the basis for the formation of belief. First, the scientific method requires not only reliable truth, but also a way to obtain that truth. This process should be open to others who wish to verify its authenticity, whether the results obtained are similar or not. The community or public aspect of the scientific method is strongly emphasised, because the content of beliefs and procedures should not be limited to specific topics. Second, the scientific method is critical, because research results can always be re-examined. If the results cannot be defended, then a new hypothesis will be formulated. Thirdly, absolute knowledge requires collaboration among all members of the scientific community. This means that scientific conclusions must be reached by all scientists, not just one person. Peirce wanted to emphasise empirical research that underpins a collaborative approach to belief. He argued that science is essentially a method of acting, of doing something. Therefore, every correct thought should be an effective way of acting. Peirce then summarised that in order to take action, one must have belief, while belief itself requires thought. Only thoughts that can be tested through experience and experiments can form the basis of belief, which ultimately leads to actual habits of action.

4. Ethics

Peirce understood that ethics is the science of good and evil. The fundamental question of this recognition is what our purpose is in acting. This question leads to the purpose of an action, particularly the action of liberation or self-control. Peirce also distinguished ethics into 'pure ethics' and 'practical ethics', based on the above definition. The mission of pure ethics is to discover the essence of an ideal life, namely the highest good that is the main goal of every human action. He argues that there is only one main goal and all human behaviour is directed towards achieving that goal. Meanwhile, practical ethics studies the harmony between certain actions and life aspirations. According to Peirce, pure ethics is pre-normative, while practical ethics is normative, and both have equal levels of importance. He believes that pure morality needs to be discussed, because the determination of life goals cannot be done in one go. These efforts must actually be carried out in stages and the ultimate goal itself is not limited, so it must be viewed from various perspectives. He calls this stage universal rationalisation.

There are three crucial elements. First, the main goal must be achieved gradually through a dynamic process. Second, the main goal is cosmic in nature and is realised through actions carried out rationally. Third, the process involves

cooperation and is social in nature, open to everyone. According to Peirce, conscience plays an important role as a moral principle that precedes society's awareness of the highest purpose in life. Universal love is the most important moral aspiration. The meaning of universal love is the desire to do good to all of humanity. In this sense, Peirce discusses humanity as a boundless community, a 'boundless human community'.

D. The Application of Charles S. Peirce's Pragmatism in Islamic Education

In today's era of globalization, Islamic educational activities are required to remain adaptable without losing their essential substance (Anamisari et al., 2026). In this context, the internalization of Islamic character-building values must be integrated into various aspects of Islamic educational activities, such as the curriculum, the teaching-learning process, extracurricular activities, and habit formation (Bisri et al., 2026). It is hoped that this integration will help to establish a system of Islamic education that is dialogue-based and context-sensitive (Afdila, et al., 2026). This is becoming increasingly necessary amid the rampant problem of juvenile delinquency among school pupils (Cuanton, et al., 2026).

In Islam, there is knowledge that comes from revelation, which is based on trust and faith concerning the relationship between humans and their God. This knowledge is contained in the holy book given by God to humans through intermediaries (prophets, messengers, or saints). (Ali Mudhofir and Heri Santoso, 2007: 72). Because it is based on belief and faith, everything revealed by God is true. This is in line with what Kuntowijoyo said, that truth in Islam is anything that comes from God, whether it is beneficial or its benefits are not yet known in practical life. This is based on the verse which means, 'And indeed, those who have been given the Book (Torah and Gospel) know that (the change of direction) is the truth from their Lord.' (Kuntowijoyo, 2006: 4-5) 'The truth is from your Lord, so never be among those who doubt.' (Mushaf Fami bi Syaunin: al-Qur'an and translation, 2013: 22).

