



OBJECT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION THEORY BASED ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Abdul Hayyi¹, Zamroni², Yosi Huzna³, Nidia Ningrum⁴

Abdulhayyi889@Gmail.Com¹, iceisa.iainsmd18@gmail.com²

^{1,2,3,4} Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris State Islamic University Samarinda

Abstract:

This study aims to examine the object of Islamic educational theory based on a community approach by tracing the historical and conceptual roots of critical education, as well as its relevance in contemporary social, political, and cultural contexts. Islamic education from a critical perspective is understood not only as a process of knowledge transfer, but also as a means of liberation and human empowerment from various forms of structural, ideological, and cultural oppression. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study method, which examines relevant national journals indexed by Sinta 2 and international articles (2020–2025). The analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that critical education in Islam has a strong theological basis, rooted in the values of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar and the principle of tahrir al-insān (human liberation). Islamic education is understood as a process of spiritual and social emancipation that fosters reflective awareness, builds moderation, and strengthens the cultural identity of the community. Furthermore, Islamic education serves as a political product, a means of cultural resistance, and a preserver of just and civilized local values. Thus, the theory of community-based Islamic education integrates spirituality, rationality, and social awareness in shaping people who are faithful, knowledgeable, and civilized.

Keywords: *Islamic Education, Critical Educational Theory, Society, Social Transformation, Culture*

INTRODUCTION

The development of Islamic educational theory cannot be separated from the ever-changing social, political, and cultural dynamics of society (Zohaib Hassan Sain Chanda Chansa Thelma, Uthman Shehu Lawal, Muhammad Lawal Habibu, 2025). Education in Islam is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but also an instrument of social transformation that fosters critical awareness of the realities of human life (Adeoye & Munawwaroh, 2025). In this context, critical education is a relevant approach because it positions education as a means of human liberation and empowerment (Samsul, 2025). This approach seeks to free humanity from structures of oppression, whether political, economic, or cultural, and to foster moral and spiritual awareness oriented toward social justice.

As explained by (Hidayat 2023), critical education from an Islamic perspective stems from the spirit of enjoining good and forbidding evil, which emphasizes the crucial role of education in combating injustice and social oppression.¹ Education serves not only to develop intellectual intelligence but

also as a tool for internalizing the values of justice (al-'adl), freedom (hurriyyah), and social responsibility (mas'uliyah ijtima'iyah). This demonstrates that Islamic education has a strong ethical dimension in developing students' social and spiritual awareness. In a historical context, (Azra 2021) asserts that Islamic education has been a social project rooted in the transformation of Muslim society itself from its inception.² Educational institutions such as kuttab (Islamic boarding schools), madrasahs, and pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) served not only as venues for the transmission of religious knowledge but also as spaces for the social and political articulation of Muslims. Islamic education, therefore, has always been closely linked to the power, ideology, and social structures surrounding it. For example, Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia played a crucial role in shaping national consciousness and resistance to colonialism, as evidenced by the history of pesantren education in Java and Sumatra (Tohet, 2024).

Furthermore, (Chanifah 2021), through her research at two Islamic universities in Indonesia, emphasized the importance of designing Islamic education based on spirituality and community to face the challenges of modernity and globalization.³ She argues that Islamic education cannot simply focus on cognitive aspects but must integrate spiritual and social dimensions to foster a balanced character between faith, knowledge, and good deeds. In this view, spirituality serves as the primary foundation for developing critical awareness rooted in Islamic values, while the community approach emphasizes the importance of social participation in the educational process. Thus, community-based Islamic education aims not only to produce knowledgeable individuals but also to build a social order that is humanistic, just, and based on divine values. This educational model places the community at the center of the learning process, not merely as an object of educational policy, but as an active subject in creating social change. Islamic education based on critical awareness and community spirituality can be an effective means of achieving social justice, solidarity, and moral sustainability amidst contemporary global challenges..

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of critical Islamic education through conceptual and textual analysis. This approach was chosen because it provides a comprehensive explanation of the relationship between Islamic educational theory, society, and social practices developing in the contemporary environment. The primary objective of this approach is not to test hypotheses, but rather to interpret the meaning and context of various relevant academic literature.

The method used is library research. Data was collected from various credible scientific sources, including national journals indexed by Sinta 2 and international articles published between 2020 and 2025. The literature analyzed includes writings on Islamic education, critical theory, educational philosophy, and community approaches to Islamic curriculum development. Source selection was conducted purposively, taking into account the relevance of the theme, the reputation of the journal, and the recency of the publication.