Translated by Kuntowijoyo as 'do not be deceived by the freedom of the disbelievers in their lands'. According to him, "freedom" here refers to progress in business. "O you who believe! Enter into Islam completely..." Complete in this case means complete in thought, speech, and action. 'And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight path.' By 'straight path,' he means 'authentic,' in the sense of pure, untainted, and flawless. The last two verses indicate the requirement to be a complete and authentic Muslim in terms of faith, worship, sharia and morals. Meanwhile, the theory of truth only applies to faith, because it is primary. The civilisation of Tawhid (theocentric civilisation) is based on the provisions set by God. Apart from that, or what is secondary, there is complete freedom for human creativity, such as technical matters, political structures, and culture. The limitation on cultural matters is akhlaqul karimah (good character). So,

in Islam there are matters that cannot be touched by pragmatic theory, namely matters of Tawhid, because in pragmatic theory a statement can be abandoned if a new statement emerges as a result of experimentation. Meanwhile, in Islam, God is eternally one, and reason is only permitted to contemplate Hisplc. creation, not His essence. Furthermore, knowledge that comes from Him, in the form of revelations recorded in the holy book, is true; in other words, it cannot be subject to theory. Pragmatism in Islam is pragmatic in nature, which can be understood or interpreted as such. This is because interpretation must be in line with the spirit of the times, or what is known as contextual interpretation. (Dhuhaa Rohmawan and Riyadlul Badi'ah, 2022: 105).

If Charles S. Peirce's theory of pragmatism is applied to the Islamic education paradigm, it can be elaborated in various aspects as follows.

1. Scientific Methods in Religious Education

Peirce's pragmatic view emphasises the importance of linking theory with practice, which can be applied in Islamic education. The learning process is not limited to understanding religious theory, but also applying it in daily activities. This principle is in line with Islamic teachings that prioritise the practice of religious teachings in life. Peirce was one of the pioneers of the scientific method that focuses on observation, experimentation, and analysis. This concept can be implemented in Islamic education to explore a broader understanding of the verses of the Qur'an and hadith through in-depth study, history, and contextual interpretation.

2. Logic and Analysis in Understanding Religion

Peirce's logical thinking can be used to analyse and understand religious texts. In the context of Islamic education, the application of logic can help students understand religious arguments, find errors in interpretation, and develop critical thinking towards various points of view. Peirce's pragmatic approach supports critical thinking in the interpretation of Islamic law. Students are encouraged to think critically when making decisions based on religious principles, taking into account the context and purpose of the regulations.

3. Variety of interpretations and Cross-Perspective Knowledge

Peirce recognises the importance of accepting uncertainty and diversity of thought. This can be applied in Islamic education by teaching students to appreciate various approaches and views in religion, while developing a tolerant attitude towards differences. Cooperation between disciplines. The principle of collaboration between various disciplines in Peirce's thinking can inspire an interdisciplinary approach in Islamic education. Through collaboration between religious studies, natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, students can achieve a more comprehensive understanding of religious and social issues. Action-

based moral education. Peirce's pragmatism emphasises the importance of morally-based actions. This concept can be applied in Islamic education by encouraging students to perform actions that are in line with Islamic moral and ethical principles in their daily lives.

g. Continuity of Education

Peirce's thinking on the evolution of knowledge throughout life is in line with the Islamic view of lifelong learning. Education in Islam can emphasise the importance of continuous learning to further understand religion, science, and moral values. By linking Charles S. Peirce's thinking with Islamic education, a more comprehensive educational method will be created that encourages the development of critical thinking and the application of religious teachings in daily activities.

E. Conclusion

Based on the research topic, it can be concluded that pragmatism is a school of thought in philosophy that believes that the truth value of a concept or theory is determined by its usefulness in practice. This school of thought opposes excessive intellectualism, absolutism, and devalues formal logic. Meanwhile, the pragmatic approach in Islamic education can be implemented by providing students with real experiences, so that they can hone their critical and creative thinking skills when facing challenges in everyday life. From an Islamic perspective, pragmatism can also be applied by referring to educational theories based on strong philosophical foundations.

This study contributes to the idea that Charles S. Peirce's philosophical thinking, especially in the field of pragmatism, has great potential to enrich and expand education in Islam. The limitations of this study are still at the level of theoretical conceptual study, not attempting to relate it to implementation in case studies. Therefore, case studies are important as follow-up research.

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