The research steps included: (1) identification and classification of data sources; (2) in-depth reading of scientific documents; (3) interpretation of key concepts based on social and historical context; and (4) thematic analysis to identify conceptual patterns related to community-based Islamic education

theory. The data analysis technique used the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three main components: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. This model allows researchers to interpret data simultaneously and reflectively, allowing the results to provide a comprehensive picture of the study object.

Research validity was maintained through source triangulation, which involves comparing findings from different journals and contrasting expert opinions to obtain robust and objective conclusions. Thus, this research is not only conceptual but also critically analytical in uncovering the relevance of Islamic educational theory to social change in modern society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tracing the Origins of Critical Education

The conceptual roots of critical education historically date back to Paulo Freire's thinking in his monumental work, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970), which asserted that education should be a means of liberation from structures of social oppression. Freire's ideas were later adapted and recontextualized by Muslim thinkers as an effort to achieve tahrīr al-insān, the liberation of humanity from all forms of oppression that hinder its human potential. {Formatting Citation}. Rahman explains that Islamic education truly has a mission of spiritual and social liberation, as every learning process is directed toward elevating human dignity as free beings before Allah SWT, rather than as objects of domination by social or political systems.

In an epistemological context, the discourse of critical education has developed into an integral part of modern Islamic educational philosophy. Mirza (2024) introduced the concept of Islamic Scientific Critical Consciousness, a framework of critical awareness that integrates revealed values with scientific thought.²

This approach seeks to emphasize that scientific rationality and Islamic spirituality need not be in conflict; they can synergize to form a holistic critical awareness. Mirza believes this integration is crucial so that the Islamic educational paradigm does not become trapped in dogmatism, but rather can act as a transformative force that fosters faith-based critical thinking and ethical reasoning.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, Yusuf (2024) interprets liberation education as a process of strengthening social piety (taqwā ijtīmā'īyyah) and increasing the community's awareness of structural inequality and injustice.³

According to him, Islamic education is not sufficient to instill moral values individually; it must be directed towards the formation of a caring, participatory, and socially empowered society. He emphasizes the importance of community-based education, which utilizes social reality as a learning laboratory for a practice that combines reflection on faith with social action. Thus, it can be understood that the roots of critical education in Islam are not merely the adoption of Western theories, but rather the result of an epistemological dialogue between Quranic values and universal humanistic awareness. Critical Islamic education arose from the need for the community to develop self-awareness, reject dehumanization, and uphold social justice. The concept of tahrīr al-insān serves as the meeting point between the spiritual goals and the social mission of Islamic education, so that the orientation of learning is no longer merely the transfer of knowledge, but rather a process of

comprehensive human emancipation.

The Essence of Critical Education in Islam

The essence of critical education in Islam is rooted in the view that the educational process aims not only to cultivate intellectual intelligence but also to humanize humans according to their natural creation. Critical Islamic education seeks to develop a reflective awareness of social, spiritual, and moral realities so that students can understand structures of injustice and play an active role in correcting them. According to Kurniawan (2020), critical Islamic education can be understood as a process of *tahdhib al-fikr*—namely, the formation of a reflective and just way of thinking that guides humans to think ethically and transformatively.¹ He emphasized that every learning activity in Islam must contain the dimensions of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification) and *islah al-mujtama'* (social improvement). Thus, education is not only a cognitive space, but also a space for the formation of just awareness and character.

Furthermore, Rahmat (2022) demonstrated through his research in the *International Journal of Instruction* that the implementation of inclusive Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials significantly influences increasing religious tolerance and reducing the tendency towards radicalism among students.² These findings underscore the relevance of a critical approach in Islamic education, where the learning process is directed at developing social empathy, respecting differences, and strengthening universal human values (*al-qiyām al-insāniyyah*).

By combining the dimensions of rationality, spirituality, and social awareness, critical Islamic education creates an integrative paradigm. Rationality encourages students to think logically and scientifically; spirituality instills transcendent awareness and divine values; while social awareness drives concrete action to create justice. These three aspects form a unified praxis of liberation, where knowledge does not stop at the realm of theory but is embodied in social action oriented toward change and the welfare of the people.

Within this framework, critical Islamic education is truly a reflection of the Qur'anic teachings that position humans as caliphs on earth. The role of humans.

Education as Cultural Resistance

Islamic education serves not only as a means of transmitting knowledge, but also as a form of resistance against cultural hegemony that threatens the values and identity of the Muslim community. In the context of globalization, materialistic and secular cultural currents tend to dominate the public sphere, leading to the erosion of spiritual and local values. Islamic education exists as an alternative force that reaffirms the importance of morality, spirituality, and local wisdom in building human civilization.

According to Sari (2020), Islamic education can be understood as a form of cultural resistance against the hegemonic and capitalist dominance of modern civilization.¹ Through the educational process, Islamic values are constructed not merely as dogma, but as an ideological force capable of resisting cultural penetration that undermines the social order. She demonstrates how Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia play a crucial role in maintaining national character and Islamic identity amidst the currents of cultural globalization. This view is reinforced by Hasanah (2022), whose research shows that Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) serve as cultural bulwarks for

Muslims amidst the onslaught of consumerist ideology and the commercialization of education.² Islamic boarding schools are not merely religious institutions, but centers of social transformation that foster local values such as simplicity, sincerity, and social solidarity. Through a cultural pedagogy approach, Islamic education can rearticulate the identity of Muslim communities in a contextual way rooted in social reality.

Meanwhile, from an international perspective, a study titled "Community-Based Islamic Education: Democratizing Learning through Local Wisdom" (2021) shows that community-based Islamic education is a strategic instrument in strengthening cultural autonomy and expanding social participation.³ This model emphasizes the principle of learning from the community, where the community becomes the center and source of knowledge, not merely an object of learning. This approach enables students to critically understand their own cultural realities and build a collective consciousness to maintain Islamic values amidst rapid social change.

Thus, Islamic education as a form of cultural resistance plays a crucial role in building identity awareness and value resilience. It functions as a form of cultural counter-hegemony against the currents of globalization, which tend to neglect spiritual and moral dimensions. Through a contextual and community-based curriculum, Islamic education can become a space for cultural liberation that encourages students to think critically, act ethically, and be firmly rooted in authentic Islamic traditions.

Education as a Cultural Preservator

In addition to serving as a force of resistance, Islamic education also serves as a means of cultural preservation and the transmission of noble values that define the identity of Muslim communities. From an Islamic perspective, cultural preservation (*hifz al-thaqāfah*) is part of the mandate of education, as culture is a manifestation of moral, spiritual, and social values passed down from generation to generation.

Mahfud (2021) emphasizes that Islamic education plays a role in preserving the continuity of local values (local wisdom) that align with universal Islamic principles.¹ He demonstrates how the Nusantara Islamic tradition positions education as an integrative instrument between modern scholarship and local cultural heritage, such as the traditions of mutual cooperation, deliberation, and sincerity in social service. Islamic education that respects local wisdom serves to maintain social cohesion and build a national character that is both religious and inclusive.

This view is reinforced by Arifin (2023), who found that community-based Islamic education activities not only transmit religious knowledge but also play a role in revitalizing local culture.² Through community-based learning activities, such as environmental religious studies, community madrasas, and socio-religious training, Islamic education serves as a medium for maintaining traditional values in accordance with Islamic ethics. This demonstrates that cultural preservation through education is not a static effort to preserve the past, but rather a dynamic process to maintain the relevance of cultural values in a modern context.

In a global context, a study titled "Sustainable Islamic Education for Cultural Preservation and Social Development" (2023) explains that sustainability-oriented Islamic education plays a vital role in maintaining harmony between tradition and modernity.³ Education plays a role not only as a

vehicle for learning spiritual values, but also as a social mechanism for preserving cultural heritage and strengthening sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that community-based Islamic education has a strong foundation in the Islamic tradition of critical thought and social practice. Islamic education serves not only as a means of transmitting knowledge but also as an instrument of social, moral, and spiritual transformation aimed at liberating humanity from various forms of oppression, whether structural, cultural, or ideological.

Its historical roots, which stem from the idea of critical education, demonstrate that Islam views education as a process of liberation (*tahrīr al-insān*). This view emphasizes that the primary goal of education is not merely to produce intellectually intelligent individuals, but also to cultivate morally and socially conscious individuals. Critical education in Islam serves as a vehicle for fostering reflective awareness (*tahdhib al-fikr*), strengthening spirituality, and developing social responsibility that favors the welfare of the community.

In the socio-political context, Islamic education plays a dual role: as a product of state policy and as a moral force capable of correcting the direction of power. As a political product, education often reflects dominant ideologies, but through a critical and transformative Islamic paradigm, education can become a tool of cultural resistance that preserves the identity and noble values of the community. Islamic education also functions as a cultural preserver, maintaining the continuity of traditions and local wisdom without losing its universal orientation toward the values of justice, humanity, and mercy.

The diverse schools of critical Islamic education, including transformative, emancipatory, theological, humanistic, and sociological reconstruction, demonstrate the epistemological richness of Islamic education, which is not static but always open to renewal. The basic principles of critical Islamic education, such as awareness of power, dialogue, reflection, social action, and siding with the oppressed, make education not merely a means of intellectualization but also a social jihad.

Thus, the theory of community-based Islamic education is an effort to unite the dimensions of spirituality, rationality, and social awareness within a single, just learning system. Such Islamic education not only produces faithful and knowledgeable individuals but also fosters a civilized society—a society that thinks critically, has a social spirit, and is grounded in divine values.

REFERENCES

- Adeoye, M. A., & Munawwaroh, I. (2025). Transformational Leadership in Education: Harmonising Accountability, Innovation and Global Citizenship. *Kharisma: Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 4(1), 14–30.
- Arifin, Z. “Pelestarian Nilai Budaya dalam Pendidikan Islam.” *Tarbiyah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2023): 155–170.
- Azra, Azyumardi. “Islamic Education and Modernity in Indonesia.” *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah* 6, no. 1 (2021): 1–12.
- Chanifah, N. “Designing a Spirituality-Based Islamic Education Framework for Young Muslim Generations: A Case Study from Two Indonesian Universities.” Taylor & Francis, 2021.

- Fauzi, M. "Politik Pendidikan Islam dan Ideologi Negara." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* 7, no. 3 (2022): 245–259.
- Hamid, S. "Critical Islamic Pedagogy: Towards Social Empowerment." *Jurnal Tarbawi* 9, no. 1 (2024): 90–105.
- Hasanah, N. "Pesantren dan Perlawanan Budaya di Era Global." *At-Ta'dib: Journal of Islamic Education* 17, no. 2 (2022): 201–218.
- Hidayat, R. "Pendidikan Kritis dan Transformasi Sosial dalam Perspektif Islam." *Jurnal Tarbiyah Islamiyah* 8, no. 2 (2023): 112–129.
- Kurniawan, A. "Epistemologi Pendidikan Kritis dalam Islam." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Sosial* 9, no. 1 (2020): 33–48.
- Latif, H. "Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Islam Transformatif." *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 5, no. 1 (2022): 75–90.
- Mahfud, C. "Islam Nusantara and the Continuity of Local Wisdom in Islamic Education." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2021): 45–59.
- Mirza, U. J. "Islamic Scientific Critical Consciousness as a Theoretical Framework for Muslim Science Educators." *London Review of Education* 22, no. 1 (2024): 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.14324/LRE.22.1.09>.
- Nugraha, B. "Prinsip-prinsip Pendidikan Kritis dan Implementasinya di Madrasah." *Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 11, no. 1 (2023): 88–104.
- Rahman, F. "Tahrir al-Insan: Pendidikan Pembebasan dalam Islam." *Jurnal Filsafat Islam* 4, no. 2 (2021): 110–127.
- Rahmat, M. "Effectiveness of an Inclusive PAI Teaching Material Model on Religious Tolerance and Eradication of Radicalism." *International Journal of Instruction* 15, no. 3 (2022): 100–118.
- Ridwan, M. "Humanistik-Teologis: Basis Baru Pendidikan Islam Kritis." *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam* 7, no. 1 (2024): 55–70.
- Sari, L. "Resistensi Budaya dan Pendidikan Islam Lokal." *Tarbiyah Islamiyah* 5, no. 2 (2020): 88–101.
- Suharto, D. "Model Analisis Data Kualitatif Pendidikan Islam." *Tadrib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 3 (2022): 176–190.
- Yusuf, M. "Taqwa Sosial dalam Paradigma Pendidikan Islam Kritis." *Jurnal Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Sosial Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1–16.
- Zainuddin, A. "Ideologi dan Netralitas dalam Pendidikan Islam." *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Keislaman* 8, no. 3 (2023): 222–239.
- "Community-Based Islamic Education: Democratizing Learning through Local Wisdom." *International Review of Education Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021): 55–68.
- "Sustainable Islamic Education for Cultural Preservation and Social Development." *Journal of Islamic Studies and Sustainability* 5, no. 1 (2023): 77–92.
- Samsul, Z. H. S. (2025). Quality Control in HR Management: Ensuring Accreditation in Higher Education. *Evaluasi: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 9(1), 142–158.
- Tohet, M. (2024). Gender Awareness in Building Self-Efficacy in Student Organization Leadership at School. *Journal of Educational Management Research*, 3(1), 71–84.
- Zohaib Hassan Sain Chanda Chansa Thelma, Uthman Shehu Lawal, Muhammad Lawal Habibu, S. H. S. (2025). ChatGPT in Higher Education: Exploring Usage Patterns, Benefits, and Ethical Implications. *SSR Journal of Engineering and Technology*, 2(1), 1–7.